

GREAT YARMOUTH BOROUGH COUNCIL MEDIA RELEASE

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Great Yarmouth Borough Council launches new scheme to help victims of domestic abuse

Great Yarmouth Borough Council (GYBC) has launched a new service to enable victims of domestic abuse to remain in their homes and avoid becoming homeless.

Called the Sanctuary Scheme, it aims to help survivors of domestic abuse feel safe by providing security measures such as reinforced doors, locks and video surveillance.

Councillor Emma Flaxman-Taylor, Great Yarmouth Borough Council's portfolio holder for housing, health and communities, said: "Many victims of domestic abuse are forced to relocate, leaving behind their home and support networks. Moving is a major upheaval and can cause disruption to employment and children's education, and we are hopeful this new scheme will help those who need assistance in the borough."

The scheme is aimed at low and medium-risk cases, with high-risk cases being signposted to the Norfolk Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (NIDAS), because the council is unable to offer the creation of safe rooms for victims.

As part of the work, council officers involved have undertaken the Police Crime Prevention Academy (PCPA) Level Three qualification and will offer thorough surveys of the property and recommend security measures.

Tailored to accommodate individual needs, security recommendations under the scheme could include additional locks on doors and windows, reinforced exterior doors, fire safety equipment and video doorbells or CCTV.

The Sanctuary Scheme, which is free, is open to all victims and survivors of domestic abuse, including council, housing association and private tenants. However, landlord consent is required and victims need to consent to information being shared with landlords that target-hardening measures need to be installed at the property.

For more information about the new scheme please contact sanctuary@great-yarmouth.gov.uk or call 01493 846140.

Meanwhile, to ensure GYBC is providing the best possible service for those experiencing domestic abuse, it is now working towards achieving Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) Accreditation.

DAHA'S mission is to improve the housing sector's response to domestic abuse through the introduction of clearly defined standards of good practice. And, as part of the council's work towards achieving the accreditation, staff awareness of the issue has been improved via internal training and an online survey.

Councillor Flaxman-Taylor said: "In order for us to provide the best service we can for our residents it is essential our staff are well informed about domestic abuse.

Seeking DAHA accreditation is an important step towards ensuring the council is providing the best support it can for all victims and survivors of domestic abuse.”

You can find more information about DAHA here: <https://www.dahalliance.org.uk/>
And for further information about domestic abuse and how Great Yarmouth Borough Council can help, please see our dedicated online page here: <https://www.great-yarmouth.gov.uk/domestic-abuse/introduction>