

Domestic Violence Joint Working Agreement

Background

For those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness as a result of domestic violence (DV), there can be occasions when the most appropriate course of action is to move to another area. This can in itself be difficult to arrange which in turn can contribute to homelessness and people may need to approach more than one borough for assistance.

This joint working agreement sets out standards that will make this process across the sub region simple and fair. It also aims to streamline administration and avoid inter borough disputes. It is built on the premise that applicants fleeing domestic violence will be offered a range of options as appropriate to their situation. This may include options such as sanctuary schemes or facilitating access to private rented sector accommodation through rent deposit schemes. Throughout the process, boroughs will provide links to appropriate support agencies for the applicant.

Aims and objectives

- Establish clear lines of responsibility between boroughs when dealing with cases where a move between boroughs may be necessary
- Establish a structured approach to information sharing between boroughs

Procedure

Boroughs will seek to offer a wide range of housing options to people fleeing domestic violence from the outset. All boroughs will complete options offered/advice given sheet with name of officer and contact details attached.

Where borough A has accepted a duty to a client who then decides to approach borough B and where they notify Borough A of their intention to do so, borough A will make contact with borough B **in advance** using a list of named officers with DV leads and team managers. Boroughs agree that an email/fax providing relevant information as appropriate to assist in the case is sufficient information.

Where a client approaches borough B without borough A's knowledge, information will be sent through by email/fax as soon as requested. In this instance, if necessary and time depending boroughs agree that a one night booking for temporary accommodation will be provided by borough B.

Monitoring

A DV sub-group will meet quarterly to share information on good practice, lessons learned from different initiatives including the joint working agreement and to encourage ongoing communications between the boroughs. In the unlikely event of boroughs not being able to reach agreement at this forum, the disputed case should be referred to the appropriate member of the homelessness sub group for each borough concerned.

The DV sub-group will have responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of the working agreement and recommend suggestions to the homelessness group