

Rochford Sanctuary Scheme (for victims)

What is the Rochford Sanctuary Scheme?

The Sanctuary Scheme is for Rochford District residents who are at risk of homelessness due to domestic violence from a current or former spouse, partner or close family member.

It is an alternative to temporary accommodation. The Scheme offers high risk and very high risk victims of domestic violence and their families the option to remain safely and securely in their homes through the installation of free tailored home security.

Who is eligible?

The Sanctuary Scheme is open to :

- Rochford Housing Association tenants.
- Other Registered Social Landlords with properties in the Rochford District.
- Owner occupiers and privately renting tenants.

Provided the perpetrator is no longer living or staying at your property and the extra security measure would help you and your family feel safe in your home.

If you are a private tenant, we will need to get permission from your landlord before any safety measures can be installed in the property. The Sanctuary Scheme is not suitable for people in temporary accommodation.

Is the perpetrator allowed back into the property?

No. The safety measures that have been installed in the property are for your safety and/or your family and if the perpetrator returns to the home where sanctuary measures have been installed you and/or your family could be at greater risk of harm.

How much will it cost?

The installation of all home security is entirely voluntary and free of charge to you and your landlord, however, if after it has been installed you allow the perpetrator back into your property you will be liable to pay for the cost of the works in making your property safe. If you have children you should arrange child contact to happen elsewhere and not take place at your home. If the perpetrator comes to your home you should contact the police immediately.

The Citizens Advice Bureau or a solicitor can assist you regarding child contact.

What if I have a joint tenancy with the perpetrator?

You will not be eligible for the Sanctuary Scheme if you are a joint tenant with the perpetrator. This is because the perpetrator has the same rights to the property as you. If you wish to remove the perpetrator from your tenancy you should speak with the Housing Officer, Citizens Advice Bureau or contact a Solicitor for advice on how you may be able to obtain an Occupational Order.

Do I need to get an injunction?

It is recommended as it will give you additional protection from the perpetrator both inside and outside your home. Sometimes it may not be possible to get an injunction so you should always report any domestic violence related incidents to the Police.

What does the Sanctuary Scheme visit involve and do I get to choose what safety measures I want for my property?

The Essex Police Crime Reduction Officer (CRO) visits your home and undertakes a security survey to identify what security measures are needed to accommodate your needs and circumstances. The officer will not be wearing a police uniform. The Crime Reduction Officer will then ask you sign an agreement for the work to be carried out. There is no obligation for you to agree to having all of the security measures that are being recommended. The Crime Reduction Officer will then talk to you about home and personal safety and provide you with information on Home Safety, Be Safe, Be Secure and a personal attack alarm.

Who will be fitting my security?

Once the home visit and survey has been completed and the works agreed, Our Contractors will be notified and they will contact you directly to make an appointment and arrange to undertake the works. These contractors have been police checked, have confidential policies and have experience in the field of domestic violence. They will know that domestic violence has occurred but will not know any details about what has happened to you.

What if I decide to move house after the work is done?

A Sanctuary Scheme is designed to give you and your family the option to remain safely and securely in your home for the long term. However, it is entirely your decision if you want to move and there is no prejudice if you move of your own accord or present yourself as homeless. If you

believe your safety is at risk, and wish to move then please discuss this with the Housing and Domestic Violence Liaison Officer at Rochford District Council or your Housing Officer if you are a RHA or RSL tenant.

Will anyone keep in contact with me once the Sanctuary has been fitted?

The Housing and Domestic Violence Liaison Officer at Rochford District Council will contact you to arrange a visit, once the security measures have been installed, to complete a satisfaction survey form.

Then three months after the initial visit the Basildon Women's Aid (BWA) will be in contact with you where you can raise any concerns e.g further incidents that have occurred or discuss any issues and also review the security measures that were previously installed. Final contact from Basildon Women's Aid will be at six months after Sanctuary was installed.

If you would like this information in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 546366 Ext 3517



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