

DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY



RGS PROPERTIES

DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY

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VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved By	Revision Date	Next Review Date	Description of Change	Author
1.0	Management Board	11/06/2026	11/06/2029	New Policy	Housing Services Manager

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to reassure customers, residents, employees and stakeholders that threats or acts of domestic abuse are taken seriously by RGS Properties and to explain how we will respond to reports of domestic abuse affecting our customers, residents or members of their households.



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1. INTRODUCTION

RGS Properties is committed to creating safe homes, secure communities and supportive environments where people can live free from fear, intimidation, violence and abuse.

We recognise that domestic abuse is a serious issue affecting individuals, families and communities. We acknowledge the significant impact domestic abuse can have on victims, survivors, children, families and wider communities.

As a responsible housing provider, property management company and social housing partner, we are committed to preventing domestic abuse wherever possible and supporting those affected by it.

Our employees regularly engage with residents, tenants, applicants, landlords, local authorities and community partners. Through these interactions, our staff may identify signs of abuse or receive disclosures from individuals experiencing domestic abuse.

We believe that nobody should have to live in fear of violence, intimidation, coercion or abuse from a partner, former partner or member of their household.

We recognise that domestic abuse can affect anyone regardless of age, disability, race, religion, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status or socio-economic background.

This policy outlines how RGS Properties will respond to reports of domestic abuse and the support available to customers, residents and members of their households.

The aims of this policy are:

- To provide a safe and supportive environment for people experiencing domestic abuse.
- To ensure all reports are treated seriously and confidentially.
- To respond promptly and effectively to disclosures.
- To work collaboratively with specialist agencies and support services.
- To ensure customers receive appropriate advice, assistance and protection.
- To raise awareness of domestic abuse among staff, customers and stakeholders.
- To support safeguarding arrangements for adults and children at risk.



2. DEFINITIONS

RGS Properties adopts the statutory definition of domestic abuse contained within the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

Domestic abuse is defined as behaviour by one person towards another where:

- Both individuals are aged 16 or over.
- They are personally connected.
- The behaviour is abusive.

Abusive behaviour includes:

Physical Abuse

Including but not limited to:

- Assault
- Hitting
- Punching
- Kicking
- Strangulation
- Physical violence
- Threats of violence

Sexual Abuse

Including:

- Sexual assault
- Rape
- Coercion into sexual activity
- Sexual exploitation

Emotional and Psychological Abuse

Including:

- Humiliation
- Intimidation
- Gaslighting
- Isolation
- Manipulation
- Persistent criticism
- Threatening behaviour

Coercive and Controlling Behaviour

Including:



- Restricting freedom of movement
- Monitoring activities
- Restricting contact with family or friends
- Surveillance through technology or social media
- Controlling daily routines

Economic Abuse

Including:

- Controlling finances
- Preventing access to money
- Creating debt in another person's name
- Restricting employment opportunities
- Financial exploitation

Domestic abuse can consist of a single incident or a repeated pattern of behaviour.

Personally connected persons include:

- Current or former spouses
- Civil partners
- Former civil partners
- Individuals in intimate relationships
- Family members
- Parents of the same child
- Individuals with parental responsibility for the same child

Additional forms of abuse recognised under this policy include:

- Stalking
- Harassment
- Honour-based abuse
- Forced marriage
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Technology-facilitated abuse
- Violence against women and girls
- Abuse involving vulnerable adults

3. OUR APPROACH

Disclosure

RGS Properties takes all disclosures of domestic abuse seriously.

Customers may report domestic abuse through:



- Telephone
- Email
- Website contact forms
- Social media messaging
- In person appointments
- Third-party referrals
- Written correspondence

We will:

- Respond within one working day wherever possible.
- Treat all disclosures confidentially and sensitively.
- Take a victim-centred and trauma-informed approach.
- Provide translation and interpretation services where required.
- Respect the wishes and preferences of those making disclosures.
- Consider the safety of children and vulnerable adults at all times.

Staff receiving disclosures will be trained to respond appropriately and sensitively.

Where appropriate, a risk assessment will be completed to determine the level of support required.

We recognise that some individuals may not identify themselves as victims or survivors and we will respect the language they choose to use.

Our Action

We will treat all domestic abuse reports as a high priority.

Our response may include:

- Conducting risk assessments.
- Making safeguarding referrals.
- Referring customers to specialist domestic abuse services.
- Working with local authorities and partner agencies.
- Arranging additional security measures where appropriate.
- Providing housing advice and support.
- Assisting with emergency accommodation referrals.
- Supporting legal remedies where appropriate.

We will ensure that individuals experiencing abuse understand the options available to them and are supported in making informed decisions.

Where lawful and appropriate, we may take action against perpetrators including:

- Tenancy enforcement action.



- Injunction applications.
- Possession proceedings.
- Partnership action with police and local authorities.

We recognise that housing insecurity can prevent people from leaving abusive situations. We will therefore work proactively to identify safe housing solutions where required.

We will continue supporting customers until appropriate resolutions and support arrangements are in place.

Working in Partnership

RGS Properties recognises that effective responses to domestic abuse require partnership working.

We will work closely with:

- Local Authorities
- Police Services
- Social Services
- Safeguarding Boards
- Domestic Abuse Services
- Refuge Providers
- NHS Services
- Community Safety Partnerships
- MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference)
- Voluntary and Community Organisations

Information sharing will always comply with:

- UK GDPR
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Safeguarding obligations
- Relevant statutory guidance

Information will only be shared where:

- Consent has been provided; or
- There is a legal obligation; or
- There is a safeguarding concern involving a child or vulnerable adult; or
- There is an immediate risk of serious harm.

We will maintain positive working relationships with specialist support agencies to ensure residents receive timely assistance.



Awareness of Domestic Abuse

RGS Properties is committed to raising awareness of domestic abuse.

We will:

- Promote support services through our website and communications.
- Provide information to customers and residents.
- Deliver staff training and awareness programmes.
- Encourage early reporting of concerns.
- Support community awareness initiatives.
- Review procedures regularly to ensure good practice.

Training will be delivered to employees to ensure they understand:

- Signs of domestic abuse.
- Safeguarding responsibilities.
- Reporting procedures.
- Risk assessment processes.
- Available support services.



4. REFERENCES

This policy has been developed with reference to the following legislation and guidance:

- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Housing Act 1985
- Housing Act 1996
- Housing Act 2004
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Care Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK GDPR
- Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- Localism Act 2011
- Modern Slavery Act 2015

Related Policies

- Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- Allocations and Lettings Policy
- Tenancy Management Policy
- Complaints and Compensation Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Good Neighbourhood Management Policy



5. EXCEPTIONS

There may be circumstances where the application of this policy requires flexibility due to individual vulnerabilities, safeguarding concerns or exceptional circumstances.

Any exceptions will:

- Be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- Be documented appropriately.
- Consider the needs of vulnerable individuals.
- Ensure fair and proportionate decision-making.
- Comply with legal and safeguarding requirements.

RGS Properties will always seek to balance consistency with compassion and individual circumstances.

6. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – National Support Providers & Useful Contacts

Organisation	Description	Contact
National Domestic Abuse Helpline (Refuge)	24-hour support for domestic abuse victims	0808 2000 247
Women's Aid	Support for women and children experiencing abuse	www.womensaid.org.uk
Men's Advice Line	Support for male victims of domestic abuse	0808 801 0327
Galop	Support for LGBT+ victims	0800 999 5428
Bright Sky App	Domestic abuse support app and information resource	www.hestia.org/brightsky
Karma Nirvana	Honour-based abuse support	0800 5999 247
Safe Spaces	Safe locations for support and assistance	www.uksaysnomore.org
Ask ANI	Domestic abuse assistance through participating pharmacies and Jobcentres	www.enough.campaign.gov.uk



POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if required by:

- Legislative changes
- Regulatory updates
- Operational requirements
- Lessons learned from case reviews
- Best practice developments

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