

Housing Advice

Homelessness and Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is an incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading, intimidating, isolating and violent behaviour.

This may include psychological abuse, emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, financial/economic abuse, harassment, stalking and online/digital abuse.

Domestic abuse is carried out by a partner, ex-partner or family member, regardless of gender or sexuality.

Safety first: Plan ahead

1. Tell someone about your situation - get help.
2. Contact an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) for specialist support, advice, and safety planning. This service is free and confidential. The Harrow IDVA service is delivered by Hestia. Contact 020 8907 8148 or idva.harrow@hestia.org
3. Keep your mobile phone charged and on you at all times. Call 999 for the Police in an emergency.
4. If you feel you are in danger at home, consider a code word that is recognised by a friend or neighbour who can call the police for you.
5. If you are planning to leave, don't leave any clues and consider what you tell your children as they may unknowingly disclose your plan.
6. Keep some money, clothes, important documents and any medication in a bag at a trusted friend's house.
7. Explain to children that it is not their fault and they are never to blame for the violence. Tell them they should never try and stop the violence as they could get hurt. Teach them to dial 999 in an emergency.

How to get help

In an emergency call the Police on 999. The non-emergency number is 101.

Contact an IDVA for specialist support, advice, and safety planning. This service is free and confidential. The Harrow IDVA service is delivered by Hestia. Contact 020 8907 8148 or idva.harrow@hestia.org

If you are at risk of homelessness contact the Housing Advice Team:

020 8424 1093 (option 1)

020 8863 5611 out of hours

housing.advice@harrow.gov.uk

The council will give you advice about finding somewhere to live. You will be asked for information about your situation and for supporting evidence. You may be entitled to help in finding alternative accommodation.

You could stay with friends or relatives while you think about what to do next, if it is safe to do so.

You could find a place in a women's refuge. Contact the National Domestic Violence 24 hour Helpline on 0808 2000 247 for help finding a refuge space.

If you (or the perpetrator) are a council or housing association tenant you should contact your housing officer for tenancy advice in the first instance, don't make a decision to give up your home permanently until you have spoken to an independent adviser and considered all your options.

In some circumstances safety works (such as changing locks, fire proof letter box and panic rooms) can be carried out at your home through the Sanctuary Scheme. Contact the housing advice team on 020 8424 1093 to ask about the Sanctuary Scheme. If you are a social housing tenant your landlord may be able to help.

You may be entitled to help from the council's social services department, for example if you have children living with you, are under the age of 18, have left care (or are about to do so), are elderly or have a physical or learning disability. Contact Harrow Children & Family Services on 020 8901 2690 or Harrow Adult Safeguarding Service on 020 8420 9453.

Useful contact numbers

National Domestic Violence 24 hour Helpline 0808 2000 247

Hestia Harrow Domestic Abuse Support Service 020 8907 8148 / idva.harrow@hestia.org

Hestia Harrow Domestic Abuse Refuge 020 8357 0126

Victim Support Supportline 08 08 16 89 111

Harrow Adult Drug & Alcohol Service (WDP) 0300 303 2868

Harrow Young People's Drug & Alcohol Service (Compass) 020 8861 2787

Women & Girls Network Advice Line 0808 801 0660

EACH domestic violence counselling service 020 8577 6059

National Stalking Helpline 0808 802 0300

Forced Marriage Unit 020 7008 0151

National Centre for Domestic Violence (emergency injunctions) 0800 970 2070

National LGBT Domestic Abuse Helpline 0800 999 5428

Men's Advice Line 0808 801 0327

The WISH Centre for young people 020 8416 7277