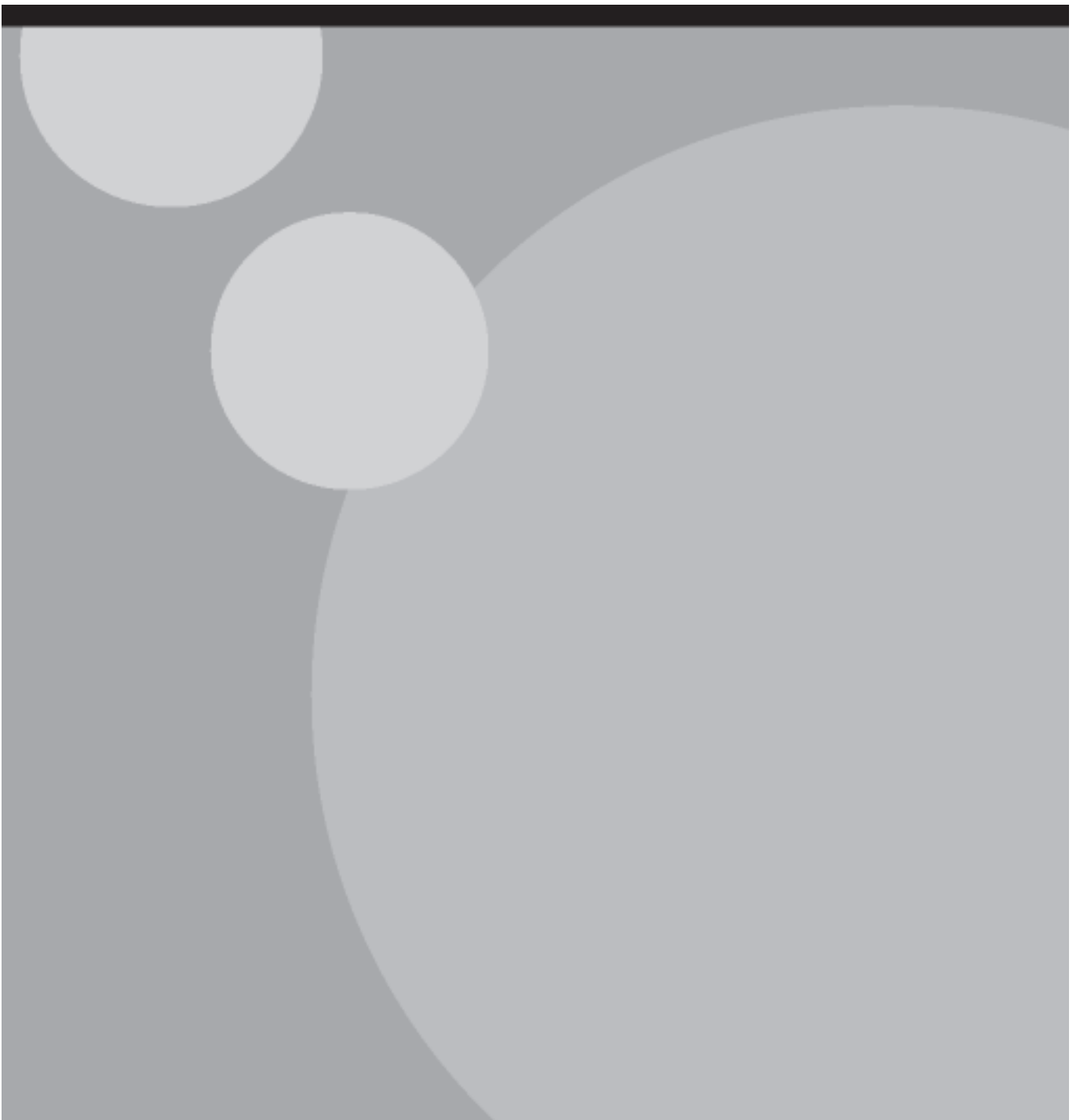




Sanctuary Schemes for Households at Risk of
Domestic Violence
**Practice Guide for Agencies Developing and Delivering
Sanctuary Schemes**



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Sanctuary Schemes for Households at Risk of Domestic Violence

Practice Guide for Agencies Developing and Delivering Sanctuary Schemes

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August 2010
Department for Communities and Local Government

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Glossary of terms

Birmingham Bar: A Birmingham Bar is a steel reinforcing bar that is mainly used to strengthen the hinge side of the door frame on inward opening door. Birmingham Bars can also be fixed (with appropriate security fittings) to the external face of the frame to resist jemmy and chisel attacks on outward opening doors.

CAADA: Coordinated Action against Domestic Abuse is a charity established to encourage the use of independent advocacy as a way to increase the safety of survivors.

CAADA-DASH-MARAC Risk Identification Checklist: A risk assessment tool developed by CAADA.

Domestic Violence: The government definition of domestic violence is: 'Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality'¹.

Floating Support: This is flexible support, provided by workers who visit people in their own home.

Freedom Programmes:² Programmes which seek to increase understanding of domestic violence amongst those affected by it. Freedom Programmes cover, for example: the behaviour of perpetrators; the effects of domestic violence on victims and children; and, how to recognise an abuser. Freedom Programmes also work with survivors to develop their confidence and self-esteem; provide practical advice about sources of help and support; and provide an opportunity for survivors to share their experiences.

Homelessness: Broadly speaking, somebody is statutorily homeless if they do not have accommodation that they have a legal right to occupy, which is accessible and physically available to them (and their household) and which it would be reasonable for them to continue to live in. It would not be reasonable for someone to continue to live in their home, for example, if that was likely to lead to violence against them (or a member of their family)³.

¹ See Home Office Violent Crime Mini-site: <http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/violentcrime/>

² See also the Women's Aid self help group programme guide *Power to change*. Available at: <http://www.womensaid.org.uk/domestic-violence-articles.asp?section=00010001002200370001&itemid=1841>

³ Communities and Local Government, (2006) *Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities* London: Communities and Local Government, p. 10). Available at: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/homelessnesscode>

Home Link Alarm: A Home Link Alarm connects directly to the police or to a care control centre.

Housing Options Team: Following the Homelessness Act (2002) there has been an increasing emphasis on the prevention of homelessness. Housing Options Teams, based within local housing authorities, are part of the preventative approach. These teams provide advice and assistance, including advocacy and mediation, to housing applicants on options for remaining in their current accommodation or finding alternative accommodation. This includes, for example, helping applicants to access rent deposit schemes to secure tenancies in the private rented sector. CLG is currently piloting 'Enhanced Housing Options Approach' which provides more holistic advice and support to a 'wider audience'⁴.

Imkaan: Imkaan is a national second-tier organisation which represents the needs of Violence Against Women services that provide specialist support and routes to safety for Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic & Refugee (BAMER) women and children affected by violence and abuse across the UK. Imkaan's services include strategic advocacy, training for frontline professionals, policy development, capacity-building and community-based research.

IDAP: Integrated Domestic Abuse Programmes are programmes for perpetrators of domestic abuse who have been convicted and are run by probation services.

IDVA: Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) are trained specialists whose goal is the safety of survivors of domestic violence, ultimately to help them and their children move safely towards living violence free lives. An independent domestic violence advocacy service involves the professional provision of advice, information and support to survivors of intimate partner violence living in the community about the range, effectiveness and suitability of options to improve their safety and that of their children. This advice must be based on a thorough understanding and assessment of risk and its management, where possible as part of a multi-agency risk management strategy or MARAC process.

ISVA: Independent Sexual Violence Advisors are specially trained to provide proactive and tailored assistance to victims of sexual violence⁵.

Injunction: An injunction is a court order that requires someone to do or not to do something. The party that fails to adhere to the injunction faces civil or criminal penalties. There are two main types of injunction available under Part IV of the Family law Act 1996:

- **A Non-molestation Order:** A non-molestation order is used to deter someone from causing or threatening violence to the applicant or to

⁴ See: Expanding Choice, Addressing Need: Addressing need through the Enhanced Housing Options Approach. Available at:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/housing/housingmanagementcare/enhancedhousingoptions/>

⁵ For more information on the role of ISVAs go to: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime-victims/reducing-crime/sexual-offences/sexual-violence-advisors/>

any children. The Act does not define molestation but it can include: intimidation, pestering, threats and harassment.⁶

- An Occupation Order: Its purpose is to protect people who experience violence in a familial type relationship. An occupation order regulates the occupation of the home shared by the couple and their children to protect any party or children from domestic violence. The order can exclude an abuser from the property altogether, or divide the property to exclude him/her from part of the accommodation. If a respondent has already left the property, an occupation order may, therefore, be used to prevent him/her from re-entering and/or coming within a certain area of the property.⁷
- More recently, with the implementation of the Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007 in November 2008, it is now also possible to obtain a Forced Marriage Protection Order (FMPO). The court can make an order preventing someone from being forced into a marriage including being taken to another country and it can also initiate protective steps to help someone after a forced marriage has taken place.⁸

LSVT: Large Scale Voluntary Transfers. It can also be called Local Stock Voluntary Transfers if the number of properties is relatively small. This is in reference to the movement of ownership of council housing stock from local authorities to housing associations.

LAAs: Local Area Agreements are three year agreements which set out priorities negotiated between central government and the local area. LAAs aim to simplify some central funding, help to join up public services more effectively and allow greater flexibility for local solutions to be tailored to local circumstances. They work by putting the local authority at the centre of a network of local public service providers and encouraging partners to support each other in furthering common goals (LGA, 2006).

London Bar: A London bar is a steel door frame reinforcing bar with a D shaped staple to fit over and secure the locking point side of the frame. It is attached to the internal face of the lock side of the frame and will resist kicking, splitting and forcing the door.

MARAC: Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference. A Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) is part of a coordinated community response to domestic abuse, incorporating representatives from statutory, community and voluntary agencies working with victims/survivors, children and the alleged perpetrator.

⁶ See: Ministry of Justice (2007) Domestic Violence: A guide to Civil Remedies and Criminal Sanctions, London: Ministry of Justice. Available at:

http://www.family-justice-council.org.uk/docs/DV_Guide_March_2007_-_English.pdf

⁷ See Ministry of Justice (2007) above.

⁸ For more information on FMPOs go to:

<http://www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/partnersandfamilies/forcedmarriage/protectionorders/>

NIS: National Indicator Set. The National Indicator Set (NIS)⁹ replaced Best Value Performance Indicators and all other existing sets of indicators in 2008.

P1E Data: statistical returns made by local housing authorities about their activity under the homelessness legislation, including the number of homeless acceptances and the number of households in temporary accommodation at the end of each quarter, collated and published by central government as the official homelessness statistics.

PSA: Public Service Agreement. The Government introduced Public Service Agreements in 1998 and these are now a key step in the budget allocation process for Government departments and agencies, setting out the level of service delivery expected in return for the public investment made. PSAs are set out in documents called Delivery Agreements.

Refuge: Refuge provides safe, emergency accommodation and emotional and practical support to women and children experiencing domestic violence. Refuge also provides services for children, individual and group counselling and community based outreach services for women. It also has a growing team of independent domestic violence advocates and runs the Freephone 24-hour National Domestic Violence Helpline in partnership with Women's Aid.

Respect: Respect is the UK membership association for domestic violence perpetrator programmes and associated support services. Respect's vision is to end violence and abuse in intimate partner and close family relationships. The key focus is on promoting, supporting, delivering and developing effective interventions with perpetrators.

Sanctuary: A property where security measures have been installed in order that households at risk of domestic violence are able to remain safely in their own accommodation and where the perpetrator does not live in the property, if they choose to do so.

Sanctuary Room: Sanctuary models often include a Sanctuary Room. This is created by replacing a door to a main room, often the bedroom, with a solid core door. The Sanctuary Room door is reversed to open outwards; the frame is reinforced and additional locks and bolts and a door viewer are fitted. The purpose of the Sanctuary Room is to provide a safe place where household members can call and wait for the police.

Sanctuary Scheme: A multi-agency victim centred initiative which aims to enable households at risk of violence to remain in their own homes and reduce repeat victimisation through the provision of enhanced security measures and support.

Specialist Domestic Violence Courts: Specialist Domestic Violence Courts represent a partnership approach to domestic violence by the police,

⁹ See CLG (2007) The New Performance Framework for Local Authorities & Local Authority Partnerships: Single set of National Indicators, London: HM Government. Available at: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/doc/517909.doc>

prosecutors, court staff, the probation service and specialist support services for victims. Magistrates sitting in these courts are fully aware of the approach and have received additional training. These court systems provide a specialised way of dealing with domestic violence cases in magistrates' courts. They refer to the approach of a whole system, rather than simply a court building or jurisdiction. Agencies work together to identify, track and risk assess domestic violence cases, support victims of domestic violence and share information better so that more offenders are brought to justice.

Women's Aid: Women's Aid is the national charity working to end domestic violence. Women's Aid works to protect survivors by influencing laws, policy and practice in partnership with national and local agencies; to prevent domestic violence in the future through public awareness and educational campaigns; and to provide online and telephone services to help abused women and children. Women's Aid also oversees the national network of over 370 organisations providing accommodation- and community-based services for women and children affected by domestic violence.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Background to this research

- 1.1 Households at risk of domestic violence often have to leave their homes because of the risk of repeat incidents of abuse. Refuges and other forms of emergency and temporary accommodation can provide a safe and supportive environment for households fleeing violence but many households do not wish to leave their homes or choose to return to their homes after a short stay in temporary accommodation despite the risks.
- 1.2 Sanctuaries are an additional accommodation option for households at risk of domestic violence which can, where *suitable* and *appropriate*, offer households the choice of remaining in their homes.
- 1.3 A Sanctuary Scheme is a multi-agency victim centred initiative which aims to enable households at risk of violence to remain safely in their own homes by installing a 'Sanctuary' in the home and through the provision of support to the household. A 'Sanctuary' comprises enhanced security measures designed to enable households to remain safely in their homes.
- 1.4 The Sanctuary model was first conceived in the late 1990s and Sanctuaries have since been promoted by government as one accommodation option for households at risk of domestic violence. The provision of a Sanctuary type scheme was one of the 11 indicators comprising Best Value Performance Indicator 225 on domestic violence¹⁰. Although there are no current national figures on the number of Sanctuary Schemes in England, evidence suggests that they are widespread. A survey of homelessness prevention conducted in 2007 found that about half of England's councils (171 of 354) were operating such schemes (CLG, 2007)¹¹.
- 1.5 This non-statutory guide replaces the earlier *Options for Setting up a Sanctuary Scheme* (CLG, 2006) and aims to provide updated advice to all agencies involved in setting up and delivering a Sanctuary Scheme, and to promote and share good practice. It is based on research conducted by the Centre for Housing Policy, working in association with the Centre for Criminal Justice, at the University of York, for Communities and Local Government (CLG) on *The Effectiveness of Schemes to Enable Households at Risk of Domestic Violence to Remain in their own Homes* (Jones *et al.*, CLG 2010).

¹⁰The aim of BVPI 225 was to assess the overall provision and effectiveness of local authority services designed to help victims of domestic violence and to prevent further domestic violence. In 2008, BVPIs (and all other existing sets of indicators) were replaced by the National Indicator Set (NIS).

¹¹ A CLG commissioned survey of accommodation and housing related support for households at risk of domestic violence is currently being conducted by the Centre for Housing Policy at the University of York. This will gather evidence on the extent of Sanctuary Scheme provision and types of service and support they offer.

- 1.6 The research involved in depth case studies in eight areas. The case study areas were purposively selected to represent a range of models of Sanctuary Schemes and all had been operating such schemes for a year or more. The eight case study areas were:
- Tameside (New Charter Homes)
 - Southend (South Essex Homes)
 - Hull (Hull Domestic Abuse Partnership)
 - Middlesbrough (My Sister's Place and Erimus Housing)
 - Nottingham (Nottingham City Council)
 - Greenwich (Greenwich Victim Support)
 - Solihull (Solihull Community Housing); and
 - Calderdale (Calderdale Council).
- 1.7 The study comprised interviews with national level stakeholders, interviews with service providers and relevant agencies, analysis of monitoring data and project documentation, and interviews with households who were using, or had used, Sanctuary Scheme services. The report presents evidence on the effectiveness of Sanctuary Schemes.

Background

What is domestic violence and who does it affect?

- 1.8 Domestic violence accounts for between 16 and 25 per cent of all recorded violent crime and costs the various agencies that deal with it in excess of £23 billion a year (Home Office, 2005). Repeat victimisation rates are also high compared with other crimes (Kershaw *et al.*, 2008). The government defines domestic violence as: 'any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality'.¹² Domestic violence is not confined to incidents in the home but extends to violence outside the home (CLG, DfES and DoH, 2006).
- 1.9 Domestic violence occurs across society, regardless of age, gender, race, sexuality, wealth, and geography (Warrington, 2001). However, it consists mainly of violence by men against women, and women are far more likely to report consequential loss of accommodation (Housing Corporation, 2008). Moreover, it is women who are at greatest risk of repeat victimisation and serious abuse. On average, almost two women are murdered by a current or former partner every week, and, in 2008/09, 32 men were murdered by current or former partners¹³. Overall, it is estimated that one in four women

¹² See Home Office Violent Crime Mini-site: <http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/violentcrime/>

¹³ Smith, K *et al* (2010) *Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2008/09: Supplementary Volume 2 to Crime in England and Wales 2008/09*. London: Home Office

and one in six men will experience domestic violence during their lifetime (Davis, 2008).

- 1.10 The presence of children in a household is associated with nearly double the risk of domestic violence for women (Walby and Allen, 2004). Domestic violence has an impact on children who witness it (McGee, 2000; Mullender and Morley, 1994; Saunders *et al.*, 1995). A study conducted by NCH Action for Children (NCH, 1994) found that children who witnessed domestic violence also frequently experienced physical and sexual abuse. Children who witness domestic violence are over-represented among those children referred to statutory Children and Family teams because of concerns about child abuse and neglect. Over half (52 per cent) of child protection cases involve domestic violence (Farmer and Owen, 1995).
- 1.11 Evidence from the British Crime Survey indicates that the risk of violence to the victim can increase post-separation or at the ending of a violent relationship. (Kershaw *et al.*, 2008; Walby and Allen, 2004) Findings show that separated females are amongst those most at risk of domestic abuse perpetrated by a former partner. This can be a particular problem when the victim has to meet with the perpetrator because of child contact arrangements. Of the female victims of domestic violence who had seen the perpetrator because of child contact arrangements following separation, 29 per cent had been threatened, 13 per cent had been abused in some way, two per cent had had their children threatened, and in one per cent of cases the perpetrator had hurt the children (Walby and Allen, 2004).

Government policy on domestic violence

- 1.12 The Government's strategic approach to tackling domestic violence was outlined in the consultation paper *Safety and Justice* (Home Office, 2003). Domestic violence was set to be tackled through three strands: prevention, protection and justice, and support. This paper culminated in the passing of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 which introduced new powers for the police and courts to deal with offenders. In 2009, the Home Office launched its strategy on ending violence against women and girls '*Together we can end Violence against Women and Girls: A Strategy*'. This strategy identified the way in which violence against women and girls (VAWG) was to be tackled across the three main areas of prevention, provision and protection¹⁴.
- 1.13 The *Every Child Matters* Green Paper (HM Treasury, 2003) set out the Government's aims to ensure that every child has the chance to fulfil their potential by reducing levels of educational failure, ill health, substance misuse, teenage pregnancy, abuse and neglect, crime and anti-social behaviour among children and young people. The Children Act 2004 provides the legal underpinning for *Every Child Matters* and a series of documents have been published which provide guidance under the Act, to support local authorities and their partners in implementing new statutory duties, including a

¹⁴ The strategy is available at: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/vawg-strategy-2009/index.html>

good practice guide on how to support children who have witnessed domestic violence (Mullender, 2004). Domestic violence was no longer to be treated as a separate area but, rather, mainstreamed and integrated throughout the children's agenda (Home Office, 2005).

- 1.14 Other actions to tackle domestic violence include the introduction of the Specialist Domestic Violence Court¹⁵ programme in 2006 following a number of successful pilots (Cook *et al.*, 2004; Cook 2003). These represent a partnership approach by police, prosecutors, court staff, the probation service and support services. All agencies work together to bring the offender to justice in a way that is appropriate for the victim (CPS, 2008). Additionally, Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) services¹⁶ were established in order to provide specialist assistance to the victim. Their work is typically short to medium term and they work within a multi-agency setting to manage the risk that clients face. To facilitate this integrated agency approach, Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences¹⁷ (MARACs) have been introduced for those at high risk. In a MARAC, local agencies will meet to discuss the highest risk victims of domestic abuse in their area. Information about the victims, actions necessary to ensure safety, and available resources, are all shared.

Domestic violence and homelessness

- 1.15 Survivors of domestic violence and their children often have to leave their homes for fear of repeated violence, and although some may move in with relatives, or find accommodation elsewhere, these solutions are often unsustainable for longer than a brief interim period (Warrington, 2001). It can often then be the case that households at risk of violence will suffer the disruption and trauma of having to make a succession of moves, for example, moving from the family home into a refuge or other place of safety, to temporary accommodation, and finally into settled accommodation. For their own safety, households are often rehoused in a new location but this may be away from important informal support networks, such as family and friends. As noted above, domestic violence, including the harassment and stalking of victims, may continue following separation, in particular where victims have to meet the perpetrator because of child contact arrangements (Kershaw, *et al.*, 2008; Walby and Allen, 2004).

¹⁵ See: Her Majesty's Court Service, Home Office and Criminal Justice Service Justice with Safety: Special Domestic Violence Courts Review 2007-08. Available at: <http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/dv/dv018.htm>

¹⁶ For more information on the role of IDVAs see Home Office (2005) Domestic Violence: a national report, London: Home Office. Available at: <http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/domesticviolence/domesticviolence51.pdf>

¹⁷ A Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) is part of a coordinated community response to domestic abuse, incorporating representatives from statutory, community and voluntary agencies working with victims/survivors, children and the alleged perpetrator. For more information on MARACs see Robinson, A. (2004) Domestic Violence MARACs (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) for Very High-Risk Victims in Cardiff, Wales: A process and outcome evaluation, Cardiff: School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University.

- 1.16 Women's refuges or other forms of temporary accommodation provided by a local authority can provide safe places for households fleeing domestic violence on a temporary basis. Refuges are a specialist form of provision for women and children fleeing domestic violence, and offer a package of accommodation and support which is tailored to the needs of households at risk of domestic violence. Refuges can also offer the opportunity to connect to other people and access emotional and practical support that many women fleeing domestic violence require (Abrahams, 2007). However, research has also shown that the experience of living in a refuge or temporary accommodation may be stressful and stigmatizing for both women and children (Abrahams, 2007; Fitzpatrick *et al.*, 2003; Jones *et al.*, 2002; Saunders *et al.*, 1995). Children, already traumatised by the violence they have witnessed or sometimes suffered, often have to move to new schools, and families often have to spend long periods in temporary accommodation until they can access more settled accommodation (this is especially so in London and in the south of England because of the greater housing supply constraints). The move to new settled accommodation can also be disruptive, potentially forcing another change of school and health services, as well as a move away from any recently developed support networks in temporary accommodation.
- 1.17 Previous research has noted the problems homeless families may experience when trying to settle in unfamiliar areas without the support of friends and family they would normally rely on. Further, families who are forced to flee violence often have to leave all their possessions behind, which adds to the difficulty of trying to resettle (Pleace *et al.*, 2008; Jones *et al.*, 2002). Households may live in fear of the perpetrator tracking them down to their new accommodation. Where this happens, it may lead to further episodes of homelessness and more disruption (Jones *et al.*, 2002).
- 1.18 Under the homelessness legislation (Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996), local housing authorities must secure suitable accommodation for applicants who are 'eligible' for assistance, 'unintentionally homeless' and in 'priority need'. Households with dependent children are a priority need group, as are persons who are vulnerable as a result of having to leave accommodation because of violence or threats of violence from another person that are likely to be carried out.¹⁸
- 1.19 Domestic violence is a major cause of statutory homelessness. CLG Statutory Homelessness statistics show that domestic violence is consistently reported as the main reason for loss of last settled home for around 13 per cent of homelessness acceptances in England.¹⁹ The rate of statutory homelessness

¹⁸ The Statutory Homelessness Code of Guidance (CLG, DfES, DoH, 2006) provides that when determining whether an applicant is vulnerable the local authority should consider whether, when homeless, the applicant would be less able to fend for him/herself than an ordinary homeless person so that he or she would suffer injury or detriment, in circumstances where a less vulnerable person would be able to cope without harmful effects.

¹⁹ The P1E records this as violent relationship breakdown with a partner. P1E statistics are published by CLG, and are available at:

acceptances due to domestic violence varies from area to area, and one research study found that domestic violence accounted for as much as 30 per cent of all acceptances in one large metropolitan authority (Davis, 2008).

- 1.20 Recent developments in countering homelessness due to domestic violence in the UK have occurred within the context of a wider drive towards a more pro-active, interventionist focus on preventing homelessness (CLG, 2005; Pawson, 2007). All local authorities have been encouraged to develop interventions designed to enable households at risk of domestic violence, where appropriate and acceptable to the households at risk, to stay in their own homes (CLG, 2006). These interventions are usually known as 'Sanctuary Schemes'.

What is a Sanctuary Scheme?

- 1.21 The Sanctuary Scheme model was conceived in 1998 by the Crime Reduction Unit (CRU) at Harrow Police Station. Although a large amount of good work was being done to help victims of domestic violence and hate crimes, there was a recognition that people often felt isolated and lived in fear of repeat incidents, whilst many fleeing violence experienced repeat episodes of homelessness. The police advised households about home security and personal safety but there were no provisions in place to provide the additional physical security measures to ensure the safety of households.
- 1.22 In September 2002 the CRU in partnership with the London Borough of Harrow Housing Department, launched the 'Sanctuary Project'. The aim of the project was to help households at risk of domestic violence and hate crime remain safely in their homes by installing enhanced security measures, including an inner 'Sanctuary' or 'Sanctuary Room' (Metropolitan Police and London Borough of Harrow, 2007).
- 1.23 Sanctuaries should be individual packages informed by a full risk assessment, the type and condition of the property and the needs and circumstances of the individual household. Sanctuaries are created by enhancing security in the property through 'target hardening' of the property and the provision of safety equipment. Sanctuary measures might include:
- reinforced exterior doors
 - extra door and window locks
 - reinforced double glazed windows
 - laminated windows
 - window grilles
 - fire retardant letter boxes
 - smoke detectors and fire safety equipment

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/housing/housingresearch/housingstatistics/housingstatisticsby/homelessstatistics/livatables/>

- window alarms
- alarm systems that connect directly to the police or care control system
- intercom systems
- video entry systems.

- 1.24 Sanctuaries sometimes include a Sanctuary Room. This is created by securing a room, normally the main bedroom, by installing a reinforced Sanctuary door, and equipping it with a mobile telephone or an alarm and other safety equipment (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2). The purpose of the Sanctuary Room is to provide a safe place from where victims can call and wait for the arrival of the police.
- 1.25 The research, on which this guidance is based, however, suggests that Sanctuary Rooms may actually pose a danger to service users, particularly in cases where they later reconcile with the perpetrator who could, effectively, hold household members hostage in the Sanctuary Room. There was no evidence to suggest that service users had come to any harm in this way, but neither was there evidence that Sanctuary Rooms offered any extra protection to households.
- 1.26 Sanctuary Rooms were also unpopular with some service users who disliked the appearance of the reinforced Sanctuary Room door and refused to have them installed. The Sanctuary Schemes in the eight case study areas had installed over 1,000 Sanctuaries between them.
- 1.27 There had been attempted breaches of Sanctuaries but in the vast majority of cases, Sanctuary measures such as reinforced external doors, window locks and grilles had deterred or prevented perpetrators from forcing their way into the property. Only three cases were reported where a perpetrator had managed to force entry, and in one of these cases the service user was not at home at the time.
- 1.28 Sanctuary measures are not confined to target hardening work and enhanced security measures within the home. Sanctuary Schemes can also improve security outside, by for example:
- providing security lighting
 - installing CCTV (which can act as a deterrent but is also useful for gathering evidence)
 - cutting back hedges; and,
 - erecting fences and gates.
- 1.29 Sanctuary measures should be part of a multi-agency response to households at risk of domestic violence. Sanctuary service users should have their wider needs assessed and be provided with all necessary support and/or referred to specialist support providers as required (see Chapters 6 and 7 and Appendix 3).

- 1.30 Sanctuaries are potentially appropriate for all groups regardless of age, sexuality, ethnicity, or gender provided they wish to have Sanctuary installed, and are no longer living with the perpetrator. Clearly, Sanctuaries are not suitable if the perpetrator's friends or relatives are living in the property or where it is too dangerous for the household to remain in the area because the perpetrator or the perpetrator's family and friends pose a threat. Sanctuaries will not be suitable for people who cannot operate security measures or follow safety procedures; or, for those living in houses in multiple occupation or other properties with shared entrances which can not be secured. The suitability of Sanctuary will always depend on a full risk assessment of the case and the property.
- 1.31 Sanctuary Schemes have been promoted by the Government since 2005 when BVPI 225 (Best Value Performance Indicator: Actions against Domestic Violence) was introduced, and in 2006, CLG published guidance on setting up Sanctuary Schemes (CLG, 2006). Although there are no current national figures on the number of Sanctuary Scheme services in England, evidence suggests that they are widespread. A survey of homelessness prevention initiatives / interventions conducted in 2007 found that about half of England's councils (171 of 354) were operating such schemes (CLG, 2007).

Benefits of Sanctuary Schemes

- 1.32 The research on which this guide is based suggests that Sanctuary Schemes have a number of benefits both for service users and local agencies. Benefits for agencies include a reduction in homelessness caused by domestic violence and a potential reduction in repeat victimisation for Sanctuary Scheme users which have the potential to produce significant cost savings for housing providers and the criminal justice system.
- 1.33 The benefits for service users include:
- a reduction in repeat incidents of domestic violence
 - minimizing the disruption of having to move home and/or becoming homeless and having to move to a refuge or temporary accommodation
 - enabling families to remain in familiar areas and close to support networks, friends and family
 - enabling children to remain in their schools and to maintain friendship and support networks.
- 1.34 Local authorities have a statutory responsibility to work with other agencies to reduce crime and disorder, including domestic violence. Sanctuary Schemes can help local authorities and other key agencies meet their responsibilities in relation to a range of National Indicators and Analysis of Policing and

Community Safety indicators.²⁰ The National Indicators (NIs) are set out in seven outcomes categories:

- Stronger Communities
- Safer Communities
- Children and Young People
- Adult Health and Wellbeing
- Tackling Exclusion and Promoting Equality
- Local Economy
- Environmental Sustainability.

1.35 The two NIs relating directly to domestic violence, are NI 34 (domestic violence murder) and NI 32²¹ (repeat incidents of domestic violence) and are contained in Public Service Agreement Delivery Agreement (PSA) 23 *Make Communities Safer*²² which describes the significant range of actions that will be taken to ensure safer communities including a reduction in domestic violence. Other relevant NIs and PSAs include:

- NI 141 (number of vulnerable people achieving independent living) and NI 142 (number of vulnerable people who are supported to maintain independent living)²³
- NI 50 (emotional health of children)²⁴
- PSA 24 which covers the Criminal Justice System²⁵.

²⁰ The Analysis of Policing and Community Safety (APACS) framework is a performance measurement framework which applies to all police forces in England and Wales. APACS was designed to be closely aligned with cross-government strategic priorities and external frameworks, in particular: the Public Service Agreements (PSAs) and Community and Local Government's development of performance indicators for the National Indicator Set. For more details see:

<http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/performance-and-measurement/assess-policing-community-safety/>

²¹ This indicator is the percentage reduction in repeat victimisation of those domestic violence cases being managed by a MARAC.

²² PSA Delivery Agreement 23 Make Communities Safer. Available at:

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/pbr_csr07_psa23.pdf

²³ Tackling Exclusion and Promoting Equality, CLG Departmental Strategic Objective. Available at:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/finalnationalindicators>

²⁴ PSA Delivery Agreement 12: Improve the Health and Wellbeing of Children. Available at:

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/pbr_csr07_psa12.pdf

²⁵ PSA Delivery Agreement 24: Deliver a More Effective, Transparent and Responsive Criminal justice System for Victims and the Public. Available at: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/pbr_csr07_psa24.pdf

Structure of the guide

1.36 **Chapter 2** provides advice on developing a Sanctuary Scheme.

Chapter 3 covers referrals to Sanctuary Schemes.

Chapter 4 sets out the options for removing perpetrators.

Chapter 5 covers risk assessment and the installation of Sanctuary measures.

Chapter 6 describes how Sanctuary Schemes can work with households and other agencies to help keep households safe.

Chapter 7 discusses the provision of support to households living in a Sanctuary.

Chapter 8 sets out the importance of monitoring and evaluation and makes some recommendations on the data Sanctuary Schemes should gather.

Appendix 1 provides details on minimum standards security products for Sanctuary Rooms.

Appendix 2 sets out guidance on fire safety guidance.

Appendix 3 presents an aide memoire for needs assessment produced by Women's Aid.

Appendix 4 gives contact details of organisations which provide domestic violence awareness training.

Chapter 2

Setting up a Sanctuary Scheme

- 2.1 This chapter discusses the development of a Sanctuary Scheme including identifying the key agencies that must be involved in setting up and delivering the service and some of the issues that have to be considered and addressed before the Sanctuary Scheme service can become operational.

Key points

The following issues need to be considered when developing a Sanctuary Scheme:

- Which agency and who within that agency will take overall responsibility for co-ordinating the development of the Sanctuary Scheme?
- Who will take overall responsibility for co-ordinating the delivery of the Sanctuary Scheme service?
- Will the Sanctuary Scheme employ dedicated specialist domestic violence workers to provide support to Sanctuary Scheme service users, including children? If not, which agency will provide this support? Does the agency have the capacity to support Sanctuary Scheme users? Are these support services willing to be part of the Sanctuary Scheme?
- What other support services are in place to ensure that the Sanctuary Scheme is part of a wider package of support for households at risk of domestic violence? Is there a need to develop new support services? Is there a need to develop formal agreements with support providers?
- How will the Sanctuary Scheme be promoted to agencies not directly involved in the development and delivery of it, and to potential service users? Is there a case for piloting the Sanctuary Scheme?
- How will the Sanctuary Scheme be funded?
- Is there domestic violence awareness training available locally for all those involved in operating and delivering Sanctuary Scheme services. If not, how will this training be provided and by which agency?

- What policies, procedures and agreements are necessary to ensure that the service performs efficiently and effectively (for example, information sharing protocols; referral criteria; risk assessment and safety protocols)
- How will the Sanctuary Scheme be monitored and evaluated?
- What will happen if a Sanctuary is no longer required?

Lead agency

2.2 Sanctuary Schemes are multi-agency partnerships and should involve all agencies which have a responsibility for tackling domestic violence. The key agencies, which **must** be involved in all stages of the development of Sanctuary Scheme include:

- specialist domestic violence services
- housing providers
- police
- fire service
- the agency which will be responsible for installing Sanctuary measures (this could be an in-house maintenance and repair team based within the local authority or RSL, or a private contractor).

2.3 It is essential that Sanctuary Schemes have a dedicated Sanctuary Co-ordinator who has specialist knowledge of domestic violence.

2.4 Other partner agencies might include:

- Housing and Neighbourhood Services, Homelessness Prevention and Housing Options, Supporting People Teams
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships/Community Safety Teams
- Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT) organisation
- Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs)
- Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)
- private landlords
- Primary Care Trusts
- Social Services

- children and young people's services
- domestic violence forums or partnerships
- other specialist domestic violence services not already involved
- specialist domestic violence agencies working with BAMER groups
- Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs)
- Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs)
- Probation Service and National Offender management Service (NOMS)
- local solicitors specialising in domestic violence.

2.5 Key partners should meet regularly. Regular meetings involving all key partners provide an opportunity to:

- develop working relationships
- clarify the roles and responsibilities of all agencies
- develop means and methods of promoting the Sanctuary Scheme service
- agree information sharing protocols
- agree referral criteria and processes
- develop risk assessment tools
- develop needs assessment and personal safety planning tools.

Providing support

2.6 Sanctuaries are relatively inexpensive measures and can be installed quickly, and demand for the service is likely to be high. However, some service users will have support needs. Agencies developing Sanctuary Schemes must consider how the service will operate as part of a package of measures to support service users and to prevent further incidents of domestic violence. Attention should therefore be paid to meeting the wider support needs of service users including their need to keep safe outside the home (these are discussed in more detail in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7).

2.7 All service users, and their children, should have their needs assessed by a specialist domestic violence worker who can work with them to develop personal support plans and safety plans. If the Sanctuary Scheme is not delivered by a specialist domestic violence service then the Sanctuary Scheme must either employ dedicated specialist domestic violence workers or secure formal arrangements for the provision of support to Sanctuary Scheme service users from a specialist domestic violence support service.

2.8 It is recommended that all agencies adopt standardised tools for assessing risk, assessing support needs, and developing personal safety plans. These tools should be developed in conjunction with specialist domestic violence

services. CAADA²⁶ also provides standardised tools for risk assessment, needs assessment and safety planning tools, and provides detailed information about using these tools.

- 2.9 It is also vital that the other key agencies responsible for delivering the service and providing support, including the police, the fire service, and the agency responsible for installing Sanctuaries, have the capacity and resources to support the service. For example, delays in conducting risk assessments, in installing Sanctuary measures or in safety planning, might place service users at risk. Sanctuary measures are intended to keep households safe in the event of an emergency, for example, where the abuser attempts to force entry, until the police arrive. If the police can not ensure a speedy response (this might be a particular issue in a rural area), then Sanctuary will not be an appropriate option.

Deciding on the Sanctuary model

- 2.10 Sanctuary Schemes often offer various levels of Sanctuary measures for low, medium and higher risk cases, but in practice such categories are not useful and are rarely strictly adhered to. The type of Sanctuary measures installed **must** depend on the level of risk, the needs of the service user and the type or condition of the property. All these factors will differ from case to case. These issues are discussed more fully in Chapter 5. Agencies developing Sanctuary Schemes might find it useful to visit established Sanctuary Schemes to learn more about the types of security measures used. The types of security measures that might be installed in a Sanctuary are discussed further in Chapter 4, Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

Piloting the Sanctuary Scheme

- 2.11 Agencies developing a Sanctuary Scheme might consider piloting the Scheme in order to test the model, assess demand, and evaluate the scheme's effectiveness in reducing homelessness and reducing repeat victimisation amongst service users. If successful, the pilot evaluation can provide useful evidence to support the case for establishing the Sanctuary Scheme, and to help secure further or longer term funding (further information on monitoring and evaluating services is provided in Chapter 8).

Raising awareness of the Sanctuary Scheme

- 2.12 Sanctuary Schemes should consider how they will promote their scheme to agencies in the local area. These would include any agency, organisation or service that might become aware that a household was at risk of domestic violence and be able to make a referral to the service. Although a wide range

²⁶ For more information about the work of CAADA and CAADA resources go to:
<http://www.caada.org.uk/>

of organisations and agencies will be involved in the development of Sanctuary Schemes it is most important to ensure that those workers who are likely to come into direct contact with households at risk of domestic violence are aware of the Scheme. It is also important to promote Sanctuary Schemes to the general public.

Funding options

- 2.13 Sanctuary Scheme partners need to ensure clarity around responsibility for funding Sanctuary Schemes, taking into account the agencies that may accrue benefits as a result of the Scheme, including, for example, local housing authorities, RSLs, and the police.
- 2.14 There are a number of options available for the funding of Sanctuary Schemes, including:
- the homelessness prevention fund or an ‘invest to save’ approach
 - Working Neighbourhood’s Fund
 - a local authority’s Private Sector Renewal Strategy
 - contributions from Registered Social Landlords
 - contributions from private sector landlords
 - Local Area Agreements
 - Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships/Community Safety partnerships or the police
 - Neighbourhood Renewal Fund
 - Housing Grant Fund
 - Area Based Grants²⁷.
- 2.15 Sanctuary Schemes in some areas have also secured funding from fire services. Sanctuary Schemes might also consider applying for charitable status²⁸.

Training

- 2.16 Agency representatives involved in operating and delivering Sanctuary Schemes, including workers responsible for installing Sanctuary measures, should undertake training in order to improve their knowledge and understanding of:

²⁷ For more information on Area Based Grants, see:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/localgovernment/localgovernmentfinance/areabasedgrant/>

²⁸ Tameside New Charter Homes was successful in securing Charitable Status for its Sanctuary Scheme. For information on applying for charitable status see: <http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/registration/think.asp>

- the dynamics and nature of domestic violence
- the impact of domestic violence on victims and children
- barriers to leaving a violent relationship
- the emotional and psychological consequences of ending an abusive relationship
- the survivor's perspective on domestic violence.

- 2.17 It is important for all those involved in operating and delivering Sanctuary Schemes to have some knowledge and understanding of the nature of domestic violence in order to deal with households at risk in an appropriate and sympathetic manner. The provision of Sanctuary measures and the removal of the perpetrator alone will not 'solve' the problem for the survivor.
- 2.18 Domestic violence is still a largely taboo and stigmatised subject and one surrounded by myths and misunderstanding, for example, that the victim is somehow to blame for the abuse or that some forms of abuse such as emotional abuse are 'not as bad' as physical violence (Abrahams, 2007; James-Hanman, 2000). Those involved in dealing with domestic violence must have some understanding of the barriers to leaving a violent relationship and the emotional and psychological problems survivors may experience once they make the decision to end the relationship, a process akin to bereavement (Abrahams, 2007). The perpetrator's control over the survivor may well continue even after the decision has been made to end the relationship. Victims may change their minds about having Sanctuary installed; they may 'reconcile' with their partners; they (or their children, friends or family members) may be forced to give the location of the Sanctuary to the perpetrator or to allow the perpetrator into the property; or, the victim may, against advice, decline to pursue civil or criminal remedies because they are frightened that such actions will make the situation worse. Those involved in operating and delivering Sanctuary Schemes must have an understanding of all these issues and possible outcomes, if they are to provide an appropriate and sympathetic response.
- 2.19 Local specialist domestic violence services may provide domestic violence awareness training and some local authorities may also have their own domestic violence training programmes. Other organisations (contact details are provided in Appendix 4) which provide domestic violence training include:
- Women's Aid
 - CAADA, which provides training courses for IDVAs
 - the NSPCC, which provides training on the impact of domestic violence on children.

- 2.20 Sanctuary Schemes should also consider the need for specialist training to meet the needs of other groups in the local population. Local services working with BAMER groups may be able to provide training on specific needs, cultural issues and service access issues of BAMER victims of abuse. The following are also useful sources of information:
- Imkaan which provides specialist information on the needs of South Asian victims of domestic violence
 - the Refugee Council which provides training and information on culturally appropriate support for refugees and asylum seekers at risk of domestic violence (including relevant information on the immigration rights of women who are victims of domestic violence, the personal and cultural issues involved for women from abroad when reporting domestic violence, and service access issues for these women)
 - the No Recourse to Public Funds Network (NRPFN)²⁹ provides information for local authorities about the needs of victims of domestic violence who are from abroad and have no recourse to public funds, and advice on statutory obligations to these households.
- 2.21 Other sources of information on training and awareness include: the Greater London Domestic Violence Project and the Women's National Commission³⁰. Skills for Justice sets out National Occupational Standards for Preventing and Tackling Domestic and Sexual Abuse/Violence, detailing the skills and knowledge needed by agencies providing services to those at risk of domestic violence.

Monitoring and evaluating the Sanctuary Scheme

- 2.22 Sanctuary Schemes should consider how they will evaluate their service from the outset. Monitoring and evaluation of any service is important in order to demonstrate that the service is meeting its aims, and in identifying areas where changes and improvements are required. It is also important to provide evidence to support the case for investment and to assess likely savings; and, to assess the outcomes for service users (for example, whether they are safe and feel safe). Monitoring and evaluation is discussed in Chapter 8.

What will happen if a Sanctuary is no longer required?

- 2.23 Sanctuary Schemes should consider what will happen if a Sanctuary is no longer required because, for example, the household does not feel safe or is not safe; the household moves; or, the service user reconciles with the perpetrator. These issues are discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

²⁹ For more information go to:

http://www.islington.gov.uk/Health/servicesforadults/nrpf_network/default.asp

³⁰ Further information on organisations providing training is contained in Appendix 3.

Chapter 3

Referral to a Sanctuary Scheme

- 3.1 This chapter discusses the referral process and referral criteria. It recommends that Sanctuary Schemes should be widely promoted so that all local agencies and the general public are aware of the Sanctuary Scheme, and that Sanctuary Schemes should accept self-referrals.

Key points

Sanctuary should be presented as an *option*. Potential service users should not be compelled to accept a Sanctuary and they should understand that they can change their minds at any stage.

Referrals should be accepted from all agencies, organisations and individuals who become aware that a household is at risk of domestic violence. Sanctuary Schemes should accept self-referrals.

Sanctuary Schemes should be widely promoted so that all potential referral agencies and potential service users are aware of the service.

Referral criteria should be clear and simple:

- Sanctuary should be available (free of charge) to all households and individuals at risk of domestic violence, regardless of tenure or gender, where the perpetrator is no longer living at the property
- Sanctuary Schemes should accept referrals from all agencies and accept self-referrals.

The Sanctuary Scheme Co-ordinator should check that the client wishes to have a Sanctuary installed.

The Sanctuary Scheme Co-ordinator must establish whether it will be necessary to seek the landlord's permission to install Sanctuary.

If there is an immediate risk to the household then steps should be taken to ensure the safety of the household in the interim period before Sanctuary measures are installed. There are two options:

- the household can move out of the property (for example, into emergency accommodation, a refuge or to a friend or relative's home) until such time as the Sanctuary can be installed; or
- interim security measures can be installed (this is particularly important where clients are not willing to move out of their homes despite being advised to do so).

Referral agencies

- 3.2 In most cases, referrals to Sanctuary Schemes will be made by agencies such as Housing Options services, domestic violence services or the police (with the permission of the client). However, Sanctuary Schemes should accept referrals from any service that may be aware of households at risk of domestic violence (with the permission of the household), including, for example, health, education and social services, third sector agencies, services working with BAMER groups, RSLs and private landlords.
- 3.3 Sanctuary Schemes should also accept self-referrals. It is therefore important that the Sanctuary Scheme is promoted and advertised widely.

Promoting the Sanctuary Scheme to referral agencies and potential service users

- 3.4 Although a wide range of organisations and agencies will be involved in the development of Sanctuary Schemes it is most important to ensure that workers who are likely to come into direct contact with households at risk of domestic violence are also aware of the Sanctuary Scheme and the referral process. The following list is not exhaustive but these agencies might include, for example:

- health services (for example, accident and emergency departments, GPs, health visitors, midwives, school nurses and paramedics, services dealing with substance misuse)
- education services (teachers, classroom assistants, other school staff members)
- social workers
- Sure Start Children's Centres
- third sector agencies
- services working with BAMER groups
- police
- MARACs
- Victim Support
- local landlords (RSLs and PRS;
- Housing Options workers
- tenancy support workers; and,
- housing officers.

3.5 It is also important to promote the Sanctuary Scheme to the general public, as awareness of the option of Sanctuary might prompt households at risk of domestic violence who do not wish to leave their homes to seek help rather than stay in a violent relationship.

Practice point: promoting Sanctuary Schemes

Sanctuary Schemes can be promoted and advertised in a variety of ways including:

- through presentations to key agencies such as health service workers and social workers
- dissemination of information at multi-agency forums such as Domestic Violence forums, Homelessness forums and Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs)
- landlord forums for private sector landlords and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs).

Sanctuary Schemes can also advertise their service through:

- promotional literature which should be made available in a range of places, such as GP surgeries, libraries, hospital accident and emergency departments and housing offices

Sanctuary Schemes can also be advertised on local authority and housing providers' websites, in residents' and tenants' magazines, and through the media.

Referral criteria

3.6 Referral criteria should be clear and simple:

- Sanctuary should be available (free of charge) to all households and individuals, regardless of tenure or gender, at risk of domestic violence where the perpetrator is no longer living at the property
- Sanctuary Schemes should accept referrals from all agencies and accept self-referrals
- Referrals should only be made if the client wishes to consider the possibility of Sanctuary as one of a range of accommodation options
- Sanctuary must be presented as a *choice*.

The referral process

- 3.7 After receiving a referral from an agency or directly from an individual at risk of domestic violence, the Sanctuary Co-ordinator should check that the referral criteria for Sanctuary have been met and gather any available additional information about the case from the police or other agencies involved in the case (for example, the local refuge or other domestic violence service). These preliminary investigations are necessary to help establish the immediate risk to the household.

Accommodation options

- 3.8 People seeking help because of domestic violence will often be anxious and may find it difficult to understand their options. It is essential, therefore, that the person responsible for presenting accommodation options, including Sanctuary, to households at risk of domestic violence fully explains the range of alternatives. These might include: management or emergency transfers; mutual exchanges; refuge accommodation; emergency and temporary housing; private sector leases; and, accessing rent deposit schemes to facilitate a move into the private rented sector. The Sanctuary Co-ordinator should check that the client understands the full range of accommodation options available and that Sanctuary is a choice.
- 3.9 Under the homelessness legislation, where someone is seeking help from a local housing authority, the authority will need to consider whether there is reason to believe the person may be homeless or likely to become homeless within 28 days. If there is reason to believe this is the case, the authority must make inquiries to determine whether any duty is owed under the legislation. Authorities cannot defer making inquiries while they wait to see whether a housing option, including a Sanctuary, is accepted.
- 3.10 The Sanctuary Co-ordinator should also ensure that households understand what would happen if the Sanctuary proved not to be a safe option. It should be explained that, subject to their circumstances, they may be entitled to assistance under the homelessness legislation³¹.

Interim safety measures

- 3.11 If information provided by the referring agency or the client suggests that there is an immediate risk to the household, then steps *must* be taken to ensure the safety of the household in the interim period before Sanctuary measures are installed. Sanctuary Schemes cannot wait for a full risk assessment to be conducted before taking steps to protect the household. Options include:

³¹ If the Local Authority has reason to believe that an applicant may be homeless, eligible for assistance and in priority need they are under a duty (s188) to secure accommodation for that person pending further inquiries.

- a move to emergency accommodation, a refuge, hostel or temporary accommodation
- staying with relatives or friends
- interim security measures.

3.12 In many cases, service users will not wish to leave their homes despite being advised that this would be the safest option. In such cases interim security measures such as lock changes, window locks and wherever possible, alarms that link directly to the police should be installed.

Establishing tenure and gaining permission to install Sanctuary

- 3.13 The Sanctuary Scheme Co-ordinator should contact the individual as soon as possible to establish the tenure of the property and whether it is necessary to seek the landlord's permission to install Sanctuary measures. Some service users might not wish their landlords to be informed about the abuse for fear that the landlord might then want to end the tenancy. In these cases Sanctuary cannot proceed and alternative accommodation options will have to be considered.
- 3.14 In cases where the perpetrator is still living in, or has returned to, the property, Sanctuary Scheme Co-ordinators should advise the household about the options available for removing the perpetrator and refer the household to a specialist domestic violence service or to an IDVA for support and advice on civil remedies. The Sanctuary cannot be installed until the perpetrator has been removed from the property. In the case of jointly owned properties and joint tenancies it may be necessary to obtain an occupation order or to begin procedures to transfer the tenancy before Sanctuary can be installed. These issues are discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 4

Options for the removal and exclusion of the perpetrator

- 4.1 This chapter sets out the options for the removal and exclusion of the perpetrator. It begins by describing the options for removing perpetrators from owner occupied properties and goes on to set out the options available where the perpetrator is a joint tenant, either in the private or the social rented sector.

Key points

Sanctuary **must not be installed** if the perpetrator is still living in the property or has access to the property. Options for removing a perpetrator include:

- occupation orders
- transfer of tenancy by order of a court
- ending a joint tenancy by mutual agreement or by notice to quit by one joint tenant; or
- ending a joint tenancy where the perpetrator has breached a tenancy agreement by abusing a joint tenant.

The Sanctuary Scheme Co-ordinator should refer the client to an agency that can provide specialist advice on occupation orders, for example an IDVA or solicitor.

Where the victim and perpetrator are joint tenants, the Sanctuary Scheme Co-ordinator should take responsibility for contacting the landlord to discuss options for removal of the perpetrator.

- 4.2 The Ministry of Justice (2007) guide, *Domestic Violence: A guide to civil remedies and criminal sanctions*³², sets out the civil remedies and criminal sanctions available through the courts to victims of domestic violence, and includes the provisions of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004.
- 4.3 Part IV of the Family Law Act 1996 provides a civil remedy for molestation, violence and occupation of a home. Its purpose is to protect people who experience domestic violence in a familial type relationship. There are strict criteria about who can apply for an injunction or occupation order to protect them under this Act and further details are contained in the Ministry of Justice guide (Ministry of Justice, 2007).
- 4.4 Under the Family Law Act 1996, the court can grant occupation orders. An occupation order regulates the occupation of the home shared by the couple and their children to protect any party or children from domestic violence. The order can exclude an abuser from the property altogether. If a respondent has already left the property, an occupation order may be used to prevent the abuser from re-entering the property and/or coming within a certain area of the property. In the case of jointly owned property, it may be possible to seek a condition to be attached to an occupation order, that locks can be changed. Additional measures for joint tenancies
- 4.5 Under the *Family Law Act 1996* an application can also be made for the transfer of the tenancy of rented property from the joint names of the parties into the sole name of the applicant. This would usually be done following, or in conjunction with, an application for an occupation order.
- 4.6 Emergency applications can be made very shortly after an incident ex-parte (or without notice) without the alleged perpetrator present. Applications will require a further hearing 'on notice' with both parties present.
- 4.7 Where there is a threat of violence a court can be asked to attach a power of arrest to the order. This means that if the respondent then breaches the order or any part of the order to which the power of arrest is attached, the respondent can be arrested and be brought back before the civil court and may be sentenced to a term of imprisonment (in the county court). As soon as an occupation order is made in respect of a joint tenancy, even if action has not been commenced to transfer the tenancy to a sole tenant or remove the perpetrator in the case of freehold joint tenants, at that stage a Sanctuary can be installed in the property as long as any required consents (e.g., from the landlord) have been obtained.

³² Ministry of Justice (2007) *Domestic Violence: A guide to Civil Remedies and Criminal Sanctions* London: Ministry of Justice. Available at: http://www.family-justice-council.org.uk/docs/DV_Guide_March_2007_-_English.pdf

Joint tenancies in the social sector

- 4.8 Local authorities and housing associations, and all front line staff, should be aware of their legislative duties and powers, so that they are clear regarding action they can or can not take to assist their tenants who are at risk of domestic violence.
- 4.9 Rules that apply to all joint tenancies are applicable. A joint tenancy can be brought to an end by:
- mutual agreement (surrender). In such a case the tenants arrange to hand in the keys and give vacant possession at a time agreed with the landlord. It is unlikely, however, that a perpetrator will agree to this; or,
 - by notice to quit by one joint tenant, which brings a joint tenancy to an end.
- 4.10 Therefore, a joint tenancy (in the case of a social tenant this is likely to be either secure or assured tenancy) in England could be brought to an end by the victim of domestic violence giving four weeks notice in writing. A new tenancy could then be created for the victim. However, it is important to note that a joint secure tenancy cannot be converted to a sole tenancy by one of the joint tenants executing a deed of release, surrender, transfer or assignment unless this is to comply with a court order made in family proceedings. The only way for a joint secure tenancy to be converted to a single tenancy is for a joint tenancy to be terminated and a new tenancy created in a sole name.
- 4.11 Where there are rent arrears or other tenancy breaches the local authority should, where possible, take into consideration whether these may have been as a result of domestic violence.

Tenancy agreements

- 4.12 Tenancy agreements should make it clear that social landlords reserve the right to end a joint tenancy and grant a sole tenancy to the victim where one joint tenant has been violent towards the other.
- 4.13 Where a partner has left the home because of violence or the threat of violence, the Housing Act 1985 Schedule 2 Ground 2A (secure tenants) or Housing Act 1988 Schedule 2 Ground 14A (assured tenants) can be used to bring possession proceedings against the perpetrator. This could be important where the perpetrator is a sole tenant, or where a joint tenant is unwilling to end the joint tenancy but has been driven from the home by violence or the threat of violence.
- 4.14 Housing providers should take legal advice on all issues relating to any proposed legal action against tenants and actions to end joint tenancies.
- 4.15 Victims of domestic violence, in all tenures, may wish to have the perpetrator removed or excluded from the property but may be anxious about the

process. Most will require both specialist advice about their options and support through the process, in particular, if this involves a court appearance.

Chapter 5

Risk Assessment and Installation of Sanctuary Measures

- 5.1 This chapter describes the risk assessment that Sanctuary Schemes should conduct before a Sanctuary can be installed. It goes on to outline the installation process and the types of Sanctuary measures that can be installed.

Key points

Risk assessments should be undertaken as soon as possible following referral of households to schemes. In cases where the household chooses not to move to interim temporary accommodation despite having been advised to do so, the risk assessment should be conducted on the same day.

Risk assessments should comprise two main elements:

- an assessment of the case, including the needs and preferences of the service user, the risk posed by the perpetrator; and,
- an assessment of the property.

The risk assessment must be conducted jointly by:

- the Sanctuary Scheme Co-ordinator or worker with specialist domestic violence knowledge
- a Crime Prevention Officer (or equivalent)
- a fire service representative.

The types of Sanctuary measures installed and decision as to whether Sanctuary is appropriate for an individual household should depend on the:

- level of risk
- needs and circumstances of the household
- type and condition of the property
- views of assessors and the views of the client: this should be a joint decision.

Sanctuary measures should be installed as soon as possible (ideally within a couple of working days) following the risk assessment in order to minimise disruption to the household. However, if the household chooses not to move out of the property temporarily whilst awaiting installation then interim security measures should be installed (see Chapter 3).

Sanctuary Co-ordinators should ensure that Sanctuary users understand how to use safety measures and equipment and are able to operate these.

Sanctuary Co-ordinators should also ensure that service users are satisfied with the installations and any safety equipment provided. Sanctuary Co-ordinators should also ensure that service users know what to do in an emergency.

Risk assessment

- 5.2 Sanctuary will not always be an appropriate option, for example, where the risk to the service user outside the home is too great for them to remain in the area. The risk to households outside the home should be considered from the outset. Sanctuary will also not be appropriate where service users are unable to manage any locks and/ or other security measures that are deemed necessary, or are unable to follow safety plans. In some cases the property may not be suitable for Sanctuary (for example, it may not be possible to secure houses in multiple occupation or properties with shared entrances). The decision as to whether Sanctuary is an appropriate option should be informed by two main factors: the needs and preferences of the household, and a full risk assessment.
- 5.3 Risk assessments should comprise two main elements:
- an assessment of the *case*, including the needs and preferences of the service user; the circumstances; and, the risk posed by the perpetrator (including outside the home); and,
 - an assessment of the *property*.
- 5.4 The risk assessment of the case, for example, the whereabouts of the perpetrator and the nature of previous incidents, should be co-ordinated by a Sanctuary Scheme worker and include input from all relevant agencies, in particular the police, and specialist domestic violence services.

- 5.5 This should be a comprehensive assessment using a standardised tool such as the CAADA-DASH Risk Identification Checklist³³ or a similar tool developed in conjunction with a specialist domestic violence service.
- 5.6 Property risk assessments should be undertaken jointly by a Sanctuary Scheme worker; the Crime Prevention Officer (or equivalent officer with specific expertise, for example, a Crime Reduction Officer or Victim Support Officer) and a representative from the fire service. A property risk assessment and management tool should be developed jointly by the Crime Prevention Officer and fire service officer³⁴.
- 5.7 The Sanctuary Scheme Co-ordinator should arrange to visit the client at the property with the Crime Prevention Officer and fire officer to undertake a full risk assessment. This visit should take place as soon as possible after referral.

Practice point: balancing security and fire safety

It is vital that the risk assessment takes account of both security and fire safety issues.

Whilst it is important to secure the property, in the event of emergencies such as fire, accidents or illness, emergency services must be able to enter the property and households must have a means of escape.

It is therefore essential that risk assessments are carried out jointly by trained Crime Prevention Officers (or equivalent) and fire service representatives using a jointly developed property risk assessment tool.

The Sanctuary Co-ordinator, Crime Prevention Officer and fire officer are all responsible for ensuring that service users fully understand fire safety and security measures and procedures and know what to do in an emergency.

The Sanctuary Co-ordinator is responsible for ensuring that all emergency services are aware of properties where Sanctuary measures have been installed and what these comprise.

See Appendix 2 for more details on fire safety.

³³CAADA resources are available at:

http://www.caada.org.uk/Practitioner_resources/Quick%20Start%20Guidance%20&%20RIC%2009062009.pdf

³⁴ Appendix 2 presents more details on fire safety considerations and preferred standards.

- 5.8 The risk assessment should also take account of the service user's needs and preferences and their past experiences. The risk assessors should discuss the measures clients require to make them feel safe and explain what will happen in the event of an emergency.

Case Study Example 1 Involving service users in risk assessment

[Victim Support Officer] said they could put reinforced double glazing in and because of the history he said he thought it was appropriate – he had kicked in the windows before to get in while I was at work and he was waiting for me when I got in – I also told him that I wasn't happy with the front door because it was just a normal door and he said he'd try to get me a special new door and he got that sorted as well. The police and fire station have this address so they know I have this door as they will need special equipment to get in – they explained everything about what to do in an emergency or if I was ill...My carer has a spare set of keys....

Sanctuary user

- 5.9 In some cases properties will already be secure and there may be no need to install extra security. In such cases it is important that this is explained fully and carefully to service users so that they are reassured that the property is secure. If service users are not reassured and do not feel safe then alternative accommodation options should be considered.

Case Study Example 2 Involving service users in risk assessment

... the fear of crime is just as important...I always sit down with them and discuss what's going to be done to make sure that they are happy about it... I have visited properties where the security was good, the property had outside lighting and safe doors and windows so I explained why security measures were unnecessary – that reassured the woman and she was quite happy...

Crime Prevention Officer

- 5.10 Once the risk assessors have decided on the Sanctuary measures required; and if the client still wishes to have Sanctuary installed, then the contractor responsible for installing Sanctuary can be instructed to proceed, and should arrange a convenient time to install the Sanctuary. This should be arranged as soon as possible especially if the household has chosen to remain in the property prior to installation.
- 5.11 The Sanctuary Co-ordinator should ask service users about any concerns they might have about the installation. For example, some service users might be nervous about having male workers in their home, and would appreciate having a female Sanctuary Scheme worker or a friend or relative with them during installation.
- 5.12 As noted earlier, it is very important that the workers responsible for installing the Sanctuary measures are sensitive to the issues and they should receive domestic violence training.
- 5.13 Sanctuary Schemes should develop safety protocols for workers. For example, if there is any risk to workers then they should not visit the property alone, or if there is any evidence that the perpetrator is in the property, or poses an immediate threat, then the workers should not proceed with the installation.

Installing Sanctuary measures

The type of measures installed

- 5.14 The type of Sanctuary measures installed must depend on the level of risk, the needs of the service user and the type or condition of the property. All these factors will differ from case to case. Installing elaborate security measures such as window grilles and London or Birmingham bars where risk assessment indicates that they are *not required* is not cost effective, and may cause service users to feel more anxious about their safety by exaggerating potential risks.
- 5.15 The types of measures to be installed should be decided jointly by the key agencies responsible for assessing the property and the case following consultation with the client. It is extremely important that good quality products are used both to ensure that service users are safe within their property, and, as importantly, that service users *feel* safe. Poor quality products and equipment will place service users at risk and will undermine confidence in the credibility of the Scheme.

Types of Sanctuary measures

Internal measures might include:

- solid core Sanctuary doors
- new/extra door and window locks
- London bars
- Birmingham bars
- reinforced double glazed windows
- laminated windows
- window grilles
- fire retardant letter boxes
- smoke detectors
- hard wired smoke alarms
- fire safety equipment (fire blankets, extinguishers; domestic sprinkler systems)
- window alarms
- 'panic alarms' which alert neighbours
- alarm systems that connect directly to the police or care control system (also useful for gathering evidence about incidents)
- battery operated alarms which connect directly to the police where there is no landline
- intercom systems; and,
- video entry systems.

External measures might include:

- security lighting
- CCTV (which can act as a deterrent but is also useful for gathering evidence)
- anti-climb topping for fences, walls, gates and flat roofs
- cutting back hedges
- removing branches
- erecting fences and gates
- securing shared entrances (for example; fixing communal doors so that they close automatically;)
- entrance systems)
- padlocking gates.

- 5.16 A Sanctuary can also include a Sanctuary Room where the risk assessment suggests this is appropriate. A Sanctuary Room is created by replacing a door to a main room, usually the main bedroom, with a solid core door. The Sanctuary Room door is reversed to open outwards; the frame is reinforced and additional locks and bolts and a door viewer are fitted³⁵. The purpose of the Sanctuary Room is to provide a safe room from where household members can call, and wait safely for, the police.
- 5.17 Many, although not all, of those involved in delivering Sanctuary Scheme services, and other key stakeholders interviewed for this project, expressed concern that Sanctuary Rooms can be potentially dangerous for service users. The main concern expressed was that service users might reconcile with the perpetrator and be held hostage within the Sanctuary Room. Although this is a very plausible risk, the research upon which this guide is based found no evidence to suggest that these concerns had been borne out in practice. Further, Sanctuary Rooms were sometimes unpopular with service users who refused to have them installed. Evidence suggests that adequate target hardening of the rest of the property (and where necessary the outside of the property), and the provision of alarms that link directly to the police or to a care control system, normally provide adequate security. The decision to install a Sanctuary Room should depend on the risk assessment and the needs and preferences of the service user.

Practice point: post installation checks

Once the Sanctuary measures have been installed the Sanctuary Scheme Co-ordinator should check that:

- all the security measures have been installed and are working correctly
- all additional equipment such as mobile telephones or personal alarms have been provided
- emergency services are aware of properties where Sanctuary has been installed and know what types of security measures have been installed
- the service user is happy with the installation and feels secure
- the service user understands how to use the various safety measures
- the service user understands what to do in an emergency.

³⁵ Appendix 1 contains more detailed information on minimum standard security products for Sanctuary Rooms.

- 5.18 Sanctuary Scheme Co-ordinators must ensure that all emergency services are aware of addresses where Sanctuary has been installed. They must also be informed about the types of security measures in place at the property so that they can respond appropriately, for example, they may require specialist equipment to break down doors.
- 5.19 Service users must also understand the importance of fire safety and other safety procedures and what to do in the event of an emergency, for example, if the perpetrator attempts to gain entry to the property or in case of fire (see Appendix 2). For example, service users should be advised to keep window lock keys and door keys in their bedroom at night so that they can leave the property in an emergency, and should be advised to keep mobile telephones and alarms in the bedroom at night and to ensure that these are always fully charged. Individual fire safety plans and precautions will depend on the types of security measures installed and the type of property. Sanctuary Co-ordinators should take responsibility for ensuring that a fire service representative visits the property following installation of the Sanctuary measures and advises service users on fire safety.
- 5.20 Service users must also be reassured that emergency services will be aware that Sanctuary has been installed and will be able to enter the property if necessary.
- 5.21 It is also important that service users understand and are satisfied with using the safety equipment provided. Expensive video entry systems and alarms will be of no use if service users do not understand or find it difficult to operate them.
- 5.22 Sanctuary Co-ordinators should also consider the wider support needs of service users from the outset. These include practical advice and support to help households stay safe outside the home as well as within the property, and support with a range of other needs. These are discussed in some detail in the following two chapters.

Chapter 6

Helping Sanctuary users to keep safe

- 6.1 This chapter describes the ways in which Sanctuary Schemes can help service users to remain safe both in their homes and outside of them. The chapter begins with a discussion of safety planning, who might advise on this and what safety plans might cover. It goes on to consider the role of the legal system and the police in ensuring the safety of service users, and the importance of maintaining Sanctuary installations. Finally, the chapter considers what should be done if Sanctuary service users do not feel safe or where Sanctuary is no longer required.

Key points

Households at risk of domestic violence have to be able to go about their daily lives as safely as possible, and Sanctuary Scheme services must ensure that safety outside the home is addressed.

Police domestic violence officers, Crime Prevention Officers, Victim Support Officers, Independent Domestic Violence Advisers and specialist domestic violence services can all provide advice on keeping safe outside the home.

Legal remedies such as occupation orders and non-molestation orders can be useful tools in helping keep households safe; however, some service users may require fairly intensive specialist support through the legal process.

Sanctuary measures are intended to keep households safe in the event of an emergency until the police arrive. Addresses where a Sanctuary has been installed must be clearly flagged on police IT systems so that it is clear that an immediate response is necessary.

Where Sanctuary users are not safe or do not feel safe then they should be offered all the accommodation options available to any household at risk of domestic violence.

Safety planning

- 6.2 Households at risk of domestic violence need to be able to go about their daily lives as safely as possible. As noted earlier, if the risk assessment suggests that it is too dangerous for a household to remain in the local area then Sanctuary would not be an appropriate option. Nevertheless, service users may still feel unsafe or be at some risk outside their homes. Others may choose not to move from the area despite being advised that this would be the safer option. Sanctuary Scheme services must work with all service users to address safety outside the home. The need for safety planning is one of a range of support needs that has to be assessed and addressed (see Chapter 7 and Appendix 3) as part of an individual support plan.
- 6.3 Police domestic violence officers, Crime Prevention Officers, Victim Support Officers, Independent Domestic Violence Advisers and specialist domestic violence services can all provide practical advice on keeping safe outside the home and work with the household to assess their needs and develop individual safety plans. Women's Aid's *The Survivor's Handbook*³⁶ also provides advice about safety planning.
- 6.4 Measures can include:
- the use of injunctions
 - criminal sanctions
 - the provision of personal alarms including Global Positioning System alarms
 - developing safety plans and strategies for keeping safe, for example:
 - changing routes to work and school
 - avoiding isolated routes and going out alone at night
 - changing routines that the perpetrator will be aware of (for example, regular appointments, where and when service users shop or bank)
 - informing schools, employers and neighbours about the situation; and,
 - planning what to do in an emergency (for example, finding a safe place to wait for the police).
- 6.5 Women's Aid have developed a list of key issues that should be considered when assessing the needs of service users and their children and developing safety plans. This is presented in Appendix 3. Although this has been developed for use with Women's Aid clients, the key principles and practice points are as applicable to male service users.

³⁶ Women's Aid (undated) *The Survivor's Handbook*. Available at: <http://www.womensaid.org.uk/domestic-violence-survivors-handbook.asp?section=000100010008000100310005>.

Case Study Example 3

Putting a safety plan into action

I was actually shopping in the [...] high street...he seen me, started shouting and I just went into a shop and got out of the way because I knew he couldn't do nothing in front of other customers [IDVA] told me 'always keep your 'phone charged at all times, never let the battery run low' which I don't...and also if I see him call the police straight away and if he does approach me in the shops or whatever, just go to the staff and say, 'look, I need help'...don't feel embarrassed because you're asking someone to help you...

Sanctuary user

Civil remedies and criminal sanctions

- 6.6 Although legal remedies such as occupation orders and non-molestation orders³⁷ can be useful tools in tackling domestic violence and preventing repeat victimisation, victims of domestic violence may often be reluctant to pursue these civil remedies. They may be even more reluctant to pursue criminal sanctions. This may be because they do not believe the measures will be effective, because they fear that taking legal action may anger the perpetrator and therefore exacerbate the situation and further jeopardise their safety, or because they are nervous about having to appear in court.
- 6.7 Guidance on the civil remedies and criminal sanctions available through the courts to victims of domestic violence can be found in *Domestic Violence: A guide to civil remedies and criminal sanctions*.³⁸ There are also more accessible resources designed for victims of domestic violence including the *Domestic Violence DIY Injunction Handbook* (Rights of Women, 2006). Women's Aid's *Survivor's Handbook*³⁹ also contains useful information about civil remedies and criminal sanctions.

³⁷ Non-molestation Order: Part IV of the Family Law Act 1996 provides a civil remedy for molestation, violence and occupation of a home. A non-molestation order is used to deter someone from causing or threatening violence to the applicant or to any children. The Act does not define molestation but it can include: intimidation, pestering, threats and harassment.

³⁸ Ministry of Justice (2007) *Domestic Violence: A guide to Civil Remedies and Criminal Sanctions* London: Ministry of Justice. Available at:

http://www.family-justice-council.org.uk/docs/DV_Guide_March_2007_-_English.pdf

³⁹ Women's Aid *Survivor's Handbook* is available at: <http://www.womensaid.org.uk/domestic-violence-survivors-handbook.asp?section=000100010008000100330002>

Practice point: support through the legal process

Many service users will require support and advice about the civil remedies and criminal sanctions available from, for example:

- an Independent Domestic Violence Adviser
- specialist domestic violence workers
- solicitors.

Some service users may well require fairly intensive support through the legal process, including being accompanied in court.

Service users may well change their minds about pursuing legal remedies because they are nervous of appearing in court, concerned that such action will anger the perpetrator or unsure that the measures will be effective. It is important that workers are sympathetic to these fears and concerns.

Police support and response to incidents

- 6.8 As noted earlier, one purpose of Sanctuary measures is to keep households safe in the event of an emergency, for example where the abuser attempts to force entry, until the police arrive. If the police response is slow then there is a danger that the perpetrator could breach the Sanctuary or, through intimidation and threatening behaviour, persuade the service user to allow entry to the property. Even if the service user remains safe within the Sanctuary, a slow police response will undermine confidence in the security measures. Addresses where a Sanctuary has been installed must be clearly flagged on police IT systems so that it is clear that an immediate response is necessary.

Maintaining Sanctuary installations

- 6.9 As noted earlier in this chapter, Sanctuary Scheme Co-ordinators should check that Sanctuary measures are working correctly following installation and should continue to do so on a regular and agreed basis, for example at three monthly intervals when needs are reassessed (see Appendix 3). Service users may be reluctant to report lost keys or accidental damage to security measures but the Sanctuary Scheme Co-ordinator should ensure that they understand the importance of reporting any defective or damaged security measures if they are to remain safe. Defects and damage should be reported to the Sanctuary Scheme Co-ordinator who should arrange for the repairs to be undertaken promptly. The Sanctuary Scheme Co-ordinator should take overall responsibility for ensuring that repairs have been completed satisfactorily.

What to do if Sanctuary proves not to be a safe alternative or is no longer required

- 6.10 Where Sanctuary users are not safe or do not feel safe either in their home or outside and wish to move, then Sanctuary Service Co-ordinators must explain all the accommodation options available to them. Having had a Sanctuary Scheme does not preclude people from accessing emergency accommodation, refuges or other forms of temporary accommodation. Where the local housing authority has reason to believe they may be homeless (for example, because it is no longer reasonable for them to continue to occupy the accommodation) or it is likely that they may become homeless within 28 days, the authority must make inquiries to determine whether any duty is owed under the homelessness legislation.
- 6.11 Sanctuary Scheme service users might leave the property for other reasons (for example, to set up home with a new partner), and Sanctuary Schemes might wish to consider reusing the property for another household at risk of domestic violence. However, a full risk assessment will have to be undertaken of the new case to ensure that the existing Sanctuary measures are appropriate for the needs and circumstances of the household moving into the property.
- 6.12 Finally, it is not uncommon for victims of domestic violence to reconcile with perpetrators, and there may thus be an on-going risk of perpetrators moving back into properties where Sanctuary measures have been installed. Sanctuary measures intended to protect service users could then potentially pose a danger (see Chapter 1). If reconciliation occurs, then ideally any such measures (in particular Sanctuary Rooms) should be removed, but realistically it is highly unlikely that service users would inform the Sanctuary Scheme of any reconciliation. It is therefore extremely important that the risk assessment takes account of the likelihood of service users reconciling with the perpetrator and that certain measures – in particular Sanctuary Rooms - are only installed where deemed necessary and appropriate.

Chapter 7

Supporting households living in a Sanctuary

- 7.1 This chapter focuses on the provision of support to households living in a Sanctuary. It begins by discussing needs assessment before going on to describe the types of support Sanctuary Scheme service users and their children might require in addition to support and advice on safety discussed in the previous chapter.

Key points

Sanctuaries should be one element in a package of measures to support and protect households at risk of domestic violence.

Sanctuary Schemes must ensure that the needs of service users and their children are fully assessed following referral, and reassessed at regular intervals following installation of the Sanctuary.

Sanctuary Scheme users will have varying levels of need. Many will require only minimal support beyond the provision of Sanctuary measures whilst others may require intensive specialist support.

Some service users may benefit from peer support groups and Sanctuary Schemes might wish to consider developing service user groups.

The duration of support will vary according to individual needs. Support should not be time limited, and should be provided for as long as the service user requires it.

Service users must know who to contact should they have further problems and should be encouraged to contact the Sanctuary co-ordinator should any problems arise at a later date.

Sanctuary Schemes as part of a package to support households

- 7.2 Sanctuary Schemes should be part of a holistic package of measures to support and protect households at risk of domestic violence. This is in line with government policy on tackling violence against women and girls, which consists of three strands: prevention, protection and justice, and the provision of services and support. Support to victims of domestic violence can also have an important role in helping service users recover from their experiences; to prevent further episodes of violence; and, to sustain accommodation (Abrahams, 2007; Jones *et al*, 2002).
- 7.3 Although some service users may require minimal support beyond the physical security measures of the Sanctuary, needs vary and may change over time and it is important that needs are reassessed at regular intervals and that service users are encouraged to contact the Sanctuary Scheme should their circumstances or needs change (see Appendix 3).

Assessing support needs

- 7.4 All Sanctuary Scheme users should have their needs assessed. Where possible, the needs assessment should be undertaken by a specialist domestic violence worker and the use of a standardised needs assessment tool developed for Sanctuary Scheme service users⁴⁰. Women's Aid have developed a list of key issues that should be considered when assessing the support needs of service users and their children. This is presented in Appendix 3. Although this has been developed for use with Women's Aid clients, the key principles and practice points are as applicable to male service users.

⁴⁰ For an example of an Individual Service Plan see:
http://www.caada.org.uk/practitioner_resources/CAADA_Individual_IDVA_Service_Plan_2009.docx

Practice point: needs assessment

Sanctuary Schemes should work with specialist domestic abuse services to develop an appropriate tool for assessing the support and safety needs of Sanctuary Scheme users.

The needs assessment should cover:

- medical needs (substance misuse, depression/mental health and access to services)
- legal needs and support (advice on criminal/legal protection, accompaniment to court)
- finance (debts, child maintenance, benefits)
- domestic violence support/counselling
- needs related to children (for example, child contact issues).

Needs should be reassessed at regular intervals (see Appendix 3).

Support needs

7.5 Sanctuary users will have varying levels of need and the types of need will differ from case to case. Some service users may require specialist domestic violence support whilst others may require more practical support. Some may have complex needs and will require support from a range of agencies. These agencies should be identified and referral procedures agreed when setting up the Sanctuary Scheme (see Chapter 2). The types of support required might include:

- support and advice on civil remedies and criminal sanctions
- support and advice on child contact issues
- support with domestic violence related issues, for example, referral to a support group and/or to individual counselling
- financial advice, including advice on benefits or debt management
- support and advice on housing related issues, for example, transfer of ownership or tenancy in the long-term
- support with mental health issues
- support with substance misuse
- if they have recently moved home or moved to a new area, they may need general support with setting up a new home and/or settling in the new area (for example, finding schools and health services). This support might be provided by a generic floating support service or a specialist domestic violence service.

Support for children

7.6 Sanctuary Schemes should also ensure that the needs of children are assessed and addressed. These assessments should be undertaken by specialist children's workers. Various agencies can provide specialist support for children affected by domestic violence including Women's Aid, Refuge, other specialist domestic violence services, the NSPCC, Children's Services and Family Intervention Projects. The provision of such services will vary from area to area and Sanctuary Schemes should identify available services and formalise referral procedures when setting up the Sanctuary Scheme. Women's Aid has created a web site *The Hide Out*⁴¹ to help children and young people understand domestic abuse and those affected to take positive action such as creating a safety plan. The types of support required by children affected by domestic violence might include:

- support with domestic violence related issues, for example, referral to a children or young people's support group and/or to individual counselling
- if they have recently moved homes or areas, they may need support in settling in the new area including their new schools, friendships and leisure activities
- help with issues around bullying
- support with mental health issues
- support with substance misuse.

Peer support

7.7 Sanctuary service users may feel isolated and may find peer support or other opportunities to meet with survivors of domestic violence helpful. Sanctuary Schemes might wish to develop their own service user groups⁴² or refer service users to local domestic violence services which run user groups or structured activities and programmes such as Power to change⁴³ or a Freedom Programme. These seek to increase understanding of domestic violence amongst those affected by it. The Freedom Programme covers, for example: the behaviour of perpetrators, the effects of domestic violence on victims and children, and, how to recognise abusive behaviour. The Power to Change educational programme covers issues such as why it is so hard to leave an abusive relationship, coping with grief, fear, guilt, and anger, assertiveness skills and techniques, and what healthy relationships might look like. Both programmes also work with survivors to develop their confidence

⁴¹ *The Hide Out* is available at: <http://www.thehideout.org.uk/default.aspx>

⁴² For more information about setting up a service user group, contact Martha McCann at New Charter Housing Trust Group: Martha.McCann@newcharter.co.uk

⁴³ For information on setting up Power to Change support groups and to download a copy of the Power to Change manual see <http://www.womensaid.org.uk/domestic-violence-press-information.asp?itemid=1842&itemTitle=Women%92s+Aid+launches+new+European+resource+to+help+victims+of+domestic+violence§ion=0001000100150001§ionTitle=Press+releases>

and self-esteem; provide practical advice about sources of help and support; and provide an opportunity for survivors to share their experiences.

Ongoing assessment of needs and duration of support

- 7.8 Some service users might not feel that they, or their children, require support at the time Sanctuary is installed, or they might choose not to take up the support offered at that time. They might, however, require support at a later date. Sanctuary Scheme Co-ordinators should stay in regular contact with service users in order to:
- ensure that the household is safe
 - ensure that household members *feel safe*
 - check that all Sanctuary measures are working correctly
 - ensure that the support needs of households are being met.
- 7.9 This regular contact could be in the form of telephone calls or home visits (monthly or more frequently if the service user requires intensive support). Cases should be formally reassessed after a month and then at three monthly intervals. Sanctuary Schemes should also encourage service users to contact the Sanctuary Scheme Coordinator or Sanctuary workers at any time after the Sanctuary has been installed if they experience any problems or require advice or support.
- 7.10 The duration of support will vary according to individual needs. Support should not be time limited, it should be provided for as long as the service user requires it. However, as noted above, Sanctuary Schemes must ensure that Sanctuary users know who to contact should they require help and advice in the future and, again, should be encouraged to do so.

Chapter 8

Monitoring and evaluation

- 8.1 This chapter discusses the need for monitoring and evaluation and sets out the types of data Sanctuary Schemes should collect in order to assess the effectiveness of the service.

Key points

Sanctuary Schemes should have clear aims and objectives and realistic and measurable goals or performance indicators.

Sanctuary Schemes should have systems in place to monitor and evaluate the service.

Sanctuary Schemes must be realistic about what data they will be able to collect and who will be responsible for collecting and collating this information.

- Evaluations should assess process, implementation and outcomes
- Evaluations provide evidence of the effectiveness of the Sanctuary Scheme which can be used:
 - to support the case for the continuation of the Sanctuary Scheme
 - to help secure future funding
 - to identify problems
 - to inform the ongoing development and improvement of the Sanctuary Scheme
 - to inform good practice in delivering Sanctuary Schemes.
- Evaluations should also include service users' views about the Sanctuary Scheme and their experiences of the service.

Monitoring and evaluation of services can also help to identify gaps in service provision and unmet need.

Monitoring

- 8.2 Monitoring entails the routine recording of information about all cases dealt with that can be used to describe, broadly speaking, the ways in which services are used. It can be used to gather information on, for example, numbers of referrals, the characteristics of households who receive services, and basic information on service outcomes. In the setting up of a service, consideration should be given to designing monitoring tools which can be completed by front-line workers, and which reflect, where feasible, service aims and objectives, so that this data can be used to inform formal service evaluations and cost benefit assessments. It is useful to compile monitoring information regularly – e.g. quarterly - and to share these with key stakeholders.
- 8.3 Typical monitoring data might include:
- Referrals to the Sanctuary Scheme:
 - the number of households referred to the Sanctuary Scheme
 - the number of referrals by referral agencies
 - the number of self referrals
 - the tenure of households referred to the service
 - the number of referrals accepted
 - the reasons why referrals were not accepted
 - the reasons why households chose not to have Sanctuary installed.
 - Referrals accepted for Sanctuary
 - the household type and characteristics (families with children, lone person households, gender, ethnicity and age)
 - the number of Sanctuaries installed
 - the tenure of properties where Sanctuaries are installed (PRS, HA or LA, Owner occupied)
 - the type of Sanctuary measures installed
 - the cost of each Sanctuary installed (including the cost of Sanctuary measures and support).
 - Take up of support and support needs/gaps in services
 - the number of households (adults and children) taking up support
 - the types of support required
 - the types of support provided
 - which agencies provide this support .

- The costs of Sanctuary which should include:
 - the costs of different types of installation
 - the cost of support provided to Sanctuary Scheme service users
 - the costs of operating the Sanctuary Scheme.

8.4 In order to help assess whether services are meeting their aims and objectives, Sanctuary Schemes may also wish to gather routine data on outcomes for service users. These may relate to whether Sanctuaries are still being sustained after a given number of months, and whether there have been breaches.

8.5 The sorts of data that may therefore inform such an assessment and which would usefully be gathered via monitoring systems may typically include:

- the number of households remaining in their homes following the installation of Sanctuary measures (for example up to six months or 12 months after installation and longer if possible);
- the number of repeat incidents of domestic violence, attempted breaches and breaches, at addresses where Sanctuary measures have been installed and the outcome (for example, whether the household had to move as a result of the breach)
- the number of repeat incidents of domestic violence or harassment to people who are living at addresses where Sanctuary measures have been installed, and the outcome.

8.6 Other information that could usefully be gathered might entail information on the extent to which households are leading more settled lives, for example:

- the number of service users remaining in employment
- the number of service users returning to or entering, employment, education or training
- improvements in school attendance
- debt reduction
- the number of service users engaging with peer support groups or other activities.

8.7 However, it is recognised that many of these measures are highly subjective and may be beyond the remit of regular monitoring tools, and may be more appropriately gathered by service evaluations (see below).

Evaluation

8.8 Evaluation tends to be a less frequent activity, and generally aims to assess the extent to which services meet their aims and objectives. It can demonstrate how services are helping to deliver local targets or policy

objectives and may entail cost-benefit analyses provided the relevant monitoring information is available (see above). It often aims to identify ways in which services can be improved. It often entails the analysis of monitoring data to inform its conclusions. However, in addition, evaluation will often want to gather other, more subjective information that reflects the experiences and views of service users and staff involved in service delivery. This type of information may be particularly useful in order to reflect how well services have helped deliver on 'softer' outcomes or objectives, such as an improvement in the quality of life of service users, or in their independence or well-being. Evaluations will therefore often entail interviews or focus group work to gather such information. Results can be used to improve services and can be shared with key stakeholders.

- 8.9 Evaluations should be based on a clear understanding of the service's aims and objectives.
- 8.10 These may typically include:
- enabling households at risk of violence to remain in their own homes
 - reducing repeat victimisation through the provision of enhanced security measures and support.
- 8.11 As noted above, evaluations can be usefully informed by the analysis of regular monitoring data, so it is useful to consider the sorts of information that monitoring systems should gather with this in mind.
- 8.12 Evaluations might include, for example, analysis of referral information in order to evaluate how successful the service has been in promoting the Sanctuary Scheme to referral agencies and the general public; or to check whether the service is reaching all groups (across all tenures) that could potentially benefit from a Sanctuary; and to gather information on the support needs of service users and any gaps in services.
- 8.13 They should also entail analysis of data on outcomes, to assess the extent to which Sanctuaries are sustained and whether there have been any breaches since installation.
- 8.14 They may also make use of data gathered from other sources, such as local police forces, who may have available data on domestic violence incidences prior to and after Sanctuaries are installed.

Service user views

- 8.15 Any overall judgement about the effectiveness of a Sanctuary Scheme should also address service quality. Evaluations should, in part, be informed by the views and reported experiences of households who are using, and who have used, Sanctuary Schemes. Service user views can be gathered through postal surveys and/or, more informally, through feedback from service user groups.

- 8.16 Evaluations could usefully gather service users' views on, for example:
- advice received about accommodation options
 - their reasons for opting for Sanctuary
 - their experience of the referral process (advice received and speed of process)
 - the risk assessment process (for example, did they feel they were consulted and that their needs and preferences were taken into account)
 - the time taken between referral and installation
 - the installation process, the attitude of workers, and whether all measures were explained fully and clearly
 - the support offered and provided by Sanctuary Scheme and/or other providers and agencies including the police
 - their support plan
 - safety planning
 - the support offered or provided to children
 - repairs and maintenance services
 - how safe they have felt since having Sanctuary installed
 - how safe they have actually been since having Sanctuary installed
 - the duration of support and whether it has been appropriate
 - if applicable, how support was brought to an end, and any views they have on this.

Evaluating the cost-benefits or cost-effectiveness of Sanctuary Schemes

- 8.17 Research suggests that Sanctuary Schemes have the potential to produce significant cost savings for local authorities by reducing homelessness and, as a consequence, potentially reducing the need to provide alternative accommodation, such as refuge places and temporary accommodation; and reducing the costs involved in rehousing households. Schemes should consider carrying out an assessment of the cost-benefits of Sanctuary Schemes as an integral part of any service evaluation.
- 8.18 Cost-benefit analysis can be informed by regular monitoring information gathered by Sanctuary services themselves or from other sources.
- 8.19 Data on homelessness acceptances are collected by local housing authorities and are readily accessible in the form of P1E returns. It is therefore, possible to make some estimation of the impact of Sanctuary Schemes on the number of households accepted as homeless where the reason for loss of last settled home was a violent relationship breakdown with a partner, and to make some assumptions about the resulting cost savings. Local housing authorities can

estimate the cost of providing alternative provision and make some comparisons with the cost of providing a Sanctuary. However, such estimates should be treated with caution as it cannot be certain that all households which received the Sanctuary Scheme service would have become homeless without the intervention, or that they would have remained in the local authority area. Further, it is difficult to ascertain whether other homelessness prevention or domestic violence interventions had an impact on reducing homelessness. Nevertheless, Sanctuary Schemes should collect data on the costs of Sanctuary which should include:

- the costs of different types of installation
- the cost of support provided to Sanctuary Scheme service users
- the costs of operating the Sanctuary Scheme
- the average costs of alternative likely service provision including support.

8.20 As noted above, Sanctuary Schemes should also collect data on the outcomes for service users (in terms of how many were able to remain safely in their own homes). These data would prove invaluable in any future external evaluation of the effectiveness of Sanctuary Schemes which included a cost-benefit analysis. An important issue in thinking about costs and benefits is the likely cost of any alternatives if the Sanctuary had not been provided. Stakeholders may be able to provide this kind of data or make informed estimates of the order of costs involved.

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Appendix 1

Minimum standard security products for Sanctuary Rooms

The following specification is based on a guide to the minimum standard of security products for Sanctuary Rooms employed by the Crime Reduction Unit at Harrow Police Station. The component parts are made up of various security products, which must comply with British and/or European Standards where available.

- 1 x 44mm solid core door 1/2 hour fire rated (minimum).
- 1 x Intumescent strip routed into the perimeter of the door.
- 2 x Europrofile locks (using a 6 pinned patented system to avoid duplication) with internal thumb turns.
- 3 x 200mm (4") steel hinges (Class 10 standard) secured with 30mm x 5mm (1" x 1/8") steel screws.
- 2 x hinge bolts.
- 1 x memo door viewer.
- Collapsible security grilles (LPS 1175 standard) for ground floor flats.
- Frames are secured with 130mm (5") frame fixers, positioned at 400mm (8") centres.
- The door jambs are secured with 50mm x 5mm (2" x 1/8") screws positioned at 200mm (4") centres. Loft hatches are secured with two closed shackle insurance rated padlocks with vertical or horizontal pad bars secured with coach bolts.

It is important to note that Sanctuary doors are not suitable for stud partition walls.

Clients with mobile telephones must be advised to keep their telephone with them at all times and the charger in the Sanctuary Room. 'Pay as you go' or '999 only' mobile telephones should be supplied to clients who do not have mobile telephones.

Appendix 2

Fire Safety

This appendix is based on the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority Fire Safety Guidance Note Number 74, 'Sanctuary' Rooms in Domestic Premises – Fire Safety Considerations and Preferred Standards'. The Safety Guidance Note and further information on fire safety precautions and products can be obtained from the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority's website at www.london-fire.gov.uk.

Introduction

The aim of a Sanctuary is to make it possible for households at risk of domestic violence to remain safely in their own homes. In some cases this entails the installation of a Sanctuary Room in the property. The Sanctuary Room, normally the main bedroom, provides a secure place to retreat to and a place from where assistance can be summoned if the victim is under threat. It is recognised that there is often conflict between security and fire safety measures; however, in most cases an acceptable balance can be achieved.

Type of premises – means of escape

Not all types of premises will be suitable to house a Sanctuary Room. When considering a property it should be noted that, from a fire service viewpoint, any additional security measures should not compromise basic means of escape principles. Consideration should also be given to access for the fire service including, where possible, locating the Sanctuary Room at the front of the property to facilitate rescue of the occupants in the event of an emergency.

As it is difficult to provide a means of escape in multi-storey buildings, Sanctuary Rooms should, ideally, only be installed in one or two storey properties. In such premises few considerations are necessary beyond ensuring that the Sanctuary Room opens directly onto a hallway or stair leading to the entrance to the premises with an alternative means of escape such as another door or window that can be opened without the use of a key. In premises used as 'houses in multiple occupation' the level of risk to other occupants will need to be assessed in terms of possible lateral fire spread as well as the adequacy of fire separation between dwellings.

It is recognised, however, that there will be instances where the victim resides in a block of flats and the Sanctuary Room is needed in premises above the second floor. In such circumstances it is likely that there will be no secondary means of escape, unless it is possible for the brigade to achieve this by ladder rescue, and consideration may need to be given to an enhanced level of fire protection.

Home fire safety check

Every property being considered for a Sanctuary Room should be subject to a home fire safety check which should include advice on maintenance and testing of any smoke alarms and general fire safety advice. The visit will also provide an opportunity to prepare an emergency escape plan, including a bedtime key routine, which is essential especially if additional security measures have been provided to doors and windows.

Smoke alarms

Premises with a Sanctuary Room should ideally have mains operated smoke alarms installed in circulation areas only and the system should comply with the installation recommendations in British Standard 5839 Part 6. Alternatively a sufficient number (normally one per floor) of 10 year battery powered smoke alarms should be provided in circulation areas.

An alarm should be installed close enough to a Sanctuary Room door to alert the occupants should they be asleep but not so loud as to interfere with any subsequent telephone call to summon assistance. If necessary, consideration should be given to installing a muting device within the Sanctuary Room to prevent the loud background noise of the alarm from interfering with the emergency call.

In cases where there are direct threats of arson against the occupier then hard wired smoke alarms should always be provided and a domestic sprinkler system considered.

Emergency lighting

It is recommended that rechargeable, battery operated emergency lighting is fitted directly outside the Sanctuary Room. This will assist occupiers to leave the premises should there be a mains failure during any emergency. The provision of a torch with rechargeable batteries will generally meet the requirement here although this would be more ideally located inside the Sanctuary Room.

Doors in Sanctuary Rooms

The Sanctuary Room should be a fire resisting compartment able to withstand fire for a minimum of 30 minutes. Any door set should therefore be of similar fire resistance (known as FD30 or E30 doors). Intumescent and cold smoke fire seals should be rebated into all internal Sanctuary Room doors (or the receiving frame). In the event of fire these will greatly expand to seal the gap around the door to provide a safe and effective barrier against the passage of fire and smoke. A threshold should be provided on the bottom of the door to prevent the ingress of smoke and flammable liquids and any perforation of the door should be suitably protected to stop similar ingress.

Any front door letter box should be sealed up and replaced with an external wall mounted letter box or alternatively replaced with a special internal 'arson letterbox'.

Further guidance on security measures for doors can be found in London Fire Brigade's Guidance Note No. 11 'Security Doors and Other Security Measures for Residential Premises – Preferred Standards'⁴⁴.

Windows in Sanctuary Rooms

Windows can be provided within Sanctuary Rooms to provide an alternative means of escape; in such circumstances the window should comply with the requirements of the Building Regulations and the stipulations with regard to floor height and window dimensions. In brief these regulations state that the window should have an unobstructed opening of not less than 0.33m² and should be at least 450 mm high and 450mm wide; the bottom of the opening area should not be more than 1100mm above the floor. If a window is to be used for means of escape purposes then, like a door used for the same purpose, it should lead to a place of safety away from the danger of fire.

Windows that allow escape on to a roof, or that can be opened from a Sanctuary Room to provide fresh air, should be easily opened in case of emergency. If the windows are locked, keys should be kept nearby.

Further guidance on security measures for windows can be found in London Fire Brigade's Guidance Note No. 11 'Security Doors and Other Security Measures for Residential Premises – Preferred Standards' (see above).

Fire fighting equipment

The following fire fighting equipment should be provided in the Sanctuary Room:

- dry powder extinguisher (to deal with a petrol/paraffin fire)
- water extinguisher (to deal with carbonaceous fire)
- fire blanket
- break-glass hammer.

Telephone facilities

It is important that a reliable means for summoning assistance in the event of an emergency is provided for the occupier. It is therefore strongly recommended that a dedicated telephone line is provided for the premises with an extension within the Sanctuary Room. A Fire Instruction Notice should be fixed adjacent to the telephone extension. The notice should include clear

⁴⁴ *Security Doors and Other Security Measures for Residential Premises – Preferred Standards'* and additional advice on fire safety matters can be obtained from the LFEPA's website at www.london-fire.gov.uk

instructions that, when calling the fire brigade, the caller should state that they are in a locked room and give the room's location (e.g. ground floor, front or back of premises).

In addition, and to take account of possible interference with the telephone cable, a 'pay-as-you-go' mobile phone with credit should be provided and kept available for use at all times in the Sanctuary Room.

Notifying the brigade

The fire service must be informed of the details of any premises where a Sanctuary Room and other Sanctuary measures have been installed. The details should include the full address and location within the premises of the Sanctuary Room and the details of any other Sanctuary measures such as reinforced external doors, window grilles and other measures which might impede access to the premises in an emergency. These details will be used to inform fire crews who may be called to any incident at the premises. It is also important that the Authority is informed if an existing Sanctuary Room is taken out of use. The Sanctuary Co-ordinator will be responsible for ensuring that the fire service and other emergency services (including the ambulance service) are aware of these details.

Appendix 3

Sanctuary Schemes: Needs assessment, support planning and safety planning

Introduction

A key feature of Sanctuary Schemes - in addition to improving the safety of the physical accommodation - is the provision of support to victims of domestic violence. This support may be provided internally by trained workers employed by the Scheme, or service users may be referred to a local specialist domestic violence service.

The first step in providing support is completing a full assessment of the service user's needs. Using the information collected during the assessment, an individual support plan should be devised reflecting the woman's needs, wants and circumstances. Part of the support plan should include a safety plan, which helps a victim to prepare for a crisis situation.

Needs assessment and support planning should be conducted on the assumption that:

- the perpetrator has definitely left the property
- a full risk assessment has already taken place
- the property and surrounding area has also been assessed for its suitability for Sanctuary and any associated risk factors
- the service user has willingly agreed to the installation of Sanctuary measures, after a full discussion of all options available.

Procedural guidance

The assessment and planning process has three stages:

1. The **Needs Assessment** will be completed as soon as possible after referral, once the risk assessment has been undertaken and the woman has agreed to the installation of Sanctuary measures. It should be seen as part of a package of measures to support service users and increase their safety.
2. The **Support Plan** should be completed not more than 5 days after the completion of the needs assessment. The Support Plan should also include a **Safety Plan**.

3. Both the needs assessment and support plan, including the safety plan, should be **reviewed** after one month and at least every three months thereafter, or as the service user's circumstances change.

The process should be explained to and completed with the service user to ensure they have an understanding of, and feel in control of, the process. Service users should see and sign the completed documents and be able to request a review at any time.

All these documents should form part of the service user's individual file and should be stored safely when not in use. The confidentiality of this information should be managed in line with the confidentiality policies of both the specialist domestic violence agency and the agency responsible for delivering the Sanctuary Scheme, and with information sharing protocols applying to relevant partnership agencies.

Format

Each agency may wish to devise their own needs assessment and support/safety planning tools. However, there are a number of issues outlined below which should be covered as standard to ensure the individual service user's needs are identified and action is taken to meet those needs.

N.B. It is important that the following points are not *simply* used as a checklist but as an aide-memoire, to be introduced with a conversational approach. Bear in mind that risk factors and needs might be more likely to emerge in conversation, once the client has built up trust, rather than as a response to a direct question.

Some of these issues are of greater immediate priority than others (for example, safety of survivors and her children, child contact issues, contact with perpetrator). Other issues may also be covered at the outset, or if more appropriate, could be left until subsequent meetings.

A. ADULT SERVICE USERS

1. Personal details

- Name
- Contact details
- Children's details
- Date of assessment and review

2. Safety

- Actual and potential contact with the abuser?
- Safety at home – do Sanctuary Scheme measures improve feeling of safety?
- Safety outside the home – safe to take children to school, go shopping, travel to work?
- Safety at work – change route to work? Inform employer?

- Telephone and internet safety – change telephone number(s) and email address?
- Safety plan in place? (see section on ‘Making a safety plan’ below in this section)

3. Access to support and advice

- Friends/family – any contact? Safe/suitable to confide in?
- Professional support – details of professionals/agencies previously or currently involved with service user
- Other contacts, e.g. neighbours, colleagues, community/religious groups – safe to confide in?
- Concerns about loneliness/being home alone/lack of contact with others?
- Know where to go to get advice? Feel confident seeking advice/support?

4. Physical health

- Registered with GP?
- Contact with any other medical professionals; e.g. health visitor, midwife, district nurse?
- Injuries resulting from the abuse? In need of immediate medical attention?
- Ongoing health problems that require attention?
- Needs arising from impairment or disability?
- Other physical health issues

5. Mental health and emotional well-being

- Experiences of depression, anxiety, disturbed sleep, self-harming behaviour, suicidal thoughts?
- Diagnosed conditions, e.g. bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, eating disorders?
- Use of alcohol, illegal substances or prescribed medication?
- Contact with mental health workers, substance misuse workers, counsellor or other therapist?
- Other mental health/emotional well-being issues

6. Housing

- Current accommodation – rent/own, joint/sole?
- Immediate issues, e.g. safety measures, repairs
- Long-term problems, for example removing abuser from tenancy?
- Other housing issues

7. Legal options

- Have a solicitor at the moment?
- Criminal prosecution
- Non-molestation/occupation order
- Divorce
- Child contact

- Immigration
- Other legal matters

8. Financial situation

- Current income – salary from paid employment, welfare benefits, maintenance
- Financial difficulties, e.g. managing on a budget, debt, eligibility and applications for welfare benefits
- Other financial problems

9. Children

- Contact arrangements
- Safety – during contact? Risk of abduction?
- Physical health and emotional well-being?
- Educational needs?
- Behavioural issues?
- Specialist support needs?
- Parenting support for mother?
- Other needs relating to children

10. Employment, education and training

- Currently in employment/education/training? Or future plans?
- Work or college informed of situation? Safety measures in place?
- Related problems, e.g. needing time off because of abuse?
- Other work/study needs

11. Interests

- Particular interests or hobbies? New interests to explore?
- Anything preventing you from pursuing hobbies/interests, e.g. lack of money, fear of leaving home?
- Other issues relating to interests/hobbies

12. Other

B. CHILD SERVICE USERS

1. Personal details

- Name
- Contact details
- Parent's details
- Date of assessment and review

2. Safety

- Contact with abusing parent – do they feel safe?
- Feel safe at home?
- Feel safe outside the home, e.g. going to school, shops, out with friends?
- Other safety issues

3. Physical health

- Registered with GP?
- Contact with any other medical professionals; e.g. health visitor, district nurse?
- Injuries resulting from the abuse? In need of immediate medical attention?
- Ongoing health problems that require attention?
- Needs arising from impairment or disability?
- General fitness, involvement in sports and games, etc?
- Diet - eating patterns, favourite foods, dislikes, allergies and intolerances?
- Other physical health issues

4. Mental health and emotional well-being

- Experiences of depression, anxiety, disturbed sleep, self-harming behaviour, suicidal thoughts?
- Diagnosed conditions, e.g. bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, eating disorders?
- Use of alcohol, illegal substances or prescribed medication?
- Contact with mental health workers, substance misuse workers, counsellor or other therapist?
- Worries or concerns e.g. mum, dad, missing/contact with dad, loneliness, self-confidence, bullying at school, living with the Sanctuary Scheme, involvement with police, courts, and social workers?
- Behavioural issues?
- Other mental health/emotional well-being issues

5. Interests

- Hobbies and interests?
- Opportunities for structured and free play?
- Friends and playmates – safe to visit? Parents informed of situation?
- Visiting places - where, what, when?
- Other things do they/would they like to spend their time doing?
- Barriers to joining in play and pursuing interests?

6. Learning and education

- Performance at school?
- Issues with homework?
- Other issues e.g. financial ones concerning equipment, uniforms, school trips; getting on with other children, and with teaching staff? Concerns over bullying? Concerns over other children knowing/asking what is going on at home?
- Future plans for education, training or jobs?
- Other issues relating to learning and education

7. Other

Making a safety plan

A personal safety plan should be developed with each victim as a way of helping her to protect herself and her children. She is probably already doing some or most of these things. For example, she may be aware of a pattern to the violence, which enables her to plan ahead to increase her safety.

Agencies may wish to develop a safety plan pro forma where details of emergency contacts and photocopies of essential documents are securely stored. The other points outlined below should be covered during the needs assessment and support planning sessions to help the service user (and her children) to be prepared in a crisis:

1. Plan in advance how to respond in different situations, including crisis situations.
2. Identify a safe place to go in an emergency, for example a trusted friend, family member or a neighbour. Make sure they are aware of what is going on and have a spare set of keys to your house, and you have keys to their house.
3. If any Sanctuary Scheme measures have been installed, such as a Home Link Alarm, make sure you know how to use them. If any of the equipment stops working, or is damaged, contact the sanctuary scheme co-ordinator immediately. If you have been given a personal alarm, you should take it with you at all times.
4. In an emergency call 999 or activate the Home Link alarm (if you have one).
5. Teach children to call 999 in an emergency.
6. Keep any important and other emergency telephone numbers to hand; for example, those of the sanctuary scheme co-ordinator and other domestic violence support services, your children's school or childcare service, any friends or neighbours you can call on in emergency, your solicitor, your GP, midwife, health visitor, or other health service.
7. Be prepared to leave the house in an emergency:
 - pack a small emergency bag (including child's favourite toy) and hide it somewhere safe;
 - keep a small amount of money to hand at all times - including change for the phone and for bus fares;
 - keep essential documents somewhere safe and easily accessible – birth certificate (yours and children's), National Insurance number, passport, marriage certificate, driving licence, bank/building society account details, court orders, etc.
 - rehearse an escape plan, so in an emergency you and your children can get away safely.
8. Consider which are vulnerable or isolated situations and plan how to avoid these or reduce associated risks.

9. Consider which routines the abuser will know about and plan how to avoid these or reduce associated risks.
10. Try to choose a safe route when approaching or leaving places such as the children's school, G.P. surgery, place of work.
11. Tell the children's school, nursery or childminder what has happened, and let them know who will pick them up. Make sure they are aware they must not release the children to anyone else.
12. Set up an emergency code word with relevant people (e.g. school, neighbours, etc.) For example, in some circumstances you may be unable to call the police yourself, or need to ask discreetly for assistance from a trusted friend, family member, colleague, etc. In case such a situation might arise, you could pre-arrange a code word (which is both innocuous but not something you would usually say; for example, ice cream cone or red car). If you say this code word your contact will know it is an emergency and they should contact the police on your behalf.
13. Change mobile phone and landline numbers.

Appendix 4

Organisations providing training in domestic violence awareness and domestic violence advice and support

CAADA: <http://www.caada.org.uk/training/training.html>

Imkaan: <http://www.imkaan.org.uk/pub/?id=61>

National Domestic Abuse Helpline: Freephone 08082000247
<http://www.womensaid.org.uk/?gclid=CL6lpP75np8CFaBb4wodsnuJg>

NSPCC: <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/default.html>

Refugee Council: <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/>

Respect: <http://www.respect.uk.net/>

Skills for Justice: <http://www.skillsforjustice.com>

The Greater London Domestic Violence Project: <http://www.gldvp.org.uk/>

The National Women's Commission: <http://www.thewnc.org.uk/>

The Survivor's Forum:
<http://www.womensaid.org.uk/forums.asp?section=0001000100080020§ionTitle=Survivor's+Forum>

Women's Aid: <http://www.womensaid.org.uk/>

For more information on meeting the needs of victims of domestic violence with no recourse to public funds, see:
http://www.islington.gov.uk/DownloadableDocuments/HealthandSocialCare/Pdf/nrpf_domestic_violence_guidance.PDF