

**Report for:** Community Safety Partnership – 11 December 2019

**Item number:**

**Title:** Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation

**Report authorised by :** n/a

**Lead Officer:** Denise Gandy, Director of Housing Demand, Homes for Haringey  
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**Ward(s) affected:** n/a

**Report for Key/  
Non Key Decision:** Information only.

**1. Describe the issue under consideration**

To inform the Partnership of the work that Homes for Haringey are undertaking in relation to domestic abuse and the intention to seek Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation.

**2. Recommendations**

That the Partnership note the contents of the report and identify any opportunities that this offers for further partnership working to address domestic abuse and violence against women and girls.

**3. Background information**

3.1 The Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance's (DAHA) mission is to improve the housing sector's response to domestic abuse through the introduction and adoption of an established set of standards and an accreditation process.

3.2 The accreditation standards have 8 priority areas:

- policy and procedure
- case management
- risk management
- partnership working
- perpetrator management
- equality and diversity
- staff training
- publicity and awareness.

- 3.3 In order to build on the excellent work of Hearthstone, our dedicated domestic abuse service, Homes for Haringey have decided to seek DAHA accreditation for the whole organisation.
- 3.4 As a provider of housing services we are well placed to recognise the signs of domestic abuse due to our level of day to day contact with residents (over 13,000 general needs tenants, 1,330 sheltered housing tenants, 4,900 leaseholders and almost 3,000 households in temporary accommodation).
- 3.5 One in four women and one in six men will experience domestic abuse at some point in their lifetime. Domestic abuse can happen to anyone and given the prevalence many of our residents and staff will be experiencing abuse currently or have done so in the past. As an organisation we consider the work we do to tackle domestic abuse to be some of our most important work and we are committed to offering support and assistance to both our residents and staff.
- 3.6 Research shows that on average victims will experience 50 incidents of abuse before getting effective support. 85% of victims seek help from five professionals before they receive the help they need. The reaction that someone receives when they first decide to disclose that they are experiencing abuse is key to what happens next - if they develop the courage to seek help after many incidents of abuse and then feel they are not believed or taken seriously then it may mean they just return to the abuse and do not seek further help. We want to ensure that if the professional they approach is anyone from Homes for Haringey they will receive a supportive response and either receive the help they need or be directed to a service that can help.
- 3.7 Right across Homes for Haringey our staff already work hard to support people who have experienced domestic abuse, whether it's through our responsive repairs, tenancy and estate services, housing demand or our specialist service at Hearthstone. However, in order to strengthen our offer and help us to secure accreditations we have:
- Adopted a Domestic Abuse and VAWG Policy, which details how we will assist and support all Homes for Haringey residents and household members, including our residents in all forms of temporary accommodation.
  - Adopted a Domestic Abuse and VAWG HR Policy, based on the Haringey Council staff policy, to strengthen the support we offer to staff.
  - Committed to a programme of training across the organisation to raise awareness of domestic abuse and the support that can be offered. This ranges from risk assessment training for casework officers to 'tool box talks' for our repairs operatives.
  - Carried out a programme of awareness raising during the 16 days of Action on VAWG, including dedicating a room to our work on domestic abuse at our staff conference on 5 December.

- Committed to recruiting 'Champions' from across the organisation – we are looking for volunteers, who are you passionate about tackling domestic abuse and want to make a stand, to help us deliver the best response we can and make a real difference to people's lives.
- Committed to strengthen our approach to perpetrators, including potentially consulting on a change to our tenancy conditions.

3.8 Partnerships in relation to addressing domestic abuse and VAWG are well established in the borough. Homes for Haringey already work well with a range of partners but we wanted to highlight this work to the Community Safety Partnership in particular so we can explore any additional opportunities that this may offer to further strengthen partnerships. Partnership working is one of the key accreditation strands and is key we are committed to build on existing arrangements.

#### **4. Contribution to strategic outcomes**

- Borough Plan – People Priority d) Levels of violence against women and girls significantly reduced.
- Haringey's Violence against Women and Girls Strategy

#### **5. Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities)**

n/a