



Could you, or
someone you know,
be experiencing
domestic abuse?

**Domestic abuse can happen to anyone
regardless of gender or sexuality.**

At Homes in Sedgemoor we understand that it can be very difficult to take the first step to get help. Therefore, we are committed to acting quickly and sympathetically to anyone who is experiencing domestic abuse.

Within this leaflet, you will find out what domestic abuse is and how Homes in Sedgemoor can help if you, or someone you know, is experiencing any of the signs.

What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse is defined as any incident, or pattern of incidents, of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

Psychological abuse

Psychological abuse involves the regular and deliberate use of a range of words and non-physical actions, with the purpose to manipulate, hurt, weaken or frighten a person mentally and emotionally. These actions can also distort, confuse or influence a person's thoughts and actions within their everyday lives, changing their sense of self and harming their wellbeing. An example of psychological abuse would be threatening to 'out' you to your family if you were lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

Physical abuse

This form of abuse is when someone is physically hurting you. This could be by kicking, punching, and restraining you with their hands, their feet, or an object.

Sexual abuse

This form of abuse is acted out by making you do things you don't want to do such as preventing you from practicing safe sex. Another form of sexual abuse is rape which is forcing another person to have sexual intercourse against their will.

Financial abuse

This involves someone using or misusing money, which limits and controls your financial situation as well as current and future actions and your freedom of choice. It can include controlling what you spend, using credit cards without permission, putting contractual obligations in their partner's name, and gambling.



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Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is an attempt to control your emotions, in the same way that physical abuse is an attempt to control another person. The only difference is that the emotional abuser does not use physical forms of harm. Emotional abuse could involve someone using emotions to criticise, embarrass, shame, blame, or otherwise manipulate you, with the aim of controlling you through discrediting, isolating, and silencing you.

Controlling behaviour

Controlling money, always criticising and being purposely isolated from friends and family are just some of the examples of controlling behaviour which is a form of domestic abuse. It can happen slowly, building up in a relationship. This controlling behaviour is called 'coercive control' and it is domestic abuse.

Coercive control

Coercive control is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten you.



With your permission, we can make referrals to specialist domestic abuse agencies such as You Trust, who will be able to offer you the right help.

How can Homes in Sedgemoor help you?

Firstly, Homes in Sedgemoor will listen. We will listen and ask you how you wish for us to help you. We will be guided by you and will not do anything you are not comfortable with. We will react quickly and effectively to ensure that you are safe. We are committed to responding to all reports of domestic abuse within 24 hours.

Advice and information

We will ensure you are given information regarding other agencies who are best placed to support you. We can be present when you make the initial call if you prefer and can guide you through the process of getting support.

With your permission, we can make referrals to specialist domestic abuse agencies such as You Trust, who will be able to offer you the right help. We will provide you with advice relating to your home and tenancy, and will support you to stay safe within your home or support you to move away from your home address if this is what you wish.

Keeping information confidential

We will not share the information you give to us without your consent unless there are serious concerns for you or your children's welfare. If you report domestic abuse to us we will never inform the perpetrator that you have disclosed this. Your safety is our priority.

Communication

We will be sensitive and understanding when discussing your situation with you. We can meet you at an agreed safe place, in our offices or in one of our communal halls. If you prefer, we can offer you the opportunity to speak to someone of the same gender or sexuality. We will ensure that you are kept up-to-date throughout the process and ensure that you have one point of contact throughout.

Action plan

We will carry out a domestic abuse risk assessment with you and outline the options you have. We will offer to increase security within your home, but, if home is not a safe place for you, we will work with Sedgemoor District Council's Housing Advice Team to help you get alternative accommodation (such as temporary accommodation).

Translation and interpretation services

If you require this, we will provide you with a translation and interpretation service. Please call us on **0800 585 360** to arrange this.



If your life
is in danger,
always ring
999

How to get help

If you, or someone you know, is experiencing domestic abuse, there are a number of different ways to get help. Below is a list of some of the organisations who will support you:

Homes in Sedgemoor

0800 585 360/ 01278 552 400

Somerset and Avon Rape and Sexual Abuse Support (SARSAS)

0808 801 0456

Somerset Domestic Abuse Helpline

0800 69 49 999

Mankind Initiative

01823 334 244

National LGBT Domestic Abuse Helpline

0800 999 5428

National Centre for Domestic Abuse

0800 970 2070

Silent Service

(how to call the police when you can't speak)

If you are in danger and unable to talk on the phone, call 999 and listen to the questions from the operator and, if you can, respond by coughing or tapping on the handset.

Calling 999 from a mobile

If the BT operator cannot determine whether there is anyone on the line, you will hear an automated message asking you to press 55. If you press 55, your call will be transferred to the police.

Call 999 from a landline

If the BT operator cannot determine whether there is anyone on the line you will be connected to a police call handler. If you replace the handset, the landline may remain connected

for 45 seconds. If you pick up again during this 45 seconds and the operator is concerned for your safety, the call will be connected to police.

If you are deaf or can't use a phone

You can register with the **emergencySMS**. Text REGISTER to 999. You will get a text which tells you what to do next. Do this when it is safe so you can text when you are in danger.

Concerned about your own behaviour?

If you would like advice about your behaviour, or support to change how you treat a partner, ex-partner or family member, there are a number of organisations which can help.

National Domestic Abuse Helpline

0808 2000 247

Respect

0800 802 4040

www.respectphoneline.org.uk

Need this translated?

If you would like this information translated into another language, please contact our Customer Services Team on **0800 585 360**.

Jeśli chcesz uzyskać te informacje przetłumaczone na język polski, proszę skontaktuj się z naszym Zespołem Obsługi Klienta pod numerem **0800 585 360**.

Se você deseja que essas informações sejam traduzidas para o português, por favor contacte a nossa Equipe de Atendimento ao Cliente, pelo telefone **0800 585 360**.



 HomesinSedgemoor

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