

EastendHomes

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE POLICY

1 STATEMENT OF INTENT

- 1.1 EastendHomes believes that its residents have the right to live free from violence, threats, intimidation and abuse from a spouse or partner, former spouse or partner, or other member of their household or former household and will take steps to assist and support any resident suffering from or threatened with violence. Such violence may be physical, emotional or psychological. This policy is intended to cover all such instances regardless of the perpetrator.
- 1.2 The support which EastendHomes will provide, will, in some cases, depend on the tenure of the victim but in every case, regardless of the age, ethnicity, disability, gender, faith, tenure, sexual orientation or economic status of the victim, EastendHomes will identify appropriate agencies and progress a referral.
- 1.3 EastendHomes will offer assistance to any of its residents who are suffering from domestic violence or threats of violence either from someone within their own home, or from someone outside their home (such as a boyfriend/girlfriend or former partner).
- 1.4 EastendHomes does not have any statutory responsibility for re-housing victims of domestic violence. EastendHomes will support victims to access rehousing opportunities within and outside the borough and will provide advice to the victims of violence on alternative sources of accommodation and support through all appropriate agencies.
- 1.5 EastendHomes will take a victim-centred approach in responding to cases of domestic violence. EastendHomes will be guided by the victim in determining the most appropriate course of action in responding to an incident.
- 1.6 EastendHomes will, wherever possible, take action to repossess the property of the perpetrators of domestic violence using the powers available to it under the Housing Act 1996.
- 1.7 EastendHomes will take a flexible approach in responding to incidents of domestic violence to take account of the varying circumstances of victims and the different courses of action which may be possible and appropriate.
- 1.8 EastendHomes will work with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and other local agencies to develop appropriate strategies for responding to the needs of those experiencing domestic violence.

2. DETAIL

- 2.1 Wherever practicable all victims of domestic violence will be interviewed within 24 hours of EastendHomes being made aware of their situation whether this is by the victim making a report to the local housing centre or notifying an officer of EastendHomes, or by EastendHomes being notified by a third party referral.
- 2.2 The victim will be offered an interview with an officer of the same sex and/or cultural background if possible. Where it is necessary to use an interpreter, s/he should also be of the same sex as the victim if the victim requests this.
- 2.3 Interviews will be carried out in a sympathetic and supportive manner. The victim will be assured of confidentiality.
- 2.4 The victim will be advised of possible courses of action, to respond to both the immediate situation and to deal with the longer term. These will include possible legal remedies, re-housing options and other sources of advice, assistance and support.
- 2.5 Where appropriate and agreed, EastendHomes will refer the victim to the Tower Hamlets Domestic Violence Unit.
- 2.6 Where necessary, with the victim's permission, the officer carrying out the interview will contact external agencies, such as the local authority, police, a solicitor, local advice agency.
- 2.7 If the victim is unable to return home, with the victim's agreement EastendHomes will contact the Local Authority, or other agency regarding the provision of emergency and/ or temporary accommodation.
- 2.8 If the victim is able to remain in their home, EastendHomes will refer the case to the Sanctuary Project regarding securing the property and ensuring the safety of the victim.
- 2.9 All cases involving domestic violence will be kept under regular review with the agreement of the tenant/victim until it is agreed that the problem has been resolved satisfactorily.
- 2.10 EastendHomes will keep up-to-date information about local agencies, who may be in a position to offer advice or support to victims of domestic violence. Wherever possible EastendHomes will participate in any local forums established to consider the needs of those suffering from violence.