



Portus
Supported Housing

Domestic Abuse Policy

Version: 1.0

Review

Date of this review	Date of last review	Author(s)	Owner	Next review date
06.01.2026	10.01.2025	Customer Director	Managing Director	06.01.2029

Details of amendments

Version	Date	Update/ amendment detail	Resulting from
1.0	06.01.2026	Policy updated to reflect Portus Supported Housing branding, revised governance arrangements, strengthened safeguarding and trauma-informed approach, and improved clarity on roles, responsibilities, recording and partnership working.	Organisational merger and alignment with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, statutory guidance, and Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023.

Approved by

Executive Team	03.02.2026
Board	N/A



1. Introduction

Portus Supported Housing (PSH) is committed to working with other agencies to take a zero-tolerance approach to domestic abuse. We recognise that domestic abuse is a crime and has a considerable impact on the victim's physical and psychological wellbeing, and as such we will endeavour to help support them in living a life free from abuse.

PSH has adopted the definition of domestic abuse as set out in Domestic Abuse Act 2021:

Behaviour of a person ("A") towards another person ("B") is "domestic abuse" if

- (a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and*
- (b) The behaviour is abusive*

Behaviour is "abusive" if it consists of any of the following:

- (a) Physical or sexual abuse.*
- (b) Violent or threatening behaviour.*
- (c) Controlling or coercive behaviour.*
- (d) Economic abuse.*
- (e) Psychological, emotional, or other abuse.*

and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

PSH recognises that children who see, hear, or experience the effects of domestic abuse are victims, even where the abuse is not directly targeted at them. Where children are present, staff will consider safeguarding responsibilities and make referrals in line with PSH's Safeguarding Policy and Procedure.

2. Purpose / Aim

To establish a clear framework for identifying, addressing, and preventing domestic abuse among customers, ensuring that responses are safe, consistent, trauma-informed, and victim-centred.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all areas of work that PSH undertakes and is for the people and communities in which it operates. It outlines our approach to assisting and supporting any person experiencing domestic abuse, regardless of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, disability, or background.



PSH also recognises that its own staff may experience domestic abuse and is committed to supporting them appropriately in line with safeguarding principles and relevant HR policies.

4. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy ensures that PSH is compliant with the below legislation and regulation:

- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Housing Act 1988, 1996
- Family Law Act 1996
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Domestic Violence, Crime & Victims Act 2004
- Police & Justice Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Antisocial Behaviour, Crime & Policing Act 2014
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Care Act 2014
- Clare's Law/Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS)
- Stalking Protection Act 2019
- Domestic Abuse Act Statutory Guidance 2022
- The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023

5. Confidential Reporting

Domestic abuse will always be dealt with sympathetically and confidentially. PSH staff will not pass on information to anyone else except with the agreement of the victim or where there is a legal duty to share information, including where information is required for the protection of children or adults with care and support needs, in line with PSH's Safeguarding Policy.

6. Supporting Victims

When we become aware of a case of domestic abuse, we will ensure that all victims are:

- Listened to and believed.
- Reassured
- Treated with respect
- Provided with relevant information
- Able to expect any reports to be kept confidential
- Assured that PSH will 'keep the door open' no matter what route they choose to take;
and



- Assured that they have choices/options

PSH will develop an action plan with the victim tailored to meet their needs, liaising, and making referrals to appropriate support agencies as identified, such as:

- Victim support
- Counselling services
- Criminal/legal agencies
- Facilitate safety improvements to the property
- If it is not safe for the victim/witness to remain in their current property, we will try to offer alternative accommodation, if appropriate, or make a referral to another agency/landlord.
- We will, where possible and if requested, arrange for a member of staff of the same sex, sexual orientation, or ethnic background to conduct the interviews and home visits.

All disclosures of domestic abuse will be considered through a safeguarding lens. Where there is a risk of serious harm, coercive control, repeat incidents, or where children or adults with care and support needs are involved, a safeguarding referral will be made in accordance with PSH's Safeguarding Policy.

PSH will work in a trauma-informed way, recognising that victims may choose not to take immediate action or may disengage from support. Staff will respect these choices and continue to offer support where it is safe to do so.

7. Supporting Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse

PSH may provide support to perpetrators only where it is safe to do so and where such support does not compromise the safety of victims or others.

Support for perpetrators will never take precedence over victim safety. Any engagement will be carefully risk assessed and undertaken alongside specialist agencies where appropriate. This may include:

- Making referrals to drug and alcohol support agencies.
- Making referrals to counselling services.
- Ensuring that any perpetrator with mental health difficulties or other disabilities is referred to the most appropriate agency or organisation who can offer the support needed.

Where appropriate, PSH may signpost or refer perpetrators to recognised behaviour-change or intervention programmes in partnership with specialist agencies.

8. Partnership Working

PSH will work closely with a number of other agencies to obtain the desired outcome for victims of domestic abuse; these include but are not exclusively:



- Police
- Other landlords.
- Local Authorities.
- Specialist Support agencies.
- Victim Support.
- Any relevant Community Safety partnership group that are in place within the areas that we have properties.
- Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

This may include participation in information-sharing arrangements where lawful and necessary to reduce risk and protect victims.

9. Housing Options

If a victim requires a transfer, having stated that they no longer feel safe at their current address, PSH will endeavour to find suitable alternative accommodation within its own housing stock, based on professional advice from the Police and partner agencies.

In the event PSH is unable to facilitate a transfer to another PSH property, we will seek as far as possible to work with these agencies to ensure the customer is well supported and offered appropriate accommodation, where necessary.

Local Authorities have a legal obligation to re-house anyone made homeless because of actual or threatened violence within the home, providing they meet the set criteria (priority homeless).

We will consider contributing or supporting the cost of the victim moving. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and at the discretion of the Customer Director.

10. Action Against the Perpetrator

To prevent the continuation of the domestic abuse, PSH will seek to protect and support the victim by offering advice and assistance in accessing legal remedies specifically designed to deal with domestic abuse, for example, Non-Molestation Order, Occupation Order, Injunction etc. In addition, PSH will make referrals where necessary and with the consent of the victim to specialist support services such as the National Centre for Domestic Violence (NCDV), Woman's Aid, and other localised domestic abuse services.

PSH may also consider tenancy enforcement action, where appropriate and proportionate, in line with tenancy agreements and relevant legislation, while ensuring that such action does not place victims at further risk.

11. Reasonable Adjustments



PSH will engage with the victim and/or witness to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made where necessary to allow customers to report incidents, receive support, and engage in the investigation process. Adjustments might include procedural modifications, providing information in accessible formats, or signpost to external support. This also may include adjustments for victims experiencing financial abuse, digital exclusion, language barriers or disabilities.

PSH will also provide clear, accessible methods for victims and/or witnesses to report incidents of domestic abuse, including multiple reporting channels such as in-person, phone, or email.

12. Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for this policy lies with the Customer Director.

Managers across the organisation have a responsibility to ensure that all colleagues are made aware of PSH's approach to managing reports of domestic abuse.

Cases of domestic abuse will be managed by the Customer team under the supervision of the Regional Housing Manager and the Customer Director.

All colleagues have a responsibility to act in accordance with this policy at all times.

PSH will ensure that relevant staff receive appropriate training on domestic abuse, including recognising indicators of abuse, responding to disclosures, and understanding safeguarding and information-sharing responsibilities.

13. Recording and Information Management

All disclosures of domestic abuse, actions taken, and decisions made will be recorded accurately and securely in line with data protection legislation.

Risk assessments and action plans will be reviewed regularly and updated as circumstances change.

Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with PSH's Data Protection and Safeguarding policies.

14. Other Documents

This policy is linked to the following documents, and they should be read in conjunction:

- Antisocial Behaviour Policy
- Lettings Policy
- Tenancy and Neighbourhood Policy
- Safeguarding Policy



15. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed every three years unless amendment is prompted by a change in legislation, operational requirements, or customer feedback.

The number of reported cases of domestic abuse will be reported to the Board annually.

