

**STOP
DOMESTIC
ABUSE**



A new refuge for women and children
escaping from domestic abuse

SANCTUARY
WITH **STOP** DOMESTIC ABUSE

Refuge support for women and children is at the heart of what we do. It saves lives and provides space for them to heal and begin to rebuild their lives.

Domestic abuse can have a devastating impact on victims and their families. It is a leading cause of homelessness and puts children at risk of long-term physical and mental health problems. Survivors of domestic abuse often face the incredibly difficult choice between staying in an abusive household or leaving to find safety.

This is where Stop Domestic Abuse comes in. We offer a range of support options, including a safe place to stay, one-to-one support in the community, specialist support for children and young people, group recovery programmes and help to make their home a safe place.

The need for a new refuge in Hampshire

Every year Stop Domestic Abuse provides safe accommodation to hundreds of families. Our expert refuge teams support women and children staying in refuge accommodation across Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton. We do everything we

can to keep our refuges homely, safe and welcoming for our residents. We deliver high quality support services to our residents, helping them to remain safe, to access local health and education services for their families, and supporting them to develop good mental, emotional and financial health.

But there are not enough refuge spaces to accommodate all the survivors who need safe accommodation. Women's Aid are reporting a 23% shortfall in refuge bed spaces, and here in Hampshire more than 150 victims had to be turned away from refuge because their specialist needs couldn't be met, or we simply didn't have enough empty rooms for them. Disabled women sometimes have nowhere to go as there is currently only one adapted disabled refuge room in Hampshire.

This is why we will build our new refuge - bespoke modern family accommodation where survivors of domestic abuse can begin to rebuild their lives.

The need for women-only specialist refuges

On average, two women a week are killed by a partner or ex-partner in England and Wales; every day, nearly 30 women experiencing domestic abuse attempt to complete suicide. The overwhelming majority of victims are women and the perpetrators men. 89% of victims who have experienced repeated incidents of domestic abuse are women.

Today it is widely acknowledged that single sex, trauma-informed spaces are crucial in providing safe spaces for recovery from abuse for women and their children. We know that many women and children who have been subject to male violence and abuse need access to support and accommodation which is provided in single sex spaces as this reduces their distress and trauma.

The Istanbul Convention requires states to provide specialist services to meet the specific needs of victims and children, including specialist refuge provision. Article 22 of the Convention makes clear that specialist support is best ensured by women's organisations and by support services that have specialised and experienced staff with in-depth knowledge of gender-based violence.



Gill Butler, Chair of Trustees

Every day our staff and volunteers do something remarkable. In our refuges, out in the community, on the Helpline, in schools and hospitals, they reach out to people and help them through the most distressing times. They are committed, passionate and highly skilled at supporting victims of domestic abuse to find safety and recovery.

We have been providing expert support for survivors of domestic abuse to local people for nearly 50 years. Our refuge teams have provided comfort and safety to thousands of families. It's now time to build on all that we have achieved and provide women and children with the very best safe accommodation in which they can recover and heal. To do this, we need to create a brand-new refuge with living areas where women and children can recover together and gain support from our staff and from each other; fully accessible facilities for disabled residents; stimulating children's play areas, and comfortable inspiring space for therapeutic activities.

In recent years we have been fortunate to receive support for this project from our community and partners. This has put us in a position to pursue our vision of a new refuge in Havant, but we need the support of our local community and partners to raise the last £1 million.

I ask you to help us build a new refuge for women and children who so desperately need a safe haven in which to recover and rebuild their lives.



To find out more about this project contact
refugeappeal@stopdomesticabuse.uk

A portrait of Claire Lambon, Chief Executive, smiling. She has short blonde hair and is wearing a white, textured jacket with a red zipper. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a stone building.

Claire Lambon,
Chief Executive

A new refuge for families escaping from domestic abuse

We are now ready to achieve our vision of a new purpose-built refuge in Havant, where women and children can find safety and begin to rebuild their lives.

The physical environment will be as much a part of survivors' recovery as the specialist support we will provide to our residents.

The new refuge will be a warm and welcoming environment where anyone who walks through the door feels valued and safe. Carefully designed communal facilities will create spaces for families to share meals, play and move forward on their journey of recovery. As well as a bright and fun playroom inside for children, there will be imaginatively designed outside space including a play area and gardens providing a pleasant environment for women to relax and play with their children.

This welcoming building will be built in an energy-efficient and environmentally sustainable way. It will provide safe refuge to hundreds of families in the years to come. The building will be fully accessible ensuring there are no barriers to accommodating women and children living with disabilities.

A place of safety and healing

At Stop Domestic Abuse we believe that refuge goes beyond providing a safe place to stay. It's where our specialist staff provide women and children with the building blocks they need to begin a new life, free from fear. Refuge is where we support each woman with her individual needs, both practical and emotional. Our refuges provide women and their children with one-to-one and peer support which enables them to leave abusive relationships, cope with the trauma they have experienced, regain their self-esteem and begin rebuilding their life in safety and independence.

Specialist support for women and children

At Stop Domestic Abuse, we are committed to providing comprehensive support to every woman and child through a meticulously crafted programme encompassing both therapeutic and practical assistance. Practical support begins when our refuge team helps women and children to settle in, guiding them to access vital services such as registering with a doctor and dentist, securing specialist healthcare, identifying a suitable school for their children, fostering connections with faith groups when appropriate, addressing immigration concerns, getting legal advice, establishing a bank account, and navigating benefit claims. Trauma-informed support sessions are held with all our residents, in a private meeting room one-to-one or in groups, increasing feelings of safety, trust, support, collaboration, empowerment and understanding.





Crucially, our approach is one of empathy and non-judgment. We respect each woman's autonomy, offering time and space for them to make decisions that align with their needs and aspirations. Our focus extends beyond immediate practicalities to the emotional well-being of women and their children, aiming to enhance their understanding of the abuse they have experienced. Our new refuge will offer women the space to speak about their abuse experiences and to gain support to cope with intrusive thoughts and memories that may resurface when a woman feels secure enough to confront her past. This crucial aspect of our work aids women and children coming to terms with the abuse they've experienced, empowering them to navigate and cope with the trauma associated with the relationship they escaped and the challenges of rebuilding their lives.

A calming environment for children to recover and learn

Our specialist children's workers will help children and young people to begin to understand life in refuge and the experiences that led them to refuge. The garden and playground, the playroom and our large family room will provide safe spaces for fun and exploration where children are empowered to overcome the effects of trauma, promoting resilience and emotional well-being. Through art

Contact refugeappeal@stopdomesticabuse.uk or call us on 023 9200 8329

and play, children will be given the language and skills to understand the difference between healthy relationships and experiences of abuse.

Recognising the unique challenges that come with parenting amidst difficult circumstances, our skilled team will offer guidance and resources to help mothers who might need additional support to navigate parenting issues.

In this new refuge, our support will extend beyond immediate shelter. For every resident, we will work with our partners to find safe suitable housing options for the future. By working collaboratively with residents, we aim to empower them on their journey towards sustained safety, well-being, and independence.



Join us in building a better future for families affected by domestic abuse

Being part of the community in Havant is important to us. It's where the charity began its work and where our pioneering founders opened the doors of our first refuge in 1978. Fast forward to today and we're still working to stop domestic abuse in our community. We invite you to support us to open the doors to women and children who desperately need our support.



The new refuge



Designs by Marlow Architects

Two accessible self-contained units

Seven family bedrooms on the first floor

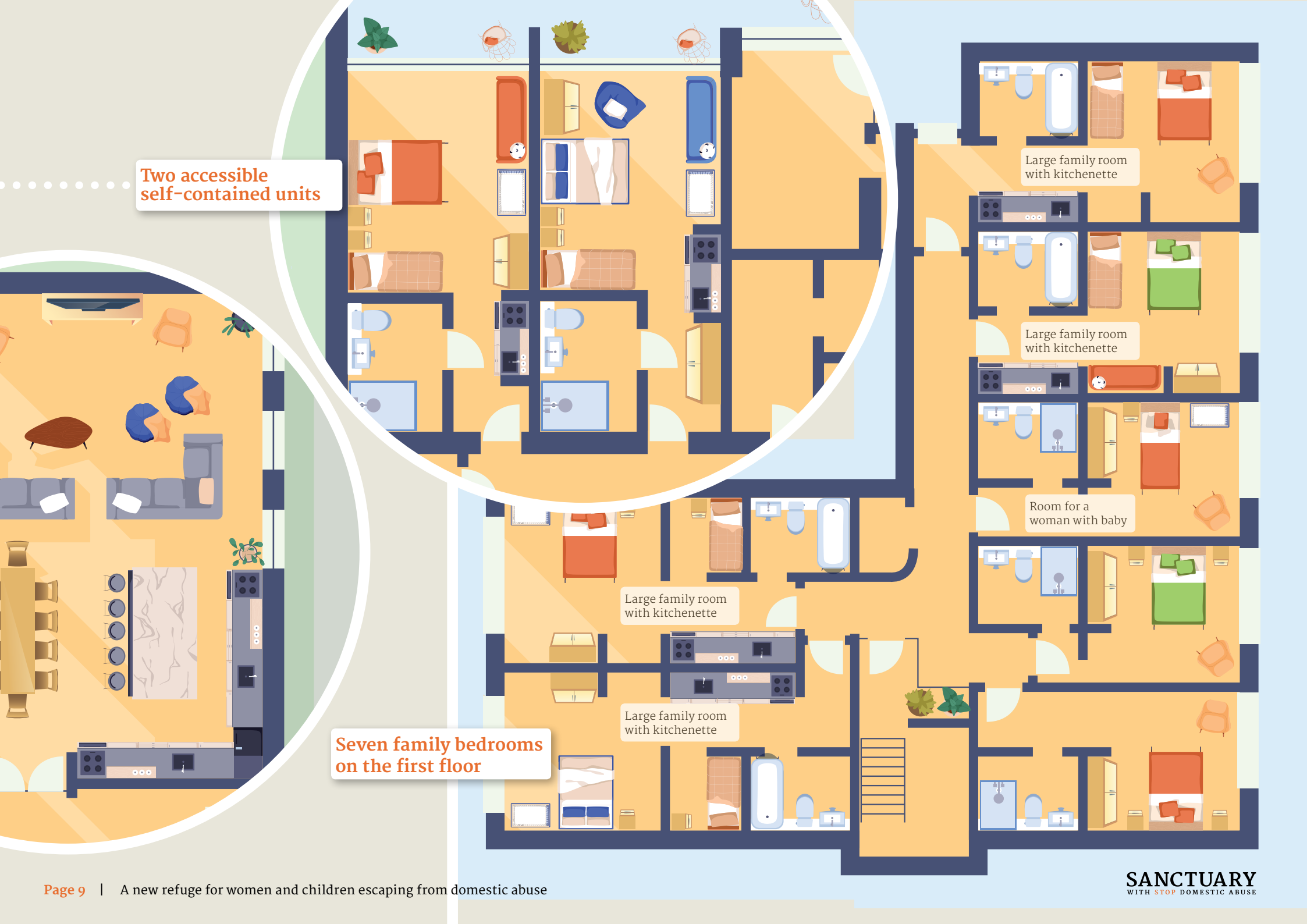
Large family room with kitchenette

Large family room with kitchenette

Room for a woman with baby

Large family room with kitchenette

Large family room with kitchenette



Open-plan living space





“I would tell any other children coming into the refuge not to feel scared. It’s a good house and you make lots of friends and you get to have a new house soon.”

Jake* aged 8



Kelly's Story

Kelly and her children had been living a life in the shadows for several years. Her partner controlled where she went, what she wore, how much sleep she had and gave her only a few pounds to buy food for her two children once a week. The children were scared to play in the house, as he often lost his temper when they were noisy or left their toys in his way.

Kelly's life had become extremely stressful and isolated and she was terrified of what might happen to her and the children.

After enduring years of abuse, she contacted Stop Domestic Abuse's Helpline to try to find a way out. The Helpline adviser helped her to recognise that she was experiencing abuse and that it wasn't safe to stay in the house. They explored a number of options and the adviser explained what she would need to do if she decided to escape to refuge accommodation.

The following week, when her partner was out, she packed a few essentials and got the children ready to go to refuge.

When they arrived at our refuge, as well as needing practical support, Kelly also needed help with her mental health as the trauma she had been experiencing at home had led to panic attacks and a struggle with managing her anxiety. Her daughter, Cara said she felt lonely, scared and couldn't stop crying. After years of being scared to play at home, to laugh and make a mess, Cara and her brother were withdrawn and tearful.

Liz, one of our refuge workers was assigned to provide Kelly with the practical and emotional support she needed while she stayed in the refuge. They worked together to co-produce a safety plan to ensure the family's immediate safety. Liz supported Kelly to register with a doctor, set up a bank account and get in touch with the local Council's Housing team. But the abuse had taken its toll, and she was afraid of attending appointments and speaking on the phone. She felt that things were piling up and this was contributing to her feelings of anxiety and helplessness.

After a while, Liz supported and encouraged Kelly to speak up at appointments and calls with other professionals, building up her confidence to access the support she needed in order to rebuild her family's life. This included joining one of our domestic abuse group work programmes where she spent time with other survivors and discovered that she wasn't alone in what she'd experienced for so many years. The programme helped Kelly to find her confidence and understand her rights as a victim.

*Names have been changed to protect the family.

With Liz supporting her at every stage, Kelly felt able to report the abuse for the first time and she completed several interviews with the Police. She felt relieved and empowered that her case was being taken seriously by the Police and that Stop Domestic Abuse would support her to seek justice and protection for herself and the children.

Kelly's children have had regular support sessions with one of our specialist Children and Young People workers. This has helped them understand the difference between healthy relationships and experiences of abuse, and has given them their own personal coping toolkits to help them deal with their feelings and worries.

“Being in refuge has transformed my life. I came in terrified of the unknown but knowing it had to be better than the abuse I endured. The support around me has been invaluable. You've given me the encouragement and tools I need to feel empowered and move on to fight for myself and build the future that my children and I deserve.”

Cara said, “I remember when we first came into the refuge. I was so scared of living in a house full of strangers. But I love everyone here so much and it feels like a big family where we're always safe and helping each other”.





Nicole Jacobs

Domestic Abuse Commissioner for England and Wales

“For victims and survivors of domestic abuse, home can be the most dangerous place. The right support in a safe environment can be integral to rebuilding your life after fleeing domestic abuse. It was fantastic to see the support on offer at Stop Domestic Abuse’s new refuge. Their specialist service for children is the kind of tailored support I would like to see in every area of the country, particularly as my research found just 29 per cent of victims and survivors of domestic abuse were able to access support for their children. I hope Stop Domestic Abuse will be able to transform outcomes for women and children for years to come.”



Donna Jones

Police & Crime Commissioner, Hampshire & the Isle of Wight

“As Police Commissioner, I’m committed to tackling domestic abuse, stalking and violence against women and girls. Over the last few years, I have commissioned Stop Domestic Abuse to provide expert support to victims of domestic violence, and this new refuge will transform outcomes for women and children who’ve been forced to flee their homes. Victims deserve to feel safe and be safe, and I will continue to do everything I can to provide meaningful and effective solutions to combat domestic abuse and protect victims from this devastating crime.”

Survivor

“The safe space provided at the refuge allowed me to rebuild my life with a newfound strength and resilience. What stood out the most was the consistent motivation and reassurance Stop Domestic Abuse’s team offered, ensuring that I never felt alone or overwhelmed.”



Farah Nazeer

Chief Executive, Women's Aid of England

"Specialist women's domestic abuse services across England have been facing a funding crisis for over a decade, resulting in a postcode lottery of support for women and girls, with many being turned away at a point of crisis. I am delighted that this project by Stop Domestic Abuse will provide women and children fleeing abuse with refuge accommodation and the tailored and specialist support that is so desperately needed. We know from working with survivors that to be truly effective, support must be delivered by specialist services and it is fantastic to see that this will be the case in Hampshire, with Stop Domestic Abuse having a long and proven track record in meeting the needs of survivors."



a world
without
domestic
abuse.

Helpline: 0330 0533 630

Always dial 999 if you are in immediate danger or in an emergency.

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Stop Domestic Abuse supports and protects victims and survivors of domestic abuse. We provide a range of flexible and accessible services across Hampshire to anyone affected by domestic abuse, including perpetrators. Our vision is a world without domestic abuse. We work in partnership with other service providers, commissioners, the police and our local community to tackle domestic abuse and stalking.

Stop Domestic Abuse is the commissioned service provider for domestic abuse services throughout Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton.

Stop Domestic Abuse delivers the Police & Crime Commissioner's Stalking Advocacy & Support Service across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

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Thank you to



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Stop Domestic Abuse is the trading name of Southern Domestic Abuse Service Registered Charity Number 1146773.

Get in touch:

refugeappeal@stopdomesticabuse.uk

023 9200 8329

stopdomesticabuse.uk

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@southerndas

We
need
to talk