

b) Any person who might reasonably be expected to reside with them.

If you fall into this category, you may be eligible for a 'Sanctuary'.

The 'Sanctuary Project' is not limited to Housing Association tenants and includes any person, who is threatened with homelessness due to domestic abuse, hate crime or other abuse.

Referrals to the 'Sanctuary Project' can be made by any one of the following agencies and they are then assessed by a Multi Agency Panel consisting of members of these agencies.

These agencies are Wychavon District Council, the Police, Women's Aid Network, Social Services, the Community Safety Partnership, Housing Associations and any other relevant organisation.

## For more information & advice

**Wychavon District Council**  
**Housing Needs Team**  
01386 565020

# Sanctuary

## 9. a guide for victims of abuse



## Introduction

The 'Sanctuary Project' is a victim centred initiative which aims to make it possible for victims of domestic abuse and crimes to remain in their own homes and feel safe.

Many victims of domestic abuse and hate crimes feel that they need to move on numerous occasions as they are in fear of repeat incidents. This results in often moving away from their network of friends and family and having to uproot children from their schools.

This scheme has been introduced to try to prevent this from happening. It is not confined to Housing Association tenants and there is no charge.

The main feature of the project is the creation of a 'Sanctuary Room', which consists of having an internal door replaced with a solid core door, reversing it to open outwards, so that the door jamb acts as an additional barrier. Two mortice bolts, three steel hinges, hinge bolts and door viewer is added.

Additional security can be provided i.e. locks on windows and doors, grilles, gates, fire escape ladders and anti arson letterboxes.

The project is not an immediate response although applications are dealt with as quickly as possible providing a long-term solution to improve the victim's quality of life.

## What is a 'Sanctuary'?

Every 'Sanctuary Project' is tailored to meet the needs and circumstances of the individuals involved. The security recommendations generally fall into three categories;

**Sanctuary** - this is where a door to the main room, generally the master bedroom, is replaced with a solid core door and reversed to open outwards. Two mortice bolts are fitted to the inside of the door, one at the top and the other at the bottom, along with three large steel hinges, hinge bolts and 180 degree viewer. This provides a safe room or 'Sanctuary' for victims to call for and await the arrival of police.

**Sanctuary Plus** - this would normally have all of the above elements plus additional security features, i.e. grilles, extra 'Sanctuary' doors to the front and rear of the property, 'London' and 'Birmingham' bars.

**Sanctuary Minus** - this does not include a safe room, but could include a number of other security options, i.e. changing window locks and door locks etc.

In the majority of cases, victims are also provided with fire safety equipment, which includes smoke detectors, break glass hammers and collapsible fire escape ladders.

## Who is eligible for a 'Sanctuary'?

Under Section 177 of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002, a Local Authority has the responsibility to assess whether it is reasonable for a person to continue to occupy accommodation. The Act states that it is not reasonable for a person to continue to occupy accommodation if it is probable that this will lead to domestic abuse, or other abuse against them or against:

- a) A person who normally resides with them as a member of their family, or