

Bristol Community Land Trust
Domestic Abuse
(and Violence Against Women and Girls) Policy
Date first adopted: September 2025

Review dates:

Date of review	Amendments/Updates made	Reviewed & accepted	Proposed next review
September 2028			

Policy Statement

Bristol CLT does not tolerate domestic abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). Domestic abuse can affect anyone at any time and Bristol CLT are committed to supporting our residents, customers and community where we can.

This policy outlines our victim centred approach, which ensures that we create a culture when residents, members and colleagues who have experienced or witnessed domestic abuse feel supported when making a report.

We recognise the importance of supporting residents, members and colleagues whilst also safeguarding their safety and the safety of others, ensuring that any action we take is done with their consent.

We will work collaboratively with external partners when managing cases of domestic abuse.

This policy applies to all residents, all staff, board members and contractors, sub-contractors and agents working for Bristol CLT

Legislation and regulation

The legislation listed in this policy is not intended to cover all legislation applicable to this policy.

Definition of Domestic abuse

Under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 is *'Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional.'*

Domestic abuse can take different forms, including:

- *Physical abuse.*
- *Sexual abuse.*
- *Financial abuse.*
- *Coercive control and gaslighting / emotional abuse.*
- *Digital / online abuse.*
- *So-called 'honour-based' violence.*

- *Forced marriage.*
- *Female genital mutilation (FGM).*

The legislation listed within this policy was considered at the time of the development of this policy, but subsequent primary and secondary legislation, case law and regulatory or other requirements will be considered and the policy reviewed and adopted in accordance with the requirements set out therein, even should such subsequent legislation not be explicitly listed within this policy.

The main legislation is as follows:

- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Family Law Act 1996
- Anti-Social Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Crime & Disorder Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The Housing Act 1996
- The Equality Act 2010
- Care Act 2014
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Clare's Law (Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme) 2014
- Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- Police & Justice Act 2006
- Children Act 2004
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

Bristol CLT aims to:

- Work collaboratively with people with lived experience of domestic abuse to ensure their voices are heard and shape our housing policies and services
- Work collaboratively with key partners and wider stakeholders to identify ways in which we can take earlier, effective intervention and improve our responses and service offering to tackling domestic abuse
- Develop an improved understanding of domestic abuse amongst housing staff to ensure effective, high quality housing support, advice and information
- Provide a policy framework which sets out clear messaging promoting equality and respect, and rejects all forms of domestic abuse.
- Support wellbeing amongst our housing workforce to ensure a supportive and trauma responsive environment to effectively address domestic abuse across all sectors of society
- To prevent and reduce adverse childhood experiences and provide safe and nurturing accommodation and support that can help children and families thrive
- Challenge gendered stereotypes across all aspects of our service delivery
- protect our community, safeguarding where possible them against domestic abuse in an inclusive and respectful way

How can Bristol CLT help?

Housing Services are at the forefront of delivering services to people affected by domestic abuse. This includes sustaining current accommodation, where possible and where this is the preference, preventing the need to present as homeless. This avoids any potential distress and

Housing options include, but are not limited to:

- Supporting women to remain in their home
- Removing the perpetrator (where possible)
- Rehousing the perpetrator
- Supporting women to transfer the tenancy to their name
- Supporting women to gain legal advice and information
- Utilising management housing transfers to support women to make planned moves and avoid homelessness
- Utilising domestic abuse housing protocol priority points to achieve a move through the general or transfer waiting list and avoid homelessness

trauma associated with moving into temporary accommodation or moving to an unfamiliar area away from existing support networks. We also know that for some people, the trauma experienced in their accommodation may mean that it is not an option for them to remain there. In these circumstances we would find alternative suitable accommodation.

We recognise that people experiencing domestic abuse who approach the housing service asking for help may have other issues such as disability, addiction or be financially dependent on their abuser. We ensure that we treat people sympathetically and provide a trauma informed service to explore a range of housing options and supports to identify the best housing and/or support outcome. We will work in partnership with specialist services

You can also speak to the Bristol CLT and we will see what we can do to support and sign-post you. You can email info@bristolclt.co.uk

Identifying abuse and external support

Domestic Abuse is the use of power for one person to control another in a family or intimate relationship. The abuse can take many forms; for example, physical, psychological, emotional or sexual. It can also include frightening or abusing you or your children – or damaging your property.

If you are faced with the immediate threat of violence: **Call 999 and ask for the police** (or ask someone to do it for you) If you're in danger and can't talk, listen to the questions and respond by whispering, coughing or tapping the phone if you can. You may be asked to press 55 so police can help you.

Access to a variety of support and advice services can be found on the Bristol Council Website

[Domestic abuse: useful contacts](#)

Go to a safe place (not the kitchen), stay near a door and if in doubt, leave the premises.

There is support available for you too outside of Bristol CLT.

- **Victim Support:** Victim Support run these services for victims and survivors of any abuse or crime, regardless of when it occurred or if the crime was reported to the police. Free, independent and confidential 24/7 Supportline 08 08 16 89 111
- Women can call the **National Domestic Violence Helpline** on 0808 2000 247

- Men can call the **Men's Advice Line** on 0808 8010 327 for further advice and assistance.
- Other information for seeking support is here: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/getting-help-for-domestic-violence/>
- **Employer support here:** Hestia's [Respond to Abuse Advice Line](#) is a free resource for employers. Employers can call 020 3879 3695 Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, or email advice.line.eb@hestia.org for support, guidance or information about domestic abuse and how to support employees and colleagues experiencing domestic abuse.

We work with partners including the Police, Social Services support providers, and Community Mental Health Teams as well as local voluntary groups.

We work within the ASB, Crime and Policing Act 2014 that allows customers to request a multi-agency audit of their case if they believe no progress is being made to resolve their problems. This is a criminal offence and you need to report this to the Police immediately, you must also let them know if you are concerned about your safety, or that of others.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed within three years of its approval date.

This policy is subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.

Equality and diversity

We will apply this policy consistently and fairly and will not discriminate against anyone based on any protected characteristics, including those set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Complaints

Any resident or other stakeholder who is dissatisfied with how we have managed their repairs is able to submit a complaint using our Complaints process.

Once our Complaints policy is complete and if they remain dissatisfied, then they can contact the Housing Ombudsman.