



## WEST BERKSHIRE DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICES

BWA are a specialist provider of domestic abuse prevention and intervention services. Our mission is to provide domestic abuse support and advocacy services to everyone who comes to us experiencing domestic abuse.

**We aim to listen, support and empower people to act for themselves and believe everyone should be able to live free from fear and domestic abuse in their own lives.**

**In West Berkshire, BWA offer information and advice via our Helpline, Outreach/IDVA support for survivors living in the community and refuge accommodation to survivors and their children who need to leave their homes.**

**We can help you whether or not you are currently in a relationship with your abuser.**

### WHAT IS REFUGE ACCOMMODATION?

BWA have four refuges across Reading, Wokingham and Bracknell where we are able to accommodate up to 32 women and 63 children. We also provide specialist provision for women from an Asian background. BWA refuges provide a safe, confidential home where you will have time and space to make informed choices and decisions about your future. Staff will work directly with you to provide emotional and practical support.

### WHO CAN ACCESS REFUGE ACCOMMODATION?

BWA offer refuge accommodation to women and children. We can support you via our Helpline to help you find a space in another refuge if you are not a woman. BWA offer refuge spaces based on the survivor's current risk. Women do not have to be local to the area and we can consider referrals to our refuge accommodation from anywhere in the UK. We can complete a full assessment for refuge accommodation for women who meet the following criteria:

**You are at current risk as a consequence of domestic abuse**

**You consent to the referral being made to our service**



### WHAT IS OUTREACH/IDVA SUPPORT

Our trained Outreach workers or Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs) provide domestic abuse support and advocacy to survivors of all genders living in the community. This support is focused on your needs and we will work with you to devise a personal safety and support plan based on a full assessment of risks.

Outreach support can provide general information about a range of areas linked to your safety and wellbeing. Whilst BWA may not provide these services directly, we will make sure you know your options.

### WHO CAN ACCESS OUTREACH/IDVA SUPPORT?

BWA offers Outreach support to anyone based on their current risk, regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, sexuality, socio-economic status, immigration status or funding. We can offer Outreach services to anyone who meets the following criteria:

**You are living in West Berkshire**

**You are at current risk as a consequence of domestic abuse**

**You consent to the referral being made to our service**

## WHAT SUPPORT CAN THE HELPLINE PROVIDE?

The BWA Helpline provides information and signposting to survivors, professionals, family and friends, or anyone seeking additional information about domestic abuse or our services.

The Helpline can be contacted on:

**0808 801 0882**  
or [helpdesk@bwaid.org.uk](mailto:helpdesk@bwaid.org.uk)

This number is free to call from UK mobiles and landlines and does not show up on itemised bills.

If you leave us a message, please let us know when it is safe to return your call. We may call you back from a private number and may not always leave messages. If you think you have missed a call from us, please call us on our Helpline: 0808 801 0882.

We offer translation services if English is not your first language.

## HOW CAN I BE REFERRED TO BWA?

Individuals who require help and support around domestic abuse can refer themselves directly for support via our Helpline.

When a survivor contacts our Helpline, one of the team will take their information and may also complete a risk assessment. They will be able to provide safety planning advice and direct the survivor to other services if they need them.

A professional such as a social worker, police officer, housing officer or your GP can also refer you. Professionals who would like to make a referral can find a copy of our referral form on our website:

[www.berkshirewomensaid.org.uk](http://www.berkshirewomensaid.org.uk)



## WHAT HAPPENS ONCE I HAVE BEEN REFERRED?

Once a referral is received, this will be passed to the relevant BWA team who will review the referral to ensure that the person being referred meets the criteria for each of our services. For refuge, this will mean that we assess whether someone is safe in the area, or if we have a space that will meet the survivor's needs.

BWA will maintain contact with the survivor and professional throughout the referral process to keep them updated on the progress.

## DO YOU HAVE TO SHARE MY INFORMATION

Information that you share with us will be confidential within BWA unless there are exceptional circumstances. We aim to get your consent to share information unless it is considered that doing so will increase someone's risk. Although we aim to get your consent to share your information, in exceptional circumstances we may have to override your consent for example, if we believe you or someone else may be at risk of significant harm.

against domestic abuse  
**bwa**

SUPPORT ● ADVOCACY ● REFUGE

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