

PARKHEAD HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY

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1. Aims and Objectives

1.1 The policy aims to:

- Provide an appropriate and effective response to domestic abuse
- Enable staff to confidently support victims
- Ensure we work closely with partner agencies and contribute to local initiatives to raise awareness of domestic violence and abuse

2. Legal and Regulatory Framework

2.1 Scottish Social Housing Charter standards apply as below:

1. Equalities Every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services

6. Estate Management, anti social behaviour, neighbour nuisance and tenancy disputes Tenants and other customers live in well maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe

11. Tenancy sustainment Tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations

2.2 The Domestic Abuse (S) Act 2018 is the primary relevant legislation.

3. Links to Equal Opportunities and Sustainability Policies

3.1 The policy has links to both of the above and as stated in 4.1 below will be delivered in the context of but having primacy over the Good Neighbour Policy.

4. Policy Statement

4.1 All reports of domestic abuse will be treated primarily under the Associations Domestic Abuse Policy and also the Neighbour Relations Policy as appropriate.

4.2 The Association recognises the Scottish Government definition of domestic abuse which recognises domestic abuse as a form of gender based violence. “ Domestic abuse can be perpetrated by partners, or ex partners and can include physical abuse, sexual abuse, and mental and emotional abuse (eg threats, verbal abuse, racial abuse, withholding money, other controlling behaviours)”.

4.3 The Association recognises that domestic abuse takes many forms including non physical as described above and including controlling coercive behaviours and that domestic abuse is a criminal offence. Further the Association recognises that domestic abuse is an everyday manifestation of gender inequality.

4.4 The Association as a default position will support the abused partner and any children to remain in the family home while recognising that

this may not be the preferred choice of the abused person or indeed in all cases be possible. This will be an early conversation with the abused person.

4.5 The Association recognises that children who live with domestic abuse are themselves experiencing abuse.

4.6 This policy and PHAs response to domestic abuse recognises that while domestic abuse has historically been man on woman it applies equally to all genders across all relationships including men, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and gender non binary people.

4.7 With due deference to 4.4 above where for whatever reason it is not possible for the abused person and any children to remain in the family home the Association will automatically award a transfer application special case of 200 points to expedite the earliest possible move to another secure Association tenancy assuming that is the wish of the abused person.

4.8 Any Housing Officer suspecting that domestic abuse is ongoing within a family unit will immediately add this to their list of vulnerable tenants (family composition members) and offer a confidential interview at a location of the suspected abused persons choice and will immediately consider housing option pathways including support to remain in the home and managed transfers.

4.9 As a default position the Association will accept a complaint of domestic abuse by the person alleging abuse and will immediately offer support, advice and assistance while recognising that for certain legal actions evidence as per any other criminal activity will be required.

4.10 Successful intervention by the Housing Management Team will require partnership working with, dependant on the circumstances of the case, Social work, Womens Aid, Police, our own Welfare Rights Officer, Health professionals, and a number of voluntary sector organisations who support victims of domestic abuse.

4.11 The Association will take any opportunity to raise awareness of domestic abuse, the 2018 legislation, and the support available to victims.

5. Outcomes and Targets

5.1 The Association will adopt its Good Neighbour Policy target of seeking to resolve the complaint as soon as possible after notification and within 28 days wherever possible.

6. Responsibilities and Delegated Authority

6.1 The Board are responsible for setting this policy and the Housing Manager and Housing Management Team are responsible for delivery.

7. Review

7.1 This policy is due for review in 2026