

# 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

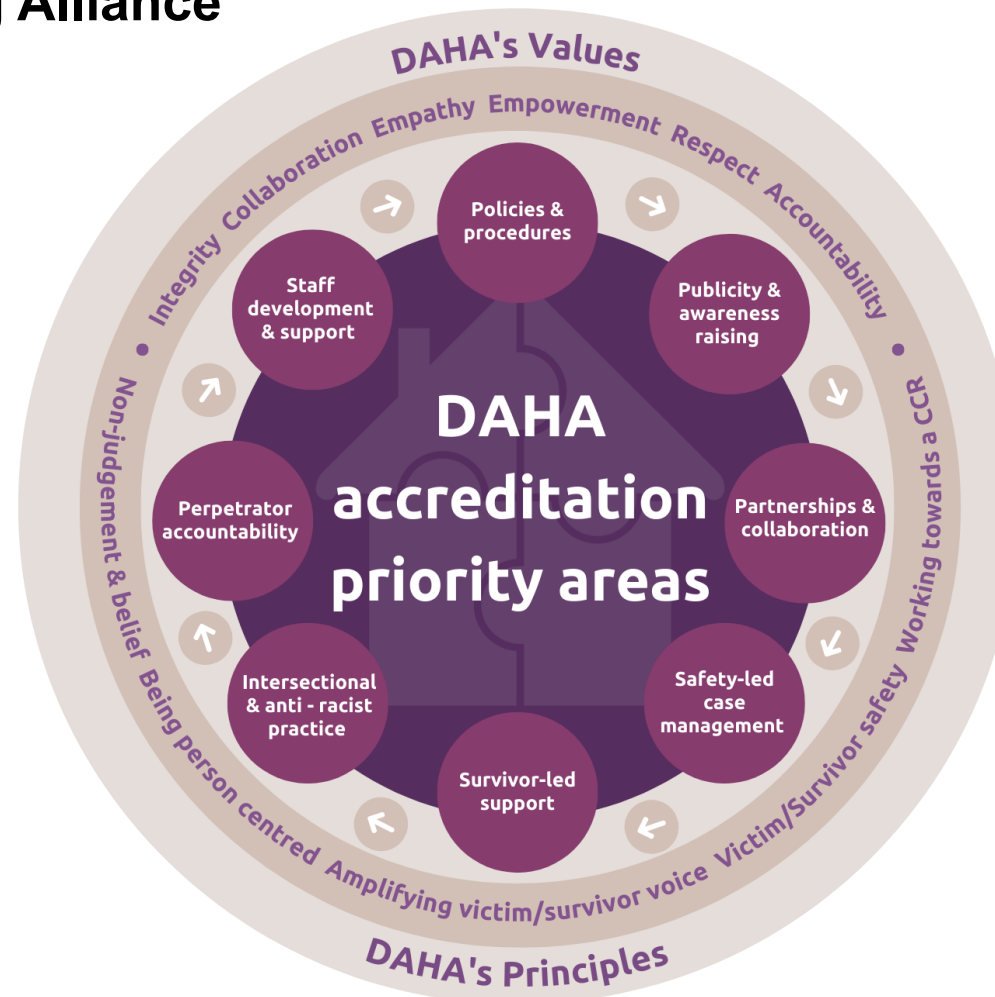


## Domestic abuse and Regulator of Social Housing standards

- 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?