

MAKE A STAND

HOW TO... MAKE A STAND

Housing organisations house and employ millions of people across the UK and that means they house and employ many thousands of people affected by domestic abuse. CIH believes that the housing sector has a key part to play, in the words of former CIH president Alison Inman OBE, these are "...our homes, our people and this is our problem".

Managing cases involving domestic abuse is a key part of delivering a high quality, customer focused housing management service. To support housing providers, CIH launched the **Make a Stand** pledge in June 2018 as part of Alison Inman's presidential appeal, continued by Jim Strang, to tackle domestic abuse. CIH launched the pledge in partnership with the **Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA)** and our 2018 presidential charity partner, **Women's Aid**.



The original pledge

The original pledge was designed for housing providers to show that they take domestic abuse seriously and are acting to demonstrate this commitment to addressing domestic abuse within their communities. The original four commitments are:

1. Put in place and embed a policy to support residents who are affected by domestic abuse
2. Make information about national and local domestic abuse support services available on your website and in other appropriate places so that they are easily accessible for residents and staff
3. Put in place a human resources policy, or amend an existing policy, to support members of staff who may be experiencing domestic abuse
4. Appoint a champion at a senior level in your organisation to own the activity you are doing to support people experiencing domestic abuse.

The supporter's pledge

Following the launch of the original pledge, CIH received many enquiries from organisations that do not own or manage housing, but work closely with organisations that do, that wanted to make the pledge. So, we launched the Make a Stand supporter's pledge designed for organisations that do not provide housing but still want to show their commitment to tackling domestic abuse. The supporter's commitments are:

1. Make information about national and local domestic abuse support services available on your website and in other appropriate places so that they are easily accessible for staff, your members, customers or clients

2. Put in place a human resources policy, or amend an existing policy, to support members of staff who may be experiencing domestic abuse
3. Appoint a champion at a senior level in your organisation to own the activity you are doing to support people experiencing domestic abuse and promote the campaign with your members, customers or clients.

What is domestic abuse?

The Home Office defines domestic abuse as:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse:

- Psychological and/or emotional abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Financial abuse
- Harassment
- Online or digital abuse
- Coercive Control

**MAKE
A
STAND**

Getting it right

An effective response begins at the point a disclosure of domestic abuse is made and continues until the matter is successfully resolved - it might continue for an extended period or indefinitely depending on the circumstances of the individual case. Your response should be underpinned by being there to listen, being non-judgmental and following your organisational policies and procedures - these should be comprehensive and developed and agreed with tenants to reflect their priorities, but also to meet your legal duties.

Policies and procedures to manage cases of domestic abuse should be:

- Survivor and outcome focused
- Use a 'case management' approach with a named case officer
- Clear and user friendly to support staff to manage cases of abuse effectively
- Backed up by staff training, by a specialist domestic abuse service, and support to put them into practice
- Reviewed every three years to ensure they take account of new duties/powers and case law (this is a rapidly changing area of policy)
- Adhered to - if challenged you need to be able to show you have followed agreed procedures
- Compliant with the law and your policies and procedures around safeguarding.



**MAKE
A
STAND**

Meeting the pledges

1. Put in place and embed a policy to support anyone affected by domestic abuse

Many housing providers categorise and deal with domestic abuse as 'anti-social behaviour'. This is not an appropriate or effective way to respond to this issue and it is vital that your organisation has a specific policy to deal with domestic abuse.

In putting a policy together to work with tenants experiencing or perpetrating domestic abuse, we recommend that you visit the [Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance](#) (DAHA) website which has a toolkit of resources. Access is free, but you will need to create a username and password. Their website provides further guidance about the issues you should think about as well as good practice examples from several housing providers who are leaders in the field. [DAHA's](#) 'core principles' for a robust domestic abuse policy are:

- Safety
- Person centred
- Believing/non-judgemental approach
- Confidential
- Inclusive.

You should think about:

- How you will respond to domestic abuse when the tenancy is:
 - o a joint tenancy
 - o a sole tenancy where the perpetrator is the tenant
 - o a sole tenancy where the person experiencing domestic abuse is the tenant
 - o the perpetrator is a family member who is not named on the tenancy

- Whether you will consider domestic abuse a breach of tenancy and whether you wish to amend your existing tenancy agreement to make it so
 - o [Shelter \(England and Wales\)](#) and [Shelter \(Scotland\)](#) offer information on tenancy management – including which grounds can be used to end tenancies in cases of abuse
- How you will respond in cases where the person experiencing domestic abuse does not want the other agencies, such as the police or children's services, involved
- How you will plan for the safety of people experiencing domestic abuse and involve them in this process. Women's Aid offer advice on how to make a [safety plan](#)
- How you will deal with reports of domestic abuse by a third party or where it is identified by staff
- How you will respond if you become aware that a staff member is experiencing domestic abuse or is perpetrator of domestic abuse (see pledge 3)
- How you will work with your local [domestic abuse specialist service](#).

Embedding your policy

Having a policy on domestic abuse will only achieve so much without the buy-in and awareness of your staff – particularly people working on the frontline. Training will play a crucial role in helping your staff to recognise domestic abuse and know how to respond. So, you should consider how you can:

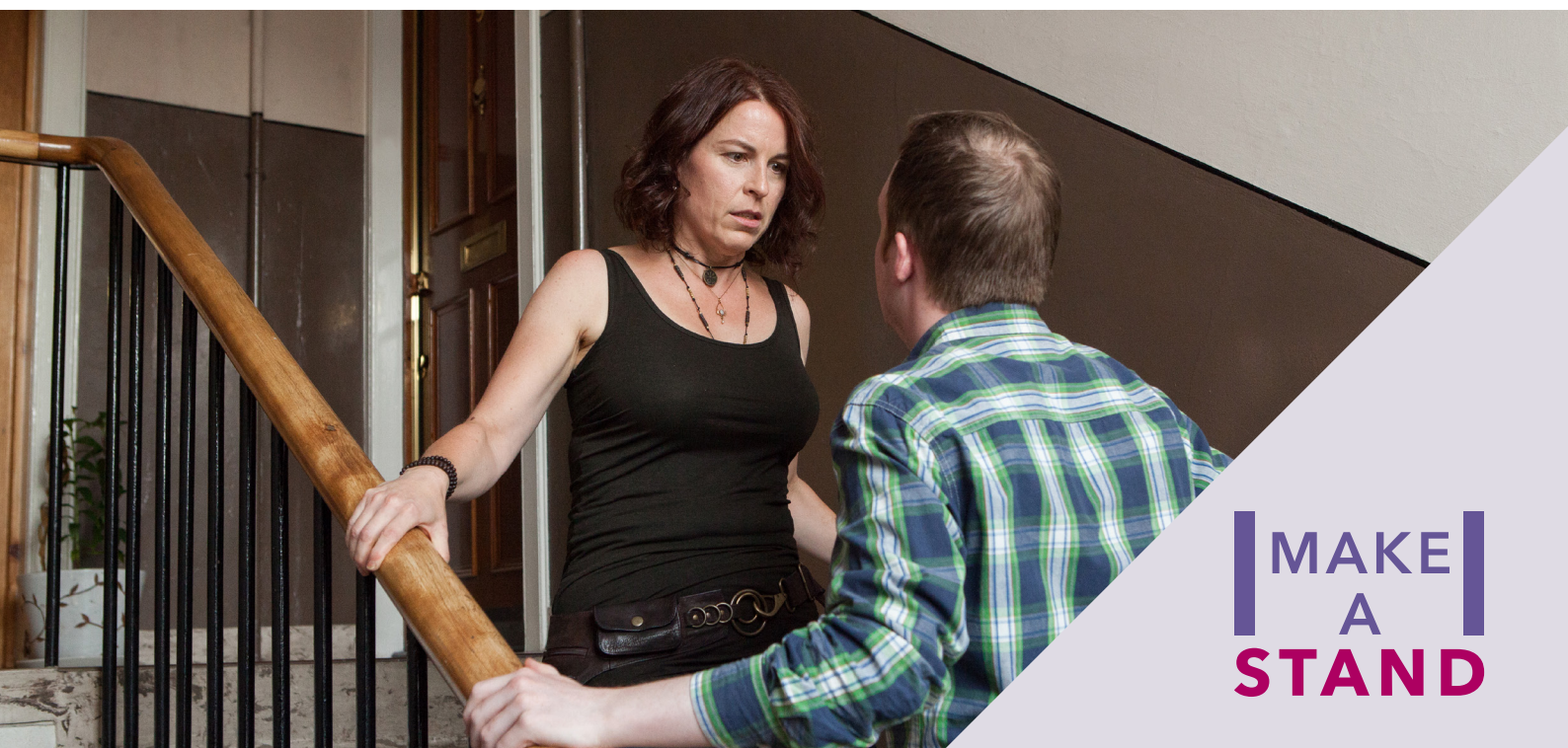
- Involve customers, staff and your local specialist domestic abuse service in putting a policy together
- Clearly communicate your policy to your staff and customers and put it in an easily accessible, relevant place, including on your intranet/website
- Have a named person in the organisation at a senior level who is responsible for the policy and its implementation (see pledge commitment four)
- Put in place clear and deliverable objectives which are appropriate to your policy

- Publicise the launch or refresh of your policy including on your staff intranet, website and any other means available to you
- Provide your staff with adequate training (provided by a specialist domestic abuse service), suitable to their role in addressing domestic abuse.

Learning from others

Berneslai Homes has taken the existing domestic abuse related sections from its previous 'vulnerability policy' and its other policies and now has a standalone, overarching domestic abuse policy. It also engaged the local independent domestic abuse service, **IDAS** as a critical friend to oversee the new policy and its implementation.

Contact: **Tony Griffiths** tonygriffiths@berneslaihomes.co.uk



**MAKE
A
STAND**

Magna Housing is using an on-line training provider, to deliver a basic level of training on domestic abuse to all its staff. With offices across Somerset and Dorset, it can find getting staff together for formal training days problematic. Using online training allows it to ensure that all staff have basic knowledge about domestic abuse and what it means for their role; staff retake the training every two years.

It has also assessed each staff role and provided more in-depth training for those it has identified as needing it for example, housing officers but also support services such as the Money Matters Team.

Contact: Jo Heeley Jo.Heeley@magna.org.uk

Fife council's staff found dealing with domestic abuse difficult as they felt they didn't have enough training and weren't sure about signposting, safety planning and legal issues.

The 'improving the way we work project' (WHIR) took on board these issues and put the following in place:

- All frontline staff and housing staff have completed mandatory 'introduction to domestic violence' training with a refresher every two years. This is also written into the induction programme
- Several members of staff from various jobs are involved in tasking groups to help develop the plan
- Pathway days allow staff to feedback on case studies and help develop the perfect pathway for people experiencing domestic or sexual abuse
- Shelter Scotland have developed training for staff who deal with enhanced housing options interviews (EHOLs) with more insight into the law and legal matters. This training is by e-learning and face-to-face

- All staff who have completed the Shelter (Scotland) training have access to the resource hub that gives them information on legislation, referrals and resources, perfect pathways and a reflective exercise. Having this tool gives staff the opportunity to keep their knowledge up to date.

Fife council has also developed 'toolbox talks' training for their building services operatives, to train them to recognise the signs of domestic abuse and to encourage them to pass any concerns on to their line manager, who can then raise this with the housing officer for the area. Fife council has worked with benefits and revenues staff and have taken part in multiagency training. They are expanding the toolbox talks to their safer communities' officers as well.

Contact: Paul Short Paul.Short@fife.gov.uk

2. Make information about national and local domestic abuse support services available on your website and in other appropriate places so that they are easily accessible for residents and staff

A simple and effective step to support anyone who may be experiencing domestic abuse is to provide details of relevant services at both a local and national level. It also helps create an organisational culture that is open about the reality of domestic abuse and shows commitment to dealing with it.

You will need to think about where you wish to put this information but as a minimum it should be provided on a relevant and easy to find section of your website. Other places you can provide information could include:

- In your tenancy packs
- In communal areas in your developments
- In your office waiting rooms
- On your intranet
- In public and staff toilets, staff rooms and breakout areas.

Useful resources

Information about national services

At the back of this guide is a list of national organisations that work with survivors and (in some cases) perpetrators of domestic abuse which you could include in your information.

There is information about the rights of people with a range of needs on **CIH's 'Housing Rights' website**.

Information about local services

You can use the **Women's Aid Domestic Abuse Directory** to find your local domestic abuse support services, or you can do your own research to identify useful and relevant services.

Don't forget to look for organisations which support perpetrators of domestic abuse to address their behaviour as well as organisations which help survivors of domestic abuse.

Learning from others

Ashfield District Council (ADC) has a **specific page** on its website that gives information about domestic abuse and the number for the Nottinghamshire

domestic abuse helpline. There are also phone numbers and web links to several other organisations that provide help and support. Its website also has a page that offers risk management advice to survivors of abuse that covers staying safe in relationships, fleeing abusive relationships and keeping safe once they have left. ADC also participate in the **White Ribbon campaign** (a campaign that seeks to end male violence against women by working with men and boys to challenge cultures that lead to abuse) and have a **page** about this too.

Contact: Emma Lindley
e.lindley@ashfield.gov.uk

Futures Housing Group (FHG) has updated their website with details of local and national organisations that work with victims/survivors of domestic abuse and put posters and leaflets in their offices and communal spaces. It has also set up a specific email address that anyone can use to raise concerns about or report abuse. Only a limited number of staff members have access to this account - FHG have found this to be a better method for people to make reports as it can be truly confidential.

Contact: Faye White
faye.white@futureshg.co.uk or
Sarah Wyke sarah.wyke@futureshg.co.uk

**MAKE
A
STAND**

Gentoo have improved the ability for their tenants to report domestic abuse online by implementing an easy to navigate process with the press of only a couple of buttons. Any report goes directly to their Victim Support staff and a response is guaranteed by the next working day. There is also a facility for someone who makes that contact to have their history of this immediately deleted so no perpetrator could find out.

Contact: Lisa Smith or Julie Lister at victimsupportofficers@gentoogroup.com

3. Put in place an HR policy, or amend an existing policy, to support members of staff who may be experiencing domestic abuse

As a large or a small employer, it is quite possible that you will have employees that are suffering from domestic abuse and it's important that you have the policies and procedures in place to support them too. Things you can do to support your staff include displaying information about helplines in your offices, and in general spaces and private spaces such as toilets. You could also provide training on domestic abuse to all your staff and specific training to managers on how to support people suffering abuse or harassment. You might also consider taking practical steps like adjusting someone's working hours, providing flexible working arrangements or having their contact details removed from the business's website if they request it.

How do I put a policy together?

You will need to think about:

- How you want people to report abuse e.g. through their line manager, domestic abuse champions or human resources
- Appointing domestic abuse champions across the organisation that staff can access as a source of advice and support
- Ensuring you provide training (delivered by a specialist provider) that complements the policy

- Publicising the launch or refresh on the staff intranet and other means available to you
- Implementing a safety plan at work if there are risks associated with the workplace which could include moving a person's work location.

Useful resources

DAHA offers free examples of domestic abuse human resources policies and guidance on how to put one together in its free **toolkit**. You can sign up for free and access these materials.

More information is available from the Employers Initiative on Domestic Abuse (EIDA) at www.eida.org.uk.

Learning from others

Berneslai Homes (BH) launched a renewed 'staff policy' at their staff conference, where employees were given the opportunity to make a personal pledge to support colleagues suffering abuse. Its employees have been trained to show 'professional curiosity' where they suspect abuse may be happening and to spot the signs of abuse. BH has also trained their managers to support any colleagues who may be suffering abuse. BH asked for volunteers from their workforce to act as 'wellbeing champions' which includes the remit of domestic abuse, and initially they had over 30 offers and have 13 active officers in place.

Contact: Tony Griffiths
tonygriffiths@berneslaihomes.co.uk

**MAKE
A
STAND**

Homes in Sedgemoor audited its policies and procedures in this area and found that, whilst it had some measures to address abuse in a 'staff well-being' policy, it decided that this was not detailed enough. They put together a standalone policy that properly articulates and prioritises their aspiration to support their staff who are experiencing domestic abuse.

Contact: Lindsey Hoggard
lindsey.hoggard@homesinsedgemoor.org

4. Appoint a champion at senior level within your organisation to own the activity you are doing to support people experiencing domestic abuse

Leadership is vitally important to success. The pledge therefore requires that you appoint a named person at senior level to oversee and be accountable for the changes you are making and the overall implementation of the policy and procedures. This could be a board member or a senior manager. You should consider:

- What you need from your champion?
Do you need them to have a strong operational focus or a more strategic role e.g. be a link to your board or councillors?
- What areas of your business are involved in your response to domestic abuse?
Who would be best placed to coordinate these areas?

Learning from others

Ashfield District Council (ADC) have appointed their director of place and communities as their Make a Stand champion. They felt that it was important to have a person with both strategic and operational oversight as their champion, but as a local authority also needed a champion who could secure political 'buy in' from elected members and provide a vital link between councillors and operational concerns. Tackling domestic abuse is a political priority for ADC.

Contact: Emma Lindley
e.lindley@ashfield.gov.uk

Futures Housing Group (FHG) have appointed their Head of Neighbourhoods as the champion for Make a Stand. FHG appointed a senior manager rather than board member as champion as they are involved in both strategic and operational level meetings across the organisation and hold the relevant budgets. FHG is currently exploring the option to have a specific budget for supporting those experiencing domestic abuse by providing a range of measures to assist and protect, which may include installing temporary 'target hardening' measures in its homes.

Contact: Faye White
faye.white@futureshg.co.uk or
Sarah Wyke sarah.wyke@futureshg.co.uk

Useful resources and information

CIH Make a Stand Pledge Information
www.cih.org/makeastand

CIH list of organisations that have signed up to the pledge
www.cih.org/makeastandsignees

CIH Housing Rights website
www.housing-rights.info/index.php

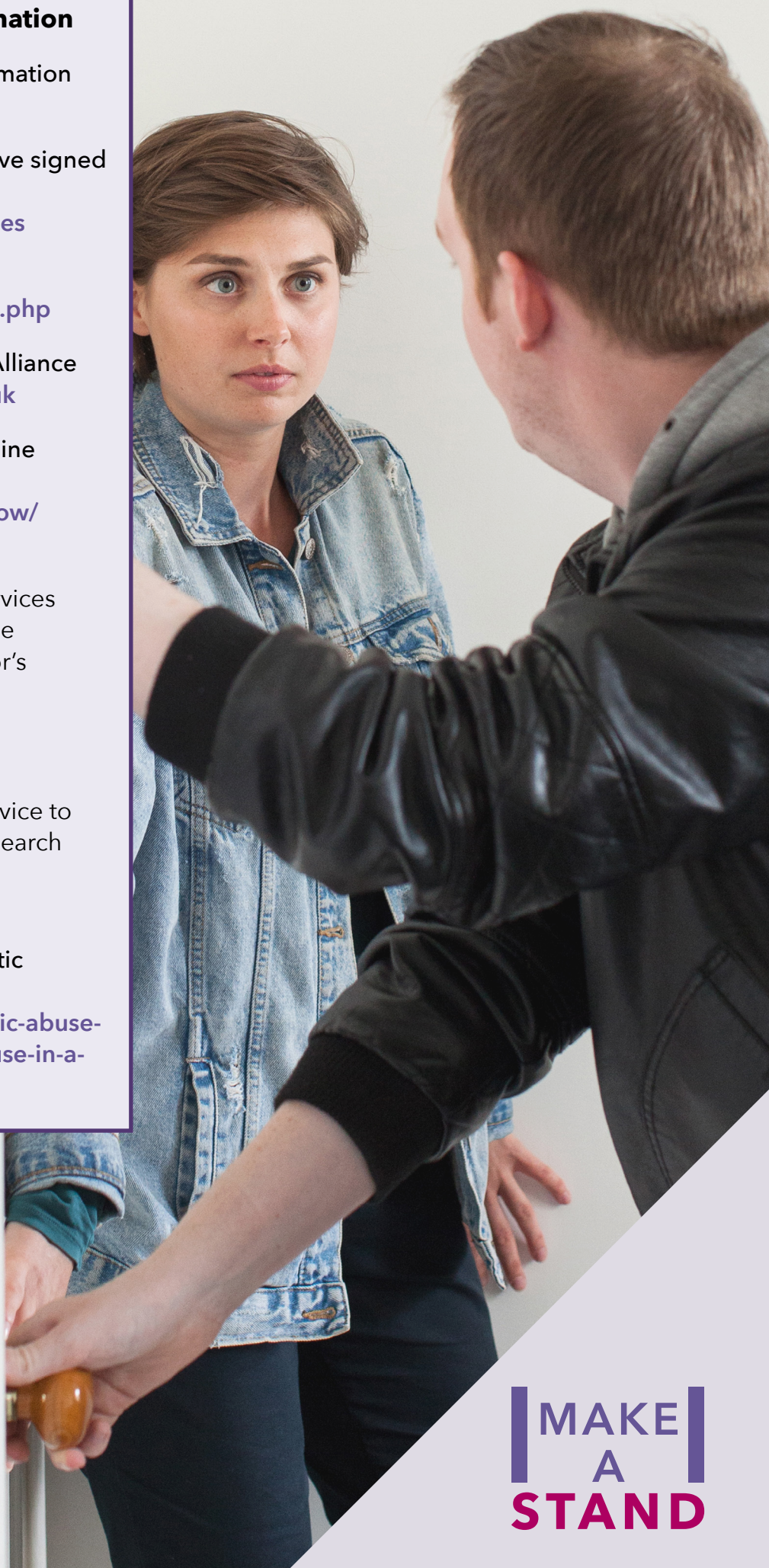
The Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance website
www.dahalliance.org.uk

National Domestic Abuse Helpline
0808 2000 247 (24 hours)
www.refuge.org.uk/get-help-now/phone-the-helpline/

Women's Aid provide direct services including a live chat helpline, the survivors' forum and the survivor's handbook
www.womensaid.org.uk
helpline@womensaid.org.uk

Refuge provide support and advice to survivors of abuse as well as research and policy and practice advice
www.refuge.org.uk

Home Office guidance: Domestic Abuse - How to get help
www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help#domestic-abuse-in-a-relationship-recognise-it



**MAKE
A
STAND**

Shelter advice and guidance on Domestic Abuse and tenancies (England and Wales) https://england.shelter.org.uk/legal/relationship_breakdown/domestic_violence/options_in_domestic_violence_cases

Shelter advice and guidance on Domestic Abuse (Scotland) https://scotland.shelter.org.uk/get_advice/advice_topics/families_and_households/domestic_abuse

Men's Advice Line (Confidential helpline to support male victims of domestic violence) 0808 801 0327 (Monday - Friday 10am-5pm)
www.mensadvice.org.uk

Forced Marriage Helpline
0800 5999 247 (not 24 hours).

Forced Marriage Unit 020 7008 0151.
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage#forced-marriage-unit>

Karma Nirvana (providing support for people experiencing forced marriage and honour-based violence)
0800 5999 247
www.karmanirvana.org.uk/

Galop (for LGBT+ people who are experiencing domestic violence)
0800 999 5428
www.galop.org.uk or
help@galop.org.uk



**MAKE
A
STAND**

Rape Crisis (provides co-ordination for the rape crisis movement in England and Wales - the website lists local centres) 0808 802 9999. <https://rapecrisis.org.uk>

REACH (Rape examination, advice, counselling and help) 0191 221 9222. www.reachsarc.org.uk

The National Stalking Helpline provides guidance and information 0808 802 0300 (run by the Suzy Lamplugh Trust) www.suzylamplugh.org/Pages/Category/national-stalking-helpline

Paladin - National Stalking Advocacy Service 020 3866 4107 <https://paladinservice.co.uk>

NSPCC (Confidential number for children and young people) 0808 800 5000.

Victim Care (independent charity helping people cope with the effects of crime, by providing free and confidential support and information) 0303 0401 099 (9am- 8pm Mon to Fri, 9am - 5pm Sat) <http://victimcareandadvice.service.uk>

Action on Elder Abuse (Action on Elder Abuse work to protect and prevent the abuse of vulnerable older adults) 0808 808 8141 <http://elderabuse.org.uk/england>

Support for perpetrators 0808 802 4040 <http://respect.uk.net>

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). It is mandatory to report suspected cases of FGM. If you suspect someone is at risk call the Police on 101.



**MAKE
A
STAND**

About DAHA

DAHA is a national partnership between three agencies: housing associations Peabody (London) and Gentoo (Sunderland), and London-based charity Standing Together Against Domestic Violence.

DAHA's mission is to improve the housing sector's response to domestic abuse through the introduction and adoption of an established set of standards and an accreditation process.

DAHA accreditation is part of the government's 'Ending Violence against Women and Girls Strategy: 2016-2020' and we are proud that it is recognised as the benchmark for how housing providers should respond to domestic abuse in the UK.

About Women's Aid Federation of England

Women's Aid is the national charity working to end domestic abuse against women and children. Over the past 45 years, Women's Aid has been at the forefront of shaping and coordinating responses to domestic abuse through practice, research and policy. Women's Aid empower survivors by keeping their voices at the heart of their work, working with and for women and children by listening to them and responding to their needs.

Women's Aid is a federation of nearly 180 organisations which provide just under 300 local lifesaving services to women and children across the country. They provide expert training, qualifications and consultancy to a range of agencies and

professionals working with survivors or commissioning domestic abuse services, and award a National Quality Mark for services which meet our quality standards. Women's Aid also hold the largest national data set on domestic abuse, and use research and evidence to inform all of their work.

About CIH

Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) is the independent voice for housing and the home of professional standards. Our goal is simple – to provide housing professionals and their organisations with the advice, support and knowledge they need to be brilliant. CIH is a registered charity and not-for-profit organisation. This means that the money we make is put back into the organisation and funds the activities we carry out to support the housing sector. We have a diverse membership of people who work in both the public and private sectors, in 20 countries on five continents across the world.

Further information is available at:
www.cih.org