

## SBC HOUSING SERVICES

<b>Question: SBC Housing Services' role / responsibilities in relation to this scrutiny topic.</b>
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Service response:

- The **Homelessness Service** will have direct contact and provide support to individuals who are homeless because of domestic abuse. And/or will be supporting individuals who have experienced domestic abuse.
- The wider **Housing Service** will also have officers visiting residents in their homes (including our Private Sector Housing and Disabled Facilities Grants Teams).

<b>Question: For any SBC housing staff required to visit properties across the Borough, do they feel confident about spotting signs of domestic abuse, and do they know how to report it?</b>
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Service response:

- We aim to ensure all team members receive sufficient training so they feel confident in identifying signs of domestic abuse (levels of training will vary depending on role).
- All new starters are required to complete Introduction to Safeguarding training. Each team member is required to refresh this training every 2 years.
- We are currently reviewing our employee Training and Development plans. Rather than encouraging colleagues to attend Safeguarding Adult and Children's refresher training (every 2 years) our intention is to make this mandatory for all Housing and Fairer Stockton-on-Tees team members (regardless of role).
- Wider TSAB training courses are shared with Service Managers who will review and identify suitable training for their team members.

<b>Question: Data on the number of domestic abuse-related referrals made by housing services in the last three years.</b>
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Service response:

We are unable to provide this information. Whilst referrals will be made, we do not record the number of referrals made.

<b>Question: Working with local social housing partners regarding domestic abuse considerations – how does this operate; is this effective; is there anything that could strengthen current arrangements?</b>
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Service response:

There is limited direct working with social housing providers regarding domestic abuse regarding domestic abuse considerations. Engagement is undertaken for example via the following routes:

## Scrutiny Review of Children Affected by Domestic Abuse

- The Homelessness Service brings together partners who are working/supporting those experiencing homelessness via a Multi-Agency Forum, the Forum is attended by social housing providers and organisations supporting those who are experiencing domestic abuse.
- We will also engage with tenants of Registered Providers and provide advice and support (via the Homelessness Service and the Lettings & Nomination service).

**Question: Any SBC oversight of private sector housing in relation to domestic abuse (e.g. awareness-raising, promotion of reporting routes, etc.)?**

**Service response:**

All visiting officers complete a service Safeguarding Visit Form when they visit a property which also provides additional information on how to report.

**Question: Any views on key areas of future focus relating to this scrutiny topic (e.g. existing challenges that need to be addressed; national / regional / local developments that will / are likely to have an impact**

**Service response:**

Government has recently published 'A National Plan to End Homelessness', section 3.4.7 includes a specific reference to Domestic Abuse [A National Plan to End Homelessness - GOV.UK](#)

**Additional information:**

- During the period 1.4.24 to 31.3.25: there were 78 presentations to the Homelessness Service from families fleeing domestic abuse (which included 6 presentations from families fleeing domestic abuse from an associated person).
- The Homelessness Service is looking to explore how it can support children who may be placed in temporary accommodation when a homelessness presentation is made (regardless of the reason for the presentation) and will be meeting with Family Action.
- The Homelessness Service Manager represents the wider service at the corporate Domestic Abuse Steering Group.

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