
Safe at Home

The case for a response to domestic abuse by housing providers



About SafeLives



SafeLives is a national charity dedicated to ending domestic abuse, for good.

Every year, over 2 million people experience domestic abuse - it is not acceptable, not inevitable and together, we can make it stop.

We want long-term solutions, not short-term fixes. Our approach includes early intervention for victims and their children, supporting every family member, and challenging perpetrators to stop. We do this by:

- using our data, research and frontline expertise to help local services improve and influence policy-makers locally and nationally
- offering support, knowledge and tools to frontline workers, agencies and commissioners
- providing accredited, quality assured training across the UK
- creating a platform for victims, survivors and their families to be heard and demand change
- testing innovative interventions and approaches that make more families safe.

Our recommendations aim to improve the experience of families impacted by domestic abuse as well as commissioners, practitioners, and partner agencies.

For victims and children, their friends and families:

- They will know what services are available and how to access them.
- They will receive a consistent, professional and reliable response that combines both specialist support and brings together the professional expertise of partner agencies in this complex area, so that both risk and needs can be met.
- They will receive a service that is empowering and responsive with their personal situation.
- The response to victim, child and perpetrator will be co-ordinated.
- Their experience will be captured systematically and used to inform future service development.

For commissioners:

- There will be much clearer provision, transparency and lines of accountability.
- Resources will follow risk and be used to best effect.
- Opportunities to intervene early will be maximised.
- Creating a consistent care pathway from identification to case closure will help to reduce the risk of domestic homicide and child deaths.
- Consistent data will provide the opportunity to learn and develop provision.

For practitioners:

- Being part of a resilient team with the full breadth of expertise required to meet the needs of all clients.
- Manageable caseloads.
- Sufficient resource for management, clinical supervision and administration.
- Career development opportunities.

For partner agencies:

- Clear referral pathways.
- Supportive training and 'lead professional' role in universal agencies to build confidence in asking victims, children or perpetrators about domestic abuse
- Being part of an effective care pathway that respects the limits of each role.



gentoo

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Section 1 : Executive Summary

Every year, almost two million people in the UK experience domestic abuse. Seven women a month are killed by a current or former partner in England and Wales. Domestic abuse encompasses psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse. Yet thousands of victims find it difficult to access effective help; recent SafeLives research revealed that **85%** of victims of abuse sought help **five times** on average from professionals in the year before they got effective help to stop the abuse. Effective early intervention by statutory agencies and voluntary sector organisations can help protect adults and children from harm as well as preventing escalation and recurrence of abuse.

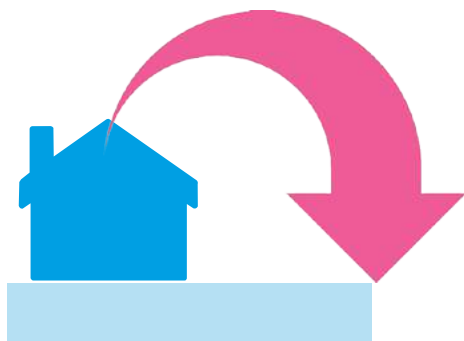
Domestic abuse has been estimated to create housing costs of £160 million per year¹, even before taking into account issues such as debts left by perpetrators in cases of financial abuse. Given that domestic abuse is perpetrated predominantly within homes, housing providers can play a unique role in supporting victims of abuse who are their tenants and holding perpetrators to account. SafeLives worked with Gentoo Group, which owns and manages more than 29,000 homes in Sunderland, to explore the case for support. The financial impact on housing providers can include:

- criminal damage to housing stock
- delays to rent payments via disruption to household finances
- mediation services between neighbours
- eviction and costs of re-letting
- tackling domestic abuse that is miscategorised as anti-social behaviour

In the case of Gentoo, we found that:

Approximately **13%** of all repairs jobs and **21%** of all repair costs were potentially related to domestic abuse, costing Gentoo

£8.4 million.



Costs associated with evicting tenants who may be hidden victims of domestic abuse and re-letting the property, up to

£5,700 per eviction.

Costs associated with dealing with perpetrators of domestic abuse and their behaviour, on average

£330 per perpetrator.



Our findings indicate that housing providers have a significant financial incentive to identify and support customers affected by domestic abuse at the earliest opportunity. A few housing providers including Gentoo have a developed offer of support including onsite specialist services, which enables the following outcomes to be achieved for their tenants:

- Early identification of victims of abuse by trained staff.
- Improved ability of victims of abuse to access effective support quickly near their homes.
- Reducing the length of time that victims suffer from domestic abuse.
- Strengthening the ability of victims to stay in their homes safely, reducing the need to disrupt children's schooling or move away from family and friends and thereby preventing future homelessness.

Based on the findings of the report, we recommend that housing providers consider the following measures:

 **Increasing awareness of domestic abuse in staff and tenants:**

- Creating a domestic abuse policy, for staff and tenants.
- Displaying posters from local specialist support services to encourage self-referrals.
- Training staff at all levels and teams to ensure they can identify abuse and signpost support confidentially and safely as early as possible.
- Requiring staff to refresh training on a specified regular basis.

 **Identifying households with domestic abuse as early as possible:**

- Creating relationships with local domestic abuse specialist services and/or providing in-house services (as Gentoo do) to ensure staff have clear referral pathways for victims and perpetrators once domestic abuse has been identified or disclosed.
- Asking new tenants about domestic abuse routinely and sensitively to consider any safety measures required.

 **Tackling the behaviour of perpetrators:**

- Including the perpetration of abuse in tenancy agreements as a breach of tenancy so perpetrators can be held accountable and potentially evicted as part of a multi-agency response (with the police force and other services).
- Holding perpetrators accountable in any anti-social behaviour (ASB) action taken and not criminalising victims. An assessment of risk to the victim should be undertaken, ideally alongside a domestic abuse specialist service.

 **Engage in a coordinated multi-agency response on domestic abuse:**

- Input into safety planning with victims of domestic abuse and domestic abuse specialist service.
- Working with agencies such as the police to ensure the safety of victims so that staying at home is a safe and realistic option for more victims.
- Specialist teams should receive enhanced training on asking questions, conducting risk assessments and safety planning.

Implementing these measures would greatly strengthen the response to domestic abuse by housing providers, save money and improve the outcomes for the most vulnerable families affected by domestic abuse.

Section 2 :

Context

Housing providers are in a unique position to be able to identify domestic abuse and prevent escalation through offering support and guidance to victims of domestic abuse. A number of housing providers have taken steps to identify domestic abuse by training frontline staff and housing officers. The Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) was set up in 2014 by Gentoo, Standing Together and Peabody to transform the housing sector's response to domestic abuse through developing a set of standards and accreditation. Gentoo commissioned SafeLives to consider the business case for housing providers to provide specialist domestic abuse support. In this section, we outline:

- Background
- Our methodology
- Gentoo's model

2.1 Background

The costs associated with domestic abuse for housing providers are numerous and include:

- criminal damage to property
- rent arrears
- anti-social behaviour interventions
- mediation services between neighbours
- eviction
- re-let and new tenancy costs.

In addition, victims of abuse and their children often leave the property as a result of the abuse, risking disruption to schooling and relationships with friends and family, as well as potential homelessness. However, the perpetrator is often able to stay in the property and is not held accountable. A lack of accountability can often lead to repeated behaviour, in some cases leading to perpetrators to continue their abuse with another partner resulting in further costs to the housing provider and anti-social behaviour interventions.

If a housing provider identifies domestic abuse, there are a number of interventions that can take place. They can refer the victim to local specialist support services, put in place safety measures on the property and if necessary and where available provide or signpost the perpetrator of domestic abuse to services. This benefits the family and the housing provider, providing an economic case for intervention which will be outlined later in this report.

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 Aims and approach

We have used a mixed methods approach which included both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Including focus groups with victims/survivors of domestic abuse and statistical analysis of repairs data.

Aim	Evaluative approach
To understand what value support from a housing provider can have from the victim's perspective	One focus group and two interviews with tenants of Gentoo that have experienced domestic abuse.
To identify any relationship between rent arrears and domestic abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analysis of rent arrears data for clients identified as having experienced domestic abuse.• Comparing the periods before and after incidents of domestic abuse to consider if the rent balance has been affected and whether the arrears are cumulative or not.
To consider whether there is a relationship between property repairs and domestic abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analysis of Gentoo repairs data for the period 2015 - 2017, identifying potential domestic abuse repairs• Analysis of data from Streetwise case management system regarding domestic abuse victims.

2.2.2 Ethical considerations

Focus group and interviews

All participants gave informed consent and had their rights explained to them by the focus group facilitator or the interviewer for the telephone discussions.

All responses have been anonymised and participants will not be able to be identified by their responses. Participants were given the opportunity to withdraw their consent at any time during the focus group and up to 4 weeks after the session. We have consent from all participants to share their stories.

Whilst some quotes included in this report refer to men as perpetrators and women or mothers as victims, recognising that women are disproportionately affected by domestic abuse especially at its most severe, this is not intended to infer that men cannot be victims of domestic abuse and women cannot be perpetrators, whether in same sex relationships, child-parent abuse or other situations.

Information sharing

All data shared with SafeLives regarding rent arrears and repairs data was held securely with password protection.

To protect the anonymity of customers, all data was edited to make it unidentifiable except for a unique code to cross reference data from the Streetwise case management system and the repairs data.

All customer data held by SafeLives will be destroyed after a reasonable amount of time.

2.2.3 Limitations

Caveats to this research include the following:

- The data used is unique to Gentoo and is not all measured by other housing associations so we are unable to make comparisons across the country or between housing providers.
- The victims who participated in our research had been supported by Gentoo's specialist domestic abuse service so do not represent the perspective of hidden victims who have not been identified and may have additional needs.
- This report focuses on the costs of domestic abuse to housing providers, focusing on physical abuse and some aspects of financial abuse. It does not capture the full cost of domestic abuse to families, such as emotional abuse to victims and children.

2.3 The Gentoo Model



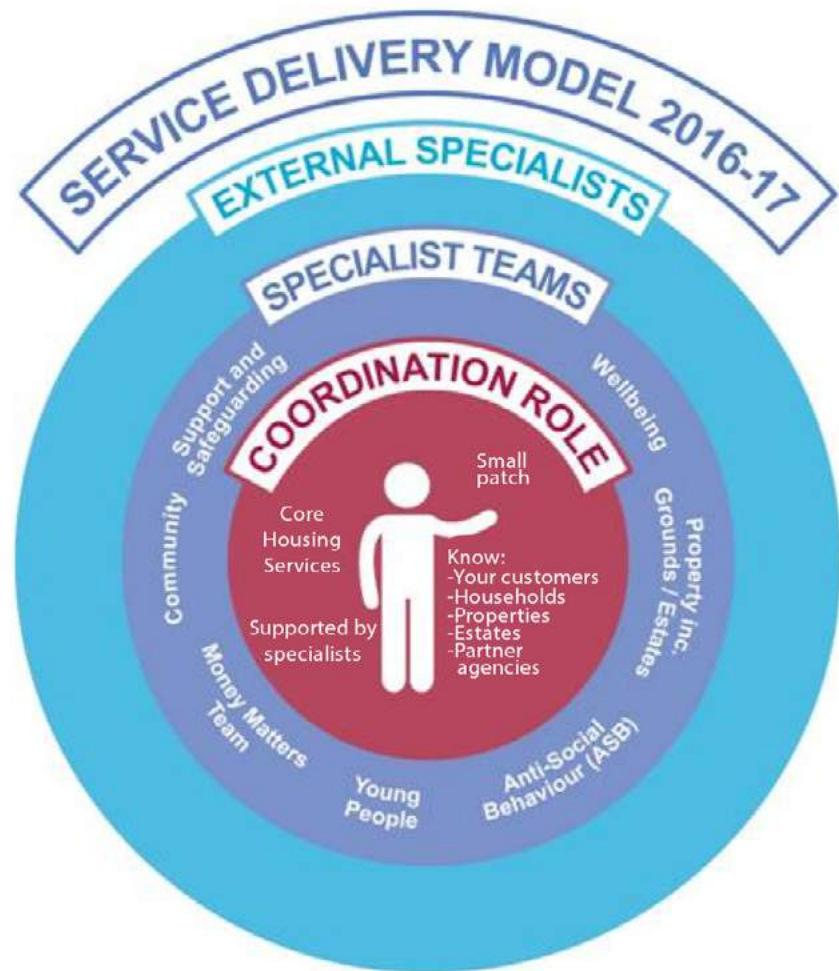
2.3.1 Overview

Gentoo owns and manages over 29,000 homes in the north east of England. Gentoo provides a number of different services as part of its overall offer to tenants, including a financial advice service, Money Matters and a specialist domestic abuse service.

There is a high reported incidence of domestic abuse in the area in which Gentoo operates. Sunderland multi-agency risk assessment conferences (Maracs) supported 632 victims at the highest risk of abuse in 2016², 8% more than the previous year. This number equates to 53 victims at the highest risk per 10,000 adult females in the Sunderland population, which is higher than the most similar area with 45 victims per 10,000.

2.3.2 The Gentoo service

Image 2.3.2a: Gentoo service delivery model 2016-17



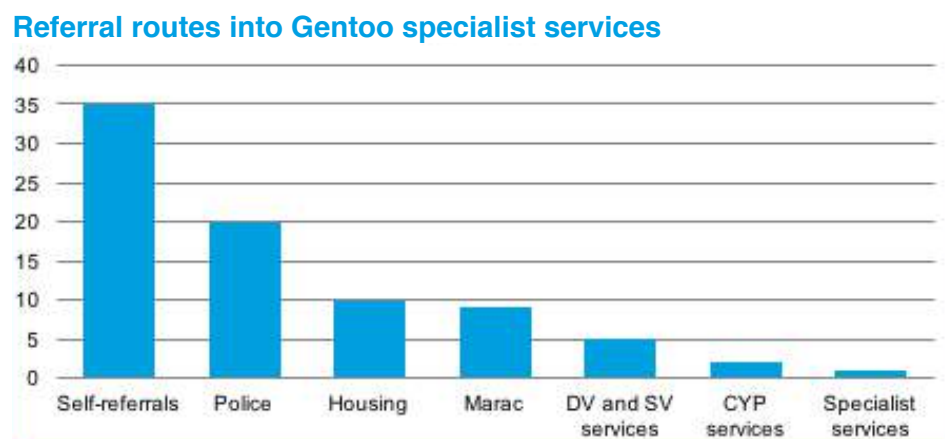
Gentoo's specialist domestic abuse service is integrated within its Community Safety and Safeguarding team. The team at present consists of support coordinators. They are either victim support coordinators or positive engagement coordinators. There are 5.5 of each team. Frontline staff in the victim support coordinator team have specialist domestic abuse training, which means that colleagues outside the service are confident in referring cases to them and they can work skilfully with victims who self-refer or are referred by others.

In addition to the staff within the Safety, Support and Crisis team, Gentoo trains frontline staff from wider services (e.g. repairs and arrears teams) in domestic abuse. This training includes how to identify domestic abuse and how to make referrals to appropriate services. For example, if a professional from Repairs suspects that property damage is a result of domestic abuse, even if the cost is rechargeable to the tenant, it will first be sent to the local neighbourhood coordinator who will follow up with a visit to the property.

Domestic abuse often includes high levels of coercive and controlling behaviour, including isolation. This can create challenges for professionals and services in being able to contact victims. Housing providers are in a unique position to get access to victims of domestic abuse as they have a reason and a right to access a property for tasks such as home inspections. These can be used as an opportunity to check on the welfare of tenants.

The Gentoo domestic abuse service receives referrals internally from Gentoo teams, as well as from external services (e.g. police) and self-referrals. In 2016/17, self-referrals were the most common route in to the service, followed by referrals from the police.

Image 2.3.2b: Referrals into the Gentoo domestic abuse service by source (April 2016 – April 2017)³



Training is an important aspect of the Gentoo model, as is wider awareness raising. In addition to formal domestic abuse training for frontline staff, Gentoo also displays posters raising awareness of domestic abuse and has previously run campaigns which automatically display as screensavers on staff computers (Appendix A). The high level of self-referrals in the graph above is likely to be directly caused by this awareness activity.

Section 3 :

Literature review

The role of the housing sector is essential in a coordinated community response to domestic abuse. Domestic abuse is often described as a hidden crime that happens behind closed doors. Housing providers can be the only agency ever to see behind those doors. It is therefore essential they are engaged in local and national responses.

Having somewhere to call home is essential for everyone. However, when we look at the options available to women who are experiencing domestic abuse, there is often little choice available to them. Indeed, without viable housing options many are forced to remain in abusive relationships, become homeless or accept inadequate housing conditions⁶.

When someone is experiencing domestic abuse, the priority should always be ensuring that they are safe and sometimes this means a referral to refuge. However, in the current national and local context, this is not always possible. In this section we will be exploring the current housing response and challenges in the context of domestic abuse, considering;

- The case for alternative options to refuge
- Options for victims staying in the same property
- Affordability
- Housing first model
- Consequences of inaction
- The evidence base

3.1 The case for alternatives to refuge

For many women that experience domestic abuse, staying in their property is not an option. Refuges are emergency accommodation for women that are fleeing domestic abuse. Refuges provide a range of support services alongside accommodation based support including one-to-one counselling, group work and support for children. It is recognised that refuge provision is vital. However, for a number of reasons, it cannot be the only option.

Firstly, there is not enough refuge provision nationally for it to be an option for all women. In 2014⁴, there were 3,660 refuge spaces across the country. As there are fewer refuge spaces than people that require alternative emergency accommodation, there need to be more options available to ensure all victims have a route to safety.

Secondly, the criteria for refuge do not suit the needs of all women. There are only a few refuges nationally that can meet the needs of victims with complex needs. Other factors that prevent victims being able to access refuge include an age limits for male children which are usually around 14 years old. This means victims with older sons are not able to access refuge.

Finally, for some people refuge is not the best option. Refuge should never be the first or only option for victims. Moving to a refuge often means leaving behind employment and children's schools. It means moving away from family, friends, and support networks. It is a significant life decision, and where it is safe to do so, all other options should be explored. Burnet (2017), identified there is an over-reliance on the refuge model when responding to domestic abuse.

Even in 1999⁵, it was argued that there was a lack of focus on transitional and permanent housing needs by agencies. The same is true today and the majority of housing providers (private and public) do not have a domestic abuse strategy that includes rehousing and resettlement.

3.2 Staying in the same property

For many victims, staying in the same property is their preferred option. This means making the home safe and removing the perpetrator.

For housing providers, it makes sound financial sense to help victims feel safe in their own home, but this must be victim-led otherwise it will not work. In reality, many perpetrators of domestic abuse remain in the family home whilst the victim and any children move frequently between temporary and unsuitable housing⁶. This does not hold perpetrators to account for their behaviour and in some cases, allows the perpetrator to continue the pattern of abuse in the same household but with new victims. Perpetrating domestic abuse could be a breach of tenancy depending on the housing provider. However, it is not common practice for perpetrators to be evicted as a result of domestic abuse, and instead victims of abuse leave the property.

There are many benefits to the victim staying in the home. Breckenridge et al (2015) analysed the 'Safe at home' programme in Australia which aims to prevent homelessness for women and their children who have experienced domestic and family violence. They discovered these benefits:

- It can prevent homelessness.
- It holds perpetrators to account for their actions.
- It provides an option of early intervention before escalation.
- It causes less disruption on the family's circumstance.
- It has moderate longer term consequences for safety, economic security, housing and social support networks.

3.3 Affordability

Even if housing providers prioritise victims staying in their homes, affordability of housing remains a critical issue. Nationally, affordability of housing means many families are challenged with finding suitable, affordable accommodation. Even in the most affordable local authority in 2016⁷, house prices were on average 2.8 times greater than annual earnings. The gap between the least affordable and most affordable parts of England and Wales has increased over the last two decades resulting in housing affordability worsening in all local authority areas across the country⁸. The impact of housing being less affordable means victims that need to be rehoused have fewer options available.

Wendt et al (2015) found that immediately after leaving, 49.6% of women lived in temporary accommodation. The remaining either moved in to rental accommodation (26.7%) or stayed with friends/family (33%). For the majority of women (67%), housing costs increased after separation. This means for many victims leaving their home due to domestic abuse came at a significant financial cost.

In our focus group with Gentoo customers, one victim described how when she and her partner separated he promised he would pay the bills for the next two months. However, she discovered that he had not and therefore she had unexpected debt on top of paying for the home she could barely afford on her single income.

3.4 Housing first model

Housing first is an approach which supports homeless people to live in their own homes. The aim is to provide a stable home with intensive personalised support. For domestic abuse victims, it prioritises putting victims of domestic abuse in permanent housing rather than temporary or emergency accommodation with a refuge or local authority. When they are moved into a new home, they are given support from a specialist domestic abuse service for the time that they need it.

The main principles of Housing First for England are as follows (Homeless Link, 2016);

1. People have a right to a home.
2. Flexible support is provided for as long as it is needed.
3. Housing and support are separated.
4. Individuals have choice and control.
5. An active engagement approach is used.
6. The service is based on people's strengths, goals and aspirations.
7. A harm reduction approach is used.

3.5 Consequences of inaction

3.5.1 Loss of secure tenancy

A consequence for many victims of domestic abuse when leaving their home is the loss of secure tenancy. Many women are placed in temporary accommodation or refuge, having to give up a previous secure tenancy.

In 2016, Solace Women's Aid surveyed 121 women who came into and exited Solace refuges in 2015; 22% had a secure tenancy on arrival to the refuge and only 13% had a secure tenancy on departure. In the context of the current housing landscape, victims may be fearful of leaving the abusive relationship because of the insecurity not only financially but also because they will lose a secure and stable home in many areas of the UK (depending on the local authority policy).

3.5.2 Homelessness

In the St Mungo's Shattered Lives research (2014) it was highlighted that, of their female clients, 50% had experienced domestic abuse compared to 5% of men. Domestic abuse is a contributing factor towards homelessness⁹ and if the person experiencing domestic abuse does not have dependent children, they may not be considered a priority for housing services in local authorities and therefore may end up sofa surfing or sleeping on the streets.

Section 4 :

Victim experience

SafeLives conducted a focus group and two telephone interviews with Gentoo tenants who were victims of domestic abuse. The feedback we received was collated and a number of themes were observed. This section provides an overview of the emergent themes, including;

- Referral routes
- Housing providers as a specialist support service
- Staying at home Vs moving
- Safety planning
- Financial consequences
- The Gentoo experience

‘My house was a prison’
Anonymous

4.1 Referral routes

Although the majority of referrals into Gentoo's domestic abuse service were self-referrals, all of the participants of our focus group and interviews were referred to the service by another professional. Despite Gentoo advertising their service, none of the participants in the focus group or interviews were aware that Gentoo had a domestic abuse support team. There were two that were identified due to criminal damage to the property, two who were referred by the police and one who was referred by Wearside Women in Need, the local specialist service provider.

'If I knew help and support was there, I probably would have used it'

Anonymous

Two of the individuals interviewed stated that they would have accessed the service if that were aware that it was available. This suggests that further advertising should be considered to increase awareness among all residents.

4.2 Housing provider as specialist support service

Housing providers have a unique role, which includes rights and powers in relation to the victim and perpetrators home. We explored the impact a housing provider offering a domestic abuse service might have. Since Gentoo is the main social housing provider in Sunderland, it is likely that they house family members of the perpetrator. This was useful in one case as the perpetrator of abuse came out of prison and Gentoo was able to offer regular housing inspections at his mother's property which was opposite the victim's house to ensure that he was not staying there and intimidating the victim.

The relationship between tenants and their local area housing manager was also crucial. Participants noted that because of the good relationship between themselves and their housing manager, they were able to openly discuss what she was going through.

'If [the housing officer] was just a stranger and I'd only seen her once in two years, I wouldn't have told'

Anonymous

In addition, the fact that all staff were trained to identify domestic abuse and were sensitive to it was important to participants. One participant reported that there was an incident while she was having repairs done at her property where she asked the perpetrator to leave; the housing professional witnessed the perpetrator shouting abuse at her and told her to get in touch with Gentoo's victim support, but she was too scared. She eventually got referred into the service after separating from her abusive partner.

Gentoo's position as the main housing provider in the area can be a problem for the perpetrator if Gentoo is aware of the abuse, as it can prevent perpetrators getting another tenancy with Gentoo. In one instance, a perpetrator threatened to move close to the victim and Gentoo barred the perpetrator from getting rehoused so he was unable to continue to harass the victim. However, banning perpetrators of domestic abuse from getting tenancies in the future should be done on a case by case basis as part of a coordinated community response with a number of partner agencies.

4.3 Staying vs. leaving

The onus is often on the victim of domestic abuse to move from the property, allowing the perpetrator to remain on the tenancy. However, Gentoo works with victims to make them feel safe and does very few moves per year due to domestic abuse. This is a victim-led approach resulting in most people wanting to stay in their own homes.

Participants outlined a number of different ways that Gentoo works to help them stay in their homes. For one person, the housing tenancy was in the perpetrator's name and Gentoo signed his tenancy orders over to the victim which allowed them to stay in the property.

'I thought I was going to lose my home, I was isolated... the only security I could offer the kids was to stay in the same home and Gentoo supported with that'

Anonymous

Two participants had moved home, one had always intended to so that she could be closer to her family. The other one felt that due to the abuse that had gone on in the property, it was no longer their home and they wanted a fresh start and Gentoo was able to facilitate that.

4.4 Safety planning

For those who did stay in their homes, Gentoo offered a range of different interventions to help them stay in the property safely.

- Safe room
- CCTV
- Security lights
- Locks on windows and doors
- Changed locks
- One to one safety planning with support worker
- Emergency alarm
- Security alarm.

The domestic abuse support service also assisted victims getting an exclusion order so that they can feel safe at home. The majority of participants described harassment and damage to the property once the relationship had ended and appreciated the reassurance from the housing association regarding security and protection of the property.

4.5 Financial consequences

Participants outlined a number of financial consequences as a result of the abuse or the relationship ending. Gentoo offers a financial support service called 'Money Matters' which offers debt advice to tenants. There were consequences of the relationship ending such as losing an income or having to pay costs associated to damage which had negative financial consequences for victims. Overall, there was anxiety around damage to property and what this would mean for their finances and tenancy.

For one participant, damage to her property had big financial consequences for her. She felt responsible for the damage because the perpetrator had a key for her house; he let himself in and destroyed her carpets with paint. She paid for the carpets to be replaced, mostly from a fear that she would be seen as a bad tenant if she reported it to Gentoo and would lose her tenancy. This is despite the fact that Gentoo policy would mean not charging a victim of domestic abuse for damage to property by a perpetrator.

Another participant found herself taking financial responsibility for all household bills once the perpetrator left the relationship. He was the main income earner and they were in the market rent section of Gentoo rather than social housing. In addition to the household income reducing, the tenant also found herself with a great deal of debt as the perpetrator had not paid the rent for the last month he lived there despite stating that he would. As a result she is paying for rent that is unaffordable for her but also has to pay off this additional debt incurred by the perpetrator through a payment plan each month.

Lastly, financial abuse was a key element of their experiences of abuse for a number of victims. One described how the perpetrator controlled her spending and asked for her bank details. Another spoke about how her rent arrears on her property meant she was unable to move when she wanted to (before disclosing abuse) and therefore she was stuck in her property with her ex-partner knowing where she lived.

The participants experiences were reflective of the work of Sharp Jeffs, N (2015) seminal work on financial abuse. Gentoo are developing training in conjunction with Sharp-Jeffs to develop training for front line staff to better recognise and understand financial abuse to best help their customers.

4.6 The Gentoo customer experience

Overall, the experience of Gentoo services was very positive for the participants. Gentoo has a number of letters¹⁶ from former service users thanking them for their support and intervention. The most common theme from the discussions with service users was that they wished they had known about the service sooner, as none of them were aware that Gentoo had a domestic abuse service.

However, once they had accessed support their experiences were very positive.

‘Best thing I’ve ever done to get support. I could trust her’

Anonymous

‘It was help trying to get me back to a level where I felt good in myself and strong’

Anonymous

‘[It] gave me a push, showed what we could accomplish. Now, I set my own goals and I see things much more clearly. Everything used to go round and round in my head.’

Anonymous

‘I know that if anything goes wrong I can turn to them’

Anonymous

Before service users received support, many of them described Gentoo being as a body that ‘collects your rent’ but realised there was so much support available to them than that and Gentoo was not just a housing provider. There was also a benefit that the housing provider was also the specialist support service as they could coordinate support and speak to teams internally about the different issues with the household, rather than the victim having to explain to a number of different departments about the abuse.



Words describing how individuals felt about their home during the abuse



Words describing how individuals felt about their home after the abuse had ended

Section 5 :

Repairs analysis

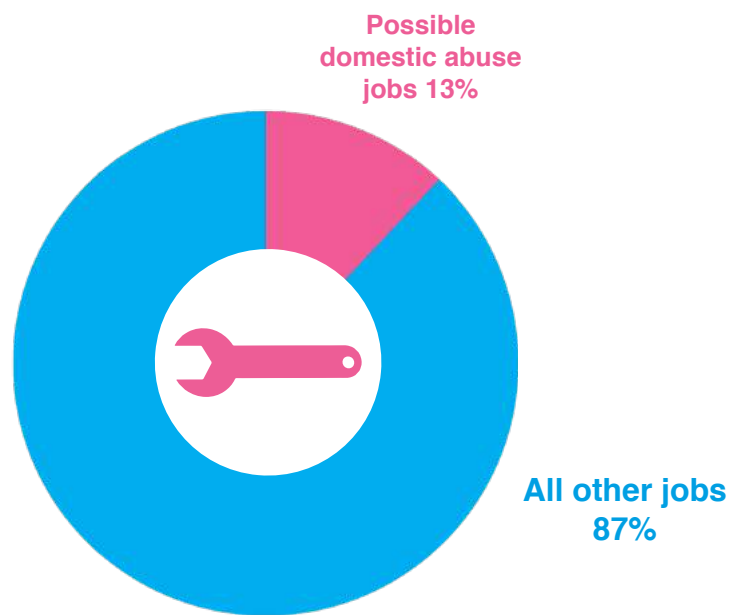
One of the aims of this research was to explore the correlation between repairs and domestic abuse. As domestic abuse can involve physical violence as well as high levels of intimidation, harassment and stalking, it is likely that this will result in damage to the property. This may range from holes in walls and doors, damage to fixtures or broken locks and doors. We have considered the repairs data provided by Gentoo to explore the correlation. The information in this section has been provided by Gentoo from their Orchard housing management system. It covers the period 30/3/2015 to 26/3/2017 (the 2015-17 financial years). This section outlines our analysis of Gentoo repairs:

- Overview
- Cost of repairs
- Type of repairs
- Repairs and domestic abuse

5.1. Overview of Gentoo repairs

In the financial years between 2015 and 2017, there were 344,280 repairs recorded by Gentoo for all its properties. In total these accumulated to a cost of £39.2 million¹⁰. There were 43,470 jobs flagged as potentially due to domestic abuse¹¹, at a cost of £8.4 million. That is the equivalent of 13% of all jobs or 21% of all repair costs attributed towards domestic abuse.

Table 5.1a: Percentage of Gentoo repairs 2015 – 2017 linked to domestic abuse



All cases that are tagged as potentially being due to domestic abuse are then referred to the local neighbourhood coordinator (housing officer role) who will follow up with a visit to the property. The cost of repairs associated with domestic abuse is absorbed by Gentoo if they are aware of the domestic abuse. However, where domestic abuse has not been identified, the tenant is responsible for the cost of repairing the criminal damage to the home by the perpetrator.

5.2 Gentoo cost of repairs

5.2.1 Repairs and cost per household analysis

For our analysis of the comparative cost of repairs, we removed all households where costs totalled over £3,000 as these indicate that there is long term or significant repair issues in the property. However, as shown in Table 5.2.1a, Streetwise properties are more likely to have higher costs for repairs. Streetwise is a case management system created by Gentoo. It is used by the various Gentoo services, including the domestic abuse support service. We have used data from Streetwise to identify households with domestic abuse and correlate the data with the repairs information on the Orchard housing system.

Table 5.2.1a: Range of repair costs per household

Total cost of repairs 2015 – 2017	% of Streetwise (domestic abuse) properties	% of all properties
<£1,000	37%	62%
£1,000 - £2,000	26%	22%
£2,000 - £3,000	13%	8%
> £3,000	24%	8%
Total	100%	100%



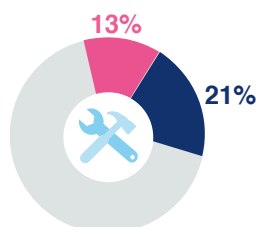
43,470 jobs

flagged as potentially due to domestic abuse



£8.4m

cost of these jobs



Jobs flagged as potentially due to domestic abuse equivalent of 13% of all jobs or 21% of all repair costs.

Average cost of repairs for all properties



Average cost of repairs at households with domestic abuse

We compared households with no identified domestic abuse with those who were in the Gentoo Streetwise (case management) system as households experiencing domestic abuse. There was a significant difference between these two groups, with households without domestic abuse having fewer repairs and on average, repairs costing less.

Repair group	Overall number of repairs	Cost of overall repairs	Average cost per repair	Average number of repairs per non-outlier household	Average cost of repairs per household
All properties, excluding those identified on Streetwise (2015 – 2017)	253,980	£22.6m	£89	10	£860
Repairs at domestic abuse households identified on Streetwise	4,086	£360,000	£88	13	£1,200

There is a significant difference between households with domestic abuse and the general tenant population of Gentoo. Although the average cost per repair is similar, there are more repairs and therefore there is more accumulative cost over time. We can estimate that identifying domestic abuse and intervening earlier will reduce the longer term cost of repairs for Gentoo.

It is also important to note that this is a cost that is likely to be borne by Gentoo, who do not charge domestic abuse victims charges for repairs associated with the domestic abuse. Therefore, this is a significant extra cost for housing associations. It would be useful to look at comparable data from a housing association that does not have a domestic abuse service, as they may have even more repairs at those households as there is no intervention in place to prevent the abuse from taking place. This could highlight the amount saved by Gentoo providing a domestic abuse service.

5.3 Type of repairs

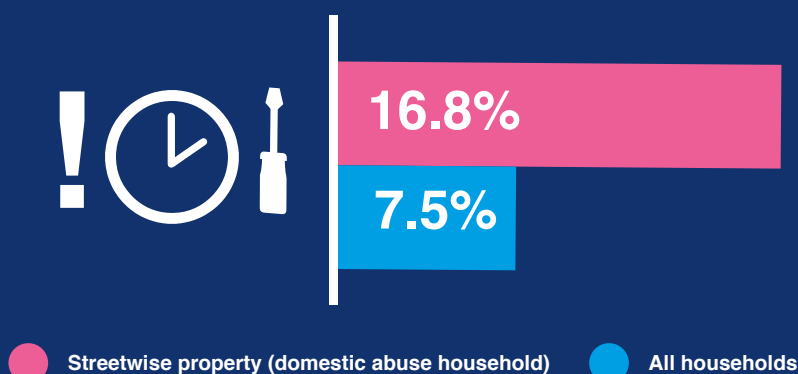
We were able to compare the difference between domestic abuse households and all households to see if there was anything interesting about the type of repairs that were taking place (Table 5.3a). Interestingly, but hardly unsurprisingly, properties with domestic abuse had more emergency out of hours repairs (16.8% opposed to 7.5% for the average). These costs are likely to also be more expensive.

The other discrepancy is the difference in percentage between Streetwise properties and all households is regarding Joinery repairs (54.2% and 62.1% respectively) which may be explained by the number of voids at domestic abuse households (20.3%) compared to all other households (14.7%). We believe that domestic abuse households probably have similar levels of joinery repairs as those not experiencing domestic abuse, however, these are only identified once the property is being prepared to be re-let to a new tenant and therefore the cost is voided and met by Gentoo. This means that properties with identified domestic abuse are more likely to be taken off line for significant repairs (20.3%) than the general housing stock (14.7%), this may be a result of domestic abuse where the resulting damage in the property has not been repaired while the tenant was living there.

Table 5.3a: Type of repairs by household group

Type of repair	Streetwise property (domestic abuse household)	All households
Fencing	0.0%	0.1%
Gas & Boiler repairs	0.0%	0.1%
Roofing	0.0%	0.1%
Savills R & M repairs	0.0%	0.2%
Floor Tiler	0.1%	0.2%
Bricklayer	0.2%	0.3%
Preservation	0.2%	0.8%
Electrical Work	0.3%	0.3%
Electrical Works Over 2 Hours Duration	0.5%	4.4%
Group Glazing Section	1%	0.6%
Plumber	1.2%	2.3%
Plasterer	5.2%	6.4%
Emergency Out of Hours Repairs	16.8%	7.5%
Voids	20.3%	14.7%
Joiner	54.2%	62.1%
Grand Total	100.0%	100.0%

Emergency Out of Hours Repairs



5.3.1 Repairs related to domestic abuse

Not all the repairs at domestic abuse households will be related to domestic abuse. For example, a child could smash a window by kicking a football through it. However, we investigated the case notes on domestic abuse related repairs and a large majority of incidents under the various categories had indicators that they were related to abuse and violent behaviour which resulted in criminal damage in the property. For example, most – if not all- security costs were associated with criminal damage or attempted break ins.

Table 5.3.1a: Examples of domestic abuse related repairs, by category

Category	Job description
Damage to property	Secure door after police concern for customer
	Board up bedroom window on first floor as the result of criminal
	Board up sitting room window after brick through window
	Kitchen repair after criminal damage
	Secure side window smashed
	Broken window, criminal damage
Access to property	There were 13 evictions at households with domestic abuse
	Force entry, domestic abuse concern
	Gain access for police concern of tenant
Security	Lock change requested, keys stolen (police log number)
	Joiner to attend change of lock on front door. Police and Wearside Women In Need at the property
	Secure front door after attempted break in

5.4 Repairs and domestic abuse: the cost to housing providers

Domestic abuse is a crime that can affect anyone, regardless of sexual identity, gender, age or ethnicity. Similarly, housing associations, private providers and local authorities provide housing to people from a variety of backgrounds, and domestic abuse is seen as something which happens ‘behind closed doors’. However, the criminal damage that results from violent behaviour is a cost that the housing provider (and in many cases, the tenant) must bear. Therefore, tackling domestic abuse makes good financial sense for the tenant and the housing provider.

5.4.1 Menu of costs

The cost of damage to property is usually covered by the registered tenant of the property who may also be the victim of the abuse. Gentoo classes damages as a rechargeable cost to tenants but pays those costs for identified cases of domestic abuse. However, if those damages are not flagged as domestic abuse or the client does not disclose the abuse, then the tenant may be responsible for paying for the damage.

Gentoo has schedule of rate (SOR) codes which are tagged as domestic abuse, this allows them to query any repair which they suspect is domestic abuse related, before charging it back to the customer.

We asked Gentoo to supply us the average costs for various repairs that are related to domestic abuse (Table 5.4.1a).¹²

Table 5.4.1a: Menu of costs of repair

Menu	
Carpentry	
Repair staircase post	£55
Remove and re-fix any kitchen unit	£45
Gain access to dwelling	£90
Board up door or window	£45
Plastering	
Plaster and paint a patch	£70
Repair to cracks in wall or ceiling	£35
Doors	
Install new panelled or glazed front door	£595
Install flushed front door	£420
Install new internal door and frame	£315
Repair door	£65
Glazing	
Temporary glazing fix prior to replacement	£55
Apply safety film to window	£55
Re-fix shower screen	£35
Replace shower screen (single)	£140
Security	
Overhaul any locks	£40
Renew bathroom door locks	£45
Replace latch	£35
Install bolt on door	£40
Install viewer on door	£40
Install chain on door	£40
Install viewer on door	£40

Using the menu of costs, we are able to create an example of the cost that either the individual or the housing provider will be responsible for.

Example: Jane's story

Jane was with her partner, John, for three years and became pregnant whilst in the relationship. After she got pregnant, John moved in but she remained the sole tenant of the property. Shortly after he moved in, John started to get violent towards her; he was physically and emotionally abusive and damaged her property. Scared of the violence increasing, Jane broke up with John and he reluctantly moved out.

Jane did not want to tell anyone about the abuse as she was scared that social services would take her baby from her when it was born. She thought that because John had moved out, things would quieten down. Unfortunately this was not the case.

She asked to get the locks changed on the property, not telling the real reason why and saying that she had lost her keys. This repair was charged to her account.

After the locks changed, John tried, unsuccessfully, to get into the house using his keys. Angry that he could not get in, he tried to break into the house and after damaging the front door, he threw a brick through the window.

Jane was still too scared to call the police, fearful of the repercussions of telling anyone about John. The next day she called for repairs to come over and board up the window. She reported it as vandalism but said that she did not want to report it to the police. When the repair staff carried out the repairs, they put it on a domestic abuse SOR as they were suspicious that the damage was DA related.

That week Jane was visited by her local neighbourhood coordinator who also brought a domestic abuse support worker. They said they were there to do a property inspection, following the act of vandalism and so Jane let them into the property. While they were there, they asked Jane about any issues she may be having and the type of help and support they could offer. This encouraged Jane to disclose that John had been abusive and was still threatening her. She is referred to the Gento domestic abuse service and another bolt is installed on her front door. She also received additional support to report his abuse to the police.

Total cost of repairs: £600

The cost of damage to property is one which all housing providers and tenants will face, regardless of whether they have the domestic abuse interventions. However, having trained staff means that repairs can identify domestic abuse and security measures can be put in place to prevent further damage to the property and greater cost to the housing provider. It also means that victims are getting help when they may have not been previously identified.

5.5 Consequences of the repairs analysis

As shown in above, households experiencing domestic abuse had 3 more repairs on average than the all Gentoo tenants (2015 – 2017). The overall cost per household therefore, was greater. There are a number of reasons why this may be, and there are financial consequences for housing providers as well as the tenant.

As the data has shown, victims of domestic abuse experienced more repairs and therefore the cost of repairs was much higher at their properties. It is clear that domestic abuse is an indicator of having a higher number of repairs. This is likely directly due to the criminal damage associated with domestic abuse which means there are more repairs taking place. This is further illustrated by the data that shows that out of hours emergency repairs are higher among domestic abuse victims.

Domestic abuse households are costing more than the average Gentoo household and the repairs are more numerous. Gentoo provides training to staff to identify domestic abuse and has a support service which provides interventions for families experiencing domestic abuse. It is likely that if these interventions were not in place, the cost of repairs would be higher as the domestic abuse escalates and there is consequential criminal damage at the property.

Gentoo often absorbs the cost of domestic abuse related damage¹³, so domestic abuse has a significant financial impact on it. However, if the victim is not aware of this policy, they may not be reporting damage, fearful of the financial consequences. Therefore, there may be more repairs needed in these properties that have not been reported which are only discovered when the property is being prepared for a new tenancy.

Interviews with victims of domestic abuse and research by Jackson¹⁴ reveals that victims of domestic abuse are fearful of losing their tenancy and so may not be reporting criminal damage in the property, so the statistics used are likely the tip of the iceberg in terms of the real cost of domestic abuse and housing.

It is therefore of significant benefit for housing providers such as Gentoo to take action early to identify and resolve domestic abuse situations.

Section 6 :

Rent arrears analysis

The impact of domestic abuse can affect all areas of a victim's life. This often includes financial consequences. For housing providers this can have a significant impact on a victim's ability to pay rent and may result in rent arrears. This section considers the correlation between rent arrears and domestic abuse. It includes;

- An overview
- Findings
- Limitations

6.1 Overview

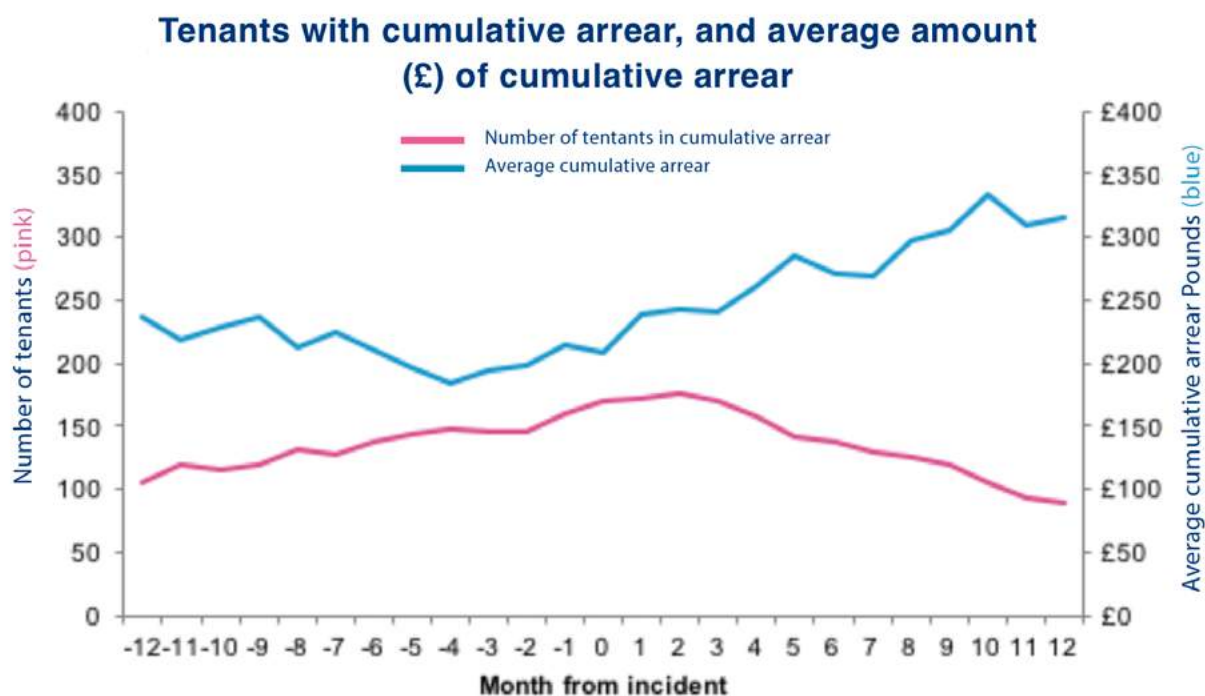
There are many reasons why a household may be in rent arrears, at Gentoo between 21% and 35% of customers can be in arrears at any time which is the equivalent of 6,000 – 10,000 people¹⁵. Gentoo data shows that the number of people in arrears reaches its peak during the Christmas period, which is understandable due to the pressures on families at that time.

The rent arrears of domestic abuse households may not always be related to the domestic abuse and could be for the same reasons as the general population. However, the loss of a main income from a partner leaving the household and financial abuse are two factors that must be considered in the context of rent arrears for victims of domestic abuse.

6.2 Findings

We received anonymised data regarding 234 tenants in rent arrears that had experienced domestic abuse. Those arrears were primarily around the time of the reported incidents of domestic abuse.

Table 6.2a: Number of tenants in arrears and average amount of cumulative arrears



It is likely that domestic abuse incidents took place before the reported incident (month 0 in Table 6.2a) and that must be considered as a factor contributing towards those who had debt before the reported domestic abuse incident date (Table 6.2a).

Further analysis showed that the average cost of a weekly arrear was £40 and it was likely to go up in the six months after the incident. However, for those with cumulative arrears the average debt was £209 and was likely to increase upon reporting the domestic abuse incident, and continue to increase.

6.3 Limitations

Because of the way Gentoo gathers rent arrears data, we were unable to conduct any direct comparisons with tenants with no identified domestic abuse to see if the average costs are higher or lower. However the correlation between rental arrears and reported incidents suggests that the impact of domestic abuse probably creates an immediate barrier in terms of the victim's ability to pay their rent. It could be beneficial for an immediate plan of action in terms of rent to be part of a wraparound package as early as possible to prevent arrears.

We judge that this systemic problem with rent arrears could be improved, with benefit to both tenant and the housing provider, if all victims of domestic abuse were identified at an early stage and support provided that responds to the precarious financial situation of the victim, as well as addressing immediate safety needs.

Section 7 :

Other costs associated with domestic abuse for housing providers

Where domestic abuse takes place, there are costs to the individual and the housing provider. These costs can be categorised as housing damage related costs such as criminal damage to property, anti-social behaviour (ASB) costs and lastly, the cost of evictions and re-letting the property. The report has already looked into the repairs costs associated with domestic abuse, here we will look at the costs associated with ASB, evictions and re-letting the property. This section includes;

- Anti-social behaviour related costs
- Cost of eviction and re-letting the property
- Cost of domestic abuse perpetrators

7.1 Anti-Social Behaviour costs

Neighbours can be the first to be aware of domestic abuse and in many instances may hear shouting or violence. This means domestic abuse can often be reported to ASB teams and reacted to as nuisance behaviour. This is an inappropriate response to domestic abuse, as it can significantly increase the risk to victims, prevent future disclosures and will not prevent further incidents.

Therefore it is essential for housing and ASB community safety teams to be trained to identify domestic abuse, and refer those households onto appropriate support services. Any punitive approach in relation to ASB in respect of the perpetrator should be in partnership with specialist services to ensure risk management and safety planning is in place for the victim.

Henderson (2016) in the largest UK based survey to housing providers on domestic abuse found that some providers framed domestic abuse as a component of ASB with 65% of survey respondents stating domestic abuse was situated within anti-social behaviour within the organisation and not as a stand-alone issue in its own right.

‘We categorise Domestic Violence and Abuse as ASB - due to the neighbourhood impact’

‘We don’t have a dedicated policy or procedure to deal with Domestic Abuse and currently view it as another element of anti-social behaviour’

If staff responding to domestic abuse related ASB are not trained or if pathways for support services such as substance misuse, perpetrator programmes or victim support services are not in place then there is no effective management of the problem.

The cost of dealing with domestic abuse wrongly identified as anti-social behaviour is absorbed by local authorities and housing providers. Therefore, there is a financial as well as moral cost to responding to domestic abuse ineffectively.

Using the New Economy Manchester Unit Cost database (2015), we were able to find costs associated with dealing with ASB.

Table 7.1a: Costs associated with ASB

Action	Responsibility	Cost (per incident)
ASB warning letter	Housing services	£80
Acceptable behaviour contract issued	Housing services	£280
Neighbourhood dispute: verbal abuse mediation	Local authority or housing association	£260
Arrest (with no further action, simple caution)	Police	£345
Arrest (detained)	Police	£720

These costs are specific to the action and do not include the additional costs such as the costs associated with housing officers and ASB officers replying to emails regarding complaints. Nor does it cover the cost to the victim of domestic abuse or the affect it has on neighbouring properties.

There is also a risk that victims and survivors feel under threat of being criminalised because the problem is being wrongly diagnosed, with further barriers then created between the victim and those who might be able to help, because of the perception of wrong-doing. This could increase secrecy and mistrust.

7.2 Cost of evicting a tenant and re-letting the property

In the last year, Gentoo had 82 new clients referred to their domestic abuse support service, which is in addition to the work they do with existing clients. This is 82 more residents that have been supported to feel safe and secure in their homes. By supporting tenants in their current homes, Gentoo avoids accruing costs associated with contract termination and re-letting the property.

Because of the domestic abuse support and identification training that Gentoo staff receive, they are less likely to inadvertently evict victims of domestic abuse. Additionally, although they have the ability to rehouse victims of domestic abuse, the service is victim-led and many victims they have contact with do not want to move, therefore there is not much rehousing due to domestic abuse.

Shelter estimated the immediate costs to government of loss of home¹⁶. A number of these calculations are housing costs which would be the responsibility of Gentoo or any housing provider.

Table 7.2a: Shelter cost of loss of home, rounded

Action	Cost
Cost of eviction from LA property	£1, 200
Rent arrears – write off	£1,900
Cost of re-letting property post eviction	£2,800
Administrative cost of new LA letting	£500

Evictions due to domestic abuse are not recorded accurately by local authorities and other housing associations so we are unable to compare Gentoo data against a national average. However, research shows that women who experience domestic abuse may face eviction as a result of a partner or ex-partner due to threats against landlords, other tenants, theft of rent money and damage to the property (Menard, 2001).

Between January 2016 and January 2017, there were 593 direct allocations (management moves) at Gentoo, and only 4 of these were due to domestic abuse. That is a mere 0.7% of direct allocations. Gentoo has a focus on working with victims of domestic abuse so that they feel safe and secure in their homes; this means they avoid the costly process of ending a tenancy and the cost of starting a new tenancy that other housing providers or local authorities are not.

The cost of terminating a tenancy is outlined above in Table 7.2a. Gentoo have also provided us with additional data to analyse the true cost of re-letting one of their properties.

The average re-let time for Gentoo is 29 days for standard properties, at this time it is vacant. This is a cost of £320 on average per property just for the property sitting empty, in addition to the costs accrued writing new contracts and starting a new tenancies. Additionally, this cost will increase if the property is not let after 28 days as then it would attract council tax which the housing provider would be liable to pay.

Gentoo also calculated the average cost of repairs to get a property to a good standard for re-letting; the average cost was £1,800.

Table 7.2b: Cost of re-letting a Gentoo home based on assumptions from Shelter report and Gentoo data

Action attributed to evicting and re-letting a property for Gentoo	Cost
Average cost of a home sitting empty for 29 days	£320
Administrative cost of new letting	£500
Cost of eviction	£1,200
Average cost of repairs to get a property to a good standard for re-letting	£1,800
Rent arrears write off	£1,900
Total	£5,720

7.3 Cost of perpetrators

Using the Gentoo Streetwise casework management system, we were able to calculate how much staff time was allocated to dealing with perpetrators and their behaviour. The cost spent on dealing with 423 domestic abuse perpetrators was £140,000¹⁷. It took 262 days of staff time to deal with it.

The average cost was £330 per perpetrator. The most prolific domestic abuse perpetrator took a total of 9 days of staff time at a cost of £4,600.

This is a significant cost even before including costs attached to any programmes or services the perpetrator was referred to, or costs associated with the victim of the abuse. This demonstrates why early intervention can be cost effective as well as important for victim safety.

£140,000

The cost spent on dealing with 423 domestic abuse perpetrators

It took 262 days of staff time to deal with it.



Section 8 :

Conclusion and

next steps

Dealing with the behaviour of the most prolific domestic abuse perpetrator at Gentoo cost the housing provider £4,600 of staff time

Repairs, arrears, evictions and anti-social behaviour all have costs to the housing provider and the families associated. Nearly a quarter (21%) of all repair costs at Gentoo are tagged as potentially being the result of domestic abuse. We only know this because Gentoo train frontline staff on how to identify domestic abuse, which is leading to positive identification and early intervention for some families. There is also an issue with repairs as households with domestic abuse have roughly £400 more of repairs than the average Gentoo household in the same time period, affecting the overall cost to the housing provider.

There are financial consequences of domestic abuse to the victims, who have expressed fear of debt due to the relationship ending and the perpetrator leaving the home. However, households affected by domestic abuse that had rent arrears, accrued these arrears both before and after the known domestic abuse incident, which indicates that financial support is also vitally important to these households, in addition to initial safety planning.

This report has also identified the huge cost that is associated with misdiagnosing domestic abuse as anti-social behaviour which a housing provider would bear. Indeed, the perpetrator of domestic abuse is responsible for a number of different costs, in addition to damage to property and financial abuse, simply dealing with the behaviour of the most prolific domestic abuse perpetrator at Gentoo cost the housing provider £4,600 of staff time.

Implementing these measures would greatly strengthen the response to domestic abuse by housing providers, save money and improve the outcomes for the most vulnerable families affected by domestic abuse.

8.1 SafeLives recommendations for housing providers

Theme	Recommendation
Raising awareness of domestic abuse in staff and tenants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creating a domestic abuse policy, for staff and tenants• Displaying posters from local specialist support services to encourage self-referrals• Training staff at all levels and teams to ensure they can identify abuse and signpost support confidentially and safely as early as possible• Requiring staff to refresh training on a specified regular basis
Early identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creating relationships with local domestic abuse specialist services and/or providing in-house services (as Gentoo do) to ensure staff have clear referral pathways for victims and perpetrators once domestic abuse has been identified or disclosed• Asking new tenants about domestic abuse routinely and sensitively to consider any safety measures required.
Tackling the perpetrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Including the perpetration of abuse in tenancy agreements as a breach of tenancy so perpetrators can be held accountable and potentially evicted as part of a multi-agency response (with the police force and other services)• Holding perpetrators accountable in any anti-social behaviour (ASB) action taken and not criminalising victims. An assessment of risk to the victim should be undertaken, ideally alongside a domestic abuse specialist service.
Engage in a coordinated multi-agency response	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Input into safety planning with victims of domestic abuse and domestic abuse specialist services• Working with agencies such as the police to ensure the safety of victims so that staying at home is a safe and realistic option for more victims• Specialist teams should receive enhanced training on asking questions, conducting risk assessments and safety planning.

Many housing providers already consider the needs of families affected by domestic abuse¹⁸. There have been reports that recommend that housing providers should train staff to identify and effectively support victims of domestic abuse¹⁹ and provide evidence that there are negative consequences for inaction. If a tenant is a victim of domestic abuse and it has not been identified by the housing provider the victim may face eviction due to anti-social behaviour or damage to the property from the perpetrator (Menard, 2001).

While this report focused on the data from Gentoo, our recommendations are applicable to all housing providers. Indeed, Gentoo is already doing a number of the recommendations made.

Gentoo are co-founders of the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) whose aim is to improve the housing sector response to domestic abuse.

DAHA have identified 8 key areas that housing providers should consider in improving their response and have an online toolkit²⁰ with resources and advice to support housing providers. The toolkit on the accreditation page offers information on the following areas:

1. Policy and Procedures
2. Case Management, Monitoring and Evaluation
3. Risk Management
4. Inclusivity and Accessibility
5. Perpetrator Management
6. Partnership Working
7. Training
8. Publicity and Awareness

This report was commissioned by Gentoo but the findings and recommendations are equally applicable to all housing providers. SafeLives will be working with the sector to improve the domestic abuse response from housing providers.



gentoo

Appendix

Image A: Raising awareness of abuse in Sunderland




Images B and C: Letters to Gentoo from tenants who faced abuse

To



...lots
and lots
and lots!

I CAN'T THANK YOU BOTH ENOUGH
FOR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE FOR ME.
TWO YEARS AGO I WAS A MESS
AND NEVER THOUGHT I WOULD SEE
LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL
I KNOW I HAD A WAY TO GO BUT
I CAN SEE THE LIGHT NOW AND THAT'S
DOWN TO THE HELP I'VE RECEIVED AND
YOU BOTH PLAYED A BIG PART.

THANK YOU SOOOO MUCH LOVE 

Dear [redacted] I want to sing the praises
of your abuse coordinator [redacted]
[redacted] I was in the unfortunate
position of needing lot help & comfort through
some very dark days, I had been married for
45 years and am now a young 75 year old
when my husband became abusive, without this
facility that Lynton provide I really don't
know were I would have ended up or even
if I would have made it. Thank you so
much for all the help given. I am
safely ensconced in my lovely hospital
with great neighbours & friends and life is
good again. Will be for ever grateful to
Lynton. yours sincerely [redacted]



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Samantha provides research and analytical support to consultancy projects. She has a criminal justice background and a BSc in Social Policy with Government from the London School of Economics. She has worked in number of roles in Parliament, local government and politics. She is experienced in a wide variety of research methods, both quantitative and qualitative and demonstrated these skills in her research into student perceptions of police rape prevention campaigns and as Report Editor for research led by Baroness Tessa Jowell and Baroness Doreen Lawrence into the use of Stop and Search by the Metropolitan Police. Samantha has an advanced understanding of data collection and analysis and experience in developing full system financial modelling.

Danielle Mcleod, Programmes and Innovation Consultant

Danielle has significant experience of local government, having worked across five local authority areas before joining SafeLives. Through her role at the London Borough of Enfield she developed the local domestic abuse strategy, leading the response to domestic abuse and all forms of violence against women and girls. Her expertise is in designing and implementing robust multi agency partnership arrangements to respond to domestic abuse. Danielle has excellent evaluative skills, having produced the first local evaluation of the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme in 2015 following its national implementation. She has significant experience of strategic commissioning through a range of models including joint and outcome based commissioning. Danielle has a degree in Psychology from the University of West London.

Miranda Webb, Senior Research Analyst

Miranda is the research lead on SafeLives' innovative One Front Door project, carrying out an internal evaluation of the pilot model being implemented in seven sites across the country. She also works on SafeLives national data including Marac data performance data, and Insights outcome measurements for local services, as well as utilising external data published for the domestic abuse sector. She is experienced in a wide variety of research and data analysis techniques. Prior to joining SafeLives in 2012, Miranda worked as a Research Officer for Worcestershire County Council, developing area profiles, produced data and mapping tools for use in Joint Strategic Needs Analyses, and provided insights using customer profiling and journey mapping. She also worked for Melton Borough Council providing an evidence base for service user and satisfaction to help inform the development and commissioning of new services. Miranda has worked with a wide variety of stakeholders including Public Health, police and local authorities. She has a degree in Psychology and Sociology.

Endnotes

1. The cost of domestic abuse' S Walby, Women & Equality Unit, 2004 http://www.devon.gov.uk/cost_of_dv_report_sept04.pdf
2. Source: SafeLives data for all Maracs in England and Wales 2016
3. Source: SafeLives Insights data 2016/17
4. UKROL data, 2014
5. Correia, 1999: 10
6. Solace Women's Aid, 2016
7. Copeland, Cumbria (UK)
8. ONS (2017) Housing affordability in England and Wales: 1997 to 2016
9. One third of the women surveyed in the St Mungo's 2014 report said that domestic abuse had contributed towards their homelessness, compared to 8% of men.
10. Costs have been rounded
11. When repairs take place, it is possible to tag the job as potentially being the result of a domestic violence incident. There were 43,466 repairs with a Schedule of Rate (SOR) code that have been identified as potentially caused by domestic abuse and violence. It is those carrying out the repairs that create this tag, as they have been trained to detect domestic abuse.
12. These costs are likely to be higher in areas such as London where the hourly wage could be higher in council areas with London Living Wage contractors
13. Gentoo does not charge for a lot of the repairs they carry out but criminal damage is rechargeable to the tenant. If the tenant is known to them as a victim of domestic abuse, they do not charge the tenant or try to recoup the costs from the perpetrator. However, if people are unaware of this, or do not want to disclose the abuse, they may be liable for costs.
14. Research conducted by Rebecca Jackson for the Chartered Institute for Housing. See link here: <http://www.cih.org/resources/PDF/Wales%20Policy/Domestic%20abuse%20and%20housing%20in%20Wales%20factsheet.pdf>
15. Internal Gentoo data, 2016 - 2017
16. Shelter, Immediate costs to government of the loss of home, 2012.
17. Costs calculated on £0.37 per minute cost of victim support officers and 368,736 minutes.
18. In 2008 Peabody changed their approach to domestic abuse including training, updated policies and procedures and proactively publishing work internally and externally. It resulted in a 1425% increase in reporting of abuse to Peabody since 2008 (Burnet, 2017)
19. Prison Reform trust, 2016; Burnet, 2017
20. <https://www.dahalliance.org.uk/accreditation>

Everyone has the right to be safe at home

