

Target hardening (locks/bolts, etc) for High Risk victims of Domestic Abuse

- 1.1 Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership (WSCSP), commissioned the services of the national charity Safe Partnership to conduct crime reduction, arson risk assessments and conduct necessary works for high risk victims of Domestic Abuse.
- 1.2 This enables the victim to be able to remain in their own homes, within their community and reduces the victim's isolation, enhances their self-confidence, and helps them to become more independent and strive towards rebuilding their lives. Target hardening measures reduce repeat victimisation and also increases victim's confidence and sense of safety. It is important that target hardening measures are offered within a wider framework of support and alongside regular risk assessments.
- 1.3 Measures to target harden homes can include upgrading locks, fitting bolts, London and Birmingham bars to strengthen doors, window locks, fireproof letter boxes, fences, gates, security lights and in extreme cases the establishment of a sanctuary room. Sanctuary rooms have fire doors fitted with several features providing high risk victims and their families a secure room to retreat to if they find themselves under attack until such time as the police arrive.

Domestic Abuse is reported to the Police and designated as 'High Risk' the victim will be offered the support of an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) who will work with the victim on risk management and safety planning.
- 1.4 In 2017, £20,000 was committed to commission the services of the national charity, Safe Partnership, to conduct crime reduction, arson risk assessments and additional works to properties for high risk Domestic Abuse victims. To extend the scheme, Suffolk County Council contributed a further £15,000 to top up a grant of £20,000 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). This additional funding from the MHCLG will enable the service to continue for a further 12 months. However, if the project costs continue at the current rate, the committed funds will run out in approximately 18 months.
- 1.5 The scheme commenced in April 2018 and by the end of January 2019 it saw 90 High Risk victims supported with works to improve security within their homes at a total cost of £19,647.00, an average of £218.30 per property. The majority of those supported live in our urban areas, 38% of people living in properties owned by Registered Social Landlords. Analysis has concluded the 'invest to save' benefits of the project in the first ten months have saved the Suffolk system £73,806.
- 1.6 Public Sector leaders have agreed to increase this funding to £30,000 for the current year, which will include a funding contribution from four of the largest Registered Social Landlords whose tenants have also benefited from these arrangements.

Franstine Jones

Community Safety Professional Lead (Sustainable Communities)

Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councils – Working together

w: www.babergh.gov.uk www.midsuffolk.gov.uk