

## **Lessons Learned from the Restart Programme and Key Standards for Developing a Perpetrator Housing Pathway**



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## Executive Summary

This Report builds upon existing Restart research and learning to develop key principles and guidance for establishing a sustainable perpetrator housing response. The resource is aimed at local authorities, housing organisations and other services interested in working towards the development of standardisation in the responses across different areas.

In seeking to provide a sustainable perpetrator pathway, the report sets the scene on housing in relation to domestic abuse as a barrier for women looking to escape and rebuild their lives.

The Report covers learning to date from the Restart Programme including barriers to success and sets key foundations for successfully implementing a perpetrator housing pathway.

# Section 1

## Introduction

Commissioned by the Drive Partnership, the purpose of this report is the development of guidance for a sustainable domestic abuse perpetrator housing response. It builds upon previous research and learnings from Restart and other pilots. The report creates recommendations to contribute to the development of practical guidance and standards for local authorities, the housing sector, and domestic abuse services interested in establishing perpetrator housing pathways.

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## Structure of the Document

This report is in three sections:

- Section one provides the domestic abuse context within which the Restart Programme operates, making the case for a domestic abuse perpetrator housing pathway.
  - Section two outlines the Restart Programme and key findings from interviews, surveys and case study analysis.
  - Section three sets out recommendations based on learning to date from the Restart Programme and conditions for the development of a perpetrator housing pathway.
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## A note on Language

We will use the term domestic abuse throughout the report to mean intimate partner violence and abuse (including ex-partners, and ex-spouses) as opposed to the wider Government definition of domestic abuse as defined in the Domestic Abuse Act (2021). The Restart programme is primarily aimed at intimate partner abuse. We use the term victim-survivor to define those experiencing harm and perpetrator of domestic abuse to those causing harm. We will use the term perpetrator and victim-survivor thereafter.

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## Methodology

A range of qualitative and quantitative methods were used to extrapolate data. These included:

- Analysis of primary data from Restart, including reports

- Analysis of secondary data from published literature and statistics, including Government data, legislation and research reports
- Semi-structured Interviews with Local Authority Homeless Team (Operational and Strategic) staff
- Semi-structured Interviews with Restart staff
- Survey to Local Authority Homeless Teams
- Case Studies provided by the Restart Team

It is worth pointing out that due to ethical reasons and time constraints, there was no access to interviews with victim-survivors or perpetrators of domestic abuse, so no inference is drawn from them directly, but data was drawn from interviews with professionals and the case studies provided.

## Section 2

### Background Context

#### Making the Case for a Perpetrator Housing Pathway

##### Women, Domestic Abuse and Housing

Research has consistently shown that housing is a key resource enabling women to escape violence from partners and ex-partners, and that a major reason why women stay in or return to violent relationships is lack of access to safe, long-term, independent, affordable accommodation (Mooney, 1994; Morley, 2000; Malos and Hague, 1993; Charles; 1994).

Domestic abuse is among the leading causes of housing instability, including homelessness for women and children (Tomas and Dittmar, 1995; Baker, Cook and Norris, 2003). Safe and appropriate housing, and the economic resources to maintain it, are major concerns for women wanting to escape domestic abuse (Chung, Kennedy, O'Brien, and Wendt, 2000). As noted by Dobash and Dobash (1992), housing is a crucial factor in women escaping domestic abuse.

*'The importance of housing cannot be overestimated it ranks as one of the crucial factors affecting women's ability to find viable alternatives to a violent relationship.'* Dobash and Dobash (1992).

Wendt et al. (2015) found that immediately after leaving an abusive relationship, 49.6% of women lived in temporary accommodation and that the rest moved into rental accommodation (26.7%) or stayed with friends/family (33%). They state that for the majority of women (67%), housing costs increased after separation.

Research has often focussed on housing as a barrier in terms of finding a new safe home for survivors. The All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Ending Homelessness (July 2017) found that:

*'In 2016, 90% of women in refuges were reported to have housing needs and in 2015/16, 6,550 people became homeless because of a violent relationship breakdown, accounting for 11% of all homeless acceptances'.*

The onus, here, remains on women and children to uproot themselves. Often the wrongdoer remains in the community, retaining established links with their known environment and social networks, whilst victim and family face multiple disadvantages, operating in isolation, often dealing with trauma after a period of crisis and abuse escalation. Kelly et al. (2014) argued that, for women and children, their home and rootedness in local communities were critical to their safety and freedom. In addition to

the violence they have experienced, the loss of home is a significant feature of the trauma that women leaving a violent and abusive perpetrator experience. The loss of a home can be further compounded by the uncertainty of re-housing if they decide to leave.

Walby and Towers (2017) used data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales highlighting the relationship between violence, economy and society, arguing that the more serious forms of domestic violence are impacted by ‘the lesser resilience’ of situational factors the victim experiences, and particularly their lack of economic resources. They found that in relation to repetition of domestic violent crimes and economic inequality; two thirds of domestic violent crime victims lived in rented accommodation (social and private rented); compared to one-third (34%) of the population (owner occupation). They observed that as the number of repeated domestic violent crimes increased, so did the percentage of female victims living in rented accommodation (66% for a single crime, to 67% for two to ten crimes, and rising to 84% for more than ten crimes). Put succinctly, housing is a key resource impacting on rates of domestic abuse (Walby, 2018).

Walby (2018) makes a crucial point arguing that minimum standards for access to housing are more important than increasing criminalisation of domestic abuse.

As the above figures suggest, the economic resources at the disposal of many women in the social rented sector are already narrow, meaning that options for women to readily access other housing options to escape abuse are limited. As well as the impact affordability has on choice of tenure, Bell and Kober (2008) found that, whilst the act of leaving the relationship meant that victims were no longer experiencing the violence, leaving their home, re-establishing their family, and furnishing a new home placed considerable strain on often financially limited resources. Sharp (2008); Bell and Kober (2008) argue that many women encounter further hardship and have had to give up employment and some may have debts incurred from financial abuse within the past relationship.

*‘It changed my whole life, I found it very difficult to pack up everything I had for so long, move it all and start afresh, this was very hard emotionally mostly due to the fact that I was already stressed due to abuse but that I had to start again decorating a new place and buying furniture with very little money.’* (Scottish Women’s Aid, 2016).

Women’s Aid (2024) in their ‘The Price of Safety: The cost of leaving a perpetrator and rebuilding a safe, independent life’ report state that it could cost a survivor almost £50,000 to leave an abuser. They base this number on the direct costs of fleeing and rebuilding a new life, stating that a victim-survivor might face a £10,000 deficit after receiving her full entitlement of support from the state.

Women's Aid point out that barriers to accessing safe accommodation after leaving an abuser include access to refuge. In their 'Nowhere to Turn' Report (2024), they found the reasons women were turned away from refuge included refuge space being no longer available (29.1%) and 17.2% spent time 'sofa surfing' while waiting for a refuge space, with 14.7% staying in local authority emergency accommodation.

## Domestic Abuse and Housing Related Costs

In England and Wales, according to Government figures (2019), the social and economic cost for victims of domestic abuse is estimated to be approximately £66 billion (Oliver et al, 2019). Information from the Crime Survey for England and Wales was used to calculate the *likelihood* of physical and emotional harm, and then used to estimate the costs of those harms (using the Quality Adjusted Life Year (QALY) method), the resulting health service costs and lost output. The highest element of the estimated cost is attributed to the physical and emotional harms incurred by victims (£47 billion), including fear, anxiety and depression experienced by victims.

**Figure 1. Costs of Domestic Abuse**

Costs in Anticipation	Costs as a consequence				Costs in response				Total
	Physical and emotional harm	Lost output	Health services	Victim services	Police costs	Criminal legal	Civil legal	Other	
£6m	£47,287m	£14,098m	£2,333m	£724m	£1,257m	£336m	£140m	£11m	£66,192m

The cost to the economy is estimated at £14 billion, where output is lost due to time off work and reduced productivity due to domestic abuse. The 'Nowhere to Turn' Report points out that some of the cost is shouldered by Government, such as the costs to health services (£2.3 billion) and the police (£1.3 billion). Some of the costs of victims' services also fall to Government, such as housing costs, which total £550 million, and take into account temporary housing, homelessness services, repairs and maintenance.

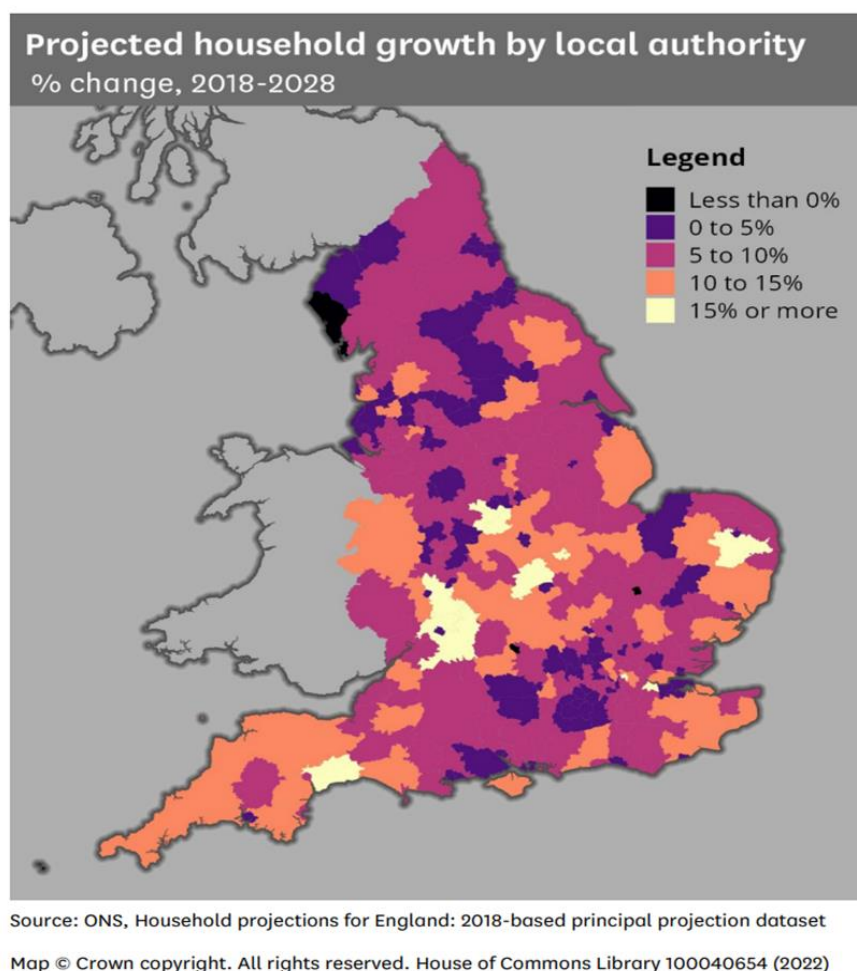
As outlined earlier, many victim-survivors flee their homes and are forced to rely on refuge (when they can get it) and temporary accommodation. MRI Software (2023) state that councils spent £1.6 billion on temporary accommodation and over 100,000 households are living in temporary accommodation.

## Scarcity of Affordable Housing

Research undertaken by National Housing Federation and Crisis (2018) identified a need for 340,000 homes each year in England up to 2031, to include 145,000 affordable homes, comprising 90,000 homes for social rent, 30,000 for intermediate rent, and 25,000 for shared ownership. The report estimated there were 4.75 million households in housing need across the UK, with four million in England alone. The ONS household

projections by local authority for the ten-year period between 2018 to 2028 can be seen below (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Projected Household Growth**



The Housing Review (2024) points out that housing benefit and the housing cost element of Universal Credit represent the largest government subsidy to housing. The Review adds that from the late 1970s, their annual cost has grown from under £5 billion to more than £31 billion in 2023/2024, and account for around one-tenth of the entire social security budget. The numbers of those in receipt of housing benefits rose from 3.4 million in the late 1970s to 5.3 million in 2022/23, and those privately renting increased from around one-fifth in the 1970s, continuing until the early 1990s, but has since risen to more than one-third. According to the English Housing Survey (EHS), the number of households in England in the PRS rose to 4,611,000 in 2021/22.

### Temporary Accommodation

Official statistics on temporary accommodation illustrate an upward trend of its use in England, where placements have more than doubled since 2010/11, increasing to over 104,000 households at the end of March 2023 (see Figure below), which is the highest since data collection began.

**Figure 3. Homeless Households in Temporary Accommodation (2009-2023)**



Women's Aid (2024) point out that many survivors must rely on temporary accommodation after leaving, as opposed to specialist refuge accommodation (ONS, 2024b). They note that there were over 35,000 households reporting support needs around domestic abuse in temporary accommodation in 2022-23.

### The Social (Housing) Regulation Act (2023)

The Social (Housing) Regulation Act (2023) made provision for registered providers to comply with regulations relating to safety of homes, setting the foundations for a new, proactive consumer regulation regime. The aim is to refine the existing economic regulatory regime to strengthen the Regulator of Social Housing's (Regulator) powers to enforce the consumer and economic regimes. This change introduced a response to domestic abuse in relation to the Neighbourhood and Community Standard and creates the conditions for engagement with housing providers in responding to domestic abuse.

#### **Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) Consumer Standards as of April 2024**

1. Safety and Quality Standard – the expected outcomes focus on the safety and quality of tenants' homes
2. Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard – outcomes centre on how landlords provide information, listen to tenants, and act on their views

3. Tenancy Standard – outcomes about how landlords allocate and let homes and manage tenancies

4. Neighbourhood and Community Standard – outcomes focus on how landlords work with other organisations to help ensure tenants live in safe neighbourhoods. Specific expectations on domestic abuse within this standard include:

Within the Neighbourhood and Community Standard, the RSH sets out expectations providers are expected to comply with:

Specific Expectation (SE) 1 - Registered providers must have a policy for how they respond to cases of domestic abuse.

Specific Expectation (SE) 2 - Registered providers must co-operate with appropriate local authority departments to support the local authority in meeting its duty to develop a strategy and commission services for victims of domestic abuse and their children within safe accommodation.

## Joint Tenancies

Joint tenancies can cause housing precarity in relation to domestic abuse where one partner who gives notice ends the tenancy for all parties. If one party wishes to end the tenancy and the other joint tenant wants to stay in the property, the landlord may:

1. Give the remaining tenant(s) a new sole tenancy at the same property
2. Not give them a new tenancy, whereby the property could be offered to someone else (i.e. a family).

If joint tenants can't agree on who gets the tenancy, a Court can decide this. When a perpetrator gives notice to quit (on a joint tenancy), this leaves the survivor (and remaining occupier) wholly reliant on the goodwill of the landlord in granting a new tenancy.

The only current means for preventing a notice to quit by the perpetrator is for the survivor to obtain an injunction to prevent the perpetrator serving notice. However, this mechanism is also open to the perpetrator to prevent the survivor serving notice. This means that women who have fled abuse and secured a refuge space can be prevented from ending a tenancy where they are a joint tenant, thus opening up the opportunity for a perpetrator to deliberately 'run up' rent arrears, commit anti-social behaviour etc. as a controlling mechanism over their victim.

Where a joint tenancy is terminated, and the landlord grants a new sole tenancy to the survivor, this depends on the goodwill of the landlord and may see the survivor losing some of the benefits accrued under the previous joint tenancy. The tenancy may also be assigned, via a court order, to the sole name of the survivor.

## Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse

The previous sections have provided detailed context in relation to housing legislation and barriers that women survivors may encounter in accessing safe, affordable accommodation when fleeing domestic abuse. This section will provide some context on perpetrator work and research. Research into domestic abuse has developed a greater focus on the need to address the behaviour of domestic abuse perpetrators, whilst centring the needs of victim-survivors.

There now exists far more research and interventions along with evidence-based practice and policymaking. Shepherd (2005) argues that coordinated community responses, where agencies act together to protect victims and hold offenders accountable, can make a difference. In addition, studies of inter-agency coordination and uniform policies and procedures have demonstrated increased rates of identification and intervention (Gamache, Edleson and Schock, 1988; Pence, 1985).

Safelives (2020) in their call for a national perpetrator strategy (2020) point out that less than 1% of perpetrators receive a specialist intervention to challenge or change their behaviour. This lack of specialist interventions represents missed opportunities to step in to work with a perpetrator who is engaging in abusive behaviour to prevent them from moving on to continue the same behaviour with their next partner.

Hester and Westmarland (2006) recognised that addressing the needs of male perpetrators is a controversial issue, particularly as service provision for the victims of male violence is under resourced and that there is the potential for programmes for male perpetrators to be resourced at the expense of women's domestic abuse services (see also Eadie and Knight, 2002). This, twinned with the shortage of affordable housing, provides a useful context in understanding the conditions for thinking about the housing needs for perpetrators. As with all work with perpetrators of domestic abuse, the matter needs to be considered in relation to the victim-survivor's safety (including housing needs).

## Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse and Housing Issues

Whilst the issue of survivors and housing is increasingly becoming documented as a barrier to escaping domestic abuse and rebuilding lives, the issue of perpetrators and housing is a more neglected area of understanding and presents a clear gap in knowledge and policy development. Westmarland and Gangoli (2006) identified housing in relation to perpetrators as a gap in services. As well as this gap, there is an issue whereby perpetrators of domestic abuse can be economically dependent on the victim-survivor to meet their housing needs. Renehan and Gadd (2024) argue that this is particularly the case for domestic abuse perpetrators who are substance dependent, long-term unemployed, or recently released from custody:

*‘This is something many men on domestic abuse intervention programmes often need support with and precisely why it is essential that probation officers work with abusive men’s partners and former partners to ensure they are not entrapped into continuing to share a home with men who put them in danger.’ (Renehan and Gadd 2024).*

Renehan and Gadd (2024b) further argue that it is counterproductive to enrol domestic abuse perpetrators onto programmes to address their abusive behaviour without first meeting basic needs. Providing safe and secure housing in the first instance may go some way in preparing perpetrators for the difficult choices they will have to make as part of intervention programmes:

*‘Men who have been domestically abusive typically have to navigate between leaving a relationship they have harmed irreparably and suffering housing precariousness, continuing to blame the victim or accepting responsibility, apologising to the victim and their children in the uncertain hope that some semblance of a parental relationship can be salvaged, and acknowledging substance dependencies that keep painful feelings at bay, including the hurt of past traumas and mistakes.’ (Renehan and Gadd, 2024a).*

Understandably, there has been focus on identifying housing needs of victim-survivors of domestic abuse. However, the approach has been fairly one dimensional, with (as outlined earlier) the onus on the survivor to move, uprooting their life and their links with community.

Wydall and Clarke (2015) highlight the importance of housing for perpetrators, suggesting that rehousing perpetrators can have positive outcomes for both perpetrators and victims. They argue the importance of the coordinated community response, which prioritises the needs of victims while simultaneously addressing the behaviour of perpetrators.

In their study of the Making Safe Project, which provided support and alternative housing for perpetrators of domestic abuse, they found that in addition to providing victim-survivors and their children respite from the daily fear and anxiety caused by the controlling presence of the perpetrator, living in alternative housing provided the men with an opportunity to illustrate they could address their problems and change their behaviour.

This, in turn, gave women the feeling of being in a stronger bargaining position than previously. The same research also illustrated the positive impact of perpetrators being re-housed, as, for men who wanted to be part of a family and return to the family home, the space away from the family was instrumental in providing them the opportunity to demonstrate that they had made the necessary changes within themselves.

*‘Because if I did have a big argument with her, I just go back to the flat and I’m by myself, you know, and I don’t want to die a lonely man. So yeah, I do want my family. It is up to me...it is my choice.’* Foundation Housing, Tenant: A from Making Safe (Wydall and Clarke, 2015).

The act of the wrongdoer having to leave the family home, when it was deemed safe for the victim-survivor to stay, was also symbolic. The Making Safe Evaluation found that some women with dependent children are reluctant to leave the family home and feel a sense of injustice at having to contemplate such a move when it is their partner’s abusive behaviour that is the issue. This finding supports earlier research by Bossy and Coleman, 2000).

The next section will focus on the Restart Programme and learning to date.

## Section 3

### The Restart Programme and Learning to Date

#### The Restart Programme

Restart is an earlier intervention and accommodation pilot for those who are at risk of perpetrating or where there is domestic abuse within families who are in contact with children's social care. The intervention is designed to fully assess risk and potential for abuse alongside offering support and tools for use in the longer term. The Restart Project runs across five London Boroughs (Camden, Croydon, Havering, Sutton, and Westminster) from November 2021, and a further, sixth site which opened in June 2024 - London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (LBBD).

#### **The Programme Aims**

1. The Programme seeks to identify and respond to patterns of domestic abuse at an earlier stage, improving safety and long-term outcomes for child and adult victim-survivors.
2. Build motivation and facilitate access to behaviour change interventions for the abusive parent.
3. Facilitate access to alternative accommodation for the abusive parent where required, ensuring that child and adult victim-survivors remain safe at home with space for action.
4. Reduce repeat and serial incidents of domestic abuse in the same, or in future, relationships.
5. Prevent escalation of Children's Social Care (CSC) intervention and the risk of adult and child victim-survivors being the ones needing to move/flee to safer accommodation.
6. Provide training and capacity building for CSC practitioners to enable CSC to effectively hold abusive parents to account.
7. Shift thinking and approaches in relation to the prevention of family homelessness by working with Housing teams on accommodation pathways.

The programme provides earlier intervention for perpetrators of domestic abuse. The Restart approach has the option of providing alternative accommodation for the perpetrator where they may be residing with the victim-survivor or where they may have insecure housing. Restart provides four weeks of supportive temporary accommodation in a hotel, with a view to supporting perpetrators into accessing rehousing via local authority homeless teams in the boroughs. The four weeks accommodation may result in them accessing accommodation after this period and in some cases, there is potential

to return to the family home. More information can be found here: <https://drivepartnership.org.uk/about-us/restart/>

The aim of the hotel setting aims to create ‘breathing space’ for perpetrators and victim-survivors and provides an immediate housing alternative. In this sense providing ‘space for action’ for women. Stark (2007) sees that coercive control undermines the victim’s physical and psychological integrity. Kelly (2003) sees this shrinking of options as limiting their ‘space for action’. The hotel provides an environment away from the victim-survivor whereby perpetrators can begin to engage with the Restart programme and other support services. By placing the perpetrator into hotel accommodation, the threat of further abuse can be reduced, so the victim-survivor and children can remain in their home and increase their security and give them space to consider things. This also gives the perpetrator access to housing practitioners who can support decision-making regarding their future housing.

Restart also provides four to eight weeks of one-to one support to the service user via a Case Manager, and a separate worker for support to the victim-survivor. Following the assessment of risk and need, the service user (SU) will move onto a 1:1 intervention with their case manager (CM) for a minimum of four weeks.

The aim of the four-to-eight-week period is to assess and prepare SUs for behaviour change. The model includes an allocated Case Manager (CM), Accommodation Support Worker (ASW), Partner Support Worker (PSW), and Safe and Together Model implementation and training for over 400 social workers across five London Boroughs (Camden, Croydon, Havering, Sutton, and Westminster) to help support their response to abusive parents.

The original five sites in the pilot programme are funded by the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and delivered by the Drive Partnership, Respect, Cranstoun and the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) who are no longer a partner. The sixth site (LBBD) is funded via Foundations What Works Centre.

## The Referral Process

Referrals are made by local authority Children’s Social Care, Housing or Early Help Teams to Restart for assessment. All organisations making referrals are offered training in the Safe and Together Model (see Appendix C). Once referred, Restart assess the referral for suitability for the programme.

## Panel Meetings

Panel meetings bring together professionals to assess accommodation need of the perpetrator in line with interactions with the family as circumstances can change. Typically, cases should be reviewed at panel at least once during the 4-week intervention period, and more if longer term accommodation needs are likely. Expectations of the

panel meetings are outlined within memorandums of understanding for each local authority. Panel meeting observations and other data suggested panel meetings were not always attended by the local authority and, when they were, there was sometimes limited information as to the service user (the perpetrator) and what their current housing situation was and therefore elements of unknown risk to victim-survivors and their families. Thus, the role of panel meetings as the eyes and ears on the ground were not used to their full advantage to dynamically assess risk. There is a need to strengthen attendance at panel meetings from all partners with a requirement to research and present a 'real time' position statement on the perpetrator. A template should be issued to all partners to provide their update ahead of the meeting to support the meeting chair to direct actions.

## Referrals

For the period 2023 / 2024, 129 perpetrators, with 229 related children, were referred to the Restart Programme from Children's Social Care teams. 30 service users have accessed the housing pathway that offers accommodation for the perpetrator so the family can stay in their home when it has been safe to do so.

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### Restart Programme Learning to Date: Case Study and Interview Analysis

To ascertain learning to date of the Restart Programme, information was gathered from a number of sources and methods, including analysis of case studies; interviews with local authority teams, ASW and CM; Cranston; attendance at panel meetings, as well as surveys to local authorities. Few responses were received to the online survey to the five local authorities.

A case analysis was undertaken on a small number of cases that were provided to the research lead. The case studies were not uniform in format and of differing detail and quality of information provided. A template for all case studies would assist in creating higher quality, professional, detailed case studies that could be used to examine lessons learned. The analysis identifies some good practice and outcomes in respect of Restart's accommodation support offer, and some of the issues that professionals encountered when supporting families in securing accommodation to prevent further domestic abuse. Findings are discussed in turn.

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### Reasons for Referral to Accommodation Support Worker

From the 14 case studies provided, 11 families referred to Restart were identified as having a housing need. The family composition could be broadly categorised into two types at the time of the referral: cohabiting or separated. Importantly, in one case where

the couple was separated, they had remained in an Islamic marriage. All families who were referred for housing support had children and/or were expecting a child.

In all 11 cases, there were a range of additional needs that, in some cases, resulted in the perpetrators' reliance upon the victim-survivor for housing. These included the perpetrators' employment status, substance dependency, and insecure housing or homelessness. In several of these cases, the Case Managers highlighted that perpetrators would engage in coercively controlling behaviours, resulting in the victim-survivor feeling guilty or responsible for their housing situation. This can be a central reason some victim-survivors resume the relationship:

*'Ben is unemployed, and Sandra often felt blamed by Ben for his homelessness status and unemployment status. Sandra previously attended a survivor's domestic abuse programme in 2019, and they separated around then, but have since reconciled'. (Case Study)*

*'Anna shared with the Partner Support Worker (PSW) at [names organisation] that Jack would use his homelessness as a form of coercion and control, often sitting outside her flat until she let him into the property. She felt blamed for his homeless status'. (Case Study)*

In two of the cases referred to the ASW, the perpetrator was sofa-surfing – in one case for two years – at the time of the referral to Restart. This included staying in (often unsuitable) accommodation that belonged to/was tenanted by the perpetrator or victim's friends or family. In one case, the perpetrator was living in a 'stock room' at their place of work, illustrating the precarity of the housing circumstances.

Residing with the victims' family member, in one case, was identified by the perpetrator as making it difficult to move on from the relationship, as is highlighted below:

*'Ben has been referred to our housing panel to discuss the possibility of rehousing him as he feels that living with Sandra's brother is demonstrative of the difficulties he has in letting go of Sandra'. (Case Study)*

The accommodation needs of the family differed in respect of their housing status. This included tenancies in the private sector, social housing, and/or local authority accommodation. The accommodation offer via Restart was not always straightforward given that this depended on whether either the perpetrator or the victim was the sole or joint named tenancy holder.

In one example, the family referred to Restart were under 18, both with their own social worker due to domestic abuse in their respective households, and an allocated social worker for their unborn child. The victim-survivor was residing with the perpetrator in his family home at the time of referral. Housing support was therefore required for both young people given the risk of domestic abuse to them by their own parents, and that

which their own relationship posed to their unborn child. This case highlights that the housing offer will differ from that offered to adults.

While the overall aim of Restart is to address abusive behaviours and prevent domestic abuse, the accommodation support offer provided was viewed as a crucial foundation pathway to addressing and supporting long-term behavioural change:

*‘It should not be assumed that the perpetrator will be supported first with behaviour management and secondly with accommodation. In some instances, it may be more effective to support the perpetrator to address immediate housing needs, to be able to focus on behaviour management. As engagement with DA support programmes are a requirement for longer-term accommodation, this will provide an opportunity for support which we will monitor and evaluate’. (Case Study)*

## Additional Considerations as Part of a Wider Package of Accommodation Support

Wydall and Clarke (2015) argued that stand-alone perpetrator programmes are not always responsive to individual needs or the wider social needs of some perpetrators (Eadie and Knight, 2002; Rees and Rivet, 2005). Henderson’s (2019) research supports the findings of Wydall and Clarke (2015) where men were given a key worker, housed away from the victim and accessed a behaviour change programme, resulting in beneficial outcomes for the perpetrator (and in Wydall and Clarke’s study, victim-survivors too).

Davies and Biddle (2018) suggest work with perpetrators can be more effective when they are tailored to the individual needs of the perpetrator (Babcock et al., 2002). There were several issues that were replicated across the case studies provided requiring professional consideration before, during, and post accommodation support for Restart to be effective. This included additional needs of the perpetrator, victim-survivor and children, subject to referral. The identified support needs of each of these are considered in turn.

### *Perpetrator Mental Health, Substance Dependency, and Trauma*

The perpetrator’s mental health was identified as a pressing issue in several of the case studies provided. Perpetrators shared examples of traumatic childhood experiences, and a reluctance to engage with services because of wider societal racial discrimination.

Several cases identified issues with substance dependency, including alcohol, ‘Class A’ substances, and cannabis – and proposed that such dependencies were featured in their violence. Professionals tailored their response in such cases, for example by providing flexibility in the length of one-to-one sessions offered, building trusting relationships, and referring to appropriate services for further support.

Meeting the housing needs for perpetrators with additional needs was important, as difficulties in accessing and maintaining housing could have an adverse impact on

perpetrators having a stable base from which to access support. Meeting housing needs is a common issue that can impact on a perpetrator's access to specialist organisations and issues with waiting lists and thresholds can prevent early support.

Local authorities in England operate a mix of points-based and/or choice-based systems for allocating housing. In either case, there must be some method for ascertaining and granting 'priority need' to households who meet the requirements. This priority need element includes a set of criteria of vulnerability including 'other special reason'.

The Homelessness Code of Guidance, 2018, sets out that under the Housing Act, 1996, a local authority must look at the circumstances of the person presenting as a whole and compare them with those of a hypothetical 'ordinary person' if they became homeless.

The Guidance states that a local authority must consider whether the person would suffer or be at risk of suffering harm or detriment when homeless that a *less vulnerable* person would not, or that harm or detriment would make a noticeable difference to their ability to *deal with the effects of homelessness*.

The idea of vulnerability equates to their vulnerability if the person is **not** provided with accommodation, meaning the local authority must assess if a person would be vulnerable if they are currently or are to become homeless, and not on how they cope when still housed. The authority has a duty to make inquiries and consider any relevant evidence when making its decision. The local authority must detail their reasons for determining why a person is not vulnerable.

In discussions with local authorities, some local authorities highlighted the importance of establishing a thorough understanding of the perpetrator's full circumstances to ensure that any vulnerabilities that might fall in this remit were understood so they could be investigated. While issues such as substance misuse are not considered within vulnerability remit, there could be some scope to consider some mental health issues.

*'Because how can we expect someone to meaningfully engage in behaviour change work when they are not housed and this is impacting their mental health, thus placing further pressure on the victim-survivor. Case Manager also noted that when he returned to sleeping in his car, the car was broken into – he advised this exacerbated his stress and impacted on his mental health'. (Case Study)*

It will be important to ascertain the full circumstances of the perpetrator as early as possible, meaning the relationship with the Case Manager will be crucial in exploring this fully to assist in homeless applications. The rapport created by the Case Manager and the local authority lead is important so the perpetrator can be honest about any vulnerabilities. One local authority area talked about considering this vulnerability in the widest sense and being 'creative' in this. Their view was that, where looking to provide

assistance, considering the overall situation would have a positive impact on the survivor and the perpetrator.

Homeless assessments take sequential steps in determining if the person is owed a duty under homeless legislation (see appendices). Perpetrators of domestic abuse are unlikely to meet the criteria of being unintentionally homeless as it is likely they will be considered to have made themselves homeless by their actions. Intentionality can include matters such as non-payment of rent where the housing provider has served a notice of seeking possession or other tenancy breached, including anti-social behaviour or domestic abuse (see Appendix A for more information).

In cases where the applicant meets the 'intentionality' test, a single homeless person (survivor or perpetrator) with no dependent children is usually unlikely to be categorised as in priority need, unless they are deemed *particularly* vulnerable. The rapport building with the case manager will be crucial to establish the full picture so that any vulnerabilities can be identified at the earliest opportunity and be considered under homelessness legislation.

### *Children, Neurodivergence, and Domestic Abuse*

There were other considerations in respect of children in the household (some of whom were subject to child in need or child protection plans) that informed the housing offer. Some children had experienced physical abuse or 'chastisement'. Furthermore, in one case the children were autistic, which professionals need to consider when developing support plans and making accommodation offers:

*'[O]n further discussion she [mother] became tearful and disclosed that she is struggling with two children who have [sic] autism and that her partner is financially controlling and becomes angry a lot. She stated that he isn't physically violent but shouts at her and the children. Jackie informed the Police of two separate occasions when Graham has pushed his two young children, causing them to both hit their heads, one has led to them being sick. Graham and Jackie did not seek medical attention for this. Jackie later disclosed physical and verbal abuse from Graham, she also raised concerns that Graham has increasing anger issues and may be suffering with his own mental health difficulties. It is known that two of the children have autism and it has been reported that Graham may also struggle with this and that this causes additional stress to the family'. (Case Study)*

This case study also highlights that the father may be neurodivergent himself but has not received a formal diagnosis. The kind of accommodation and support on offer would need to be considered via a needs-led assessment to prevent a breakdown in accommodation provided. In terms of assessment under homelessness legislation, any vulnerability might be important in determining any duty owed. Therefore, it will be

important to ensure assessments (for example neurodiversity) are made in a timely manner. This can be an issue with long waiting lists for assessments.

### *Victim-Survivor Physical, Mental Health and Other Disabilities*

There were also issues that resulted in the victim-survivors' reliance on the perpetrator, such as their own physical/mental health needs and/or support with the children. In one case provided, the perpetrator was the victim-survivor's legal carer.

Victim-survivors broadly welcomed the offer of accommodation support, though several raised that they required co-parenting support with childcare and maintaining school routines, which may or may not be exacerbated by their own care needs:

*'The Partner Support Worker (PSW) introduced Restart to Sara, including the accommodation offer. Sara was keen to have Sam leave the family home for an initial 4-week period but expressed concerns around his ability to support with childcare and the school routine.'* (Case Study)

In this case, a plan was developed with the family to secure accommodation that was close enough to the family home to support with childcare and school routines.

It was important, however, to consider that co-parenting may be used by the perpetrator as justification for refusing accommodation support:

*'During every session, the offer of the housing option was raised which he initially refused citing his childcare issues and carer role with his partner. At the last session however, he agreed to take up this option and an internal referral was made.'* (Case Study)

The role of the Partner Support Worker (PSW) is important on several levels and regarding any co-parenting.

### *Victim-Survivor Housing Needs*

In one case example, it was identified that addressing the perpetrator's housing needs alone would not be sufficient to improve the victim-survivor's safety, and underscored that all responses should be 'survivor-led and informed':

*'By addressing John's housing needs, it increased his ability to engage with his Case Manager and book onto longer term support programmes. It has also decreased the risk of John using his homeless status as form of coercion and control against Amy. By also providing Amy with support to access alternative accommodation, this only increases her opportunity for safety and housing security alongside these other actions.'* (Case Study)

The fast-moving nature of risk means that even when the perpetrator is housed, this does not mean the situation remains static and a watching brief is required. The Panel meeting and PSW interaction is crucial to ensure a real-time understanding of the situation and

retain a focus on being survivor-led. As outlined previously, the importance of a strong relationship with housing providers is crucial in providing a full picture.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) recently announced that although it is not mandatory, 89% of councils use a local connection or residency test which limits who qualifies for social housing (Local Government Lawyer, 2024.) MHCLG point out that care leavers under 25, all UK Armed Forces veterans and domestic abuse survivors are to be exempt from rules which require a connection to a local area before accessing social housing.

MHCLG advised all councils would be receive a written instruction to advise they should prioritise veterans, care leavers and domestic abuse survivors for social housing. Developments following this written instruction should be monitored.

### *Victim-Survivor Engagement*

In several cases, it was identified that the victim-survivor had chosen not to engage with Restart from the outset or had changed their mind after giving initial consent. In this case, there was concern that the perpetrator had continued to coercively control the victim-survivor, influencing their decision to engage. However, as noted later, some victim-survivors may simply choose not to engage for several reasons, including that they may have decided to move on, or they may be receiving support from other agencies. One area highlighted that they had a weekly meeting to seek information and advice from all partners and this was deemed useful in seeking the best ways to encourage engagement given the dynamic context of individual's relationships.

### *Examples of Accommodation Offers and Support*

In most cases, Restart had secured temporary accommodation (usually a hotel) for the perpetrator and had continued to provide support in securing longer term tenancies. Having secure accommodation meant some perpetrators were able to engage with case workers on a weekly basis and undertake initial motivation work, before being referred to a more intensive behavioural change intervention.

Accommodation was not considered in isolation to other needs. Referrals were made to a variety of agencies and services to support the move into short term accommodation and managing longer term tenancies. Common examples of referrals included:

- Citizens Advice for support with debts and finances, employment, benefits
- 'Additional needs and vulnerabilities'
- Access to behaviour management support
- Identified temporary Restart-funded hotel accommodation

As well as referrals to other agencies, Homeless Teams in some areas offered employment support, assisting the person in seeking employment so they could afford rent in the Private Rental Sector (PRS).

Temporary accommodation in hotels was usually funded via Restart. Support into tenancies was also supported, for example, by providing the first month's rent and deposit that could be repaid in manageable increments. Interviews with Homeless staff outlined support could be provided as part of the affordability assessment to assist the person to seek employment, thereby overcoming affordability issues:

*'We can help regarding affordability in seeking employment or accessing benefit. We were able to support the person to seek employment so they could afford to secure a PRS property.'* (Local Authority Interview)

Whether the perpetrator was employed or unemployed determined the kind of support on offer. For example, in one case, a panel determined that a perpetrator had limited income, but he would qualify to access private rented sector (PRS) accommodation under the Local Authority's Homeless Prevention Fund. He was supported to access Universal Credit, including housing benefit to pay rent, and the local authority agreed to provide his first month's rent and deposit. The ASW supported the perpetrator to access these benefits and to provide the necessary documentation for the accommodation assessment with the local authority. He was offered a PRS studio flat, under a fixed-term two-year contract. On signing the tenancy agreement, he received floating support to set up his utilities and council tax. Since signing his new contract, it was reported by the Partner Support Worker (PSW) and the Case Manager (CM) that the separated couple were able to safely co-parent.

#### **Practice Example – Jack**

Jack, a young person and with his own social worker, living in his family home where there was domestic abuse. His Case Manager, alongside the Social Worker, inquired about shared accommodation options, potentially out of the current Borough – which he was 'happy with'. While he and his partner were no longer in a relationship (due to domestic abuse), Restart extended the intervention length of time working with the young family. This was to manage risk and develop a more flexible response, to promote safety for his partner and new baby. The PSW worked closely with the social worker for the baby and mother, as well as the Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) to ensure that mother was supported and engaging in risk and need assessments as the case progressed. The victim-survivor and new baby moved into shared accommodation. Once the young family were ready to move on from Restart, separate appropriate referrals would be made for the young parents.

## Barriers to Providing Appropriate Accommodation Support

Professionals encountered several difficulties, some of which were beyond their control, that prevented them from providing accommodation support. As one practitioner pointed out:

*‘Restart is great to have in the Borough, “especially for earlier work around accountability, denial, and minimisation”. However, X stated that the accommodation pathway is not as smooth and straightforward as she had hoped when she read about Restart and made the referral. X reported that this at some points felt like a ‘battle’.* (Case Study)

Barriers highlighted in interviews included there being no housing provision in the Borough in which the perpetrator was registered, meaning that housing support could not be offered to the perpetrator, highlighting the issue of only five of the London boroughs being signed up to the Programme. Some local authority Homeless staff suggested a Pan-London approach would go some way to address this issue.

Some local authority areas responded more flexibly to providing support to perpetrators. As mentioned earlier, the ‘thinking flexibly’ around what constituted vulnerability (as in, more vulnerable than the ‘ordinary homeless person’ and therefore eligible for assistance). One local authority area highlighted that this flexibility was not something they could pursue due to scrutiny, including a high level of Freedom of Information requests (given the high levels of homelessness in the area) and Judicial Reviews which would call into question their assessment and reasoning and create a risk to the local authority.

The issue of No Recourse to Public Funds / eligibility for assistance was an issue that was an issue for local authority staff:

*‘When a referral was made to Restart, they should confirm the immigration status of the perpetrator and then the affordability so that the time of the housing team can be used more effectively’.* (Survey)

The Immigration Act, 2014, requires the need to check a tenant’s ‘Right to Rent’, which applies to properties where rent is paid, but not to charitable organisations. The National Housing Federation states that if a housing provider gives over a property to a charitable organisation, then that charitable organisation is the landlord. This means that there is scope to support a perpetrator with NRPF within charitable accommodation. They add there is scope for social landlords to use a cross-subsidy model whereby some rents cover the cost of NRPF residents.

## Social Housing Provider Engagement

Local Authority Homeless staff identified the need to engage early with the social housing provider to ensure better transitions into safe and secure tenancies. As one professional pointed out:

*‘In this instance, the victim-survivor has a social housing tenancy, and wants to move location. This could be supported through a management transfer, however, without the engagement and support of the housing provider, this isn’t possible’.*  
(Case Study)

In one case, after securing temporary hotel accommodation, the perpetrator had offered to sign his tenancy over to the victim-survivor, particularly as the children were living with her, and because the younger children were autistic. The professional shared that it had been ‘difficult’ to engage the social housing provider to facilitate this, resulting in a lengthy and cumbersome process for the victim-survivor. A family solicitor had to be engaged to secure a non-molestation and occupation order to legally facilitate a change in tenancy. Whereas, engaging with the social housing provider earlier could have resulted in a much smoother transition:

*‘In this case, the perpetrator and victim-survivor may have been able to work with the housing provider to sign the tenancy over to the survivor, provide lock changes and additional security measures’.* (Case Study)

Further information on joint tenancies can be found in Appendix A. Understanding of any impact on tenancies will be crucial for the Partner Support Worker and Case Manager so that any issues can be explained, ensuring that both parties are aware of expectations. There is a case to consider earlier engagement with housing providers to ensure they engage in the process in partnership with local authorities. The conditions are in place for closer working with housing providers with the introduction of the Social (Housing) Regulation Act (2023) which is outlined in more detail in Section One.

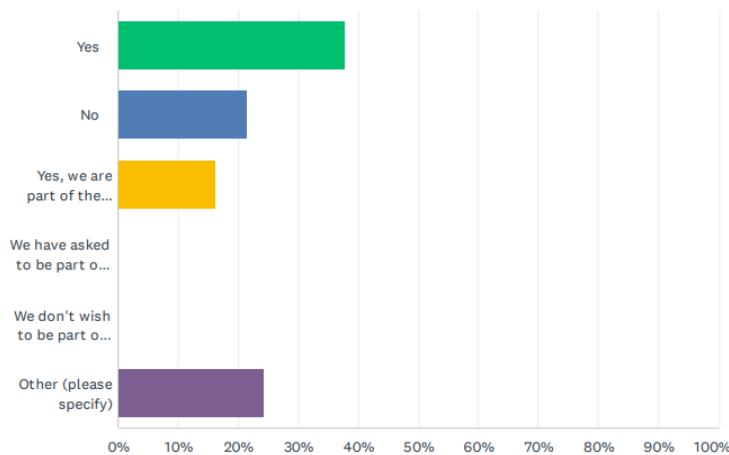
**Specific Expectation 2** of the Consumer Standards (Neighbourhood and Community Standard) that housing providers must adhere to relates to Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act (2021) whereby local authorities must have a partnership and a strategy in relation to providing safe accommodation. While many strategies focus on safe accommodation for victim-survivors and their children, there is a case to be made that the victim-survivor remaining at home needs to be one of the options available and, as such, this will require consideration of providing perpetrator housing as part of this strategy.

Prior to the introduction of the Consumer Standards in April 2024, Addressing Domestic Abuse conducted a small-scale survey asking housing providers about their preparedness for them. Asking housing providers if they were part of the strategic boards (under Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act, 2021), only **37.8%** said they were (see Figure 4).

**Figure 4. Survey to Housing Providers**

Q3 Is your organisation part of the area's domestic abuse strategic partnership

Answered: 37 Skipped: 0



This requirement under Part Four of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 provides a positive backdrop to engender their support and involvement in the Restart Programme and their response to perpetrators (and victim-survivors) of domestic abuse.

### The Use of the Private Rented Sector (PRS) in Move on Accommodation

As highlighted earlier, the lack of social housing nationally (and particularly in London) presents difficulties in securing accommodation after the hotel period has ended. This lack of availability of social housing means that accommodation in the private rented sector (PRS) is the main avenue for perpetrators:

*'We provide support to help them access the PRS, we carry out affordability checks and support with them getting back into work if that is what is needed to make sure they can afford it'. (Local Authority Interview)*

The PRS in England accounts for just under a fifth (19%) of households. According to Commonweal (2024), three million people live in the PRS in London which represents 29% of homes. They add that in addition to the increases in rent, the requirement of deposits and rent in advance needed to secure a PRS tenancy makes this a costly option, and this initial outlay presents an issue in access. Case study analysis and interviews with local authority homeless staff reflected this as an issue:

*'We provide rent in advance and a deposit which can prove very costly'. (Local Authority Interview)*

## Local Housing Allowance as a Barrier to Engagement

Linked to issues with the PRS, interviews and case studies highlighted that the local housing allowance presents barriers to accessing housing in relation to the age of the perpetrator. Local Housing Allowance (LHA) was introduced in 2008 and is used by local authorities to calculate the amount of Housing Benefit a person can receive to help pay their rent in the private rented sector. Tenants in the private rented sector who are entitled to the housing costs element in Universal Credit (UC) have an assessment based on the local LHA rate.

LHA rates are decided by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) using information provided by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA). LHA rates are based on private market rents being paid by tenants in a Broad Rental Market Area (BRMA). As such, this determines the allowance for a private rented property in different areas of the country.

Those under 35, who are single with no children, are usually limited to the 'shared accommodation rate' of Local Housing Allowance (LHA). Single people aged *35 years and over and couples with no dependent children* qualify for the rate for a one-bedroom property. This might be a one-bedroom flat or studio or other self-contained accommodation.

Interviews with Local Authority Homeless staff outlined the importance of managing expectations when working with perpetrators to address their housing needs. They stated the lack of availability of social housing meant that the PRS was usually the only option. One area pointed out that the waiting list for social housing was around seven years meaning it was not an option for many. Local Housing Allowance presented issues in engaging perpetrators with the programme, as those under 35 years of age would only be entitled to the shared rate if they left their home. Examples were given in interviews with local authorities whereby the person may have access to a child who was not living with them, meaning they were only entitled to shared accommodation rate:

*'We have to be really honest with people, so you are leaving your home, and these are the options, so that isn't easy'.* (Local Authority Interview)

The LHA Good Practice Guide states that when a young individual has a non-dependant living with them, or treated as living with them, they are entitled to the two-bedroom LHA rate. Where they have any other person living with them such as a boarder, the shared room rate applies.

In one case study, the perpetrator had refused the offer of a room in a shared house as he would have been unable to provide overnight contact with his son. While the perpetrator requested to be added to the register for social housing, he was informed that he could be on the waiting list for up to seven years. This resulted in the perpetrator returning to sofa-surfing after the initial four-week accommodation in a hotel came to an end. As one professional highlighted, shared accommodation will not be suitable for all

perpetrators – particularly for those with shared access - and raises concerns about the under 35 housing cap, for both victim-survivors and perpetrators alike:

*‘This is a wider policy issue that would need to be addressed, however needs to be considered in the wider context of only recently securing the removal of the under-35 cap for victims/survivors of domestic abuse, which does not yet apply to wider victim-survivors of VAWG. At this stage, it would be difficult to legitimise advocating for the lifting of the cap for perpetrators of DA when it isn’t for all victim-survivors of VAWG.’ (Case Study)*

This was an issue that was highlighted in interviews with local authority staff and presented a real barrier to engagement and it was felt the opportunity to lift such restrictions under exceptional circumstances would be of real benefit (such as ensuring the victim-survivor could remain in their home by rehousing the perpetrator). There was recognition of how this option could be perceived as rewarding the perpetrator and would need some work on how this could be considered.

### Wider Intervention Outcomes and Benefits

Restart and the accommodation support offer was reported to have wider intervention outcomes and benefits in respect of the perpetrator, victim-survivor and children. Wydall and Clarke (2015) argue that in the UK there has been a tendency for victim services and perpetrator interventions to operate separately, failing to acknowledge the interconnectedness between victims, perpetrators and their families. They add that operationally the challenge facing agencies is how to develop closer working relationships considering this interconnectedness.

The interconnectedness of the programme in terms of meeting the needs of victim-survivor and perpetrator in a practical sense was a particular strength.

*‘The meetings to discuss and share information between various professionals have been invaluable and have proven to make the process a more seamless experience’.* (Survey Response)

### Perpetrator Motivations to Change

Once accommodation had been provided, Case Managers were able to engage the perpetrator in behavioural change work. This included learning strategies to prevent an escalation to domestic abuse, including safety planning and learning how to take ‘time out’, understanding the impact of physical and emotional abuse on ex/partners and children, taking responsibility and developing empathy, facilitating safe child contact, exploring harmful masculinities, and understanding the utilisation of power and control. In some cases, perpetrators were referred to long-term behavioural change work having completed brief motivational, behavioural change work. Positive feedback was received in respect of both the perpetrator and victim-survivor in this case:

*‘Sam is engaging with his Case Manager and Sue reports that his presentation and communication with professionals has improved a lot, much less confrontational and combative. Sue also reports that Sam is accepting some responsibility, which is a big improvement.’ (Case Study)*

Even in cases where there was an unwanted, one-sided separation, and no child contact was afforded in respect of the newborn child, providing housing support and behavioural change had a noticeable impact on how the perpetrator managed to cope with other stressful situations:

*‘After 11 sessions with Peter, the case manager noticed a change in how he reacts when he has arguments at home – Peter has been able to leave without becoming abusive and has been thinking more about how his negative behaviour impacts on people around him. Peter was also informed he would not be able to have contact with his newborn child and he was able to speak with his case worker regarding his feelings and manage his reaction.’ (Case Study)*

There were also wider benefits such as: learning how to budget and manage finances, addressing poor physical and mental health, and support for substance dependencies.

#### *Impact on Victim Survivor*

Restart’s accommodation offer had also provided significant benefits to victim-survivors. The support accessed by women might not have been sought if they had to do this independently, so referral to the programme provided an access route for some women. When an accommodation offer was taken up by the perpetrator, this provided relief to the survivor. One survivor who claimed to feel ‘1000 times better’ and her 14-year-old son who had been subject to physical abuse by the perpetrator had been able to move back home. This freedom provided women with ‘space for action’ for the first time.

Work was undertaken with women to support their recovery. For one victim-survivor, this involved exploring the conflict in certain cultural beliefs she had internalised and the expectation that she was responsible for the wellbeing of her husband. In this case, she was connected to a Muslim Women’s Support Group, a domestic abuse awareness programme, and was supported in her desire to co-parent with the children’s dad for the benefit of the children.

In another of the case studies provided, the accommodation and engagement with the Case Work Manager and Partner Support Worker provided via Restart enabled the perpetrator to make a safe return to the family home:

*‘Sara stated that she has seen a positive change in Sam, and he had ‘become better’. He continues to engage with the DAPP, with positive feedback from practitioners. Sara has continued accessing support and has recently engaged with a peer support group and is on the waiting list for counselling.’ (Case Study)*

For another, after securing a non-molestation and no contact order, they still did not feel safe in the family home. Parallel housing support offered via Restart meant that alternative accommodation could be sought for her and children to feel safer:

*'[T]he Partner Support Worker has provided support to Amy alongside the Case Manager support offered to John. The PSW has conducted an initial assessment and provided emotional support and housing advice, feeding into the housing panel discussions. Amy confirmed that although she has a Non-Molestation Order in place, she still does not feel safe to return to her home with the children and wishes to access alternative accommodation, potentially through a management transfer.'* (Case Study)

In several cases, being 'listened to and supported' was appreciated by victim-survivors. Several women also benefited from mental health support and learning about budgeting and finances.

In respect of children, schools reported improved outcomes for children, such as being more 'settled' and 'doing well' in education. In one case where the father had undertaken behavioural change work, this had led to improved wellbeing in one child, and them doing better at school and in their friendships:

*'The SEN Practitioner at the school of the 7-year-old reported that the eldest child 'seems more settled in class', the teacher had reported that he seemed 'much more confident and happier and had started to make relationships with the other children in the class'.* (Case Study)

This section has highlighted some of the key findings on the Restart Programme and will be used to inform conclusions and key recommendations in developing a perpetrator housing pathway in Section Four.

## Section 4 - Practical Foundations for Success and Key Standards for Success in Implementing a Perpetrator Housing Pathway

Insights gained from interviews, case study analysis, surveys and desktop review of information suggest there are emerging foundations upon which to develop key standards for successful implementation of a perpetrator housing pathway. Five key standards for success have been identified (listed below) and will be discussed in turn.

- **Standard 1.** The System the Programme Operates Within is Crucial
- **Standard 2.** Making The Case for a Perpetrator Housing Pathway
- **Standard 3.** Clear Expectations on Joint Working and Established Governance
- **Standard 4.** Early Interaction with the Perpetrator
- **Standard 5.** Building Learning into the Programme

### Standard 1. The System the Programme Operates Within is Crucial

The importance of the system a perpetrator behaviour change programme operates in was highlighted by Gondolf (2002) as key to its success. He asserted that a good enough perpetrator programme located in a strong community coordinated system is likely to produce better results for women and children than an excellent programme working within an average system. Research points out that coordinated community responses (CCR) that include a host of agencies acting together to protect victims and hold offenders accountable can reduce violence (Shepard et al., 2002).

Pence and Paymar (1993) argue that domestic abuse perpetrator programmes were not designed to be used in isolation but part of the systems approach, a coordinated community response to domestic abuse. They assert a CCR requires participants to not just think differently but to act differently. This makes the case for a clear coordinated community response where a range of partners have a multi-faceted understanding of domestic abuse in terms of perpetration and needs of victims and supports the view of Shepherd (2005) who argued that coordinated community responses where agencies act together to protect victims and hold offenders accountable can make a difference.

In their research on 'what works' regarding domestic abuse, Westmarland and Kelly (2006) argued for the need for agencies from criminal justice, health and social care to work together to develop coherent and coordinated approaches to perpetrators that focus on tackling men's violent behaviour. Work with Perpetrators European Network (WWP EN) state that perpetrator programmes must be a part of an holistic intervention system and not be run in isolation (WWP EN, 2018).

This importance of ‘the system’ was set out in the Government’s Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan (March 31, 2022), which established key issues and a series of problems to be tackled, including:

**‘Problem Four, an efficient system is necessary to allow us as a society to tackle domestic abuse’.**

The Plan sets out further information (Problem 4[b]):

#### **Domestic Abuse Plan**

*‘To improve the current system, three specific problems need to be addressed: Greater collaboration and coordination between and within organisations. Research has shown this is crucial to reducing the prevalence of domestic abuse. When organisations do not collaborate and coordinate internally and externally, opportunities are missed to identify victims and survivors and perpetrators sooner. This also helps to curtail abuse (page 11).*

The Home Office commissioned research and development of evidence-based standards for interventions with perpetrators of domestic abuse. Following a literature review and practice-based evidence, seven standards were developed and published (Westmarland and Kelly, 2023).

#### **The National Perpetrator Standards (2023):**

1. The priority outcome for perpetrator interventions should be enhanced safety and freedom (space for action) for all victim-survivors, including children.
2. Interventions should be located within a wider co-ordinated community response in which all agencies share the responsibility of holding abusive behaviour in view, enabling change in perpetrators and enhancing the safety and freedom (space for action) of victim-survivors and their children.
3. Interventions should hold perpetrators to account, whilst treating them with respect, and offering opportunities to choose to change.
4. The right intervention should be offered to the right people at the right time.
5. Interventions should be delivered equitably with respect to protected characteristics that intersect and overlap.
6. Interventions should be delivered by staff who are skilled and supported in responding to domestic abuse.
7. Monitoring and evaluation of interventions should take place to improve practice and expand the knowledge base.

The standards reflect the importance of the system that programmes should operate in (see Standard 2) and that the right type of intervention is important at the right time (see

Standard 4). Development of a perpetrator housing pathway needs to be part of a strong coordinated community response and should not be undertaken in isolation.

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## **Standard 2. Making The Case for a Perpetrator Housing Pathway**

There is a need to change the narrative on perpetrators and housing at a macro (national) level, communicating the positive elements of creating a perpetrator housing pathway. There is scope for a Social Return on Investment (SROI) or Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) to illustrate the positive fiscal position of this approach as well as the positive impact on recovery for survivors, including their children. Awareness should be developed of the positive impact on victim-survivors (including children) in terms of their recovery. At a local level, this could be initiated via duties under Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act (2021), sections 57 and 58, whereby there is a strategic partnership charged with creating a safe accommodation strategy for victim-survivors and their children. Any perpetrator and housing pathway needs to feed into this governance with and form part of these local strategies. Engagement with the Domestic Abuse Commissioner for England and Wales and the Local Government Association could promote this approach at a national level (England and Wales).

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## **Standard 3. Clear Expectations on Joint Working & Established Governance**

Building on Standard 1, the importance of a strong coordinated community response as essential in developing an effective perpetrator housing pathway, there also needs to be 'buy in' at a strategic and operational level between organisations. While local authorities had signed up to Restart at strategic level, there were some issues identified in the practicalities of what this entailed for operational staff. Having an operational lead gave the opportunity to develop learning and understanding.

There were differing levels of training and awareness of staff working at an operational level. Issues were identified in local authority attendance at panel meetings to discuss the perpetrator with examples of no one attending from the local authority. In one case the local authority attended but could not provide any detail on the perpetrator, including where he was living, which was concerning in terms of managing risk.

Any perpetrator pathway would need to set out clear expectations of requirements and resources needed for the pathway to be effective. In establishing strong governance, a service level agreement, or a memorandum of understanding outlining expectations of attending panel meetings, should be a minimum requirement. An agreed template to complete ahead of panel meeting attendance would ensure all information was gathered prior to the meeting and included in minutes of the meeting.

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## **Standard 4. Early Interaction with the Perpetrator**

As mentioned in section two, there is an opportunity to engage social housing providers in the process as they may be well-placed to recognise domestic abuse in their routine duties (and are now required to do so) and start the engagement with the victim-survivor and perpetrator (before any involvement from Children's Social Care).

Henderson (2019) found in developing a DVPP with a housing support element that the engagement of a Positive Engagement Worker role was useful in engaging perpetrators in the programme. The Positive Engagement Worker also had the housing related knowledge to support the person in their housing needs.

This early interaction with perpetrators needs to be a priority for all concerned. Local authorities require documentation as part of their inquiries into assessing any duties under homelessness legislation. This early interaction from the Case Manager and Accommodation Support Worker is crucial in engaging the perpetrator and establishing their needs more widely, including any vulnerabilities that may impact on their engagement with the programme and duties that may be owed under homeless legislation. Failure in identifying vulnerabilities or specific needs may result in a failed accommodation placement. This early interaction also must involve conversations that manage expectations as to what housing they may access.

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## **Standard 5. Building Learning into the Programme**

Section 2 highlighted the importance of weekly check-ins where cases were discussed (Restart and the local authority) together to seek solutions. Learning should be included in any development of a perpetrator housing pathway, particularly as each area will have differing local conditions and cases. Use of an agreed template for case studies where any lessons learned (including scope for improvements) built in would ensure continuous improvement at a local level and identify good practice or 'what worked', which could inform national practice.

Referring agencies into the programme must have training as to what the programme entails so they can fully understand what the person will be undertaking.

Learning should also include continuing developing an holistic assessment of a family's needs. For example, thinking about neurodivergence and how this needs to be considered in terms of the accommodation provided, and whether the victim needs support with the children in terms of where the accommodation is based – looking at the person / family as a whole and not just their housing needs. This learning should include developing partnership working with local services to ensure such needs are met. Issues such as the mother being ill, perhaps, and the perpetrator being the carer to the child will

provide learning on a case level as well as linking to standard one around the coordinated community response to domestic abuse.

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## Limitations of the Evaluation

This paper has set out to examine key elements of success in developing a perpetrator housing pathway. The process involved examining the Restart Programme.

### Geography

Restart operates in six London boroughs, and while they all have distinct differences in geographical make up, they are within London. The national housing shortage will be an issue across all areas; however, it is a particular issue in the capital. Findings and learning from Restart, whilst able to inform development of the programme in other areas, will not mirror different geographical locations and democratic arrangements (Combined Authorities, Metropolitan and District councils, for example).

### Sample Size

Conclusions are taken from a small number of case studies and interviews with professionals. In addition, there are a small number of case studies to gain insight, as well as a poor response to surveys.

### Lack of Longitudinal Information

The programme has been running a relatively short period of time, meaning it was not possible to consider the impact of the intervention over a considerable time period. This is a working document and can be updated in line with moving legislation, research and evidence from emerging perpetrator pathways.

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# Appendices Legislative and Policy Framework

## Appendix A - Housing Legislation

For the current purpose, relevant legislation has been passed in the years since 1980. This section sets out the key pieces of legislation and policy.

### **Housing Act, 1980**

This legislation created the 'right to buy' scheme for local authority tenants. Extending 'right to buy' to housing association tenants had been proposed and piloted by Conservative governments but has been shelved as being both too complex and expensive to implement. This Act also gave council tenants permanent security of tenure which they had previously not had.

### **Housing Act, 1988**

#### **Tenancy Types**

This Act set out the structure of tenancy agreements that still exists. The key tenancy types are:

- Secure tenancies (mainly used by Local Authorities)
- Assured Tenancies (mainly used by Housing Associations although are available to private landlords)
- Assured Shorthold Tenancies (mainly used by private landlords).

Secure and assured tenancies give security of tenure except where tenancy terms are breached, and possession is granted by a court.

Assured Shorthold Tenancies (ASTs) give security of tenure for a limited period, usually 6 or 12 months. Following this, there is usually a 28-day notice period. The current government is looking at amending ASTs to remove section 21, which allows landlords to gain possession without giving a reason. This is also a 'mandatory ground' meaning that a court cannot refuse to enforce it where the correct process has been followed.

#### *Tenancy types and cases of domestic abuse*

There are generally three scenarios:

1. *The survivor is the sole tenant living with their perpetrator* – in this case the survivor can have the perpetrator removed from the property and injunctioned to not come near them or the property.
2. *The perpetrator is the sole tenant* – in this scenario the survivor has few rights and must generally leave the property – it is possible to get a tenancy transfer (see below).

3. *The perpetrator and survivor are joint tenants* – this is the most complex scenario and can lead to the perpetrator using the tenancy to control the survivor.

### **Ending a Joint Tenancy**

The issue of joint tenancies is a matter that could present issues in cases of domestic abuse. A joint tenancy means that both parties have individual and joint rights and responsibilities under the terms of the tenancy agreement. Both tenants are responsible for paying rent and adhering to the conditions of the tenancy agreement; both parties have the right to stay in the home and one party cannot exclude the other e.g. change the locks or make the other party leave. It is important that rent is still paid whilst decisions are made as to ending the joint tenancy as it could affect a future tenancy if rent arrears are incurred.

If one joint tenant gives notice to the landlord, the agreement will be ended for both/all tenants (as confirmed in *Hammersmith v Monk* (*Hammersmith and Fulham LBC v. Monk* [1992] AC 478)).

There are three general scenarios when a tenancy ends where a couple are co-habiting and domestic abuse is occurring. Firstly, where there is a sole tenancy and the person experiencing abuse is the tenant, in this case they have the right to have the perpetrator removed from the property and can take out an injunction to keep them away from both the property, themselves and their family. Secondly, where the perpetrator is the sole tenant. In this case, the person experiencing abuse has few rights and must generally leave the tenancy. It is possible to get a tenancy transferred by a court, but this can be time consuming and costly.

Where there is a joint tenancy, both parties are named on the tenancy agreement. This can be difficult to resolve. In cases of domestic abuse, a joint tenancy can be used by the perpetrator to control the victim-survivor on a variety of levels; for example, the perpetrator could end the tenancy, which ends the tenancy for both parties, thereby rendering the victim-survivor homeless.

Given that both tenants are responsible for paying the rent; if one tenant ceases paying the rent, then the rent arrears would be pursued against both tenants, which could lead to eviction action and present issues in terms of making themselves intentionally homeless. Rent arrears and having an eviction order granted against a person can cause problems in securing another social housing tenancy and checks made by private sector landlords could mean that a tenancy in the private rented sector would also be difficult to acquire.

Tenancy breaches other than rent arrears are also problematic in joint tenancies. Where one party could breach the tenancy agreement, for example through anti-social behaviour, action would be taken against both tenants and not only the tenant breaching the tenancy agreement.

Again, where enforcement action has been taken in cases of a joint tenancy this could provide problems for either party securing a future tenancy. Whilst housing providers may seek to support a victim of domestic abuse in a joint tenancy, they are not required to specifically enquire (under regulatory standards) around domestic abuse when a joint tenancy ends.

Joint tenancies are not specific in type and may be any of the three listed above. A joint tenancy has all tenants' names on and confers joint responsibility for ensuring the terms are adhered to, which includes rent payment etc.

Generally, a joint tenancy can be ended by either party possibly rendering them both homeless (potentially intentionally so). There are three options:

- a. The landlord may offer either party a new, sole tenancy
- b. The landlord may offer neither party a new, sole tenancy
- c. A court may decide the issue.

### **Court Remedies in Cases of Domestic Abuse**

There are situations where a court may order a transfer to a survivor – there are three such circumstances:

1. **Matrimonial Causes Act 1973** – An application can be made but only where divorce proceedings have started. This route can take over 12 months and any order only takes effect at 'decree absolute'.
2. **Children Act 1989** – An order can be made where it is thought to be in the best interests of the children. Again, a lengthy and expensive process. May not be of use where children are close to maturity.
3. **Family Law Act 1996** – Available to married and unmarried but again lengthy and expensive. Can be used to prevent a perpetrator from issuing a 'notice to quit' but is deterrent only – cannot rescind an NTQ where issued.

### **Other Potential Remedies**

#### **Ground 2A (Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1985)**

The court can order possession on a secure tenancy (used by councils) using ground 2A if one member of a couple has left the property because of domestic violence from the other partner and is unlikely to return. This ground is usually applied for by the council in cases where the partner fleeing domestic violence is safely re-housed.

The landlord can also use ground 2 if the perpetrator targets their partner's family member who lives with the couple, and this causes their partner to leave.

A couple means people who are:

- married
- in a civil partnership
- living together as partners

At least one member of the couple must have a tenancy agreement for the property and the court must deem it is reasonable to seek possession of the property in such circumstances and will not automatically give it (i.e. it is not mandatory). Domestic violence includes threats of violence and is not limited to physical violence.

### **Ground 14A (Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1988 and 1996)**

This ground gives the landlord potential to regain possession of an assured shorthold tenancy (used by housing associations) under specific circumstances related to 'domestic violence'. The Act uses the terms domestic violence and sees the following as eligible where tenants are:

- Married couples
- Civil partners
- Cohabitees

Ground 14a can be used by to seek possession from the remaining alleged perpetrator where a tenant permanently leaves the property due to domestic violence or the *threat* of domestic violence by the other tenant (which can include towards any family members living with them). Housing providers can sometimes be reluctant to pursue this ground due to difficulties in proving this in cases where the alleged victim-survivor is unwilling to make a statement or attend court (for obvious reasons).

### **Housing Act, 1996 (Part VII)**

Part VII of the *Housing Act 1996* sets out local authority duties in relation to homelessness. Although rough sleeping or street homelessness is the most visible form, The Act defines homelessness in such a way as to make it possible to be legally or statutorily homeless, but still have a place to live.

The Act sets out that if a person is:

- eligible for public funds
- has a local connection (as defined in that authority's 'allocations scheme' and
- unintentionally homeless

then they will be classed as statutorily homeless. This means that the local authority has a duty to house them, and they will be placed on the 'housing register' or waiting list for housing.

Section 168 of the 1996 Act requires authorities to publish a summary of their allocation scheme and to provide a copy of the summary (free of charge) to any member of the

public requesting one. Local authorities in England must have regard to their homelessness strategies, tenancy strategies when preparing or modifying their housing allocation schemes.

Local authorities in England operate a mix of points-based and/or choice-based systems for allocating housing. In either case, there must be some method for ascertaining and granting 'priority need' to households who meet the requirements. This priority need element includes a set of criteria of vulnerability including 'other special reason'.

However, as the assessment takes sequential steps, perpetrators of domestic abuse are unlikely to meet the criteria of being unintentionally homeless as it will be considered they have made themselves homeless by their own actions. Even where applicants pass the 'intentionality' test, a single homeless person (whether survivor or perpetrator) with no dependent children is unlikely to be seen to be in priority need, unless they are deemed particularly vulnerable. While some categories will automatically meet the test, others need to show that they are 'vulnerable' in some way to meet the criteria.

### **The Homelessness Act, 2002**

The *Housing Act 1996* (which focused on the requirement to have a housing register) was substantially amended by the Homelessness Act, 2002 and subsequently by the Localism Act 2011. This resulted in local authorities no longer under a duty to maintain a housing register themselves but that they must have an allocation scheme for determining priorities between applicants for housing which sets out the procedure to be followed when allocating housing accommodation.

The *Homelessness Act, 2002* also refined the Housing Act 1996 (Part VII) to make people who are vulnerable '*as a result of ceasing to occupy accommodation because of violence from another person or threats of violence from another person which are likely to be carried out*' in priority need.

The test commonly used to establish if someone is vulnerable and, therefore, in priority need became known as the Pereira test. The Court of Appeal, in *Pereira v Camden Council* held that a person is vulnerable if their circumstances were such that they would suffer more when homeless than 'the ordinary homeless person' and would suffer an injury or other detriment that 'the ordinary homeless person' would not. This issue of vulnerability has been the subject of more recent case law where the Supreme Court considered three cases for example *Hotak v London Borough of Southwark* (2015) which highlighted a duty may be owed (*to investigate*) if the person was more vulnerable than the ordinary person. The test for 'vulnerability' remains, but the Supreme Court clarified that 'vulnerability' should be judged against an 'ordinary person' becoming homeless, not an 'ordinary homeless person'.

This means that a person's individual circumstances should be considered in their entirety when a local authority assesses vulnerability. The threat of homelessness has

been consistently identified as a barrier that prevents victims from leaving an abusive relationship, homelessness of the perpetrator can also be a risk in escalating domestic abuse.

### ***Homelessness Strategies***

The 2002 Act included a requirement for housing authorities, with the assistance of social services authorities, and in consultation with other bodies including registered social landlords and voluntary organisations, to:

- carry out reviews of homelessness within their area
- formulate and publish strategies for tackling and preventing homelessness problems based on the results of those reviews
- publish the first strategy within 12 months of the coming into operation of these provisions
- publish a new strategy thereafter within five years of the previous strategy having been published.

The strategy must be renewed at least every 5 years. Sections 1 (5) and (6) of the 2002 Act require housing and social services authorities to take the homelessness strategy into account when exercising their functions. Authorities can combine housing and homelessness strategies in a single document where it is coherent to do so.

The strategy must set out the authority's plans for the prevention of homelessness and for ensuring that sufficient accommodation and support are or will be available for people who become homeless or who are at risk of becoming so.

### **The Homelessness Reduction Act, 2017**

The Homelessness Reduction Act, 2017 (HRA) applies to England in the context of providing more proactive and personalised support to prevent and relieve homelessness, ensuring people receive the help they need much earlier. The act sets out a duty to provide **advisory services**.

Statutory Guidance sets out that local authorities must offer a professional, non-judgmental service. Importantly, the Guidance states that applicants should be encouraged to share information without fear that this will reduce their chances of receiving support, and questions should be asked in a sensitive way and with an awareness that the applicant may be reluctant to disclose personal details if they lack confidence that their circumstances will be understood and considered sympathetically.

Section 189a of the Housing Act sets out that housing authorities must carry out **assessments to determine the duties** owed to a person applying for assistance, and the

needs and circumstances of those applicants who are eligible for assistance and homeless or threatened with homelessness.

To ascertain if the person is eligible for assistance an initial interview is undertaken. If there is reason to believe that they may be homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days the housing authority must carry out an assessment to determine if this is the case, and whether they are eligible for assistance. If the applicant is not eligible for assistance or if the authority is satisfied that they are not homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days, they must be given a written section 184 notification of the decision reached.

The Act places **2 main duties** on local housing authorities:

**Duty to Prevent Homelessness:** Local authorities are required to take reasonable steps to help prevent homelessness for anyone at risk within 56 days. This includes providing advice and support to help individuals stay in their current accommodation or find alternative housing. The duty may be ended if the applicant has a reasonable prospect of having suitable accommodation for at least six months (which might be a six-month private rental).

**Duty to Relieve Homelessness:** If someone is already homeless, local authorities must take *reasonable steps to help* them secure accommodation within 56 days. This duty applies to *all eligible applicants*, regardless of whether they have a priority need.

### ***Personal Housing Plans***

Local authorities must work with individuals to develop a personalised housing plan, outlining the steps both parties will take to resolve the issue.

The Act recognises that other organisations may come into contact with individuals who may be threatened with homelessness. The Act places a duty on organisations such as public authorities (for example prisons and hospitals) to refer individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to local housing authorities. This is known as the **Duty to Refer**.

### **Homeless Code of Guidance, 2021**

The Homeless Code of Guidance was introduced in October 2021 to accompany the Domestic Abuse Act (2021) and establishes points on how local authorities should respond to domestic abuse. Section 21.11 states:

*'An important factor in ensuring that an authority develops a strong and appropriate response to domestic abuse is understanding what domestic abuse is, the context in which it takes place in and what the impacts are on victims; as well as how the impacts may be different on different groups of people. Specialist training for staff and managers will help them to provide a more sensitive response*

*and to identify, with applicants, housing options which are safe and appropriate to their needs’.*

### **Social Housing (Regulation) Act, 2023**

#### ***‘Supported Housing Advisory Panel’***

The Act requires the relevant Secretary of State (in this case, Levelling Up, Housing and Communities), to appoint a ‘Supported Housing Advisory Panel’. This panel must provide information and advice to the Secretary of State, local housing authorities and social services in connection with any issue that may have a significant impact upon the provision of supported accommodation. Persons appointed to the panel must include individuals who it appears to the Secretary of State, represent the interests of:

- Registered providers of social housing
- Social services authorities
- Residents and/or potential residents of supported, exempt accommodation
- Local housing authorities
- Charities providing supported, exempt accommodation

These do not have to be different individuals in each case.

#### ***Supported Housing Strategies***

The Act requires local housing authorities to carry out a review of the supported, exempt accommodation in their district, and then publish a supported housing strategy that includes an assessment of:

- The current availability of supported exempt accommodation in the district
- The likely need for such accommodation in the five years beginning on the date the strategy is published
- Any other matters as specified by the Secretary of State.

Local Housing Authorities and Social Services Authorities must pay the strategy due regard in the exercise of their functions. The Secretary of State may issue guidance on how this must be done.

#### ***National Supported Housing Standards***

The Act empowers the Secretary of State (it is not a requirement) to publish a set of ‘National Supported Housing Standards’ which may set minimum standards in respect of:

- The type or condition of premises used for the provision of such accommodation

- The standard of provision of care, support, or supervision in such accommodation.

### ***Licensing***

The Act empowers the Secretary of State to make regulations under which providers must obtain and comply with a license from the local housing authority; whether the accommodation falls within the definition of supported, exempt accommodation in the Act.

Regulations made under either of these provisions must be with a view to meeting the National Supported Housing Standards. Such provisions must be made via a Statutory Instrument laid before Parliament and subject to a statutory consultation.

### ***Homelessness***

The Act amends the Housing Act, 1996 provisions on ‘intentional homelessness’ to the effect that a person does not become intentionally homeless if:

- The accommodation they are leaving is supported, exempt accommodation, and
- The person’s reason for ceasing to occupy the accommodation related to the standard of accommodation and/or the standard of care, support or supervision provided, and
- The accommodation and/or care, support or supervision provided does not meet the National Supported Housing Standards.

The Act also makes provision for registered providers to comply with regulations relating to safety of homes setting the foundations for a new, proactive consumer regulation regime. The aim is to refine the existing economic regulatory regime to strengthen the Regulator of Social Housing’s (Regulator) powers to enforce the consumer and economic regimes. This change introduced a response in relation to the Neighbourhood and Community Standard and represents positive conditions to engage with housing providers on responding to domestic abuse.

### ***Consumer Standards (as of April 2024):***

- **Safety and Quality Standard** – the expected outcomes focus on the safety and quality of tenants’ homes
- **Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard** – outcomes centre on how landlords provide information, listen to tenants, and act on their views
- **Tenancy Standard** – outcomes about how landlords allocate and let homes and manage tenancies
- **Neighbourhood and Community Standard** – outcomes focus on how landlords work with other organisations to help ensure tenants live in safe

neighbourhoods. Specific expectations on domestic abuse within this standard include:

Within the Neighbourhood and Community Standard, the RSH sets out expectations providers are expected to comply with:

*Specific Expectation (SE) 1* - Registered providers must have a policy for how they respond to cases of domestic abuse.

*Specific Expectation (SE) 2* - Registered providers must co-operate with appropriate local authority departments to support the local authority in meeting its duty to develop a strategy and commission services for victims of domestic abuse and their children.

## Appendix B - Domestic Abuse Legislation

### **Domestic Abuse Act, 2021**

The *Domestic Abuse Act 2021* was introduced with the aim of strengthening the response across all agencies including the criminal justice system, local authorities and a range of service providers.

The Act:

- creates a statutory definition of domestic abuse
- establishes the office of Domestic Abuse Commissioner
- prohibits offenders from cross-examining their victims in person in the family courts
- creates a domestic abuse protection notice (DAPN) and domestic abuse protection order (DAPO)
- provides a statutory basis for the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (Clare's law) guidance
- creates a statutory presumption that victims of domestic abuse are eligible for special measures in the criminal courts
- enables domestic abuse offenders to be subject to polygraph testing as a licence condition following release from custody
- requires local authorities to grant new secure tenancies to social tenants leaving existing secure tenancies for reasons connected with domestic abuse. Any accommodation arranged by a local authority under its homelessness functions must be suitable. This may include offering accommodation in the private rented sector or under a social tenancy, and the authority may consider it safer to offer accommodation in another location, such as in a different local authority area. In an emergency, or as a temporary measure, a local authority may consider accommodation in a hotel or bed and breakfast to be suitable.
- If a local authority chooses to offer a social tenancy to someone fleeing domestic abuse, and they rented their previous home under a lifetime social tenancy, Section 79 of the Domestic Abuse Act makes provision that any new social tenancy must also be on a lifetime basis (if the reasons for offering accommodation are related to domestic abuse). A lifetime tenancy includes secure tenancies granted by local authorities and assured tenancies granted by housing associations.
- The Act places a duty on local authorities to give support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and safe accommodation.

The Government stated that the Act provides further protections for those who experience domestic abuse, whilst improving measures to bring perpetrators to justice.

More specifically in relation to accommodation, **Part 4 (section 57)** of the Act places a duty on local authorities to:

- a. assess, or make arrangements for the assessment of, the **need** for accommodation-based support in its area. The local authority is **not required** to **provide** that accommodation but must be clear about what is **needed** in their area
- b. prepare and publish a **strategy** for the provision of such support in its area and what it will do to **address** that need
- c. monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy.

**Part 4 (Section 58)** of the Act sets out that local authorities must appoint a domestic abuse local partnership board to provide advice about the functions in section 57 and on other local authority support in the area.

- a. a representative of the relevant local authority
- b. at least one person appearing to the authority to represent the interests of local authorities for areas within its area
- c. at least one person appearing to the authority to represent the interests of victims of domestic abuse
- d. at least one person appearing to the authority to represent the interests of children of domestic abuse victims
- e. at least one person appearing to the authority to represent the interests of charities and other voluntary organisations that work with victims of domestic abuse in its area
- f. at least one person appearing to the authority to represent the interests of persons who provide, or have functions relating to, health care services in its area
- g. at least one person appearing to the authority to represent the interests of persons with functions relating to policing or criminal justice in its area.

The Government published its **Domestic Abuse Plan** on 31 March 2022. The Plan is closely aligned with the recently published Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy. The Domestic Abuse Plan focuses on 4 areas:

- Prioritising Prevention
- Supporting Victims
- Pursuing Perpetrators
- A Stronger system

## **Domestic Abuse Protection Orders (DAPO)**

Domestic Abuse Protection Orders (DAPOs) outlined in the *Domestic abuse Act 2021* are court-authorised civil orders which can impose both restrictions and positive requirements on perpetrators of DA including where there is not a criminal conviction.

They are aimed at those high-risk repeat and serial perpetrators and protect victims and seek to address underlying causes of offending to prevent future harm to others. The courts will be able to make a DAPO during existing court proceedings.

A DAPO can be used to prevent a person being abusive to another person aged 16 or over to whom they are personally connected by:

- prohibiting them from doing things described in the order, and/or
- requiring them to do things described in the order

The conditions in the DAPO can be varied over time of it by the courts and can cover positive and/or negative requirements.

For example, a DAPO could:

- prohibit any form of contact between the parties
- require the person to be assessed for suitability for a substance misuse programme for example

The DAPO can be applied for in different courts by:

- victims
- law enforcement
- other third parties specified in the legislation

A court can make a DAPO where it's satisfied that:

on the balance of probabilities, the party has been abusive towards a person aged 16 or over to whom the party is personally connected, the order is necessary and proportionate to protect that person from domestic abuse, or the risk of domestic abuse carried out by the party.

DAPOs are being piloted in three areas in 2024 lasting two years with learning from the pilots being understood ahead of them being rolled out nationally.

## **Police Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022**

The Serious Violence Duty set out within the *Police Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022* is part of the Government's approach to prevent and reduce serious violence.

The Duty came into force on 31 January 2023 and applies to local authorities, police, youth offending teams, Integrated Care System, Probation and the Fire Service stating they must work together to share information, analyse the situation locally and devise

solutions. This includes the publication of an annual strategy to prevent and reduce serious violence on a local basis. The Government sets out that around one-third of violence against the person offences and one fifth of all homicides are domestic abuse related.

Section 13 of the Act clearly sets out that violence is not limited to physical violence against the person. Under the duty, violence includes domestic abuse, sexual offences, violence against property and threats of violence. The Government states that local areas' strategy should include how they will exercise their functions to tackle domestic abuse and sexual offences.

### **National Standards for Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Interventions (2023)**

The Home Office commissioned research and development of evidence-based standards for interventions with perpetrators of domestic abuse. Following a literature review and practice-based evidence, seven standards were developed and published. These are:

1. The priority outcome for perpetrator interventions should be enhanced safety and freedom (space for action) for all victim-survivors, including children
2. Interventions should be located within a wider co-ordinated community response in which all agencies share the responsibility of holding abusive behaviour in view, enabling change in perpetrators and enhancing the safety and freedom (space for action) of victim-survivors and their children
3. Interventions should hold perpetrators to account, whilst treating them with respect, and offering opportunities to choose to change
4. The right intervention should be offered to the right people at the right time
5. Interventions should be delivered equitably with respect to protected characteristics that intersect and overlap
6. Interventions should be delivered by staff who are skilled and supported in responding to domestic abuse
7. Monitoring and evaluation of interventions should take place to improve practice and expand the knowledge base.

## Appendix C - The Safe and Together Model

The Safe and Together Model has three key principles.

**Principle 1** focuses on keeping children at home with the mother and supporting her in keeping them safe wherever possible. The reasoning being that the child requires healing, stability and the nurture she gives.

Removal of the child from the mother should only occur in circumstances where:

- every reasonable attempt has been made to partner with the mother, and
- every reasonable effort (across agencies and court systems) has been made to intervene with the perpetrator, and
- when the perpetrator continues to have access to the children and presents an imminent risk to their safety.

**Principle 2** has a focus on prioritising partnership-building with the mother as the most efficient and effective way to support the safety of her children. It is seen that the mother builds on her strengths and her survival as a mother, in the face of the harm caused to family life by the behaviours of the perpetrator.

**Principle 3** focuses on the perpetrator patterns of behaviour that are harmful to the children. It follows that the accountability, and the reduction of risk is dependent on intervention with the perpetrator to prevent those behaviours.

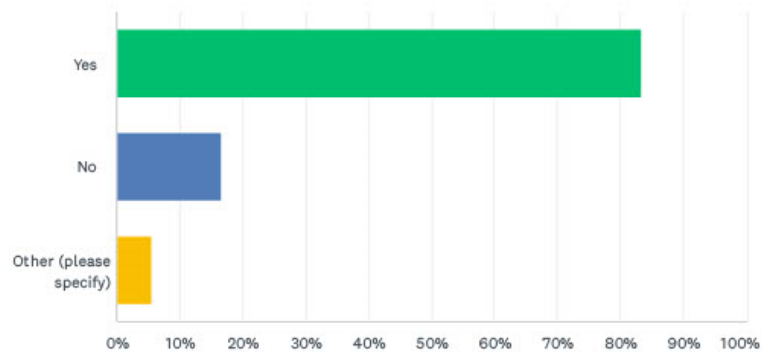
## Appendix D1 Surveys

### Survey to Housing Providers on their Response to Domestic Abuse

Housing Providers Responding to Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse

Q1 As a housing provider, does your domestic abuse policy include a response to perpetrators?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0

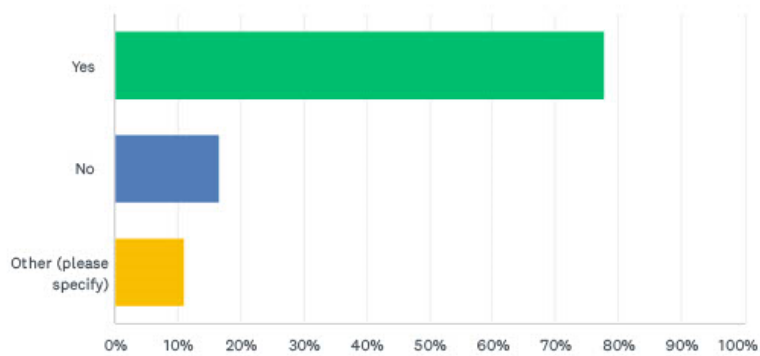


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	83.33%	15
No	16.67%	3
Other (please specify)	5.56%	1
Total Respondents: 18		

## Housing Providers Responding to Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse

### Q2 Does your response include enforcement action against perpetrators of domestic abuse?

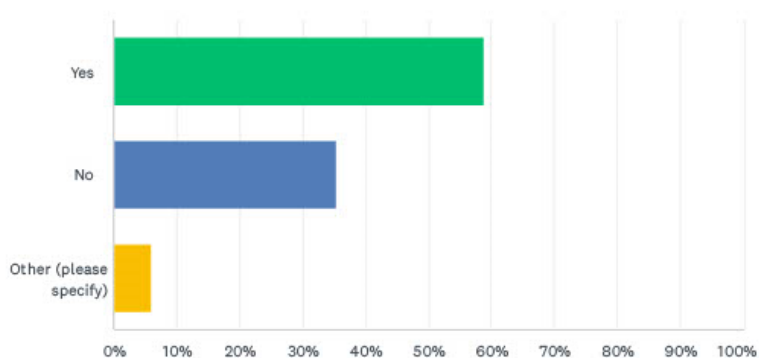
Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	77.78%	14
No	16.67%	3
Other (please specify)	11.11%	2
Total Respondents: 18		

### Q3 Does your response to perpetrators of domestic abuse include making referrals to behaviour change programmes for perpetrators?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 1

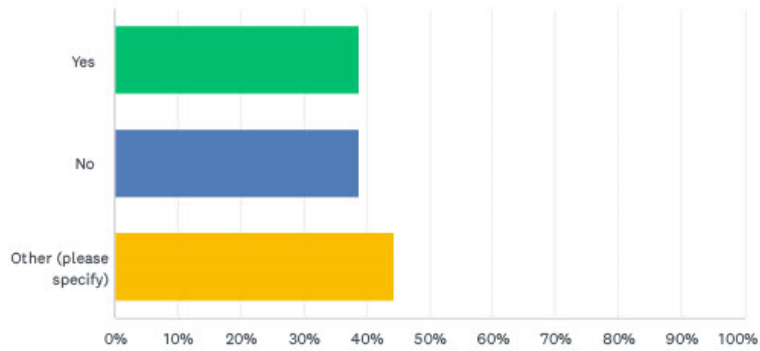


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	58.82%	10
No	35.29%	6
Other (please specify)	5.88%	1
Total Respondents: 17		

## Housing Providers Responding to Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse

Q4 Do you offer any housing to perpetrators of domestic abuse as part of your response so that victim / survivors can remain in the home (where it is safe to do so)?

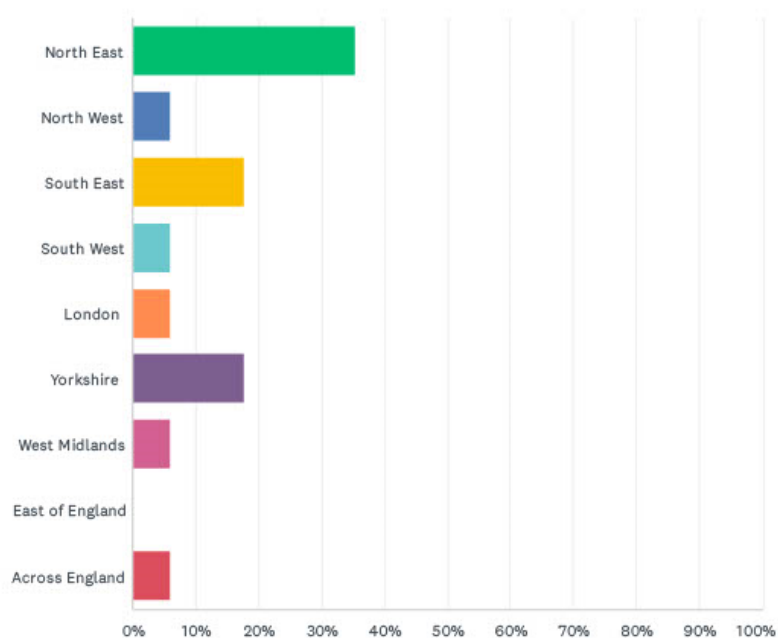
Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	38.89%	7
No	38.89%	7
Other (please specify)	44.44%	8
Total Respondents: 18		

Q6 What area of England does your organisation operate in? You can select more than one area.

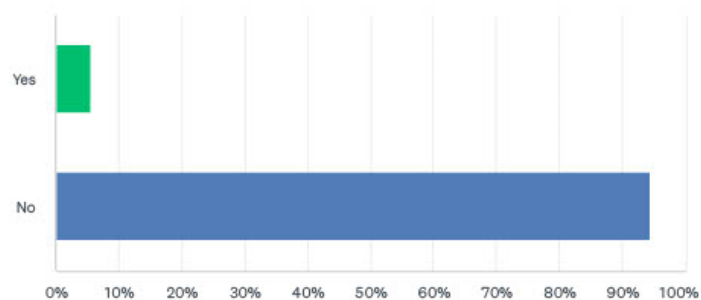
Answered: 17 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
North East	35.29%	6
North West	5.88%	1
South East	17.65%	3
South West	5.88%	1
London	5.88%	1
Yorkshire	17.65%	3
West Midlands	5.88%	1
East of England	0.00%	0
Across England	5.88%	1
TOTAL		17

Q7 Restart (a behaviour change programme for perpetrator's of domestic abuse) is operating in 5 London boroughs: Camden, Croydon, Havering, Sutton and Westminster. Does your organisation operate in any of these areas.

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		5.56%	1
No		94.44%	17
TOTAL			18

# Appendix D2 Surveys

## Survey to Restart Areas on Their Views on the Programme

Q1

Save as ▼

What is your local authority area?

Answered: 3   Skipped: 0

RESPONSES (3)

WORD CLOUD

TAGS (0)

Sentiments: OFF

Search Responses

Filter: by tag ▼

☐ Showing 3 responses

☐ London Borough of Sutton

23/09/2024 16:16

View respondent's answers

Add tags ▼

☐ Havering Council.

17/09/2024 12:28

View respondent's answers

Add tags ▼

☐ Westminster Council

17/09/2024 12:25

View respondent's answers

Add tags ▼

Q2



Save as ▼

How many cases have been referred to Restart in your local authority? Please add the number in the box below

Answered: 3 Skipped: 0

RESPONSES (3)

WORD CLOUD

TAGS (0)



Sentiments: OFF



Search Responses



Filter: by tag ▼



Showing 3 responses



Unsure

23/09/2024 16:16

[View respondent's answers](#)

[Add tags ▼](#)



7

17/09/2024 12:28

[View respondent's answers](#)

[Add tags ▼](#)



not sure

17/09/2024 12:25

[View respondent's answers](#)

[Add tags ▼](#)

Q3

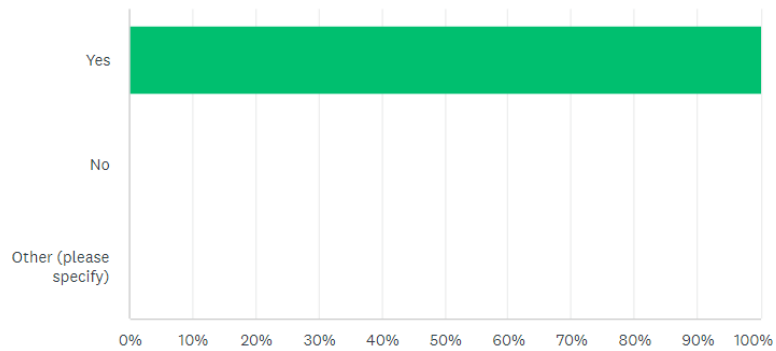


Customize

Save as ▼

Have you had a full briefing on how the programme works and the role of your local authority in it?

Answered: 3 Skipped: 0

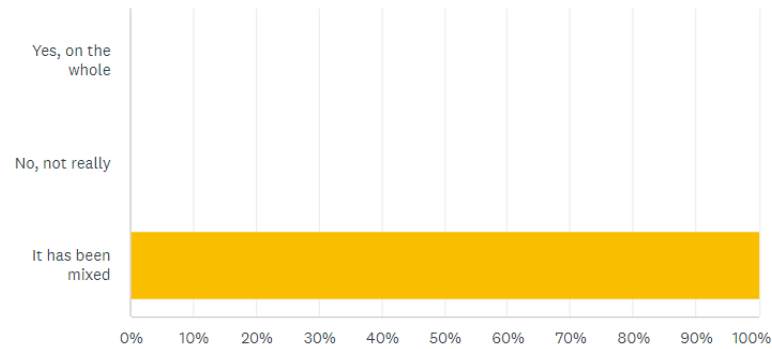


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Yes	100.00% 3
▼ No	0.00% 0
▼ Other (please specify)	<a href="#">Responses</a> 0.00% 0
TOTAL	3



Have those referred to Restart engaged in the programme?

Answered: 3    Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes, on the whole	0.00%	0
▼ No, not really	0.00%	0
▼ It has been mixed	100.00%	3
TOTAL		3

Q5

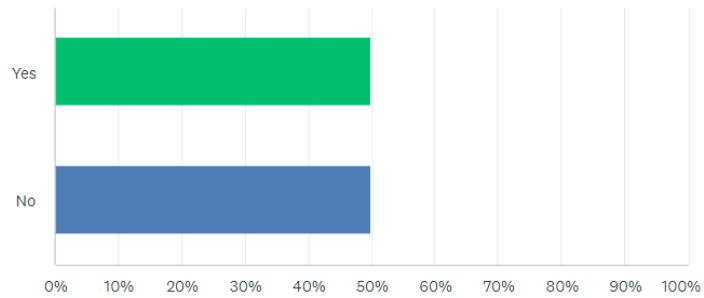


Customize

Save as ▼

Has accommodation (lasting 6 months or longer) been successfully found for referrals after their initial hotel stay?


Answered: 2 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Yes	50.00% 1
▼ No	50.00% 1
Total Respondents: 2	

[Comments \(3\)](#)

Q6

 Save as ▼

Are there any parts of the programme that have been particularly effective - if so, can you outline why?

Answered: 3   Skipped: 0


RESPONSES (3)

WORD CLOUD

TAGS (0)

 Sentiments: OFF 

 Search Responses

 Filter: by tag ▼

☐ Showing 3 responses

☐ Relationship with Restart team to ensure smooth housing pathway

23/09/2024 16:16

[View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags▼](#)

☐ The meetings to discuss and share information between various professionals have been invaluable and have proven to make the process a more seamless experience.

17/09/2024 12:28


[View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags▼](#)

☐ in general the programme is effective.

17/09/2024 12:25

[View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags▼](#)

Q7

 Save as ▼

Are there any areas of the programme that need a re-think? If so, what are they and why?

Answered: 3   Skipped: 0

RESPONSES (3)

WORD CLOUD

TAGS (0)

 Sentiments: OFF 

 Search Responses

 Filter: by tag ▼

☐ Showing 3 responses

☐ Increase the numbers of referrals!

23/09/2024 16:16

[View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags▼](#)

☐ The only areas of the process which would assist us further would be the receipt of all of the documents at the time of the referral being made to the council.

17/09/2024 12:28


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☐ when a referral was made to Restart, they should confirm the immigration status of the perp and then the affordability so that the time of the housing team can used more effectively.

17/09/2024 12:25

[View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags▼](#)

Q8

 Save as ▼

## Have there been any issues regarding the hotel stays?

Answered: 3   Skipped: 0


RESPONSES (3)

WORD CLOUD

TAGS (0)

 Sentiments: OFF 

 Search Responses

 Filter: by tag ▼

☐ Showing 3 responses

☐ No

23/09/2024 16:16

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☐ There have, on limited occasions, been a delay in the transfer from one hotel to the next however this has been largely rectified in discussions between my team and Restart.

17/09/2024 12:28

[View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags▼](#)

☐ not aware

17/09/2024 12:25

[View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags▼](#)

Q9

 Save as ▼

Please tell us anything else regarding housing perpetrators that has not been covered in your responses to earlier questions.

Answered: 2   Skipped: 1

RESPONSES (2)

WORD CLOUD

TAGS (0)

 Sentiments: OFF 

 Search Responses

 Filter: by tag ▼

☐ Showing 2 responses

☐ Most perps are housed in the private sector where possible

23/09/2024 16:16

[View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags ▼](#)

☐ cover it in question 7

17/09/2024 12:25

[View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags ▼](#)