

LIVWEST: Women's Refuge

LOCATION: Bath

DURATION: Present (Ongoing)



OVERVIEW

LiveWest appointed our team to carry out essential installation works at Dean Crescent, a specialist refuge providing supported accommodation for single homeless women aged 22+, including those fleeing domestic abuse, survivors with complex needs, and women arriving through asylum pathways.

Working in this environment required the highest levels of sensitivity, safeguarding awareness, and coordination. Our approach centred on protecting resident wellbeing, respecting the refuge's trauma-informed practices, and ensuring minimal disruption to the stability and safety the service provides.

KEY CHALLENGES

Safeguarding Women with High Support Needs

Residents at the refuge may be experiencing the after-effects of trauma, domestic abuse, homelessness, or displacement. Even small disruptions can impact emotional safety and wellbeing. This made a trauma-aware, respectful working approach essential throughout the project.

Coordinating Closely with Refuge Staff and Support Teams

Daily routines such as support sessions, wellbeing check-ins, and external appointments play a crucial role in residents' progression toward independence and transition to permanent accommodation. Aligning installation works with these schedules required close communication with the refuge's 24-hour support team.

ACTIONS TAKEN

Installation of Enhanced Safety Measures

We installed Jack Locks on every window throughout the building. These specialist locks supported the refuge's safeguarding protocols and strengthened overall security for residents.

Development of a Shared Pre-Installation Plan

We co-produced a detailed planning document with the refuge team to ensure:

- predictable, transparent scheduling
- minimal disruption to key support routines
- clear communication pathways for staff and contractors

This collaborative approach gave residents reassurance and contributed to a calm, controlled project environment.

Enhanced Toolbox Talks Focusing on Trauma-Aware Practice

Standard construction health and safety measures were adapted to meet the needs of a women's refuge setting. Toolbox talks included:

- Sharps awareness
- Trauma-informed working practices
- Sensitivity around personal boundaries and privacy
- Awareness of residents' emotional and environmental triggers

This ensured all operatives worked with heightened empathy and professionalism.

Increased On-Site Supervision

To maintain consistency and safety, we deployed:

- Two operatives at all times.
- An additional supervisor dedicated to overseeing this programme

This structure enabled quick responses to any developing needs or changes in the refuge environment.



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Mandatory Signed Room Safety Sweeps

Before entering any bedroom or resident area, refuge staff completed and signed off on a full safety sweep. This process ensured rooms were safe for our team, protected resident belongings and privacy, and aligned with the refuge's risk management procedures.

OUTCOMES

Through close partnership working with LiveWest's staff team, we completed the project with zero safety incidents, zero disruptions to resident support schedules, and no complaints.

Our approach helped maintain a stable and calm environment-critical for women rebuilding their lives after experiencing trauma. By respecting boundaries, prioritising communication, and working flexibly, we ensured our presence did not interfere with residents' sense of safety or their progress toward long-term housing.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Zero safeguarding incidents, supported by strong risk management and enhanced supervision
- High resident and staff satisfaction, with positive feedback on our respectful, unobtrusive delivery
- Strong partnership with LiveWest, demonstrating our ability to work sensitively in complex supported-housing environments

REFLECTION

- This project highlighted the importance of empathy, discretion, and trauma-aware practice when working in women's refuges. By integrating safeguarding into every stage-from planning to delivery, we ensured that the essential installation works were carried out without compromising residents' emotional or physical safety.
- Our team's professionalism and sensitivity transformed a potentially disruptive programme into a well-managed, calm, and respectful experience for everyone involved. In doing so, we reinforced the refuge's mission: providing a secure, stable environment where women can recover, rebuild, and move toward independent living. This structure enabled quick responses to any developing needs or changes in the refuge environment.