
Key findings from the evaluation of sanctuary schemes

Sanctuary schemes can help survivors stay safely in their homes, where it is their choice and safe to do so.

Why do sanctuary schemes matter?



Survivors feel safer and more stable at home

When delivered well, sanctuary schemes can give survivors reassurance, improved wellbeing, and enhanced confidence.



Survivors value having someone “in their corner”

Specialist support can help survivors navigate legal processes, access services, safety plan, rebuild confidence, and feel emotionally supported.

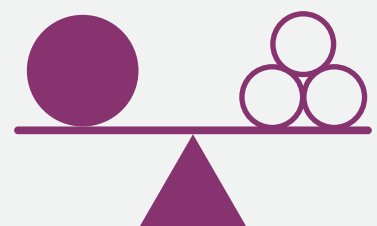


Everyone benefit from safety, routine and continuity

For survivors with children, sanctuary schemes can help children feel safer and avoid disruption to school, friendships and local support networks.

Sanctuary schemes help prevent homelessness and reduce pressure on services

By enabling survivors to remain safely at home where appropriate, sanctuary schemes can reduce the need for crisis moves into temporary accommodation, relieve pressure on refuges and housing services, and contribute to longer-term housing stability.



What are the challenges and enablers to effective delivery?

Multi-agency coordination is essential

Clear ownership and multi-agency working are vital. Without them, delivery can become fragmented, especially in two-tier areas, affecting survivors' experiences.

Security works best with specialist support

Security measures are most effective when combined with trauma-informed domestic abuse support, risk planning and ongoing survivor-centred guidance.

Good delivery depends on clear, coordinated processes

Effective examples are supported by:

- **A clear referral route**
- **Domestic abuse specialist involvement** in assessment and decision-making
- **Timely installation of security measures**
- **Trauma-informed installation practice**
- **Follow-up and aftercare**
- **Clear roles across local authorities**, domestic abuse services, police, housing providers and contractors



Barriers can delay or weaken delivery



What needs change?

To strengthen sanctuary schemes, local and national systems should:



Agree a clearer shared definition of sanctuary schemes



Promote a delivery model that brings security measures and specialist support together



Strengthen multi-agency coordination and ownership



Improve timeliness, especially between referral and installation



Improve monitoring of outcomes, not just activity



Invest in role-specific and trauma-informed training



Clarify how Part 4 funding can support sanctuary schemes

Strengthening the link to Part 4

Sanctuary schemes should be positioned within the wider support in safe accommodation framework. Local Partnership Boards can play an important role in coordinating local delivery, strengthening pathways and supporting shared ownership across housing, domestic abuse and community safety partners.