

## What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse takes many forms and can happen to any member of the Lesbian Gay Bi-sexual Transgender (LGBT+) community of any age, often without them even realising it. It is never acceptable and includes psychological, emotional, physical, financial, sexual and verbal abuse. If you're suffering domestic abuse you're likely to feel ashamed, isolated, hurt, upset, scared, confused and embarrassed. You might also find it difficult to speak out due to cultural and other sensitivities and privacy fears.

Domestic abuse includes any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over, who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.

Coercive control is now recognised as the behaviour that underpins domestic abuse. It is a pattern of behaviour which seeks to take away the victim's sense of self, minimising their freedom and violating their human rights. Here are some examples of how coercion works:

- **Creating isolation.** Limiting or stopping your contact with friends and family;
- **Depriving you.** Constantly and deliberately taking away food, medicines or restricting your basic needs somehow;
- **Managing your time.** Controlling your movements – what you do, when you do it and for how long – and checking up on you excessively;
- **Restricting your everyday activities.** This might include anything from hobbies, where you go, who you see, to what you wear and when you can sleep;
- **Degrading you.** Repeatedly putting you down, using name-calling or bullying behaviour to make you feel worthless and humiliated;

- **Restricting your ways of communication.** Taking away your mobile phone, laptop or other devices, monitoring or restricting your social media and other online activities, including the type of information and services you're allowed to access, using spyware, changing passwords or hiding things;
- **Controlling where you go.** Restricting your movements, telling you where you can and cannot go, so you're unable to leave the house or use a car or public transport to get to work, attend an appointment or visit family and friends;
- **Destroying your things.** This could be something that's precious to you – big or small – or even deleting emails and text messages that were important to you;
- **Controlling your money.** This can include constantly monitoring, commenting on and restricting your spending or giving you only a limited amount of money to spend (possibly from your own account);
- **Making unreasonable demands.** Which may include making changes to your appearance, daily routine or sex life. Often followed up with threats or intimidation – involving you or sometimes your children – pressure or physical restraint if you don't comply, for which you're often left blaming yourself.

Abuse can also encompass stalking and harassment, both of which are criminal offences. If your partner's behaviour isolates you from friends, family or colleagues, then it's important to seek help.

**Domestic abuse is a crime – if you are in any danger please call 999.**



## Support for LGBT+ victims:

New Era services are available to victims of domestic abuse wherever they live in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, with safety, immediate risk and recovery prioritised;

Identifying and coming to terms with the effects of domestic abuse can often be a complex process, but it's important you seek help as soon as you suspect you have a problem, for your own safety and wellbeing.

Specially trained staff are able to help you, whether you've made a report to the police or not.

## Services available to LGBT+ victims

### One-to-one support

New Era provides tailored individual support to LGBT+ victims, which focuses on identifying immediate needs, coping with the effects of domestic abuse and recovery from the harm caused. Support is provided through a dedicated specialist Independent Domestic Abuse Advisor (IDVA) who works exclusively with the LGBT+ community. They are part of New Era's wider team of IDVAs and Domestic Abuse Practitioners (DAPs). You will be involved in all decision making throughout, and support will be at your pace.

Our specially trained professionals will:

- Support and communicate with you in the way that suits you best – text, email, phone or face-to-face;

- Listen to you in a non-judgemental way, prioritising your safety and confidentiality;
- Provide emotional support, encourage you to feel comfortable talking about your experiences and help you to come to terms with what's happened;
- Understand any complex needs you may have, taking account of cultural and other sensitivities, such as privacy concerns around your sexuality;
- Provide information to help you and your family stay safe and practical advice on immigration, housing, benefits, legal and other matters (such as non-molestation orders, issues relating to child contact, as well as family/magistrate court visits);
- Help you to support any children who may have been involved (working closely with other agencies, where appropriate, such as social services, mental health and family support workers);
- Signpost you to appropriate services, health care specialists and other agencies that you may need to support the next stage of your recovery (such as counselling, to help rebuild your confidence and wellbeing).

## Group work

We offer group work for adult women, parents /carers and children who have been the victim of domestic abuse. Although not tailored specifically to the LGBT+ community, all our courses are designed to help participants develop confidence, self-esteem and an understanding of safety within intimate and close relationships. All our programmes incorporate a wide range of techniques, tools and activities designed to cover key aspects, such as the impact of trauma, understanding of safety, self-awareness, education and skills for change. The programmes aim to benefit all family members.

## Children and Young People (CYP)

New Era supports children and young people aged between four and 18 who have experienced or witnessed domestic abuse. Our dedicated team of CYP domestic abuse practitioners offer both individual and group support programmes.

### Consent and confidentiality

We work with you in a confidential way. We will only share information without your permission if we are worried about your safety, someone else's safety, or have a safeguarding concern.

If information is shared, we will always try and discuss with you why we are passing this on and what happens next.

Sometimes the best way to help might be to involve other agencies. In these cases, we will always ask your permission to share your information.



### New Era services:

Visit our website [www.new-era.uk](http://www.new-era.uk)

### Support for victims

Helpline **0300 303 3778**

Web and Live Chat [www.new-era.uk](http://www.new-era.uk)

Email [new-era@victimsupport.org.uk](mailto:new-era@victimsupport.org.uk)

New Era support for victims provided by Victim Support.

### Services for perpetrators

Helpline **01785 904770**

Email [new-era@justice.gov.uk](mailto:new-era@justice.gov.uk)

New Era services for perpetrators provided by the Probation Service.

### All services are free and confidential

We will only share information without permission if we are worried about a person's safety, or have a safeguarding concern.



**Support for LGBT+ victims of domestic abuse**



Website [www.new-era.uk](http://www.new-era.uk)

New Era is delivered in partnership by Victim Support and the Probation Service

