

## Scheme to secure safe homes for domestic abuse survivors

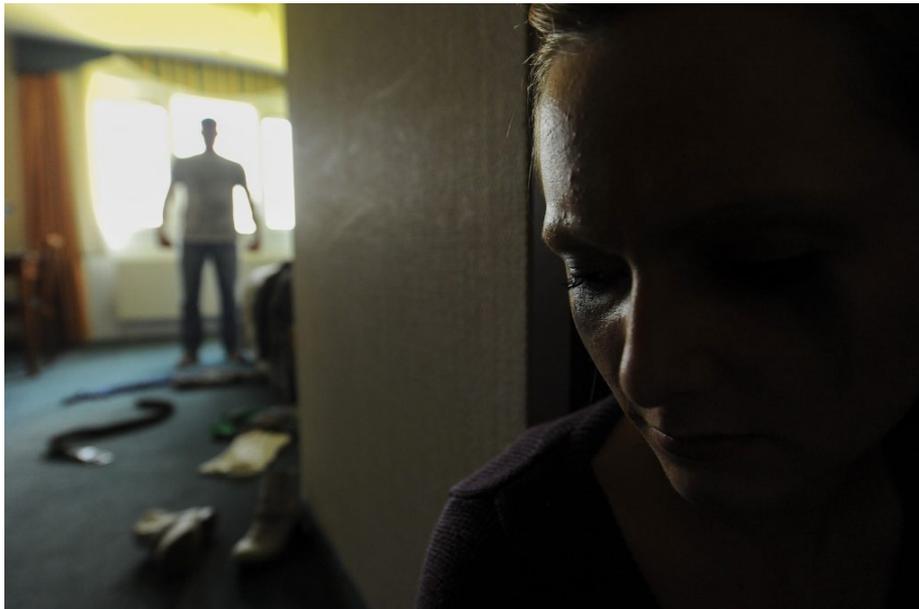
Survivors spared from competing against other high priority groups also seeking social housing.

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A new relocation project for survivors of domestic abuse is set for launch next month – sparing survivors from competing against other high priority groups seeking social housing.

REVIVE – run by Homefinder UK – is backed by a grant from the MHCLG’s fund for domestic abuses services.

Ninesh Muthiah, Homefinder UK’s CEO, said: “Currently, survivors of domestic abuse compete against other high priority groups seeking affordable social housing – REVIVE will provide a brand-new and faster route to safe and secure social housing.”

According to the 2018 Women’s Aid report, domestic abuse accounts for around one in 10 of all homeless applications, as waiting times for social housing for families across local authorities in England and Wales can range from between three and 10 years.

Patrick Odling-Smee, Service Director for Housing at Luton Borough Council and lead for the project bid, said: “The REVIVE project will further enhance the survivor-centric case management services designed to help find homes for survivors of domestic abuse.

“Luton Council is pleased to be part of the project together with the other councils and housing associations, as it provides a real alternative for survivors of domestic abuse and will help to improve their families’ quality of life.”

The focus of the project will be on helping victims of domestic abuse find safe and more stable social housing in other council areas across the UK.

Through an extensive national network, Homefinder UK can source immediately available social housing properties for rapid relocation.

REVIVE is already working alongside some domestic abuse support agencies that include DAHA (Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance), the National Probation Service, Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences, Victim Support, Women’s Aid, BAME Women’s Aid, and ACCM UK who support victims of honour-based violence.

Over recent years, Homefinder UK has rehoused over 400 households into permanent social housing nationwide, with some of those being domestic abuse survivors, said Muthiah.

“We have a proven model with an established national network of social housing organisations keen and willing to help,” she said.

Homefinder UK partners with over 100 local authorities and housing associations, with very successful outcomes and a tenancy failure rate of less than 1%.

A recently rehoused domestic abuse survivor said: “I suffered domestic abuse for many years. I had to give up my job and moved to a woman’s refugee centre – I was left with nothing.

“However, within eight weeks of contacting Homefinder UK, they got me a property, and beyond that, I received the support from my new landlord to settle in a new area – I can now live free from violence.”

Brenda Fraser, project manager for REVIVE, said: “This is just one of many successful outcomes Homefinder UK is hoping to achieve through the latest REVIVE project.

“Increased financial stability, strong support networks, awareness from cross sector professionals, and most importantly the belief that domestic abuse survivors can live free from violence will be at the forefront of scheme’s case management services.”

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