

## Domestic Abuse and Violence Guidance for Members

Domestic abuse is defined by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 as:

*Behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is “domestic abuse” if—*  
*(a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and*  
*(b) the behaviour is abusive.*

*(3) Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following —*

- (a) physical or sexual abuse;*
- (b) violent or threatening behaviour;*
- (c) controlling or coercive behaviour;*
- (d) economic abuse*
- (e) psychological, emotional or other abuse;*

**It does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.**

Personally Connected is defined as:

- (a) they are, or have been, married to each other;
- (b) they are, or have been, civil partners of each other;
- (c) they have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);
- (d) they have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated);
- (e) they are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other;
- (f) they each have, or there has been a time when they each have had, a parental relationship in relation to the same child (see subsection (2));
- (g) they are relatives.

Abusive relationships cross all social boundaries – ANYONE can be affected. Men and women of all ages, sexualities, ethnic backgrounds and religions can be affected by abusive relationships.

Domestic abuse can happen to anyone from any background. Whilst the majority of victims are female and the majority of perpetrators are male, people of all gender identities experience domestic abuse.

Domestic abuse does not always take the form of physical violence. Coercive control and emotional abuse, stalking and harassment and economic abuse are all types of domestic abuse. Non-physical abuse is not any less dangerous – in fact, research shows that men who use coercive control are more likely to kill their partner and extend their control to conceal her murder as a suicide or accident.

## Support for employees and Members experiencing domestic abuse

Peterborough City Council believes that nobody should live in fear of violence or abuse. The Domestic Abuse Policy ([add link when approved and published](#)) sets out our commitment to deal with domestic abuse. It explains that we will take all reports of domestic abuse seriously and consider the needs of individuals and work in partnership with specialist agencies to provide to a coordinated response.

As an organisation, Peterborough City Council do not condone domestic abuse or sexual violence and the Council requires perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse to declare any related prosecutions, and to follow the Self Disclosure Policy at all times.

Peterborough City Council employees who are subjected to domestic abuse can access support including nominating an appointed person in the workplace as a confidential first point of contact for those experiencing domestic abuse and access to counselling, and publicise the availability of this support regularly through notice boards, the intranet and ongoing health and wellbeing initiatives.

The full Employee Guidance can be found at [Domestic Abuse - Policy - 0719.pdf](#).

## Supporting someone subjected to domestic abuse

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Partnership have an information leaflet aimed at friends and family who want to know how to support a loved one who is being subjected to domestic abuse. The leaflet can be downloaded from [Cambridgeshire County Council DASV Partnership - Opening Closed Doors \(cambsdasv.org.uk\)](#)

A version with pictures that may be suitable for people with learning disabilities can also be downloaded from the link above.

## Top Tips

- Always speak to the person on their own – if talking by telephone or online, check that they are on their own and that the perpetrator is not overhearing the conversation.
- Always believe what the person tells you. If the abuser is someone you know, it can be hard to hear about their behaviour but don't make excuses for them.
- Conversations could start by asking someone if they are okay? Are they worried about their (or their children's) safety?
- Do not share what you have been told with the abuser – this can increase the risk of serious harm to the victim.
- If they say they don't want help or refuse to talk to you, don't give up. Reassure them you are there when they are ready and approach the subject again in the future.
- Reassure them that it's not their fault – they may feel embarrassed or guilty or the abuser may have convinced them that the abuse is their own fault.
- Ask the person what they would like you to do – would they like you to support reporting to police or talking to their GP? It may be that they initially don't want to do anything.

- It's not unusual for survivors of abuse to not want to involve the police. The situation may be complex. Survivors can get support without involving the police.
- Signpost to support services if the survivor wishes.

### Local support

Cambridgeshire County Council commissions four **refuges for women and children** across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and a range of dispersed accommodation for women with more complex needs. Women will not usually be placed in a refuge in the same area as they live.

The Council also deliver the **Independent Domestic Violence Advisory Service (IDVA)** who accept referrals from professionals only. For more information about the IDVA Service please visit [Cambridgeshire County Council DASV Partnership - Make a Referral \(cambsdasv.org.uk\)](http://Cambridgeshire County Council DASV Partnership - Make a Referral (cambsdasv.org.uk))

Cambridgeshire County Council also commission an outreach/mobile advocacy service which is open to self-referral from all victims across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, of any gender or sexual orientation - **Domestic Abuse Support Services – DASS 0300 373 1073** or email [DASSReferrals@impakt.org.uk](mailto:DASSReferrals@impakt.org.uk) (Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm).

### Third Party Reports

Members of the public raising concerns about domestic abuse should be signposted to the most appropriate service. This could be Police, Social Care or Housing Providers (see Other Local Contacts below).

### National contacts

The National Domestic Abuse Helpline is open 24 hours a day, every day of the year 0808 2000 247

Men's Advice Line 0808 801 0327 [www.mensadvice.org.uk](http://www.mensadvice.org.uk)

Galop (support for LGBTQ people) 0800 999 5428 [www.galop.org.uk](http://www.galop.org.uk)

Karma Nirvana 0800 5999 247 ('honour' crimes and forced marriage) [www.karmanirvana.org.uk](http://www.karmanirvana.org.uk)

Hourglass 0808 8080 8141 (support for older people) [www.wearehourglass.org](http://www.wearehourglass.org)

Surviving Economic Abuse – website for resources [www.survivingeconomicabuse.org](http://www.survivingeconomicabuse.org)

### Other Local contacts

Cambridgeshire Adult Social Care 0345 045 5205 / Peterborough Adult Social Care 01733 747474

Children's Social Care 0345 045 5203 (Cambridgeshire & Peterborough)

Cambridge Women's Aid [www.cambridgewa.org.uk](http://www.cambridgewa.org.uk)

Peterborough Women's Aid 01733 894964 [www.peterboroughwomensaid.co.uk](http://www.peterboroughwomensaid.co.uk)  
(projects for male victims. Women from South Asian communities and Lithuanian Worker)

Cambs & Peterborough Victim and Witness Hub 0800 781 6818 [Victim Services | Victim and Witness Hub \(cambsvictimservices.co.uk\)](#)

Cambridge and Peterborough Rape Crisis Partnership [Cambridge & Peterborough Rape Crisis Partnership – CAPRPC](#)

### **Other things Members can do**

Take the White Ribbon Promise to end violence against women and girls – Peterborough City Council are accredited by White Ribbon, the lead Member for White Ribbon is Cllr Steve Allen [Make the White Ribbon Promise – White Ribbon UK](#)

Put up posters in your local area – these can be printed from the Cambs DASV website ([www.cambsdasv.org.uk](http://www.cambsdasv.org.uk)) or if you require large amounts we can send these to you.

Follow our social media pages and re-share our posts (Facebook Cambs\_DASV, Twitter @CambsDASV)

Become a Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Champion by attending our quarterly online awareness sessions – more information at [Cambridgeshire County Council DASV Partnership - DASV Champions \(cambsdasv.org.uk\)](#)

Our website has a range of information for the public and professionals  
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Domestic Violence & Sexual Abuse Partnership [www.cambsdasv.org.uk](http://www.cambsdasv.org.uk)