

Domestic Abuse Policy

VERSION 1.3

Version Control

Note: minor updates increase version number by 0.1, major updates increase version number by 1.0.

Version Number	Sections Amended	Date of update	Approved by
1.0	First version combining legacy East and West policies	January 2021	SLT
1.1	Minor amends	January 2021	SLT
1.2	Minor amends	August 2023	PerCo
1.3	Minor amends, removed reference to colleagues as a stand alone DA Colleague Policy will be drafted	February 2026	Policy Panel

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Abri condemn all incidents of domestic abuse and are committed to a fast and supportive response to customers (tenants, leaseholders and members of their household) and aim to respond within two working days.
- 1.2 We'll adopt a victim centred approach in all cases of domestic abuse, considering the safety of the individual suffering domestic abuse or violence and will deal promptly with any damage caused to our properties.

2. This policy applies to

- 2.1 Any customer living in our homes, who experiences domestic abuse.

3. Policy

- 3.1 We want to promote safe communities where everybody can live free from fear, intimidation and violence.
- 3.2 The definition of Domestic Abuse as contained in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 is:

Behaviour of a person ("A") towards another person ("B") is "domestic abuse" if—

- (a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and
- (b) the behaviour is abusive.
- (3) Behaviour is "abusive" if it consists of any of the following—
 - (a) physical or sexual abuse;
 - (b) violent or threatening behaviour;
 - (c) controlling or coercive behaviour;
 - (d) economic abuse (see subsection (4));
 - (e) psychological, emotional or other abuse;

and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

The full definition of Domestic Abuse can be found here: [Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#)

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- 3.3 We'll support, with our partners, any customer or member of their family living in the property experiencing domestic abuse and other resident family members impacted by the domestic abuse.
- 3.4 We will pro-actively take enforcement action for a breach of tenancy against a perpetrator, when it is reasonable to do so using the relevant Grounds in the Housing Acts where the victim has left but the perpetrator of domestic abuse remains in the property, providing it does not put the victim at risk and it is proportionate to do so.
- 3.6 We'll ensure that information relating to domestic abuse is displayed on our website and will continue to publicise and raise awareness of domestic abuse via appropriate channels both internally and externally. We'll ensure all those experiencing domestic abuse are provided with a fair, consistent and empathetic service.
- 3.7 We're committed to working towards preventing and combating domestic abuse to ensure everybody can live free from fear, intimidation and violence based on the following principles:
- Those experiencing domestic abuse should never be made to feel responsible for the abuse;
 - Those experiencing domestic abuse should not be required to take any action they reasonably feel will place them in greater danger; and
 - Those experiencing domestic abuse are best able to assess the danger they are in. The individual's perception of the situation will always be of paramount importance.
- 3.8 We'll investigate any allegation of domestic abuse made in good faith by a third party, which may include work with partner agencies to resolve the allegation.
- 3.9 We realise it is often extremely difficult for the individual to come forward for help and it may take several attempts for them to leave an abusive situation. We accept an individual may choose to return to a potentially abusive situation, but this will not affect the way in which their case is dealt with, or the support provided if they subsequently return for help.
- 3.10 We will explore the use of technologies to support people and manage risk. This includes promoting the use of mobile applications to record incidents (such as Holly Guard or Bright Sky). People may also use these applications to access help and support services.
- 3.11 We will support victims of domestic abuse to be safe in their homes by offering additional security measures, but this is not possible and the criteria is met we will utilise our **Management Transfer procedure** to support a move.

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- 3.12 We have a dedicated team of specially trained colleagues to deal with disclosures of domestic abuse, from our customers and our approach is trauma-informed. Our Community Safety Officers are trained to recognise the signs of domestic abuse when having conversation with customers and they are aware of how to act and report any concerns in a confidential and sensitive manner to the relevant agency.
- 3.13 We have a budget available to help victims to stay safe in their home. However, we'll also explore housing options which could include a priority move via the Management Transfer Procedure.
- 3.14 We'll ensure all Community Safety Officers receive training in how to approach the sensitive issue of domestic abuse and ensure they are aware of key issues and appropriate legislation.
- 3.15 We'll take an active role in Domestic Abuse Forums in areas where we manage high volumes of stock. We're also committed to supporting the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) process to help manage and reduce risk to victims with our partner agencies and represent Abri at any Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangement (MAPPA) meetings should any perpetrator of domestic abuse be subject to this.

4. Legal & Regulatory Framework

- Family Law Act 1996
- Matrimonial Causes Act 1973
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Police and Crime Act 2014
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004
- Housing Acts 1996, 1985 and 1988 (as amended)
- Homelessness Act 2002 and 2012
- Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007
- Domestic Violence Crime and Victim Act 2004
- Domestic Proceedings and Magistrates Court Act 1978 (as amended)
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Care Act 2014

5. Related Policies

- Anti-Social Behaviour and Harassment Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Hate Crime Policy
- Allocations and Lettings Policy
- Abri Code of Conduct

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6. Related Procedures

- Domestic Abuse Procedure
- Tenancy Termination Procedure
- Anti-Social Behaviour and Harassment Procedure
- Safeguarding Procedure
- Allocations and Lettings Procedure
- Management Transfer Procedure

7. Appendices

None