



## **Accommodation-based Support Services for Victims & Survivors fleeing Domestic Abuse**

North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC), City of York Council (CYC) and the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for North Yorkshire (NYPFCC) recognise the negative impact that Domestic Abuse has on families, children and communities. They are committed to working together within the Domestic Abuse Joint Coordinating Group of the North Yorkshire Community Safety and Safer York Partnerships to provide effective and consistent support and interventions to meet the needs of those affected.

It is anticipated that greater value for money will be achieved by ensuring the total local investment collectively prioritises the most effective interventions and services, with an emphasis on early-intervention and providing consistent services to meet current and potential future need of any victim or survivor of domestic abuse, thereby reducing demand on operational policing services and other related statutory services such as health, housing, children, young people and family prevention services as well as social care.

In order to achieve this vision, NYCC, CYC and NYPFCC have jointly commissioned a consistent and high quality outcome focussed Domestic Abuse Accommodation-based Support Service across the whole of North Yorkshire and the City of York. From 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 this Service is being delivered by Independent Domestic Abuse Services (IDAS) and will enable high and medium risk victims and survivors fleeing domestic abuse, and their families, to make informed choices about their safety, health, housing and any other identified outcome needs.

There will be a variety of accommodation and tailored support packages available across North Yorkshire and the City of York to meet the needs of all victims and survivors fleeing domestic abuse including specialist refuge and dispersed accommodation. There are plans for short-term emergency/respite accommodation but these are currently on hold due to challenges with this as a result of Covid-19 but it is anticipated this will be available as soon as practically possible.

### **Who can access support?**

Support is available for high and medium risk victims and survivors aged 16 years and over who are fleeing domestic abuse; and any dependent children up to the age of 16 years.

Support is available for all genders and regardless of sexual orientation.

Support is available whether or not they want to make a formal report to the Police.

There is no "local connection" restriction for the Service as all victims and survivors must be allowed to travel the distance needed to be safe from their abusers.

## Making a Referral - how does it work?

Referrals for victims and survivors fleeing domestic abuse will be accepted from:

- National Women's Aid Network
- National Mankind initiative
- Statutory and non-statutory agencies and specialist support providers
- Self-referrals

Referrals can be made:

- Online at <https://www.idas.org.uk/contact/make-a-referral/>
- Email to [info@idas.org.uk](mailto:info@idas.org.uk)
- Phone on 03000 110 110
- Live Chat web chat facility Monday to Friday from 4pm to 6pm via the IDAS website: <https://www.idas.org.uk/>

It is intended that all referrals will initially be reviewed by specialist domestic abuse staff in a centralised Referral Hub which will be the first point of contact with IDAS for all victims and survivors fleeing domestic abuse. This will ensure that everyone has access to consistent support; starting with a Hub assessment looking at risk and need, and then, where needed, referral to an appropriate follow-up support service most relevant to meet their needs. The Hub will also provide triage, immediate advice, support and safety planning as required.

The IDAS Hub will have access to information about accommodation availability across the county and the UK; where accommodation is required, the Hub Team will make arrangements to appropriately accommodate victims and survivors fleeing domestic abuse in accordance with their identified needs and risk - if there is a need to be accommodated in another Local Authority area for safety reasons the Hub will arrange this.

## What help can they offer?

- Accommodation with tailored support for up to 1 year in a safe and secure environment either in specialist refuge or dispersed accommodation for victims and survivors, and any dependent children
- Safe Haven scheme (**currently on hold due to covid-19 challenges**) providing short-term emergency accommodation and respite opportunities for up to two months with host families; this will provide vital respite accommodation where other accommodation is full, and will be particularly beneficial for victims and survivors who it may not be possible to accommodate in women's refuges, do not have access to public funds or live in rural communities.
- Trauma informed whole family approach which will include therapeutic support for children who require additional support and trauma informed group-work sessions delivered by IDAS Mental Health Support Workers for victims who have suffered mental ill health and trauma as a result of domestic abuse
- 1 to 1 emotional and practical support including support through any police investigation and/or court proceedings

- Specialist support for any dependent children and young people living in the accommodation delivered by Children’s Workers including 1 to 1, group and play sessions and educational activities
- Parenting support, advice and information including support to access local school placements
- Support with independent living skills and to explore suitable move on options to assist with moving on to more independent, permanent accommodation.
- Supported group work and peer support networks
- Resettlement support for a period of up to 3 months following move on from the accommodation including onward referrals and/or liaison with other support services as appropriate.

## Commissioners Contact Details

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