

Customer Access Review – Full Assessment

Assessment details	
Assessment area	Domestic Abuse Housing Policy
Date of assessment	January 2026
Directorate and Service	Housing and Public Protection, Housing Services
Manager	Housing Solutions & Private Sector Manager / Tenancy Services Manager
Officer conducting assessment	Housing Policy & Performance Officer
Step 1: Scoping the assessment	
1. What are the aims and objectives of the activity or proposal?	<p>The Domestic Abuse Housing Policy sets out the Housing Service’s responsibilities towards tackling domestic abuse, the responses given and the support available to victims and survivors.</p> <p>The aims and objectives of the Domestic Abuse Housing Policy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To take all reports of domestic abuse seriously; • To provide an accessible, effective and supportive service, which encourages victims and survivors to seek help; • To take a trauma informed approach to helping victims and survivors recover from domestic abuse, whilst keeping the victim or survivor at the centre of our support and provide a sensitive, sympathetic, consistent and prompt response; • To offer a flexible range of housing solutions and support to assist victims and survivors to live safely, securely and free of abuse; • To be sensitive to the diverse needs of victims, survivors and their children, considering any protected characteristics; • To undertake necessary risk assessments, enabling appropriate and necessary action to be taken; • To send a clear message to perpetrators that domestic abuse is unacceptable and take appropriate action against perpetrators if they are Council tenants; • To ensure staff are trained to be confident and knowledgeable to identify domestic abuse, assess risk and take appropriate action; • To promote awareness amongst other agencies of the role that the Housing Service can play in assisting victims and survivors experiencing domestic abuse; • To work in partnership with specialist agencies to ensure an appropriate and coordinated response is given towards domestic abuse; • To ensure that any information given will remain confidential and will only be given to other agencies (e.g. the Police and Social Services) where there is a lawful basis.

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Step 1: Scoping the assessment	
<p>2. Who will be affected by the activity or proposal?</p>	<p>All residents including housing applicants, homeless applicants and Dartford Borough Council tenants.</p>
<p>3. How does the activity or proposal contribute to: a) any key performance indicators? b) policies, values or objectives of Dartford Borough Council?</p>	<p>a) The Domestic Abuse Housing Policy contributes towards the following Corporate Plan 2024-2027 key performance indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Plan: S3 - Number of domestic abuse incidents (Source: Kent Police) • Housing Service Update Report: HPI-15 - Number of households where homelessness has been prevented (Source: DBC Housing Service) <p>b) The Domestic Abuse Housing Policy contributes to the Corporate Plan 2024-2027 housing ambition to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a high quality and responsive housing service that’s built on respect for aspiring and existing tenants. We want to be practical, honest and straightforward in all the information and advice we give. <p>The Domestic Abuse Housing Policy also contributes to the Corporate Plan 2024-2027 housing key action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To use responsibly the laws and regulations available to use to increase the safety of housing and the health of residents. <p>The Domestic Abuse Housing Policy contributes to the Corporate Plan 2024-2027 safety ambition to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce crime and disorder including violence against women and girls.
<p>4. Which aspects of the activity or proposal are dictated by legislation/regulation and where do we have discretion in how they are delivered?</p>	<p>There is a requirement on the Council, as a social housing landlord, to comply with the Regulator of Social Housing’s Neighbourhood and Community Standard. The Council must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a policy for how the Council recognises and effectively responds to cases of domestic abuse. • Co-operate with appropriate local authority departments to support the local authority in meeting its duty to develop a strategy and commission services for victims of domestic abuse and their children within safe accommodation.

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	<p>The Domestic Abuse Housing Policy and its delivery is intended to be compatible with the following relevant legislation, regulation and guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Act 1996 • Homelessness Act 2002 • Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 • Domestic Abuse Act 2021 • Crime and Disorder Act 1998 • Children Act 1989 • Family Law Act 1996 • Children Act 2004 • Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 • Care Act 2014 • Serious Crime Act 2015 • Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 • Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 • Equality Act 2010 • Data Protection Act 2018 • UK GDPR • Domestic Abuse: Statutory Guidance Framework • The Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme or ‘Clare’s Law’ • Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities • Improving Access to Social Housing for Victims of Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance • Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2021 • Regulator of Social Housing’s Neighbourhood and Community Standard 2024
Step 2: Information collection	
<p>5. What do you know about the groups of people who will be affected? (i.e. demographic information in relation to the protected characteristic groups of age, disability, pregnancy and</p>	<p><u>Tenant profile</u></p> <p>The Council owns and manages a housing stock of 4,194 properties. The total tenant population is 4,159 of which 3,732 are general needs tenants and 427 are housing scheme tenants. Information in relation to profile of Council tenants (Tenant 1 data) is captured by the Council’s Housing Service, as follows:</p>

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Step 2: Information collection			
maternity, religion or belief, race, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership)	Sex	Male	33.37%
		Female	66.63%
	Age	Under 25	2.09%
		25-35	11.59%
		36-45	17.94%
		46-55	17.99%
		56-65	21.30%
		66-74	15.27%
		75 and over	13.54%
		Unknown	0.29%
	Race	White	64.80%
		Asian or Asian British	1.35%
		Black or Black British	1.44%
		Mixed	1.88%
		Chinese or other ethnic group	0.17%
		Unknown / prefer not to say	30.37%
	Disability / vulnerability	No disability / vulnerability / support need	74.44%
		Disability / vulnerability / support need	25.56%
	Sexual orientation	Heterosexual / straight	12.77%
		Gay man	0.12%
		Gay women / lesbian	0.07%
		Bisexual	0.12%
		Prefer not to say / unknown	86.92%
	Transgender	Female to male	0.02%
		Male to female	0.02%
		Not applicable	0.17%
		Not stated / blank	99.78%

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	<p><u>Dartford Population Profile</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender – There are slightly more female residents than male residents in Dartford where 51% are female and 49% are male, which is the same as the overall England ratio of females and males. • Age – The median age in Dartford is 37 years, which is slightly lower than the overall England mean age of 40 years. 21.1% of Dartford’s population is aged 14 years or under. This is followed by residents aged 35 to 44 years (15.7%), 25 to 34 years (15.2%), 45 to 54 years (13.3%), 55 to 64 years (10.8%), 15 to 24 years (10.2%), 65 to 74 years (7.4%), and aged 75 years and over (6.4%) • Ethnicity – The largest ethnic group that people in Dartford identify with is White at 74.5%. This is followed by Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African (10.50%), Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh (9.90%), Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups (3.10%), and Other ethnic groups (2.00%) • Disability – 15.9% of Dartford’s population are disabled. Of this, 6.6% of people’s activities are limited a lot and 9.3% of people’s activities are limited a little. • Religion – 48.1% of Dartford’s population connect or identify with the Christian religion, followed by 3.8% Hindu, 3.5% Muslim, 1.7% Sikh, 0.6% Buddhist, 0.1% Jewish, and 0.4% other religion. 36.5% of Dartford’s population did not connect or identify with any religion and 5.3% did not answer this question in the Census. • Sexual orientation – 91.2% of Dartford’s population aged 16 years and over identified as straight or heterosexual. 1.5% described themselves as gay or lesbian. 0.91% described themselves as bisexual. 0.14% described themselves as pansexual; 0.03% described themselves as asexual; 0.00% described themselves as queer. 0.01% described themselves as ‘other sexual orientation’. 6.54% did not answer this question in the Census. <p>(Source: Census 2021, Office for National Statistics)</p>

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Domestic Abuse Incidents in Dartford

The following data is from Kent Police and sets out notifiable offences and the number of incidents in the borough in September 2025.

Total Notifiable Offences	146
Violence Against the Person	106
- Stalking/harassment	27
- Coercion and control	16
Sexual Offences	15
- Rape	10
Other crimes	25
Non-Crime Incidents	103
Total Incidents	249

Homelessness and Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse accounted for 6.76% of homeless applicants who accepted a prevention duty and 25.57% of applicants who accepted a relief duty in 2022-23. 4.46% of applicants owed a main duty were in priority need due to domestic abuse.

(Source: Official homelessness statistics published, Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC))

Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimates for year ending March 2025 showed that a higher proportion of people who had experienced homelessness in their lifetime experienced domestic abuse in the last year (22.1%), compared with those who had never been homeless (7.2%).

(Source: Domestic abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales: year ending March 2025, ONS, November 2025)

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	<p><u>Understanding Domestic Abuse</u> Anyone can be affected by domestic abuse – regardless of age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief. In addition, domestic abuse can manifest itself in different ways within different communities. Whilst both men and women can be affected by domestic abuse, females are disproportionately the victims.</p> <p>Domestic abuse remains under reported. There can be many barriers to disclosing abuse, seeking criminal justice outcomes and accessing services.</p> <p>(Source: Domestic abuse: statutory guidance, Home Office, July 2022) The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimated that 3.8 million people aged 16 years and over experienced domestic abuse in the year ending March 2025.</p> <p>Gender In England and Wales, according to the CSEW for the year ending March 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An estimated 2.2 million females and 1.5 million males experience domestic abuse in the year ending March 2025. • A significantly higher proportion of females were victims of domestic and partner abuse than males. • A significantly higher percentage of females than males were victims of most abuse types in the last year, including economic abuse, physical abuse, domestic sexual assault and domestic stalking. • Data from 32 police forces showed that the victim was female in 72.1% and male in 27.9% of domestic abuse related crimes. This proportion was similar for most offence categories. For domestic abuse-related sexual offences, the proportion of female victims was 90.9% compared with 9.1% for males. <p>(Source: Domestic abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales: year ending March 2025, ONS, November 2025)</p> <p>Age Domestic abuse can be experienced at any age. Children are now defined as victims under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 if they have seen, heard or experienced the effects of the abusive behaviour. The 2023 Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment Update reported that in 2022/23, 15,614 domestic abuse related incidents reported to Kent Police were recorded as having a child, or children, as an involved party, where they may have witnessed the abuse (37.2% of total incidents).</p>

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	<p>The CSEW data for the year ending March 2025 showed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A significantly higher proportion of adults aged 16 to 19 years (18.2%) and 20 to 24 years (12.9%) were victims of domestic abuse compared with those in age categories of 25 years and over.• In contrast, the proportion of people who were victims of domestic abuse, aged 60 to 74 years (5.3%) and 75 years and over (3.4%) was significantly lower than people in age groups between 16 and 59 years.• Females of all age groups had a higher proportion of violence against the person offences flagged as domestic abuse-related compared with males. <p>(Source: Domestic abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales: year ending March 2025, ONS, November 2025)</p> <p>Disability</p> <p>For the year ending March 2025, the CSEW estimate that 13.4% of people aged 16 years and over with a disability were victims of domestic abuse.</p> <p>(Source: Domestic abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales: year ending March 2025, ONS, November 2025)</p> <p>SafeLives state that disabled women are twice as likely to experience abuse than non-disabled women, and disabled people are more likely to experience abuse from an adult family member compared to non-disabled people (14% vs 6%). Studies have shown that disabled women are twice as likely to experience domestic abuse and also twice as likely to suffer assault and rape. However SafeLives research shows low referral rates for disabled people into domestic abuse services.</p> <p>(Source: Disabled people and domestic abuse spotlight, SafeLives)</p> <p>Pregnancy and maternity</p> <p>Pregnancy is a specific risk factor that can make victims more vulnerable. Pregnancy can be a trigger for domestic abuse and existing abuse may get worse during pregnancy or after giving birth. Pregnancy does not cause abuse; however a perpetrator may escalate the abuse when a woman is pregnant.</p>

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	<p>SafeLives research (A cry for help: Why we must invest in domestic abuse services in hospitals, 2016) suggests around 30% of domestic abuse begins during pregnancy, while 40–60% of women experiencing domestic abuse are abused during pregnancy.</p> <p>Race For the year ending March 2025, there was a significantly higher proportion of people aged 16 years and over in the Black ethnic group (11.5%) who experienced domestic abuse in the last year, compared with those in the Asian or Asian British group (6.1%). In the Mixed ethnic group, 8.6% experienced domestic abuse, followed by 7.9% in the White ethnic group and 6.0% in the Other ethnic group.</p> <p>(Source: Domestic abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales: year ending March 2025, ONS, November 2025)</p> <p>Religion or belief Data released from the Home Office states that in the year ending March 2025, there were 2,949 ‘honour’ based-related offences recorded by the Police in England and Wales. Of these offences, 109 were female genital mutilation (FGM) and 125 were forced marriage offences.</p> <p>(Source: Statistics on so called ‘honour-based’ abuse offences, England and Wales, year ending March 2025, Home Office, November 2025)</p> <p>The Office for National Statistics (ONS) data for the years ending March 2015 to 2017 states that Christian women (5.7%) were more likely to have experienced partner abuse in the last 12 months than Muslim women (2.9%) and Hindu women (1.8%). Women with no religion were more likely to have experienced partner abuse the most in the last 12 months (7.4%).</p> <p>(Source: Women most at risk of experiencing partner abuse in England and Wales: years ending March 2015 to 2017, ONS, May 2018)</p> <p>Sexual orientation ONS data from the 2015/16 CSEW suggests that more than one in four gay men and lesbian women (29%) and more than one in three bisexual people (40%) report at least one form of domestic abuse since the age of 16. While lesbian women report slightly higher rates of domestic abuse to those of heterosexual women (11.4% compared with 7.5%), bisexual women are more than twice as likely to disclose domestic abuse compared to heterosexual women (17.3% compared with 7.5%).</p>

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	<p>Gender identity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the National LGBT Survey 2017, 48% of transgender respondents had experienced a negative incident involving someone that they lived with due to being LGBT, or being thought to be LGBT, in the 12 months leading up to the survey. • A report by SafeLives (Transgender Victims’ and Survivors’ Experiences of Domestic Abuse) found that transgender victims/survivors experience specific types of abuse that can be linked to their trans identities. • Stonewall charity (LGBT in Britain: Trans Report) carried out a survey of 871 transgender and non-binary people across Britain and found that over a quarter (28%) of those in a relationship had experienced domestic abuse in the last year. <p>Marriage and civil partnership</p> <p>Domestic abuse can happen within marriage and civil partnership but also applies to partners, ex-partners, or family members regardless of whether the victim and perpetrator live together. According to the CSEW for the end of March 2025, a significantly larger proportion of adults who were separated (22.7%) experienced domestic abuse in the last year than those who were married or civil partnered (4.4%), cohabiting (8.8%), or widowed (4.5%).</p> <p>(Source: Domestic abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales: year ending March 2025, ONS, November 2025)</p>
<p>6. What consultation has taken place with affected groups? Please describe who was consulted and the key findings</p>	<p>Internal consultation on the draft Domestic Abuse Housing Policy has been carried out with Council officers.</p>
<p>7. Are there any gaps in information? If so, what additional research and/or consultation is needed to ensure that affected groups needs and views are taken into account?</p>	<p>The Council is committed to ensuring the voice of its tenants is heard on matters that affect them. The Regulator of Social Housing places a requirement on social housing landlords to comply with the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard 2024, by ensuring that residents are given a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved in the formulation of their landlord’s housing-related policies and strategies. Consultation with Council tenants will be undertaken, as follows:</p>

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Step 2: Information collection	
	<p>1. All Council tenants will be invited to comment on the draft Domestic Abuse Housing Policy.</p> <p>2. The Dartford Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum (DTLF) will be invited to comment on the draft Domestic Abuse Housing Policy. The DTLF aims to ensure that the services delivered by the Council are accessible to all. The Forum works as a group to ensure that the views and housing needs of residents are recognised and addressed by the Council, and that those needs and views are placed at the centre of housing services delivery.</p> <p>3. The Housing Advisory Board (HAB) will be invited to comment on the draft Domestic Abuse Housing Policy. The HAB considers reports on proposed policy, strategy and performance in relation to housing issues and makes recommendations to Cabinet as appropriate. The HAB includes representation from Council officers, elected Members and DTLF members.</p> <p>The Council will also consult with a number of partner agencies to invite their feedback on the draft Domestic Abuse Housing Policy. This will include the North Kent Domestic Abuse Forum, the Kent Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board, other local Councils via the Kent Housing Group, and the Police.</p>

Step 3: Assessing the equality impact

<p>8. Consider whether the activity or proposal has or will have any positive or negative equality impacts on the protected characteristic groups in relation to the following aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty:</p> <p>a) tackling unlawful discrimination b) promoting equality of opportunity c) promoting good relations</p> <p><u>NOTES:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Initial Screening will have identified which aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty are relevant to the activity or proposal for consideration • For existing activities, consider how they are working in practice for each relevant protected group • For new proposals, consider whether there is anything that could give rise to positive and negative equality impacts for each relevant protected group • If there is no identified equality impact, please tick the 'No Impact' box and explain why in question 9 • If the equality impact is unclear, please tick the 'Unknown' box and explain why in question 9
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Step 3: Assessing the equality impact				
PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC	POSITIVE IMPACTS	NEGATIVE IMPACTS	NO IMPACT	UNKNOWN
Age	<p>Safeguarding children as victims of domestic abuse Domestic abuse has a detrimental impact on children if they see, hear, or otherwise experience the effects of abuse. Safeguarding referrals for Child Protection/Child in Need, will be made to Children’s Social Services to protect children from harm in accordance with obligations under the Children Act 2004, the Council’s Safeguarding Policy and in tandem with other appropriate actions to address housing need and safety.</p> <p>Safeguarding adults with care and support needs Where adults with care and support needs (i.e. physical, mental, sensory, learning or cognitive disabilities or illnesses, substance misuse or brain injury) are unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect, a safeguarding referral will be made to Adult Social Services to protect the adult from harm. Adult safeguarding referrals will be made in accordance with the Council’s Safeguarding Policy and the Care Act 2014. The Council will also assess the need for other means of support to address safety, for example, providing safe accommodation including refuge in the area for all victims, survivors and their children.</p>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Step 3: Assessing the equality impact				
PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC	POSITIVE IMPACTS	NEGATIVE IMPACTS	NO IMPACT	UNKNOWN
Disability	<p>Mental health and wellbeing Domestic abuse can have an immediate and/or long-lasting effect on the lives of victims including an impact on mental health and wellbeing. Abuse can result in low motivation, low confidence, low self-esteem, confusion, disturbed eating and sleeping, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, self-harm, suicide ideations, and can lead to the misuse of drugs and alcohol as a coping mechanism. Victims with complex needs regarding mental health and substance misuse will be signposted to specialist services to help address their mental health and wellbeing needs in tandem with other appropriate actions to address housing need and safety.</p> <p>Safeguarding adults with care and support needs – As under ‘Age’. Where adults with care and support needs (i.e. physical, mental, sensory, learning or cognitive disabilities or illnesses, substance misuse or brain injury) are unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect, a safeguarding referral will be made to Adult Social Services to protect the adult from harm. Adult safeguarding referrals will be made in accordance with the Council’s Safeguarding Policy and the Care Act 2014.</p>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Step 3: Assessing the equality impact				
PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC	POSITIVE IMPACTS	NEGATIVE IMPACTS	NO IMPACT	UNKNOWN
	<p>The Council will also assess the need for other means of support to address safety, for example, providing safe accommodation including refuge in the area for all victims, survivors and their children.</p> <p>Communication needs In accordance with the Council’s Equality & Diversity Document Framework, the Policy and information about domestic abuse, and the assistance the Council can provide to address any issues, can be provided in alternative formats, including: Braille, audio tape and large print versions of documents. British Sign Language interpreting services can also be provided upon request. Calls can also be received via Relay UK.</p>			
Sex	<p>Male victims and survivors of domestic abuse While domestic abuse can affect anyone, statistically it affects more women than men. The Council aims to be sensitive to the diverse needs of victims and offers the opportunity for victims and survivors to speak to a member of staff who is of the same sex if this is preferred.</p>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<p>The Policy is likely to have an overall positive impact and is not expected to have a differential impact based on gender reassignment. The Council aims to be sensitive to the diverse needs of all victims of domestic abuse.</p>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Step 3: Assessing the equality impact				
PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC	POSITIVE IMPACTS	NEGATIVE IMPACTS	NO IMPACT	UNKNOWN
Race	Alternative format and interpreting services In accordance with the Council's Equality & Diversity Document Framework, the Strategy and information about domestic abuse, and the assistance the Council can provide to address any issues, can be provided in alternative formats including documents translated into other languages. Telephone and face-to-face language interpreting services can also be provided upon request.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion/Belief	The Policy is likely to have an overall positive impact and is not expected to have a differential impact based on religious belief. Domestic abuse can and does happen to anyone, it is not confined to any one religious belief.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	The Policy is likely to have an overall positive impact and is not expected to have any differential impact based on sexual orientation. However, there is limited data available on domestic abuse and sexual orientation. The Council aims to be sensitive to the diverse needs of all victims of domestic abuse.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy/Maternity	The Policy is likely to have an overall positive impact and is not expected to have any differential impact based on pregnancy/maternity.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage and Civil Partnership*	Not applicable as the Policy does not apply in the context of employment.	Not applicable as the Policy does not apply in the context of employment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

* Regarding the protected characteristic of Marriage and Civil Partnership – public bodies need to comply with the first aim of the Public Sector Equality Duty and only in the context of employment.

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<p>9. If 'no impact' or 'unknown' was selected, please explain</p>	<p>Not applicable – domestic abuse can affect anyone regardless of protected characteristics.</p> <p>The Policy aims to advance equality of opportunity between different groups by being sensitive to the diverse needs of victims, considering their protected characteristics. The Policy recognises how domestic abuse can affect different groups in different ways and how domestic abuse may affect some protected groups disproportionately.</p>
<p>10. If Dartford Borough Council works with partners to deliver the activity or proposal, please describe any circumstances that could give rise to positive or negative equality impacts between different groups</p>	<p>The Council engages with a range of agencies under the following operational and strategic partnership working arrangements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kent Police • Dartford Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop • North Kent Domestic Abuse Forum • Dartford Homelessness Forum • Dartford Community Safety Partnership • Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference • Kent Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board • Domestic Homicide Reviews • District Child Protection Panels • Adult Safeguarding Case Conferences • Adult Safeguarding Reviews • Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements • Other local housing authorities under reciprocal out of area placement arrangements • Specialist support agencies <p>There are no known circumstances where these partnership working arrangements will have a disproportionate impact on the protected characteristic groups other than to positively improve a victims housing circumstances and safety. Effective communication with partnerships will ensure the correct support is provided through information sharing.</p>

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<p>11. Any other comments</p>	<p>Awareness of the Policy and the services available from the Council The Domestic Abuse Housing Policy should have a positive impact on residents and clients by raising awareness and understanding of how to access the Housing Service and the type of support provided so that the housing needs and safety of all residents experiencing domestic abuse are met and that the diverse needs of victims is taken into account when accessing services.</p> <p>In order to help protect and support victims, it is important to promote this awareness as widely as possible. The Policy will be accessible on the website and in alternative formats on request. Information about domestic abuse support services and the Dartford One Stop Shop is currently accessible on the Council's website and promoted on social media and posters.</p> <p>Accessing the Housing Service and other specialist services The Policy contains information on how victims of domestic abuse can approach the Council for assistance. The reporting of domestic abuse to the Council's Housing Service can be made in different ways, including in person, in writing, by telephone, online, via a third party such as the Police, and through the Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop.</p> <p>The Policy acknowledges that domestic abuse is a multifaceted and unique set of circumstances for each victim and there is no 'one size fits all' approach for providing a response. Where cases involving Council tenants meet a 'complex' threshold, the Strategy explains they will be referred into the Housing Service Complex Case Panel. This joint panel between the Housing Solutions & Private Sector and Tenancy Services Teams work together to put in place plans for Council tenants with complex needs and who may be at risk of homelessness. This includes more than one complex issue which is putting continuation of the tenancy at risk and may include for example, issues of domestic abuse, mental health problems, substance misuse, anti-social behaviour, high level rent arrears.</p> <p>In addition to accessing the Housing Service, victims will be referred or signposted to other organisations who can provide additional specialist support to help meet their needs.</p>

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Step 4: Action plan

12. Based on the information in Steps 1 to 3, please list the actions that will be taken to address:

- a) any gaps in information and consultation
- b) how any negative impacts on equality will be mitigated or eradicated

a) If additional information and/or consultation is required or the impact is still unclear, what actions will you put in place to gather the information you need?

Information needs	Action	Intended outcome	Date for completion	How this will be monitored	Responsible officer
Views from all Council tenants and leaseholders	Invite comment and input on the draft Domestic Abuse Housing Policy from all Council tenants and leaseholders	Feedback will, at a formative stage, inform any further changes that may be required to the draft Policy in advance of seeking approval for the Policy	March 2026	Details of the consultation and amendments made to the draft Policy as a result of the consultation will be included in the Cabinet report	Housing Policy & Performance Officer
Views from the Dartford Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum	Invite comment and input on the draft Domestic Abuse Housing Policy from the Dartford Tenants' and Leaseholder's Forum	Feedback will, at a formative stage, inform any further changes that may be required to the draft Policy in advance of seeking approval for the Policy	March 2026	Details of the consultation and amendments made to the draft Policy as a result of the consultation will be included in the Cabinet report	Housing Policy & Performance Officer
Views from partner agencies	Invite comment and input on the draft Domestic Abuse Housing Policy from partner agencies across Kent	Feedback will, at a formative stage, inform any further changes that may be required to the draft Policy in advance of seeking approval for the Policy	March 2026	Details of the consultation and any amendments made to the draft Policy as a result of the consultation will be included in the Cabinet report	Housing Policy & Performance Officer

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Information needs	Action	Intended outcome	Date for completion	How this will be monitored	Responsible officer
Views from the Housing Advisory Board	Invite comment and input on the draft Domestic Abuse Housing Policy from the Housing Advisory Board	Feedback will, at a formative stage, inform any further changes that may be required to the draft Policy in advance of seeking approval for the Policy	May 2026	Details of the consultation and amendments made to the draft Policy as a result of the consultation will be included in the Cabinet report	Housing Policy & Performance Officer

b) If any negative impacts on equality were found, what actions will you put in place to mitigate or eradicate these impacts?

Identified impacts (and who is affected)	Action	Intended outcome	Date for completion	How this will be monitored	Responsible officer

Step 5: Decision making and future monitoring

13. Which decision making process does this Customer Access Review need to go through? i.e. who does this need to be approved by?	Head of Legal Services & Director of Housing and Public Protection
14. Is the subject of the Customer Access Review going to committee? If yes, include your findings in the committee report and attach this assessment to the report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
15. How will you continue to monitor the activity or proposal on protected characteristic groups?	The Domestic Abuse Housing Policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner, in the event of major legislative or operational changes.
16. When will you review this Customer Access Review?	The Policy will be reviewed at the end of the three-year period, where a new Customer Access Review assessment will be undertaken in conjunction with the review.

Step 6: Final steps

17. Once this Customer Access Review has been approved, send this assessment to the Policy & Projects Officer.
18. Implement the actions identified from this Customer Access Review and ensure progress is monitored and recorded.

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Step 6: Final steps

Reviewed by Legal Services:

J.Wenham

17.02.2026

Reviewed by Director of Housing & Public Protection:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. H.', written in a cursive style.

17.02.2026