



RESIDENTS DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY 2025

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Ochil View acknowledges that domestic abuse is a significant problem which has a devastating impact on survivors and their families. We recognise that domestic abuse is still largely a hidden crime measuring the true scale of the issue is difficult. This policy / procedure represents a commitment to take all reasonable steps possible to combat the reality and impact of domestic abuse on those being abused and to challenge the behaviour of perpetrators.

As a Housing provider we are well placed to recognise the signs of domestic abuse. It is, therefore, essential that we take all reports of domestic abuse seriously. We will work with other support providers to enable survivors to access a range of housing options, advice, information, and support.

Ochil View Housing Association will in some circumstances take appropriate action in holding tenants who are perpetrating domestic abuse to account. However, we will ensure that this is with the support from the person experiencing the abuse and that any action does not place that person at increased risk.

2.0 DEFINITION

2.1 Domestic abuse is defined by the Scottish Government as:

"Domestic abuse (as gender-based abuse), can be perpetrated by partners or ex-partners and can include physical abuse (assault and physical attack involving a range of behaviour), sexual abuse (acts which degrade and humiliate women and are perpetrated against their will, including rape) and mental and emotional abuse (such as threats, verbal abuse, racial abuse, withholding money and other types of controlling behaviour such as isolation from family or friends).

(Although the above definition refers to women the issue is equally relevant to men).

2.2 Controlling behaviour

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependant by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

2.3 Coercive behaviour

Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten someone.

2.4 **Emotional and psychological**

Emotional or psychological abuse can be either verbal or nonverbal. This kind of domestic abuse chips away at the confidence and independence of a person to make them compliant and limit their ability to leave their abuser.

Emotional abuse can include verbal abuse such as yelling, name-calling, blaming and shaming, isolation, intimidation, threats of violence and controlling behaviour.

2.5 **Physical**

A wide range of different behaviour can come under the heading of physical abuse and can include punching, slapping, hitting, biting, pinching, kicking, pulling hair out, pushing, shoving, burning, and strangling.

2.6 **Sexual**

Rape and sexual abuse are common in abusive relationships due to a person's refusal of consent being ignored. Any situation where someone is forced to take part in unwanted, unsafe or degrading sexual activity is sexual abuse.

2.7 **Financial**

Economic or financial abuse limits a person's ability to get help. The abuser controls finances; withholds money or credit cards; makes someone unreasonably account for the money they spend; exploits assets; withholds basic necessities; prevents someone from working or sabotages their job and deliberately runs up debts.

3.0 **AIM OF THE POLICY**

3.1 Ochil View Housing Association is committed to delivering a proactive housing response to preventing and addressing domestic abuse. We will provide a sensitive and supportive response to any person experiencing or threatened with domestic abuse. This will apply to all our tenants including those living with our tenants. We will:

- ✓ Ensure that people experiencing domestic abuse can access services as early as possible to enable appropriate advice to allow them to make choices about what to do next
- ✓ Support and encourage tenants to report domestic abuse
- ✓ Facilitate early identification of domestic abuse and offer supportive and effective interventions to reduce the risk of harm
- ✓ Ensure the safeguarding of children or vulnerable person by following the Association's Protection of Vulnerable Persons Policy if we believe a child or vulnerable person is at risk due to an abusive relationship
- ✓ Work with partners to provide a coordinated/collaborative response to the housing and support/other needs of person who has experienced domestic abuse
- ✓ We aim to ensure a consistent approach for recording and monitoring incidents of domestic abuse
- ✓ Ensure that all Customer Services staff are clear regarding their roles in tackling and responding to issues around domestic abuse by providing training to ensure the best practice

4.0 **EQUALITIES**

Domestic abuse happens in all communities, **regardless of sex**, age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership and pregnancy or maternity. It is important when dealing with domestic abuse that we recognise differences between all protected characteristics as there may be different approaches and resources required to support survivors.

We will provide written information and advice in clear and easy to understand formats using plain language and where necessary we will translate information into other languages.

The Association uses Happy to Translate as a translation toolkit. We also work in partnership with Global Language Services to provide interpretation and translation services which, we provide to Customers at no cost to them.

5.0 **PREVENTION**

In working to help prevent domestic abuse we will: -

- ✓ Work with partners to ensure collaborative working in the prevention of domestic abuse
- ✓ We will attend where appropriate Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and Multi Agency Tasking and Coordination (MATAC) meetings with other agencies such as Women's Aid, Police Scotland, NHS, Clackmannanshire Council and Fife Council to maximise resources available to address incidences of domestic abuse
- ✓ We will publicise the domestic abuse policy to all our tenants and highlight the consequences for perpetrators
- ✓ Promote our approach to domestic abuse on our website, tenant's handbook, information leaflets, social media platforms and newsletters
- ✓ Provide good quality information about domestic abuse and the support available
- ✓ Respond immediately to reports of domestic abuse effectively, sensitively and in a consistent manner
- ✓ We will ensure the safety and wellbeing of our tenants and respond promptly to requests from partners or survivors of domestic abuse by providing additional security measures to the property i.e., fire safety boxes, door chains, spy holes, security lighting and additional locks
- ✓ Train all frontline staff to be able to report any concerns of domestic abuse to the Director of Housing Services or Housing Services Officer for that area
- ✓ Develop procedures that will guide staff through recording reported incidents of domestic abuse and providing the follow-on support to survivors.

6.0 **HOUSING OPTIONS**

- 6.1 Ochil View Housing Association recognises that every reported case of domestic abuse will be different. The response we will have will therefore be tailored to the individual circumstances and needs of the person. If a tenant or household member reports domestic abuse all available options will be discussed and considered with them. However, the priority will be making sure that the person

does not require arrangements to be made for their immediate personal safety. If this is the case, then staff will work alongside other specialist agencies to provide advice and assistance.

- 6.2 If the tenant chooses to remain in the property, we will assess the situation and, where possible take steps to enhance the safety and security of their existing accommodation, to support them in staying safe. If the tenant or member of the household agrees we will make a referral to Women's Aid for specialist support.

We will offer assistance to those experiencing domestic abuse by not recharging them for lock changes and damages to the property because of domestic abuse. If appropriate we may recharge the perpetrator for the damage caused. We may also report incidents of damage to the property to the Police, which could result in criminal action against the perpetrator and if appropriate we will refer the case to MARAC and/or MATAC. However, we will not place the survivor of the abuse at any increased risk by doing so.

- 6.3 The safety of the tenant and their dependents will be our priority and there may be occasions where either emergency accommodation is required whilst safety measures are implemented, or it is not safe for them to remain. If this is the case the duty to provide immediate temporary accommodation lies with the Local Authority under section 28 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 therefore, we will refer the tenant to the Homeless section of the Council. The tenant can also contact or be referred to Women's Aid for emergency refuge.

- 6.4 A management transfer to support a tenant who wishes to make a planned move and avoid homelessness may be an option for the longer-term. If appropriate the Association will also consider moving the perpetrator. Ochil View Housing Association's allocation policy can offer a tenancy to someone where there are Exceptional Circumstances. This includes carrying out a management transfer out with our normal allocation policy. If we transfer a tenant to prevent or reduce harm caused by domestic abuse, we will not take rent arrears or other tenancy related debt into account when considering the transfer.

Any allocation that is to be made as an Exceptional Circumstance will be recommended by the Director of Housing Services to the Chief Executive for approval and then homologated by the Customer Services Committee thereafter.

- 6.5 If the tenancy is in joint names, then neither the person who has experienced the abuse, nor the perpetrator, should be advised to terminate their tenancy. In all cases we will advise the person experiencing the abuse to get legal advice and information. We can support this by providing a list of local Family Law solicitors.

- 6.6 If the tenancy is in the perpetrators name and the person who has experienced the abuse wishes to move, then we will complete a housing application form. A Gold Priority Pass will be awarded to any applicant who is experiencing domestic abuse and wishing to leave their current accommodation. This reflects the critical housing need, for a person who is experiencing domestic abuse and any children potentially being at severe risk. The housing need is also likely to continue to be significant when someone has left their home because of domestic abuse. This level of priority reflects what an applicant would be awarded if they approached the Local Authority to make a statutory homeless application. This award will

enable the applicant to avoid having to make a homeless application if they choose not to.

We may ask for supporting evidence from a support service i.e., Women's Aid or another voluntary sector agency who is working with the applicant. We will work in partnership with Women's Aid, Voluntary Sector Organisations and/or the Local Authority who are working with people experiencing domestic abuse to ensure that our practice is appropriate to the local context and supports an appropriate safe, and consistent response.

- 6.7 If the tenancy is in the name of the person who has experienced the abuse, then safeguarding the tenant and their dependents will be priority. If the person experiencing the abuse wants the perpetrator to leave home, then we will provide support to the tenant in contacting various agencies to enable them to do so e.g., the Police or Women's Aid. The perpetrator, especially if it is a family home will often resist leaving the home and it may also heighten the risk of further abuse, therefore this process needs to be managed carefully and risk assessed. Perpetrators may also try and return to the home, therefore, legal advice should be sought by the survivor of the abuse to explore available options to keep them safe e.g. a restraining order. This may also involve multi agency working and a referral if not already completed to MARAC and/or MATAAC.
- 6.8 It is important to try and reduce the impact of homelessness on families who are homeless as a result of domestic abuse. We will provide the following measures to assist with this: -
- ✓ In the cases of management transfer, we will consider carefully the location of the property so that not to put the person at risk, for example in the same area as the perpetrator's family (unless of course the person has requested that area for example because they want to keep their children at the same school);
 - ✓ All new or existing tenants will be offered assistance from our Tenancy Sustainment service to provide support in claiming benefits including housing costs, social welfare fund applications and accessing other services to help with sustaining their tenancy;
 - ✓ The Association has a furniture budget which, can be accessed by referral from the Tenancy Sustainment Officer, this can help with white goods for example or if the person does not meet the criteria of the Scottish Welfare Fund;
 - ✓ We will ensure that the tenant who has experienced abuse is not charged for the damage which the perpetrator has caused to the property.

7.0 ACTION AGAINST PERPETRATORS

- 7.1 We will adopt a multi-agency approach in dealing with perpetrators of domestic abuse, to ensure the safety of the survivor, meet their needs, co-ordinate available resources, access specialist services and take action against perpetrators.
- 7.2 In considering appropriate action we will take a survivor-centred approach to ensure that our response to a perpetrator does not place anyone at increased risk or blame the survivor for a perpetrator's behaviour.

7.3 It is important that staff are appropriately trained and have good working relationships with specialist domestic abuse services and at an appropriate level of training. We will not try and change a perpetrator's behaviour nor suggest that staff should do so as this will likely increase the risk to the survivor.

7.4 Section 3 of the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement states that:

'Harass or assault any person in the house, or neighbourhood, for whatever reason. This includes that person's race, colour or ethnic origin, nationality, gender, sexuality, disability, age, religion or other belief, or other status;'

Therefore, we will treat domestic abuse as a breach of tenancy and if appropriate we will proceed with action to repossess the tenancy.

7.5 We will support the police with any action when appropriate. If a criminal charge is made against a perpetrator who is a tenant and the court has convicted the tenant of a criminal offence punishable by imprisonment, committed in, or in the locality of the house then we will serve the appropriate streamlined eviction notice of proceedings under section 14 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 and proceed with following the procedures for repossession.

7.6 The Housing (Scotland) Bill 2024 was passed by the Scottish Parliament on the 30th September 2025. The Bill is currently awaiting Royal Assent to officially become an Act. When the Bill is passed as an Act social landlords will have the power to apply to the court to repossess a perpetrator's tenancy on the grounds of domestic abuse.

7.7 If appropriate we will support transferring the tenancy to the survivor of the abuse and consider rehousing the perpetrator as a management transfer.

7.8 If the perpetrator consents, we will provide information regarding support options available from specialist intervention providers, including Respect UK, which deliver accredited behaviour change programmes.

8.0 INFORMATION SHARING AND CONFIDENTIALITY

8.1 The Association recognises the importance of confidentiality to all persons and the potential risks. We will respect the privacy and confidentiality of each case, and we are aware of the legal obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation. We will provide an appropriate and sensitive service to survivors by providing a customer service that does not require anyone to disclose or discuss the reason for their visit in public areas or repeat their stories to different members of staff.

We will promote the availability of a private interview room and the option to only meet with a female or male member of staff according to their preference.

8.2 In some cases, the Association may be required to exchange information with external agencies. We will encourage survivors to allow Ochil View Housing Association to share information with other agencies, including the Police and the Local Authority to ensure that a full range of civil and criminal action can be pursued and appropriate assistance provided. However, all information provided by the

survivor will be treated with the utmost confidence and only passed to external agencies with their proper, informed consent. The exceptions to this will be: -

- Where we consider a child or vulnerable person is at risk in any situation or
- If there is high risk of serious harm to anyone involved, or
- If we are obliged by law to disclose information

The Director of Housing Services must approve any disclosure that does not have the person's consent.

9.0 TRAINING

Ochil View recognises that it is important staff have the confidence and knowledge to identify and investigate incidents of domestic abuse and take appropriate action.

All Customer Services staff will receive training so they can be confident in responding to domestic abuse. The first level training will raise awareness on domestic abuse and forms of violence, to ensure frontline, customer service staff know about domestic abuse, coercive control, and other forms of violence, they will be able to identify people who are at risk, understand the behaviour and tactics of perpetrators and then respond confidently and appropriately.

The second level of training will be for Housing Services Officers who will, in addition to the first level training, receive more robust training. This will be skills-based training on safety planning, safety protection and risk assessment.

Staff will also receive training so they understand and can implement the Domestic Abuse Policy and Procedures.

10.0 COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIP WORKING

10.1 We recognise that domestic abuse cannot be tackled by one agency. We will make referrals to partners to support individuals experiencing domestic abuse with the person's consent. We also attend Forth Valley MARAC/MATAC meetings if required. The procedure and forms for referring to support agencies is detailed in the Domestic Abuse Procedures.

10.2 Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) & Multi Agency Tasking and Coordination (MATAC)

We are invited to attend Forth Valley MARAC and MATAC meetings if any of our tenants are being discussed or if we wish to refer anyone to the meeting.

MARAC is a meeting where representatives from statutory and non-statutory agencies meet to discuss individuals at high risk of serious harm or murder as a result of domestic abuse. The meeting provides a safe environment for agencies to share relevant and proportionate information about current risk, after which there will be actions to reduce the risk and increase safety. The primary focus of MARAC is to safeguard the adult survivor. However, MARAC also makes links with other agencies to safeguard children and manage the behaviour of the perpetrator. The Police chair the meeting and issue all actions.

MATAC is a meeting where representatives from statutory and non-statutory agencies meet to identify and tackle serial perpetrators of domestic abuse. It meets to identify the most harmful perpetrators using an analytical programme.

10.3 Women's Aid

Women's Aid is a registered charity offering support, information and safe refuge for abused women and their children. Ochil View will refer cases to Women's Aid with the person's consent. Women's Aid will also be providing be-spoke training to Ochil View's customer services staff.

Clackmannanshire Women's Aid

Parkway
Alloa
FK10 2AF

Telephone: 01259 721407

Email: info@clackswomensaid.org.uk

Website: www.clackswomensaid.org.uk

Fife Women's Aid

Suite 1 First Floor
Saltire House
Pentland Park
Glenrothes
FIFE KY6 2AL

Telephone: 0808 802 5555

Email: info@fifewomensaid.org.uk

Website: www.fifewomensaid.org.uk

10.4 Local Authority

Clackmannanshire Council

Housing Options Team
Kilncraigs
Greenside Street
Alloa
FK10 1EB

Telephone: 01259 225115 or 01259 450000

Email: home@clacks.gov.uk

Website: www.clacks.gov.uk/housing/homelessness/

Fife Council

Homeless Advice and Prevention
Fife House
North Street
Glenrothes
Fife
KY7 5LT

Telephone: 03451 55 00 33 or out of hours 0800 0286231

Website: www.fifedirect.org.uk

- 10.5 Ochil View also has a Support Service Directory which, lists various support agencies throughout Clackmannanshire and Fife that tenants or household members can access. This is a directory that staff can use to signpost anyone who has experienced domestic abuse to relevant support agencies or for any other support that they may require.

11.0 INFORMATION AND ADVICE

We will provide information leaflets giving contact details for support agencies. We will publicise this policy on our website and provide assistance if the persons first language is not English. We can arrange for forms to be translated or arrange for interpreting and translation services. We can also provide copies of our information in larger print if required.

12.0 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 12.1 A major barrier to people leaving an abusive partner is that it can be extremely dangerous. Women and children are at most risk of serious harm when separating from an abusive partner. Domestic abuse does not stop when a woman ends a relationship and/or leaves: abuse, stalking and harassment continue and often escalate. It may seem counter-intuitive, but it is often safer for a person to stay in a situation in which abuse occurs, but which is more predictable and in which they have some (albeit limited) help.

Housing Services Officers will be trained to identify and assess risk factors relevant to domestic abuse. The assessment of risk will assist the Housing Services Officers to make a decision on whether the case should be referred to MARAC/MATAC. If this results in a MARAC referral then a Domestic Abuse Stalking and Honour (DASH) based violence form should be completed in full. It is recommended that if 14 questions on the DASH form are answered yes then it would result in a MARAC referral however, professional judgement should be used to inform the overall assessment of risk. In addition, professional judgement should not be used to 'downgrade' an actuarial risk assessment. It may not be possible to get the DASH form completed therefore, a written report to MARAC would be sufficient to refer a case. A copy of the DASH assessment form is attached in Appendix One of this policy.

- 12.2 Customer Services staff have all completed child and vulnerable adult protection training and work within Ochil View Housing Association's Protection of Vulnerable Persons Policy.

13.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW

Ochil View is committed to delivering a continuously improving its response to domestic abuse. We understand that effective monitoring and reporting is fundamental to the process of evaluating and reviewing performance.

The Director of Housing Services has been appointed Ochil View Housing Association's domestic abuse champion and is responsible for the implementation of this policy. They will ensure that Ochil View follow good practice, requisite policies are put in place, training provided, responsibilities clarified and reporting and

evaluating established. This is important not only for ensuring that individuals who have experienced domestic abuse are supported and perpetrators challenged but also that there is a culture and wider message about not tolerating or minimising domestic abuse.

The procedures will be evaluated regularly and feedback sought from staff and tenants to reflect lessons from practice. Training needs of staff will be reviewed and discussed at one-to-one meetings and annual appraisals.

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or in line with legislation or business need.

14.0 REGULATION AND LEGISLATION

- Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2011, 2018 and 2021
- The National Strategy to Address Domestic Abuse 2000
- Equally Safe, Scotland's Strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls 2018
- Domestic Abuse: A good practice guide for social landlords
- Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007
- Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and 2020
- Children's Hearing (Scotland) Act 2011
- Forced Marriage etc. (Protection and Jurisdiction) (Scotland) Act 2011
- Protection from Abuse (Scotland) Act 2001
- Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 and 2014
- Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003
- Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations
- Equality Act 2010

Linda McLaren
Director of Housing Services
November 2025

Policy Review Consultation Process

Considered by Senior Management Team	27 th October 2025
Recommended by the Customer Services Committee	13 th November 2025
Approved by the Board of Management on	27th November 2025
Date of Next Review	November 2028

APPENDIX ONE - DASH RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

Name of Service User:

Date:

SafeLives Dash risk Identification checklist for use by IDVAs and other non-police agencies for identification of risks when domestic abuse, 'honour'- based violence and/or stalking are disclosed.

<p>Please explain that the purpose of asking these questions is for the safety and protection of the individual concerned. Tick the box if the factor is present. Please use the comment box at the end of the form to expand on any answer. It is assumed that your main source of information is the service user. If this is not the case, please indicate in the right-hand column</p>	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	State source of info if not the service user (eg police officer)
<p>1. Has the current incident resulted in injury? Please state what and whether this is the first injury.</p>				
<p>2. Are you very frightened? Comment:</p>				
<p>3. What are you afraid of? Is it further injury or violence? Please give an indication of what you think [name of abuser(s)] might do and to whom, including children. Comment:</p>				
<p>4. Do you feel isolated from family/friends? i.e. does [name of abuser(s)] try to stop you from seeing friends/family/doctor or others? Comment:</p>				
<p>5. Are you feeling depressed or having suicidal thoughts?</p>				
<p>6. Have you separated or tried to separate from [name of abuser(s)] within the past year?</p>				
<p>7. Is there conflict over child contact?</p>				
<p>8. Does [name of abuser(s)] constantly text, call, contact, follow, stalk or harass you? Please expand to identify what and whether you believe that this is done deliberately to intimidate you? Consider the context and behaviour of what is being done.</p>				
<p>9. Are you pregnant or have you recently had a baby (within the last 18 months)?</p>				
<p>10. Is the abuse happening more often?</p>				
<p>Tick the box if the factor is present. Please use the comment box at the end of the form to expand on any answer</p>	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	State source of info
<p>11. Is the abuse getting worse?</p>				

12. Does [name of abuser(s)] try to control everything you do and/or are they excessively jealous? For example: in terms of relationships; who you see; being 'policed' at home; telling you what to wear. Consider 'honour'-based violence (HBV) and specify behaviour.				
13. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever used weapons or objects to hurt you?				
14. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever threatened to kill you or someone else and you believed them? If yes, tick who: You <input type="checkbox"/> Children <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) <input type="checkbox"/>				
15. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever attempted to strangle /choke/ suffocate/drown you?				
16. Does [name of abuser(s)] do or say things of a sexual nature that make you feel bad or that physically hurt you or someone else? If someone else, specify who.				
17. Is there any other person who has threatened you or who you are afraid of? If yes, please specify whom and why. Consider extended family if HBV.				
18. Do you know if [name of abuser(s)] has hurt anyone else? Consider HBV. Please specify whom, including the children, siblings or elderly relatives: Children <input type="checkbox"/> Another family member <input type="checkbox"/> Someone from a previous relationship <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) <input type="checkbox"/>				
19. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever mistreated an animal or the family pet?				
20. Are there any financial issues? For example, are you dependent on [name of abuser(s)] for money/have they recently lost their job/other financial issues?				
21. Has [name of abuser(s)] had problems in the past year with drugs (prescription or other), alcohol or mental health leading to problems in leading a normal life? If yes, please specify which and give relevant details if known. Drugs <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health <input type="checkbox"/>				
22. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever threatened or attempted suicide?				
23. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever broken bail/an injunction and/or formal agreement for when they can see you and/or the children? You may wish to consider this in relation to an ex-partner of the perpetrator if relevant. Bail conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Molestation/Occupation Order <input type="checkbox"/> Child contact arrangements <input type="checkbox"/> Forced Marriage Protection Order <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>				
24. Do you know if [name of abuser(s)] has ever been in trouble with the police or has a criminal history? If yes, please specify:				

Domestic abuse <input type="checkbox"/>				
Sexual violence <input type="checkbox"/>				
Other violence <input type="checkbox"/>				
Other <input type="checkbox"/>				
TOTAL YES RESPONSES				

Approved