

# Gambling Harms and Domestic Abuse

## A focus on women and on their housing

### Gambling-related domestic abuse

A perpetrator's gambling contributes to or intensifies abuse.

Abuse may escalate following gambling losses and can continue after separation

### Domestic abuse-related gambling

A victim-survivor's gambling may be a way to cope with trauma or ongoing abuse.

Gambling may offer temporary escape or perceived financial independence but can lead to further harm.

## Impacts on women, children, families, and their housing

### Women

Exposure to coercive control and violence

Debt

Emotional harm

Financial insecurity

### Children

Exposure to abuse

Instability

Disrupted schooling

Emotional harm

### Families

Long-term financial strain

Emotional burden

Housing loss

### Housing

Arrears

Eviction

Poor quality temporary accommodation

Barriers to legal aid

## Why these harms often go unrecognised

Shame and stigma around gambling and domestic abuse

Limited professional enquiry about gambling harms

Fear of losing house or children

Fragmented support systems

## Recommendations

### 1. Secure, decent, affordable housing

Women cannot escape domestic abuse or rebuild stability without safe, long-term housing. Poor-quality temporary accommodation and long waits deepen harm.

### 2. Reduce stigma around gambling and domestic abuse

Shame and fear stop women disclosing. Stigma also makes professionals hesitant to ask. Normalising conversations is essential for early identification.

### 3. Strengthen multi-agency working

A coordinated public-health approach is needed across housing, domestic abuse services, gambling support, policing, and financial/legal systems.

### 4. Improve professional training and awareness

Frontline staff need practical skills to:

- ask about gambling and domestic abuse sensitively
- recognise financial and economic abuse
- respond without victim-blaming