

Children Affected by Domestic Abuse

Fiona Heighton – Care and
Support Manager

Our role

- Provide safe homes and support for victims of domestic abuse
- Raise awareness among staff
- Offer referrals to specialist agencies
- Adopt a victim-centred approach
- Work in partnership with local authorities and agencies (MARAC, MATAC, Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership)
- Domestic Abuse/ Safeguarding Policies reviewed every 3 years

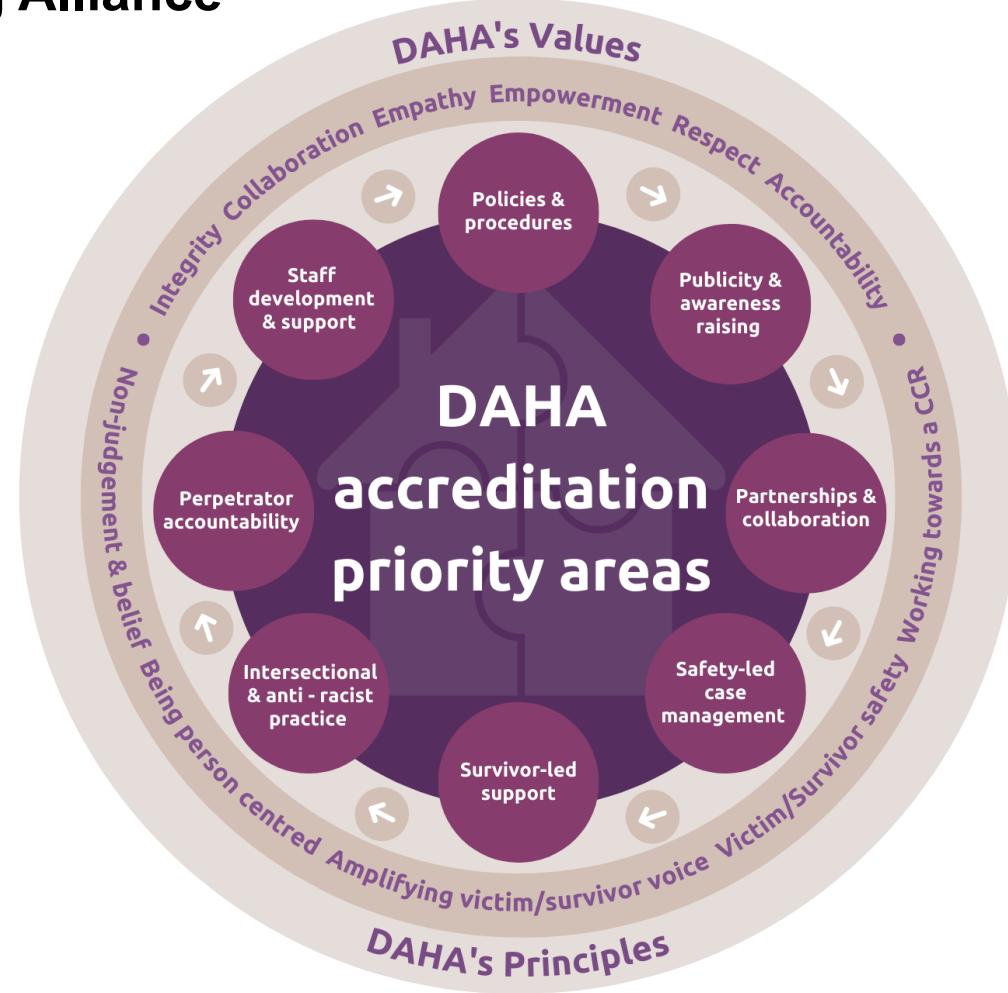


Domestic abuse and Regulator of Social Housing standards

- Awareness and training for all staff, including specialist courses
- Victim-centred approach to support tenants experiencing domestic abuse
- Clear reporting and referral processes using DASH risk checklist
- Access to specialist support and advice for customers
- Partnership working with local authorities and multi-agency forums
- Data monitoring and continuous improvement of services
- Compliance with Consumer Standards: Neighbourhood, Transparency, Safety



Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA)



Importance of Thirteen-wide awareness

- Domestic abuse affects our staff and our customers
- Reinforces staff awareness of their safeguarding duties and the importance of promptly reporting any concerns or issues
- Reassures colleagues to trust their instincts and reinforces that their professional judgement is valid
- Awareness empowers everyone to recognise signs of abuse, respond safely, and provide support effectively



Reporting domestic abuse

Staff awareness

- Clear internal guidance and mandatory training
- Victim disclosure alone triggers immediate support
- Designated Domestic Abuse Champions - in every service directorate to drive awareness, lead advocacy, and cultural change



Promotion of reporting routes

Website, social media campaigns, and policy transparency
Signposting to local services (e.g., Harbour, My Sisters Place, Halo Project)



Tenancy Support

- Supported 664 Thirteen customers experiencing domestic abuse
- Sustained 139 tenancies through our stay-at-home (target hardening) scheme



Working in Partnership

- Strong relationship between Stockton Housing Homeless Team and our Domestic Abuse (DA) team
- Regular collaboration on DA cases
- Mirrored banding process to avoid victim-survivors undergoing two separate assessments
- Active participation in the DA Strategic Group
- Newly involved in the Teesside Perpetrator Strategic Group
- Exploring opportunities to link in on target hardening provision in Stockton



Future focus and challenges

- Under-reporting and stigma
- Complex needs requiring multi-agency response
- Housing pressures and safe accommodation
- Digital abuse and technology-facilitated harm
- Funding pressures
- National developments: Domestic Abuse Act 2021, VAWG Strategy, Criminal Justice reforms
- Local connection changes
- Future priorities: early identification, enhanced training, improved data sharing, child safeguarding, perpetrator programmes



Questions?