

Information for residents living in Lewisham

We think it would be useful to let you know the support that is available to you and information regarding some of your housing options:

1. The advice we always give people reporting domestic abuse is that if you are at immediate risk, we would advise you to contact the police on 999. If you are worried that somebody can hear you making a call, please see instructions below of making a silent call to the Police:

If you're in danger, call 999 and try to speak to the operator if you can, even by whispering. You may also be asked to cough or tap the keys on your phone to answer questions.

Call 999 from a mobile

If you don't speak or answer questions, press 55 when prompted and your call will be transferred to the police.

Pressing 55 only works on mobiles and doesn't allow the police to track your location.

If you don't press 55 your call will be ended.

Call 999 from a landline

If you don't speak or answer questions and the operator can only hear background noise, they'll transfer your call to the police.

If you replace the handset, the landline may remain connected for 45 seconds in case you pick it up again.

Calling 999 from a landline automatically gives the police information about your location.

If you are not in immediate danger, are able to safely go on line and search Metropolitan Police, you can find useful information, such as "How to clear your web history and information about Claire's Law, where you can find out information about how to report a partner or ex-partner's history, to see if there is anything that you need to know about them with regard to your safety.

2. If it is not safe to call a support line in your home and you are able to get out alone, people living with domestic abuse can now access safe spaces at Boots Pharmacy and Tesco stores, where they have consultation rooms across the country and can contact specialist domestic abuse services for support and advice. These schemes are in response to the desperate situation facing many victims who are isolating with

perpetrators during lockdown. You can ask staff in Boots, who can support you with this.

3. I strongly advise you to contact the Domestic Abuse Helpline on 0808 2000 247 or email at: <http://www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk/> They can give practical support and information, which may help you in dealing with the emotional and practical the issues that you discussed with me. This service is available 24/7. There is also a service that Male victims of DA may prefer to contact which is: ManKind Initiative, Tel No: 01823 334244, www.imkaan.org.uk
4. The **Athena** service, run by Refuge, provides confidential, non-judgmental support to those living in the London Borough of Lewisham who are experiencing gender-based violence. Their services support women and girls aged 13 and over, and men aged 16 or over – including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or are unsure of their sexuality. The Athena service also supports transgender clients who identify as male, female, as another gender, or are questioning their gender identity. Telephone: 0800 112 4052, Email: lewishamvawg@refuge.org.uk Website: Athena Service
5. **Galop** gives advice and support to people who have experienced biphobia, homophobia, transphobia, sexual violence or domestic abuse. They provide emotional and practical support for LGBT people experiencing domestic abuse. You can contact them on: **0800 999 5428** – The helpline is open: Monday to Friday 10am-5pm - Wednesday and Thursday 10am-8:00pm or you can email them at: help@galop.org.uk - You can also contact **LGBT Domestic Abuse Helpline** on: 0800 999 5428
6. You can present yourself to your local authority and they will produce a personal housing plan, which will include helping you find another suitable home and put you in touch with a local agency that may be able to support you. You can find out more here: <https://www.lewisham.gov.uk>
7. You can also register on Home swapper and House exchange which is a free service and may help you to find the right home to swap and once agreed a swap, you can contact your landlord who will go through the process with you. You can find out more here: www.homeswapper.co.uk and www.houseexchange.org.uk
8. We may be able to add you on our transfer list, only if you are allocated a Band A, which is the highest priority. As a smaller housing association, we have a low turnover of stock and, after fulfilling our nominations obligations to our local authority partners, have very few vacancies for waiting list applicants. We also have a large number of people already waiting for a priority move, so this is not an option that will provide a quick resolution. I would require all written evidence and reports to support your application and present to a Panel for consideration to see if you are eligible to be included onto the Band A list.

9. The Mayor of London's mobility scheme **Housing Moves** is a housing pathway for people with a social housing tenancy in London for victims/survivors of domestic abuse, who need to move because they are experiencing domestic abuse and are at high risk of harm where they currently live. If you think you may be eligible for the scheme, contact your landlord or support professional to request a referral. You can find out more here: <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/housing-and-land/council-and-social-housing/housing-moves-scheme>
10. You can also download the "Bright Sky" app if you have a smart phone, which has been set up by a domestic abuse charity, called Hestia. This app provides support and information for anyone who may be in an abusive relationship, or those concerned about someone they know.

The Bright Sky app provide a UK wide directory of support services and questionnaires to assess the safety of a relationship, dispel myths around domestic and sexual abuse and provide steps to improve your on-line safety. You can disguise the Bright Sky app as a weather app for your own safety if someone does have access to your phone.

11. Victim Support is an independent charity dedicated to support victims of crime and traumatic incidents in England and Wales. They provide specialist help to people to cope and recover to the point where you feel you are back on track with your life. They are an independent, free and confidential service and can be contacted free 24/7 on their support line: 0808 1689 111 or online at victimsupport.org.uk
12. It is important that you know your rights. This website <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/the-survivors-handbook/your-legal-rights/> has details of places where you can get specialist advice.

We know there is a lot of information, but we wanted to let you know that there are many agencies that can support and help you through any difficult issues that you maybe living with.