



Sevenoaks District Council

**Domestic Abuse Housing Strategy
2005**

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1.0 Introduction

This Strategy supports the Community Safety Strategy and also links into the Housing Strategy 2003 by contributing to the Council's duty of crime reduction. The Housing Strategy identified an action to map domestic violence services available across the District and ensure advice and publicity is made available. The Council will work in partnership with other service providers to ensure these objectives are met. This document sets out where the need is, what services the Council currently has to offer, where the gaps in service are and also contains an action plan which details how the Council will work to fill those gaps.

A domestic violence incident takes place every 6 seconds in this Country (British Crime Survey 2000). This may take the form of physical, sexual or emotional abuse and can occur between anyone in a close relationship. More often than not it is women that are the victims although it is recognised that men can also be victims and domestic violence can occur within same sex relationships.

For those at risk and in need of protection, it is important they know where and when they can find advice, support, help and access to a range of services to suit their needs. Domestic violence can have a devastating effect on victims as well as their friends and family (particularly their children). Victims can feel socially excluded, isolated and alone and children can be affected emotionally.

There is no doubt that domestic violence is a major issue that affects many people. However, many victims do not report incidents to the police or seek alternative help because they are too frightened of the consequences or lack awareness of the support available to them.

Sevenoaks District Council recognises that everyone's situation is different and not all people want the same services or outcomes following an incidence of domestic abuse. Therefore, it is the intention of the Council to provide a range of housing services that will help victims of domestic abuse.

2.0 Definition

There are currently over 20 different definitions of domestic violence and there has been a recent move to rename it 'Domestic Abuse' to include non-physical and psychological factors. Most local authorities have adopted and amended the definitions from the Home Office or the Association of Chief Police Officers.

'Any violence between current and former partners in an intimate relationship, wherever and whenever the violence occurs. The violence may include physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse.' (*Home Office*)

'Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or who have been intimate partners or are family members regardless of gender.' (*Association of Chief Police Officers*)

It is widely accepted that domestic abuse occurs regardless of age, gender, appearance, religious belief, ethnic origin and marital status.

Kent Women's Support Service states that domestic abuse should not be seen as a single incident or series of incidents, but instead as a pattern of behaviour where one person is trying to achieve power and control over another.

3.0 Domestic Abuse Housing Strategy Aims

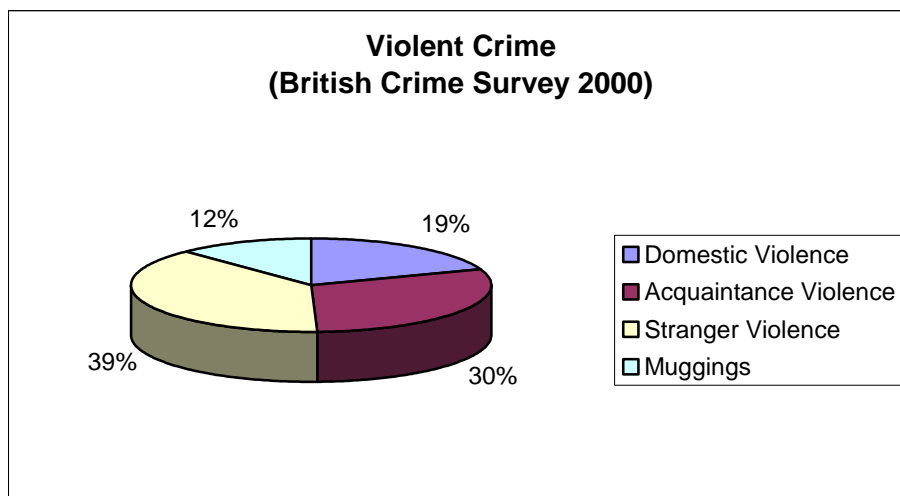
- Raise public awareness of the extent of domestic abuse in the District
- Reduce homelessness as a result of domestic abuse
- Direct people experiencing domestic abuse to the services available:
 - Staying and protecting themselves in their own home
 - Moving in a planned way
 - Accommodation as part of an emergency homeless situation
- Highlight services in and around the Sevenoaks District and identify gaps
- Outline the Governments' legislation and the duties of the Council
- Develop an action plan to meet identified gaps in services

4.0 Assessing the Need for Services

Domestic violence accounts for the highest percentage of violent crime in the UK, which is even more significant given the high levels of under-reporting and under-recording of incidents by survivors and agencies, respectively. Despite this there are some statistics available that provide a picture of the prevalence and nature of abuse and violence in the home.

4.1 National Statistics

- Of all crimes reported to the British Crime Survey 2000, more than 1 in 20 were classified as domestic violence.
- Domestic violence accounts for approximately a quarter of all violent crime (see pie chart below).
- The Police receive an average of 1,300 calls every day about domestic violence.
- Domestic violence is the least likely violent crime to be reported to the Police (under one third of incidents are reported).
- In 1999, 37% of women murder victims were killed by their present or former partners - more than 2 per week.
- A domestic violence incident takes place every 6 seconds.
- 1 in 4 women will experience domestic violence at some point in their lives (Council of Europe 2002, Home Office Research Study 1999).
- 1 in 6 men will experience domestic violence at some point in their lives (Council of Europe 2002, Home Office Research Study 1999).
- 1 in 9 women will experience domestic violence to a level that requires medical attention in any one year (Counting the Cost, Stanko et al. 1998).
- Victims only contact the police after an average of 35 repeated incidents.
- 40% of all homeless women stated that domestic violence was a contributor to their homelessness. Domestic violence was found to be the single most quoted reason for becoming homeless (Shelter 2002).



4.2 The North and West Kent Picture

In January 2003, Kent Women's Support Service was commissioned to produce a report on the extent of domestic violence and services in Kent. Through research and consultation exercises they found the following:

- 3,133 incidents of domestic violence were reported to the North and West Kent Police between April 2002 and March 2003.
- West Kent Police:
 - 1,367 incidents reported between family members, including partners (1,058 of which were solely between partners)
 - 502 repeat victims (457 of which involved the partner)
 - 294 perpetrators arrested (241 of which were the victims partner)
 - 138 perpetrators were charged
- North Kent Police:
 - 1,766 incidents reported between family member, including partners (1,458 of which were solely between partners)
 - 652 repeat victims (611 of which involved the partner)
 - 403 perpetrators arrested (325 of which were the victims partner)
 - 189 perpetrators were charged

West/North Kent (Dartford, Gravesham, Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge and Malling)

- 210,055 women over 16
- 23,339 will have experienced domestic violence to a level that requires medical attention in past year (1 in 9)
- 52,513 will experience domestic violence at some point in their lives (1 in 4)

(Source: Kent Women's Support Services, 2003)

4.3 Sevenoaks District Statistics

It is difficult to get information broken down into district council boundaries because the police and health authorities cover different areas.

- There are approximately 45,300 women over 16 in the District (2001 Census, ONS)
- 11,325 of these will experience domestic violence at some point in their lives (applying the Council of Europe's 1 in 4 ratio)
- 5,033 will experience domestic violence to a level that requires medical attention (applying Stanko et al's 1 in 9 ratio)
- There are approximately 41,800 men over 16 in the District (2001 Census)
- 6,767 of these will experience domestic violence at some point in their lives (applying the Council of Europe's 1 in 6 ratio)

4.4 Sevenoaks District Homelessness Statistics

- In the year April 2002 to March 2003, 6.7% (20) of homeless applications were received as a result of domestic violence ('Violent breakdown of relationship, involving partner')
- In the year 2003/04, this figure had risen to 8.7% (28)

- Approximately 50% of women applying to the homeless register as a result of domestic violence had at least one dependent child

The increase in homeless applications due to domestic abuse could be due to more women realising that they will receive support and are prepared to come forward. However, this is not something that should be assumed and it is the policy of Sevenoaks District Council's Housing Department to attempt to reduce homelessness as a result of domestic abuse, which has increased by 2% in the year April 2003 - March 2004 (see 4.4 above).

4.5 Management Transfers

- West Kent Housing Association, who manages the social housing stock in the District, reported that in the year 2003/04, 20 families were transferred to another property due to relationship breakdown. One person stated 'domestic violence' as the reason for the breakdown but the figure is likely to be higher as many people may not like to specifically mention the violence or abuse due to the reasons outlined in Section 6 of this Strategy.

4.6 Children and Domestic Abuse

The 1996 British Crime Survey found that:

- One third of children in a violent home are aware of what is happening. This rises to half when the violence is repeated
- Half of those who reported experiencing domestic violence in the previous year were living with children under sixteen

4.7 Hospital Admissions

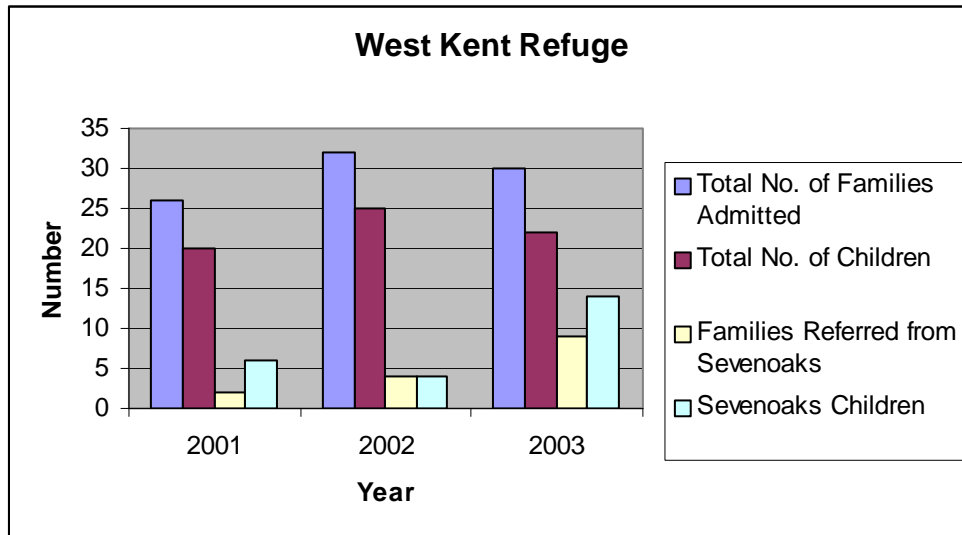
- Between April 2000 and March 2001 there were 640 admissions to Kent hospitals reportedly due to assault, 75 of which took place in the home.

4.8 West Kent Refuge Statistics

The West Kent Refuge is jointly funded by Sevenoaks District Council, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council. It is currently managed by Moat Housing Group.

- In 2001, 26 families were admitted to the refuge, 2 of which were referred from Sevenoaks District Council. The 2 families had a total of 6 children.

- In 2002/03, 32 families were admitted, 4 of which were referred from SDC
- In 2003/04, 30 families were admitted, 9 of which were referred from SDC and had a total of 14 children



- Between April 2002 and March 2003, the refuge had a total of 213 referrals and managed to house 32 women and 29 children
- The average stay at the refuge is 6-8 months

The Council is unable to establish how many refusals occur due to refuges having no vacancies, both within and outside the District, as there is currently no national database to record such information.

5.0 Legislation

In December 2003, the Government published a new Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Bill. The Bill forms part of the biggest overhaul of the laws covering domestic violence in England and Wales since the 1970's. The new laws recognise gay couples, unmarried heterosexuals, as well as people who have never lived with their partners. The Bill also includes a 'stay away' order which will keep partners away even if they are acquitted of any violent crime. The Bill received Royal Assent in November 2004.

Existing legislation is outlined below:

- The Children Act 1989
 - Sections 17, 20 & 47 refer to Kent County Council duties of providing a range of services for children in need in their areas, which will safeguard and promote their welfare.

- The NHS & Community Care Act 1990
 - States that a local authority (Kent County Council) has a duty to assess the care needs of any person and decide upon services to be offered.

- The Housing Act 1996
 - Part VII requires Sevenoaks District Council to secure alternative accommodation for those made homeless as a result of domestic violence.
 - Section 177 states: *'It is not reasonable for a person to continue to occupy accommodation if it is probable that this will lead to domestic violence against her/him, or against a person who normally resides with her/him as a member of the family, or against any other person who might reasonably be expected to reside with her/him'*.
 - The Act also cites domestic violence as grounds for ending a tenancy.

- The Family Law Act 1996
 - Part IV strengthens the civil law on domestic violence via 2 types of order:
 - Occupation orders regulate the occupation of the home.
 - Non-molestation orders (injunctions) prohibit a person from molesting, harassing or pestering another person or child.

- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997
 - Addresses the issue of 'stalking' and provides protection for abused women who no longer live with their abuser.

- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
 - Places a requirement on local authorities and the Police to audit and monitor levels of crime and disorder and consult with the public on the results. This led to the creation of the Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership.

- Section 17 requires that the local authority consider the crime and disorder implications of all its activities. The 2003 Housing Strategy complies with this by including objectives on crime reduction in its action plan.
- Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) can also be sought under this Act.
- Human Rights Act 1998
 - Article 3 states: *‘No one shall be subject to torture or inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment’*.

6.0 Acknowledgement of Challenges Faced

Sevenoaks District Council acknowledges that domestic violence occurs regardless of social group, class, age, race, disability, sexuality, lifestyle, religion or culture. The abuse can begin at any time, in new relationships or after many years spent together. Because of the diversity of the population and the different norms and values that people have, tackling domestic abuse will always be a difficult task.

It is estimated that less than a third of domestic violence cases are reported and even then it is likely that the victim has suffered approximately 35 incidents before doing so. Various challenges therefore exist in attempting to help and provide advice to victims who currently do not access the services available.

Why people experiencing domestic abuse do not access services:

- Fear of repercussions
- They still love the perpetrator
- They don't want to break up the family for the sake of the children or face a custody struggle
- They don't want to move or be threatened with homelessness
- They are financially dependant on their partner
- They are embarrassed
- They are unaware of services available or lack confidence in them
- Loss of self esteem and confidence
- Feelings of guilt and despair

The Council recognises that residents from minority groups face additional barriers and is committed to adopting a multi-agency approach in addressing these barriers:

Black & Minority Ethnic Groups

- Language barriers
- Fear of isolation from their communities
- Lack of recognition and understanding of cultural needs by service providers
- Fear of deportation if not a UK citizen

Disabled People

Disabled people may experience different forms of domestic abuse such as prevention of mobility, neglect and denial of communication. Additional barriers they may face include:

- Lack of suitable alternative housing (e.g. disabled access)
- Lack of disabled access at support services
- Fear of having children taken into care
- Additional communication difficulties which could make people less likely to report incidents
- Fear of losing care provider

Same Sex Relationships

- Fear of homophobia from agencies
- Some people may not be open about their sexuality and may be worried about confidentiality
- Fear of children being taken into care

Older Persons

- Older people may have suffered domestic abuse over a long period of time and therefore may be frightened to come forward now or fear they won't be believed
- Fear of the consequences - they may lose their long term partner and don't want to be alone
- The perpetrator could be their carer and they may be dependent on them physically
- Dementia and Alzheimer's Disease could also play a part as people may not be fully aware of what is going on or forget about instances of abuse that they have suffered
- Lack of self-esteem and confidence

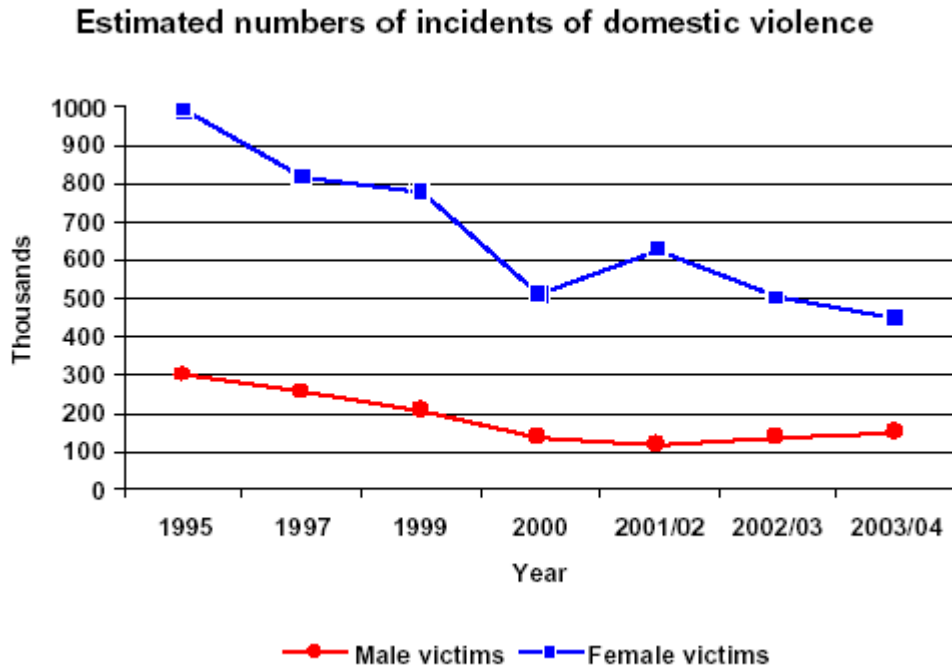
Younger Persons

- Young people may still be dependent and feel that they have no choice but to stay with their abusive parents or relatives
- Homelessness could result from running away from home
- Truancy from school could occur
- Young women fleeing domestic violence may be vulnerable to sexual exploitation
- Long-term emotional difficulties could result from being either a direct victim of abuse or a witness to abuse between parents and/or siblings

Male Victims

- Some men may be embarrassed to admit that they are receiving abuse
- Men may feel that there are no services available to them
- Fear of losing contact with children if they fled the home

Recent research has found a general bias against men suffering from domestic violence. Fathers are particularly affected as reporting domestic violence often results in the father having to leave the home and children. Figures show an increase from 117,000 in 2001/02 to 150,000 in 2003/04 (*Government Statistics on Domestic Violence – estimated numbers of incidents of domestic violence England and Wales 1995 – 2004*).



Research carried out (*Battered Men Survey, 1999*) with 100 male victims found that 20% did not leave the marital home as they had nowhere else to go.

The Council policy is to help those who need support and advice services regardless of their ethnicity, age, gender or sexual orientation. The Council aims to provide a good quality service and will adopt accepted good practice and guidance in service deliver.

7.0 Service Gaps

7.1 Staying at home

Research has highlighted that people do not always want to move home when they are experiencing domestic abuse, particularly if they do not actually live with their abuser. There are measures which can be introduced to make people feel safer in their own home, such as reinforced doors and additional locks and alarms, and these should be made readily available.

7.1.1 Sanctuary

Good practice has been developed at Harrow Council where the 'Sanctuary Project' was launched in September 2002. This is where a room within the property is made safe and secure by replacing an existing internal door with a more solid external door that opens outwards and has mortice bolts, steel hinges and a door viewer. If harassed or threatened with abuse, the victim can retreat to the sanctuary room and call for help. The project has proven successful with 71 people benefiting from the scheme. Only one person who took part in the project has since fled their home. Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council have decided to pilot a similar 'Safe Haven' scheme. Sevenoaks District Council does not currently have such a scheme but is prepared to investigate into the feasibility of undertaking this and this is addressed in the action plan (Appendix 1).

It should be noted at this point that people would not be encouraged to stay in their own home if it would put their safety at risk, particularly in the current climate where arrest rates are low and prosecution and conviction rates are even lower. A sanctuary scheme would only be adopted if the person experiencing domestic abuse wanted to stay put and felt that they would be safe from harm.

7.1.2 Legal Options

There are additional services available for people wanting to stay in their own homes such as Non-Molestation Orders and Occupation Orders. A Non-Molestation Order is an order to stop a partner molesting you or your children. Molesting means harassing, pestering or assaulting you or your children. An Occupation Order can decide who should continue to carry on living in the home following violence or harassment. These orders can help you to stay in your own home, allow you back into your home or exclude your partner from all or part of your home. A Power of Arrest can be attached to an injunction and can give the Police the power to arrest your abuser if they break one of these orders.

So there are options available to people wanting to stay in their own home but more needs to be done to make people aware of these services so that they feel they have a choice other than fleeing their home and seeking emergency accommodation.

7.2 Moving in a planned way

If suffering from domestic abuse there can seem to be only two choices - leave and go to emergency housing or put up with the abuse. There has to be some place between these two extremes. Maybe the abuse has gone away for now but there is a danger it could return giving the victim time to plan their future. There needs to be an improvement in help and advice for these people and an increase in awareness of services available is required.

7.3 Accessing emergency accommodation

There is currently no refuge located in the Sevenoaks District and there is a need for more 'second stage' and 'move on' accommodation in West Kent. Second stage refuges are self-contained individual properties, as opposed to First stage refuges, which are staffed and can house several families in the same building. Second stage refuges can help to avoid dependency and institutionalisation whilst encouraging empowerment. Refuges are often full to capacity and victims may have to join a waiting list before they can access the refuge. If friends and/or family are unwilling to accommodate them it could result in them staying with their perpetrator.

7.4 Raising awareness

There is little point having services if people don't know how to access them. Many people do not realise there are services available to them and therefore do not seek help and suffer in silence. There has been an improvement in raising awareness of domestic abuse with leaflets and booklets being commissioned by Kent County Council and forums on domestic abuse taking place across the County on a regular basis, but there is more to be done to ensure that people who suffer domestic abuse know who to go to for help.

Domestic abuse occurs across all tenures. Tenants of social housing are more likely to have accessed various social services in the past and so may have a better knowledge of the types of services on offer and therefore may be more likely to seek help. Accessing support services may be completely alien to private homeowners so there should be an emphasis on increasing awareness in the private sector.

Research carried out by Kent Woman's Support Service has shown that many people feel that a greater awareness is needed amongst staff in agencies and that training of front-line staff is needed in order to improve attitudes and increase the awareness of appropriate services available to people experiencing domestic abuse.

7.5 Services for disadvantaged people

Research has highlighted a further need for support services for Black and Minority Ethnic groups. A survey conducted by Kent Women's Support Services found that 55% of respondents felt that current services were not meeting the needs of BME groups. Respondents highlighted a need for more culturally sensitive services, better resources within refuges for victims of a different ethnicity and more appropriate interpreters for services.

Younger people may experience problems gaining education with many schools refusing to take on children that are currently staying at a refuge. Action needs to be taken to ensure that children without a permanent home can access education.

There is a lack of services for male victims. Most services are orientated around women, with men being seen as the perpetrators. There are no refuges for men in Kent and as a result they cannot access the support and counselling services that usually exist at such places. The organisation 'Mankind' can offer advice and counselling services but currently lacks specific housing services.

8.0 Monitoring/Evaluating

The Council monitors the occurrence of domestic abuse in the District through statistics from the homelessness register and will obtain reports on advice levels from Shelter and the Citizens Advice Bureaux and also through consultation via the Community Safety Partnership.

An Action Plan (Appendix 1) has been produced to ensure the Council and its partners continue to move forward in tackling domestic abuse. The plan sets out clear objectives, the timescale and who is responsible for carrying out the work/initiatives.

9.0 Summary

Domestic abuse accounts for the highest percentage of violent crime in the UK and occurs in every society regardless of status, religion or tenure. The Housing Department aims to reduce the occurrence of homelessness as a result of domestic abuse which will be achieved by increasing awareness and working to provide a range of services to support individuals and families affected by it to stay in their own homes.

The Council recognises the diversity of its residents and appreciates that everyone has different needs. Some will choose to look elsewhere to live, some will want to stay put and some will just want someone to listen to them. It is important that the individual feels that they have a choice and that there is support available to them whatever they decide to do.

10.0 Getting Help - Contact Details

One of the key areas to address in the fight against domestic abuse is the lack of knowledge and awareness of support agencies and services that are available to people.

10.1 Help within the District

Sevenoaks District Council <http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/>

If you are concerned about your housing situation and want some advice about housing options, call 01732 227000 and ask to talk to a housing officer. Alternatively, you can email housing@sevenoaks.gov.uk. The Council can help with supporting you to stay safely in your own home or, if necessary, finding suitable temporary accommodation.

Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership

The Community Safety Partnership brings together all of the agencies in the District who can have an impact of crime reduction and targeting anti-social behaviour, including domestic abuse. Partners include the Council, the Police, Primary Care Trusts and Housing Associations. For a full list of the partners involved and additional information visit www.sevenoaks-csp.org.uk or email sdcommunitysafety@sevenoaks.gov.uk

The Community Safety Partnership has set up a number of initiatives including:

- Crimestoppers: A free and confidential helpline where people can anonymously report crime. **0800 555111**
- West Kent Racial Incident Reporting Line: A free and confidential line where people can report incidents of racial abuse. **0800 138 1685**

Sevenoaks District Housing Register (SDHR)

The SDHR is an affordable housing lettings scheme, run by West Kent Housing Association. For further information and an application form contact West Kent HA on 01732 749400 or visit www.westkent.org

Floating Support Service

The Service provides a wide range of support to vulnerable members of the community.

For further details, contact Housing Services on 01732 227000.

The Police

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IS A CRIME!

There are specialist officers who are trained to help people experiencing domestic violence and advise them on the best course of action.

Always dial **999** in an emergency

To find your nearest police station, visit www.kent.police.uk or call 01622 690690

Shelter

Advice for anyone in the District concerned or threatened with homelessness - 01732 742399

Citizens Advice Bureaux

www.nacab.org.uk

Sevenoaks: Buckhurst Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent. TN13 1HW. 01732 454443

Swanley: 16 High Street, Swanley, Kent. BR8 8BG. 01322 664949
Edenbridge: 68 High Street, Edenbridge, Kent. TN8 8BG. 01732 865131

Refuges

Emergency accommodation for women and children only. There is a countrywide network of refuges which may be accessed through the police or local authorities. There are currently 12 refuges in Kent with a capacity to accommodate up to 90 families. Spaces are limited and are only available if other means of meeting need are not appropriate. A refuge may have full time staff and may be able to offer counselling services to both women and children.

10.2 National Helplines

National helplines can provide a range of support and advice and may also be able to direct you to more specialist and local agencies depending on your circumstances.

24 hour National Crisis Line (Refuge and Women's Aid joint service)

Phone: 0808 2000 247

Email: helpline@womensaid.org.uk

Women's Aid Federation UK - 0845 7023 468

Dove Project:

For advice and support - 01702 302333

24 hour refuge bed space & referral helpline - 01702 300006

Victim Support - 0845 30 30 900 <http://www.victimsupport.org/>

Shelterline - 0808 800 4444

NSPCC - 0800 800 500

Samaritans - 08457 90 90 90

Childline - 0800 1111

Male advice and enquiry line - 0845 064 6800

Mankind - 0870 794 4124 www.mankind.org.uk

10.3 Legal & Financial Support

Legal Advice

Sevenoaks District Council is a member of the **Community Legal Service Partnership (CLSP)**. CLSPs have been established nationwide to develop advice, information and legal services in their communities. Visit www.justask.org.uk for more information and to access legal help and advice in your area.

Rights of Women (ROW) - a national voluntary organisation providing legal help and advice to women. Tel: 020 7251 6577 Website: www.row.org.uk

For information about Non-Molestation and Occupation Orders which may be able to help you stay in your home, visit www.compactlaw.co.uk. You should speak to a solicitor for additional advice about these.

Financial Support

Victims leaving an abusive relationship may need financial support, particularly if their abuser was the main 'breadwinner' or the one controlling the finances. You may be entitled to claim for and receive benefits, even if you are working. Your local JobCentre Plus office will be able to give you advice on this. www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

Sevenoaks JobCentre Plus: Lady Boswell House
 42-44 London Road
 Sevenoaks
 Kent. TN13 1AS
 Tel: 01732 583600

Appendix 1: Service Improvement Action Plan						
Priority	Objectives	Targets to Meet Objectives	Responsible Officer	Resource Implications		Performance Measurement
				Finance	Human/Other	
1: Help People Stay in Their Own Homes	Reduce homelessness as a result of domestic violence	<p>April 2005 Work with partners to identify feasibility of creating additional security for people wanting to stay in their own home (e.g. Sanctuary rooms, changing locks, reinforcing doors)</p> <p>Dec 2005 Identify/develop services to help perpetrators address abusive behaviour</p>	Social Housing Team Leader	Funding for locks, doors etc	Housing Initiatives Officer; Community Safety Officers; Police; Housing Associations	Domestic abuse homeless applications to SDHR reduced by 5%
2: Help People To Move in a Planned Way	Improve services to help people move in a planned way	July 2005 Reduction on use of emergency accommodation by people fleeing domestic abuse	Social Housing Team Leader	Within agreed budget	SDHR PSL Officer	Numbers fleeing domestic abuse placed in temporary accommodation reduced by 5%

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Priority	Objectives	Targets to Meet Objectives	Responsible Officer	Resource Implications Finance	Human/Other	Performance Measurement
3: Dealing with Emergencies	Ensure sufficient, appropriate, emergency accommodation (a refuge or refuges) is provided in the district or nearby areas	2004 Conduct Needs Analysis to identify need and any gaps in accommodation within the District and surrounding areas	Housing Policy Team Leader	Capital & revenue funding to be identified; cost of joint funding a scheme	Officer time	Match need to provision with appropriate support
	Ensure 'Out of Hours' services are available	Dec 2004 Meet with other local authorities (e.g. TWBC, TMBC, Dartford, Tandridge) to look into provision of additional joint refuges or move-on accommodation				
	Improve access to 'move on' or permanent accommodation to ensure that temporary accommodation places are short term use only	Ongoing Reduction in average length of stay in women's refuges				

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Priority	Objectives	Targets to Meet Objectives	Responsible Officer	Resource Implications Finance	Human/Other	Performance Measurement
Priority 4: Increasing awareness of services amongst people experiencing domestic abuse and service providers	Increase awareness of domestic abuse and housing services available both to social housing tenants and private homeowners	<p>Ongoing Promote and advertise via leaflets and booklets in Housing Associations, Council receptions, libraries, Shelter and Citizens Advice Bureaux</p> <p>Oct 2004 Add summary of strategy together with contact details to the website</p>	SHTL Housing Initiatives Officer/ Communications Officer	From agreed budgets	Housing Initiatives Officer; Forums Officer time	Up to date leaflets and booklets are freely available Website updated and usage monitored
	Ensure all housing staff are aware of domestic abuse and can identify signs of it. They should then be able to point people in the right direction of available services	Ongoing Shared training between SDC, RSLs, CABx, Shelter and other public bodies such as the Police and Social Services	SHTL	From agreed training budget	Housing Initiatives and Community Safety Officer	All staff are trained and can direct survivors to the right services. Protocols re abuse are in place
	Liaise with other authorities, agencies, voluntary groups to promote joint working and sharing of information and initiatives	<p>Ongoing Attend NK and WK forums and conferences</p> <p>Bi-annually Meetings with RSLs and the Police</p>	SHTL		Housing and Community Safety Officers	Joint strategies, policies and initiatives are developed

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Priority	Objectives	Targets to Meet Objectives	Responsible Officer	Resource Implications		Performance Measurement
				Finance	Human/Other	
	Monitor national and regional initiatives and keep track of legislative changes	Ongoing Update this strategy with changes to legislation and ensure progress is being made on action plan	Housing Policy Team Leader	From existing budgets	Officer time	Strategy is kept up to date
Priority 5: Improving Access to Services For Disadvantaged People	Improve service to people from minority ethnic community groups and raise awareness of services	<p>2004 Audit housing service provision for BME survivors</p> <p>2004 Analyse results of Travellers & Gypsies Housing Needs sub-survey</p> <p>Ongoing Raise awareness of Racial Incident Report Line</p> <p>Ongoing Liase with ethnic minority communities and religious groups</p>	<p>Housing Initiatives Officer</p> <p>Housing Initiatives Officer</p> <p>Community Safety Partnership</p> <p>Traveller Liaison/Housing Initiatives Officers</p>	From existing budgets	Officer time	Regular satisfaction surveys and consultation with BME groups take place

Appendix 1: Service Improvement Action Plan						
Priority	Objectives	Targets to Meet Objectives	Responsible Officer	Resource Implications		Performance Measurement
				Finance	Human/Other	
	Ensure disabled people can access services	<p>Ongoing Advertise and promote awareness of services in and around district</p> <p>2005 Provide disabled people with suitable emergency accommodation if needed</p>	Housing Initiatives Officer	From existing budgets	Officer time	Leaflets and booklets are freely available; regular satisfaction surveys conducted
	Ensure people in same sex relationships can access housing services	<p>Ongoing Advertise and promote awareness of services</p>	Housing Initiatives Officer	From existing budgets	Officer time	Leaflets, booklets and website contain acknowledgment of same sex couples and direction to appropriate services

Appendix 1: Service Improvement Action Plan						
Priority	Objectives	Targets to Meet Objectives	Responsible Officer	Resource Implications		Performance Measurement
				Finance	Human/Other	
	Improve services for older people	<p>Ongoing Advertise, promote and work with local housing authorities to ensure there is appropriate awareness of services amongst residents</p> <p>2004 Encourage RSLs and agencies to train relevant staff (e.g. sheltered scheme staff, care providers) in dealing with domestic abuse amongst the elderly</p> <p>Ongoing Develop joined up working with health authorities/PCTs</p>	Housing Initiatives Officer	From existing budgets	Officer time	All officers are trained and giving appropriate advice

Appendix 1: Service Improvement Action Plan						
Priority	Objectives	Targets to Meet Objectives	Responsible Officer	Resource Implications		Performance Measurement
				Finance	Human/Other	
	Ensure young people and children can also access appropriate services and support	<p>Ongoing Advertise and promote services available in and around district</p> <p>2005 Ensure workers in refuges are trained and aware of children's needs</p> <p>Ongoing Work with KCC education authorities to ensure children have access to education if they are in emergency or temporary accommodation</p>	Youth Development Co-ordinator; Housing Initiatives Officer	From existing budgets	Officer time	Regular reports from Youth Development Co-ordinator; services monitored and reviewed

Appendix 1: Service Improvement Action Plan						
Priority	Objectives	Targets to Meet Objectives	Responsible Officer	Resource Implications		Performance Measurement
				Finance	Human/Other	
	Improve services for male victims	<p>Ongoing Raise agency staff awareness that men can suffer domestic abuse as well as women</p> <p>2005 Investigate provision of emergency accommodation for male victims</p> <p>2005 Research into whether a working group is needed/appropriate to develop services for men</p>	<p>SHTL</p> <p>Housing Initiatives Officer</p>	From existing budgets	Training	<p>Agency staff are trained and aware that men can experience domestic abuse</p> <p>All stakeholders have been consulted</p>

