



# **REIDVALE HOUSING ASSOCIATION**

## **Domestic Abuse Policy**

Policy Approved	February 2026
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Author	Housing Manager

## POLICY SUMMARY

<b>Purpose:</b>	To set out Reidvale Housing Association's approach to deals with cases of Domestic Abuse.
<b>Guidance:</b>	Statutory Guidance The Scottish Social Housing Charter Requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator
<b>Regulatory Compliance</b>	<p><b>Standard 1:</b> The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users.</p> <p><b>Standard 2:</b> The RSL is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.</p> <p><b>Standard 3:</b> The RSL manages its resources to ensure its financial well-being, while maintaining rents at a level that tenants can afford to pay.</p> <p><b>Standard 4:</b> The governing body bases its decisions on good quality information and advice and identifies and mitigates risks to the organisation's purpose.</p> <p><b>Standard 5:</b> The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity.</p> <p><b>Standard 6:</b> The governing body and senior officers have the skills and knowledge they need to be effective.</p> <p><b>Standard 7:</b> The RSL ensures that any organisational changes or disposals it makes safeguard the interests of, and benefit, current and future tenants.</p>
<b>Financial Impact</b>	Medium
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	Low
<b>Date Reviewed:</b>	February 2026
<b>Date approved by Management Committee:</b>	TBC

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# DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY

## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 This policy is in place to explain how Reidvale Housing Association will manage reports of and instances relating to Domestic Abuse in relation to tenants, applicants and staff. The policy will consider how we recognise Domestic Abuse and the steps we will take to ensure the safety of our people.

## 2.0 Policy Principles

2.1 The following legislation has been considered whilst developing the Domestic Abuse Policy:

- The Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018
- Domestic Abuse (Protection) (Scotland) Act 2021
- Housing (Scotland) Act 1987
- Housing (Scotland) Bill 2024
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Equally Safe 2023 - preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls: Strategy
- Domestic abuse: a good practice guide for social landlords

2.2 The policy covers how staff will recognise instances of Domestic Abuse either via conversations remotely (e.g. via telephone, text or email) or during home visits. This will also extend to applicants who apply to us for rehousing, how staff will consider instances of Domestic Abuse and how we can positively assist with housing options. Finally, the policy will cover how Reidvale Housing Association will provide support to staff who are experiencing Domestic Abuse. There are some overlaps between this policy and other RHA policies e.g., Allocations Policy, Rent Arrears Policy, Recharge Repairs Policy and Maintenance Policy.

## 3.0 Policy Aim and Objectives

3.1 RHA aim to:

- Recognise that Domestic Abuse is a crime and can be experienced by anyone irrespective of sex/gender identity and is typically abuse between partners/ex-partners who can live together or live apart. It can also include immediate or extended family members.
- Recognise that Domestic Abuse can take many forms including: physical violence, verbal violence (including hate speech), psychological violence, sexual violence, socio-economic violence, controlling behaviour and coercive behaviour.
- Recognise Gender Based Violence, seen as violence against women and girls can take many forms including: domestic abuse, rape, sexual assault, female genital mutilation, prostitution, forced marriages, honour based abuse and child sexual abuse.

- Recognise that Domestic Abuse can take place in the home or elsewhere including online.
- Facilitate early identification of Domestic Abuse and improve the response to victims by handling the case efficiently and sensitively.
- Provide advice and signposting to alternate, specialised organisations e.g. Women's Aid, Police Scotland, Glasgow City Council Homelessness Team.
- Encourage tenants, applicants and staff to report Domestic Abuse.
- Comply with Third Party Reporting guidance and advise appropriate authorities of cases of Domestic Abuse where it is considered a matter of safety.
- To be non-discriminatory.
- To meet all statutory and regulatory requirements, Scottish Government guidance and good practice guides.

## 4.0 Policy Framework

- 4.1 The Domestic Abuse (Protection) (Scotland) Act 2021 outlines that the meaning of abusive behaviour is:

*“(1) “abusive behaviour by person A” means behaviour by person A which is abusive of person B.*

*(2) Behaviour by person A is abusive of person B if a reasonable person would consider the behaviour to be likely to cause person B to suffer physical or psychological harm.”*

The Scottish Government also define Domestic Abuse as *“Any form of physical, verbal, sexual, psychological or financial abuse which might amount to criminal conduct, and which takes place within the context of a relationship.”*

- 4.2 Agencies that RHA staff can refer victims of Domestic Abuse onto or provide contact information for include:

- Glasgow Women's Aid
- Police Scotland
- Mankind
- Citizens Advice
- Glasgow Victim Support
- Glasgow & Clyde Rape Crisis
- Scotland's Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline
- Survivors' Advocacy Service
- Samaritans
- Breathing Space

- Scottish Women's Rights Centre
- Shakti Women's Aid (Assists BME women, children and young people)
- Sexual Assault Response Coordination Service (SARCS)
- Survivors UK
- Revenge Porn Helpline
- Respect – Men's Advice Line
- Galop (support for LGBT+ people who experience Domestic Abuse)
- Childline

4.3 We will publish this information and any other relevant support on our website and in our publications.

### Tenants

4.4 All RHA staff will be required to have an awareness of Domestic Abuse however a greater responsibility will be placed on staff who undertake home visits primarily the Head of Housing & Communities, Head of Asset Management, Maintenance Officers, Housing Officers and Housing Assistants.

4.5 Where staff suspect instances of Domestic Abuse they will endeavour to speak to the victim privately and as soon as possible following the identity of these concerns. All conversations will be undertaken in the strictest confidence.

4.6 Consideration of environment and victims' safety will be given before any discussion will take place. Any arranged interviews will be offered in a location and at a time of the victim's choice where it is safe for both parties. Independent interpretation service can be provided if required to reduce any barriers to support.

4.7 In each case where Domestic Abuse is identified, a Domestic Abuse Case Checklist will be complete. See Appendix 1.

4.8 If tenants raise a safety concern to staff directly, we will treat this as an emergency and will contact the relevant agencies such as Women's Aid, Glasgow City Council Homelessness Team and Police Scotland to ensure we assist to get the victim to safety as soon as possible.

4.9 RHA do not have an availability of emergency accommodation, therefore assistance for tenants will be sought via Women's Aid or Glasgow City Council Homelessness Service.

4.10 Where a victim advises they are the victim of Domestic Abuse but do not wish staff to take immediate action, staff will provide the tenant with a list of agencies who can assist directly which are outlined in section 4.2, a discussion will take place with the victim on how the list will be provided to safeguard the list to protect the victim from the perpetrator discovering. Staff can also contact these agencies with the consent of

the victim and on their behalf. Staff will remain in regular communication with victims who do not wish action to be taken to ensure their safety.

- 4.11 In each instance, staff will take the lead from the victim, using a survivor centred approach, with a view to supporting them in the way they wish. However, where staff have serious concerns for a tenant's life/safety or a member of the household's life/safety including children, or a safeguarding issue, we will contact the appropriate agencies such as Police Scotland / Social Work without the victims consent. The only other time we will share information with external agencies without the victims consent is if we are obliged by law to disclose this information.
- 4.12 We will give people experiencing domestic abuse the opportunity to opt for a staff member of the same sex/gender or a single point of contact to deal with their case.
- 4.13 Staff will accurately record all instances of Domestic Abuse within the rent account diary however will log this under a sensitive code meaning this information will not be available and will be protected from view even where the victim is not the tenant and only registered as a member of the household. Information is protected under the General Data Protection Regulation as part of the Data Protection Act 2018.
- 4.14 Staff will undertake appropriate ongoing training to ensure that instances of Domestic Abuse are recognised as early as possible.
- 4.15 RHA views Domestic Abuse as unacceptable and where possible will take necessary action including legal action with the consent of the victim against any identified perpetrator.
- 4.16 RHA will signpost perpetrators to appropriate agencies for support and discuss housing options with them where they are willing / wish to leave the property.
- 4.17 RHA will support the victim with their housing options, whether that be to remain in the property or to seek alternative accommodation. Staff will explain all possible options including but not limited to joint to sole tenancies/transferring tenancies.
- 4.18 RHA will consider safety measures such as additional locks at no extra charge to the tenant following a crime care referral or in serious cases of immediate safety without a referral in place. RHA may ask for the assistance of partner agencies such as Police Scotland or Women's Aid to ensure this is as per recommendations.
- 4.19 RHA will not recharge tenants for damage to the property as a result of Domestic Abuse. Please see Rechargeable Repairs Policy and Maintenance Policy for further information.

- 4.20 Staff, primarily Housing Officer & Housing Assistant will assist tenants who are victims of Domestic Abuse and who are in financial hardship to explore further financial assistance.
- 4.21 RHA, in line with the Rent Arrears Policy, and where there are significant rent arrears, will consider if a tenant is the victim of Domestic Abuse prior to considering/instructing legal action. Please see Rent Arrears Policy for more information.
- 4.22 RHA will monitor any cases of Domestic Abuse on an ongoing basis at the discretion of and in conjunction with the victim at a frequency that is suitable to them.

### Applicants

- 4.23 Where an applicant advises, or it is identified through the allocations interview that they are the victim of or are experiencing Domestic Abuse, RHA staff will give the same advice as given to a tenant. RHA can also contact support agencies on behalf of an applicant and with their consent.
- 4.24 RHA do not have an availability of emergency accommodation, therefore assistance for applicants will be sought via Women's Aid or Glasgow City Council Homelessness Service.
- 4.25 Instances of Domestic Abuse whilst considering rehousing will be considered in line with RHA's Allocations Policy.

### Staff

- 4.26 RHA will support staff who are experiencing Domestic Abuse. Support will be provided by the line manager, a safe non-judgemental space will be created where the staff member feels comfortable speaking. The staff member will be given the opportunity to opt for support from another manager of same sex/gender or a single point of contact to deal with. Discretion will be permitted to provide further support and potentially offer flexible working conditions. Support will be provided to direct them to professional support services while maintaining their privacy & confidentiality at all times.
- Staff will be given time to attend an appointment related to domestic abuse.
  - Unplanned absences and poor timekeeping will be treated sympathetically.
  - Temporary changes to specific duties can be considered to avoid potential contact with a perpetrator in a customer facing role.
  - Any staff member found to be a perpetrator of domestic abuse will be subject to Reidvale Housing Association disciplinary and grievance policy.
  - Line manager will take measures to ensure a safe working environment.

## Contractors

### 4.27

If a contractor witnesses or suspects domestic abuse while working in a property, they have a duty to report their concerns promptly and appropriately. The contractor should document the incident factually and without personal interpretation, then report it to their line manager within their company. From there, the concern should be escalated to the Housing Officer. The report should include relevant details such as the date, time, location, nature of the concern, and any immediate risks observed. The contractor must maintain confidentiality and avoid confronting the individuals involved, ensuring the safety of all parties while enabling Reidvale Housing Association to take appropriate action, which may include contacting social services or the police.

## **5.0 Monitoring of the Policy**

- 5.1 The Management Committee will review this policy at least every 3 years and staff are responsible for ensuring that it meets legal and good practice requirements.

## **6.0 Complaints and Appeals**

- 6.1 Reidvale Housing Association welcomes complaints and positive feedback, both of which provide information which helps us to improve our services. We use a complaints procedure developed by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) and the Scottish Housing Regulator.

The complaints procedure allows for most complaints to be resolved by front line staff within a five day limit (first stage), or if the complaint is complex, a detailed investigation will be made by a manager within a 20 day limit (second stage). At the end of the second stage our response will be made by a director. If the customer remains dissatisfied, he/ she may then refer the matter to the SPSO.

At each stage we will advise the customer how the complaint should be taken forward, and advise which agency would be most appropriate to consider the case.

## **7.0 Equalities**

- 7.1 Equality and diversity underpin all our activities and services. When delivering our services, we never discriminate on the basis of sex or marital status, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, language, social origin, or of other personal attributes, including beliefs or opinions such as religious beliefs or political opinions. Full details of our Equalities Policy can be found on our website [www.Reidvale.org.uk](http://www.Reidvale.org.uk) or can be obtained from our office.

## **8.0 GDPR Data Protection - Privacy**

- 8.1 We recognise the importance of data protection legislation, including the General Data Protection Regulation, in protecting the rights of individuals in relation to personal information that we may handle, use and disclose about them, whether on computer or in paper format. We will ensure that our practices in the handling, use and disclosure of personal information as part of the processes and procedures outlined in this policy comply fully with data protection legislation. More information is available from our Data Protection Officer.

## **9.0 Availability**

- 9.1 This policy is available on our website and can be made available in a number of other languages and other formats on request.

## **10.0 Review**

- 10.1 This policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years by the Management Committee and staff are responsible for ensuring that it meets legal and good practice requirements.

# Reidvale Housing Association Equality Impact Assessment Screening Questions

## Domestic Abuse

Will the implementation of this policy have an impact on any of the following protected characteristics?

- |                                   |                              |  |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| 1. Age                            | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Disability                     | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Gender reassignment            | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Marriage and Civil Partnership | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Pregnancy and Maternity        | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Race                           | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Religion or belief             | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Sex                            | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Sexual orientation             | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

*If you have answered 'Yes' to any of these points, please complete a full Equality Impact Assessment.*

*If you have answered 'No', you need take no further action in completing an Equality Impact Assessment*

## Equality Impact Assessment Screening Questions

### Reidvale Housing Association - Privacy Impact Assessment

1. A substantial change to an existing policy, process or system that involves personal information  
Yes  No
2. A new collection of personal information  
Yes  No
- 3.. A new way of collecting personal information (for example collecting it online)  
Yes  No
4. A change in the way personal information is stored or secured  
Yes  No
5. A change to how sensitive information is managed  
Yes  No
6. Transferring personal information outside the EEA or using a third-party contractor  
Yes  No
7. A decision to keep personal information for longer than you have previously  
Yes  No
8. A new use or disclosure of personal information you already hold  
Yes  No
9. A change of policy that results in people having less access to information you hold about them  
Yes  No
10. Surveillance, tracking or monitoring of movements, behaviour or communications  
Yes  No
11. Changes to your premises involving private spaces where clients or customers may disclose their personal information (reception areas, for example)  
Yes  No

*If you have answered 'Yes' to any of these points, please complete a full Privacy Impact Assessment. If you have answered 'No', you need take no further action in completing a Privacy Impact Assessment.*

**DOMESTIC ABUSE: REPORT & ACTION PLAN****Appendix 1**

<b>Date report received by Housing Officer/Housing Assistant</b>	
<b>Date report passed to Head of Housing or another member of SMT</b>	

**1) Details of person subject to alleged or actual abuse and/or harm**

<b>First &amp; last names [print]</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Contact details [phone, email]</b>	

**2) Details of incident(s) witnessed or reported/disclosed**

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**3) Details of any children in the household, or who may be affected**

<b>Name(s) &amp; age(s) [please print]</b>	

<b>4) Other agencies / organisations already involved</b>	
<b>Agency name</b>	
<b>Police</b>	
<b>Social Work</b>	
<b>School Family Liaison Officer</b>	

<b>1) What action does the victim wish us to take?</b>

<b>6) History of anti-social complaints that may have been incidents of domestic abuse?</b>

<b>7) Action to be taken (consider victims wishes against safety of all victims)</b>

<b>Date victim notified of action plan</b>	
<b>Agreed communication method for future contact</b>	
<b>Agreed frequency of communication</b>	

**Signed by Housing Officer/Housing Assistant**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Signed by Head of Housing or another member of SMT**

\_\_\_\_\_