

Forced Marriage Policy

1.0 Introduction and scope

1.1 This document outlines our policy when dealing with Forced Marriages. Our policy and associated guidance give clear directions on how we will provide a safe environment for victims of forced marriages and how we intend to support those who we would consider to be at risk.

1.2 The guidance is in an extension to our existing domestic abuse policy and procedure and should be considered in conjunction with those guiding principles.

1.3 The scope of this Policy covers:

Gentoo Group	X
Gentoo Homes	
Gentoo Developments Ltd	
Gentoo Genie	

It applies to:

General needs rented properties	X
Supported Housing	X
Sheltered Housing	X
Leasehold/Shared ownership	X
Rent to Buy properties	X
Market rented properties (domestic)	X
Temporary accommodation	X
Stock owned but not managed by the Group	
Communal Areas, including those relating to leasehold/shared ownership properties	
Commercial Property (offices, depots etc)	
Stock managed by Gentoo on behalf of a third party	
Garages and outbuildings	
Remote plant (district heating, electrical pumps etc)	
Curtilage	

2.0 Links to organisational goals

2.1 Our Vision and Values set the direction and culture of the Group. They ensure that the business is aligned around the desire to create sustainable homes and communities and to improve the lives of our customers. The Vision and Values ensure that all of our people understand Gentoo's ethos and are clear about what is expected of them and the contribution they can make.

Vision:

Great Homes - Strong Communities - Inspired People
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Values:

Do the right thing

Make a difference

Work together

Keep learning

Give all you've got

2.2 This Policy operates within our Vision and Values.

3.0 Regulation and legislation

3.1 In fulfilling its obligations under this Policy, the organisation will comply with all legislation and regulations as appropriate. The following Acts apply:

- Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007
- Anti-social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Housing Act 1988
- Housing Act 1996
- Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
- Family Law Act 1996
- Domestic Violence Crime and Victims Act 2004
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Matrimonial Causes Act 1973
- Children Act 1989

- Children Act 2004
- Adoption and Children Act 2002
- Data Protection Act 2004

3.2 Our Forced Marriages Policy will ensure that customers will be treated as individuals and with fairness and respect, reflecting our Equality and Diversity Strategy and Policy.

4.0 Our policy statement

4.1 This Policy outlines our approach to supporting victims of forced marriages, how we will carry out our work and how we intend to provide support and assistance to people at risk of or experiencing domestic abuse.

4.2 A forced marriage can have a significant impact on the victim. As with our Domestic Abuse, Safeguarding Children/Young People and Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy and Toolkits the initial response from staff is very important (See relevant Policy). It is also vital that key external agencies work together to support the victim.

5.0 Roles and responsibility

5.1 The Operations Manager (Community Safety and Safeguarding) will have overall responsibility for this policy.

6.0 Monitoring and review

6.1 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years unless business needs or legislative changes dictate that we review it before this time.

6.2 This policy may be subject to an audit in line with the internal audit plan.

6.3 This Policy is a grade 3 and changes will need the approval of the Executive Director (Operations).

6.4 The Local Service Offers can be found in Appendix 1.

7.0 Policy outcomes

7.1 Our policy aims to achieve the following outcomes:

- Ensure the welfare of all victims of forced marriages who come into contact with the Group, by providing clear guidance on roles and responsibilities to staff and partners when support victims and taking action against perpetrators.
- Create a safe environment where victims feel they can approach us, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Provide timely and effective guidance to respond to any cases of abuse that may arise, ensuring the safety and security of those involved.
- Work in partnership with statutory, voluntary and other organisations to maintain effective victim support, as well as assisting in meeting the needs of anyone experiencing, or likely to experience, honour based domestic abuse.
- Provide staff with clear and practical guidance to ensure we support and protect victims of abuse.

8.0 Records

8.1 All records regarding forced marriages are held on Streetwise.

9.0 Confidentiality

- 9.1 We will treat all information received in a private and confidential manner.
- 9.2 We will only disclose information to perpetrators, legal representatives, or other third parties once we have the consent of the complainant to do so.
- 9.3 We may however, have a legal obligation to pass information on, for example to the Police or Together for Children.

10.0 Definitions

10.1 For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions are used:

1. Adult- any persons aged 18 years or over
2. Child, children and young people- any persons aged 18 or under
3. Child in need- any child whose vulnerability is such that they are unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health or development will be significantly impaired without the provision of services., plus those who are disabled.
4. Domestic abuse- 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. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:
 - Psychological
 - Physical
 - Sexual
 - Financial

- Emotional

Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim

5. Honour- based violence- the terms 'honour crime' or 'honour-based violence' or 'izzat' embrace a variety of crimes of violence, including assault, imprisonment and murder where the person is being punished by their family or community. They are being punished for actually, or allegedly, undermining what the family or community believes to be the correct code of behaviour.

6. Learning disability- the term 'learning disability' refers to the following:

- Impaired intelligence: a significantly reduced ability to understand complex information or learn new skills, or
- Impaired social functioning: a reduced ability to cope independently, or
- Long lasting: a condition which started before adulthood (18 years of age) and has a lasting effect.

A learning disability is a permanent Impairment and not to be confused with a mental illness, although people with learning disabilities can also experience mental illness.

Appendix 1- Local Service Offers

Description	We will
Neighbourhood Safety - to help our neighbours feel safe and secure by preventing and minimising anti social behaviour (ASB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offer appropriate support and advice to victims and perpetrators of ASB and domestic abuse• Take relevant action specific to any reports of ASB or domestic abuse received• Provide you with a timely response to any reports of ASB or domestic abuse received