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Safeguarding Policy

July 2021

Important

Policies and procedures must be coordinated through the Business Development Team for compliance, auditing and control purposes. A Policy Registration Form must be completed before any revisions are made by contacting the Business Development Team at NH.Policy@networkhomes.org.uk

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Title: Safeguarding Policy

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Policy author	Director of Housing	
Policy owner	Director of Housing	
Accountable officer	Executive Director of Customer Services	
Date of next review	July 2023	
Consultation: internal	Heads of Neighbourhood Management	
Consultation: residents	Click here to enter text.	
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)	Date completed	25/03/2021
	Initial/ Full EIA	Initial Full EIA to be completed by Sept 2021

Version Control – Change Record

Date	Author	version	Reason for change
23/12/2016	Transformation Director	1.1	Amalgamation of the Adults Safeguarding and Child Protection policy into one Policy
Mary Larbie	Transformation Director	v.2.0 – 23/02/17	Changes occurred throughout document
July 2021	Service Quality Manager and Heads of Neighbourhood Management	Version 3	As a result of Internal Audit and three yearly review

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Appendices:

None

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1. Introduction

1.2 The Safeguarding policy is an overarching policy applied across Network Homes. It is important that all staff, managers, directors, Board members and involved customers are aware that it is everyone's 'responsibility' and that we all have responsibility to act on concerns of abuse and neglect.

This policy applies:

- to the protection of children, young people and adults at risk of abuse.
- across tenures.
- to staff, sub-contractors and agents working for Network Homes.

1.3 Network Homes recognises we have a responsibility to keep our customers safe from harm.

1.4 This policy outlines our approach to preventing and reducing the risk of harm to our Customers and children, who are experiencing, or are at risk from abuse or neglect.

1.5 Network Homes recognise and is committed to working in partnership with external agencies to ensure a multi-agency approach where necessary.

1.6 All Safeguarding case management will be overseen by local Safeguarding Panels.

1.7 This policy complies with the HCA Tenancy Involvement and Empowerment Standard.

1.8 Where we receive a report of potential radicalisation, this procedure is not to be used. Instead speak with Team Lead and report to Police by ringing 999 or 101.

1.9 Where we receive contact from a resident intimating they are considering suicide. Please contact the Police on 999. A Customer Hub case should also be raised.

2. Aims and Objectives

2.1 The aims & objectives of this policy are to:

- Outline Network Homes' approach to dealing with Safeguarding.
- Raise awareness about the abuse and / neglect of children, young people and adults at risk.
- Develop a culture that does not tolerate such abuse, and which encourages people to raise concerns of what they see, hear, are told or have a gut feeling.
- Outline how we will work with our service partners to develop partnership working with other agencies to support safeguarding.
- Ensure that staff are fully knowledgeable and trained on Network Homes procedures to respond promptly and proportionately to any safeguarding concern.
- The Safeguarding Champions will report, monitor and review safeguarding concerns.

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- 2.2 This policy applies to all Network Homes’ partners from whom we commission external services. We expect them to have appropriate safeguarding procedures in place.
- 2.3 The safeguarding policy extends to members of staff at Network Homes should there be concerns about the well-being of an employee, please contact HR..
- 2.4 If a Safeguarding concern relates to an allegation against a member of staff, it will be dealt with in line with the disciplinary procedure.

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1 Network Homes will apply the Department of Health’s six key principles which underpin safeguarding work:

Protection	Support and protection are key to safeguarding residents from harm, abuse and to protect those who are unable to make decisions about their own safety.
Prevention	Raising awareness and supporting people to protect themselves. It is preferable to take action before harm occurs. Organisations have processes in place to protect and minimise the risk of abuse.
Proportionality	The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
Partnership Working	Local solutions through services with their communities. Communities have a vital role to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
Empowerment	People are supported to take control of their own lives and their consent is needed for decisions and actions designed to protect them.
Accountability	To demonstrate accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

- 3.2 With all safeguarding suspicions or allegations including neglect and abuse, Network Homes will complete a Safeguarding Concerns Report (**see Apollo Form**). If significant risk is identified the concerns will be forwarded to the appropriate Local Authority for further

investigation (refer to 5.1 MASH). The Local Authority has a duty to receive the alert and decide whether a safeguarding enquiry is necessary or not.

4. Definitions

4.1 Safeguarding is protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse and neglect, while at the same time ensuring wellbeing is promoted having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This applies to adults, young people and children. A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate for children and young people, does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act 1989.

4.2 Abuse is the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.

Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to the person subjected to it. Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts, and it can be intentional or unintentional.

There are many types of abuse – the categories generally recognised in Adult Safeguarding and in the Safeguarding of Children & Young People are listed below. This list is not exhaustive.

- Psychological / emotional abuse
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial or material
- Modern slavery: 'trafficking in persons' and 'human trafficking' for the act of recruiting, harbouring, transporting, providing or obtaining a person for compelled labour or commercial sex acts through use of force, fraud or coercion.
- Domestic abuse: encompasses controlling, coercive, 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. Includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage.
- Discriminatory abuse
- Institutional or organisational abuse
- Exploitation / grooming: the act of using an adult / child for profit, labour, sexual gratification or some other personal or financial advantage.
- Prevent Duty - Radicalisation / extremism: the act or process of causing someone to adopt radical positions on political or social issues. The aim of early identification and early intervention is to divert people away from being drawn into terrorist activity.

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4.3 Neglect is a failure to provide necessary care, assistance, guidance or attention that causes, or is reasonably likely to cause, physical, mental or emotional harm. Examples of neglect are.

- Act of omission
- Self-neglect – neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health or surroundings, including behaviour such as hoarding.
- Failing to provide proper food, suitable clothing for the weather, supervision, a home that is clean and safe and medical care
- Failing to provide emotional support, love and affection.

5. Partnership Working

5.1 Network will work in closely with a number of partners and agencies responsible for Safeguarding those at risk. This will include but are not limited to:

- **MARAC- Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference** which aim to protect those affected by domestic violence
- **Local Safeguarding Children Boards-** which aim to protect children at risk
- **Multi- Agency Public Protection Arrangements-** The mechanism through which statutory agencies aim to manage risk posed by sexual and violent offenders, in a co-ordinated way in order to protect the public
- **Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR)** Safeguarding Adult Boards must arrange a (SAR) when an adult dies as a result of, or has experienced serious abuse or neglect, whether known or suspected and there is concern that partner agencies could have worked more effectively together. The aim of SAR is to identify learning and improvement action.
- **Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** – single point of contact for all professionals to report safeguarding concerns.
- **Serious Case Review (SCR)** – A SCR takes place after a child dies or is seriously injured and abuse or neglect is thought to be involved. It looks at lessons that can help prevent similar incidence from happening in the future.
- **Local Joint Action Groups-** Which are used to work in partnership with the police and other agencies to share information on and manage crime.

6. Monitoring and responsibilities

6.1 Staff that are required to be familiar with this policy include:

6.2 Heads of Neighbourhood Management

Both roles are responsible for the implementation and compliance of this policy and ensuring that staff training is provided. They will provide an annual report to the Director of Housing on the effectiveness of this policy. Both roles are Safeguarding Leads and they will also deputise for each other, in the case of absence.

6.3 Team Leads are responsible for the implementation and compliance of this policy. They are to monitor all cases and discuss cases prior to closure.

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6.4 Scheme Managers, Property and Neighbourhood Managers are responsible for completing referrals and make referring them to their local panels. They are responsible for investigating and monitoring cases, reviewing actions and reporting critical incidents or immediate concerns to the line Manager and making referrals to appropriate external services

6.5 The following are responsible for the implementation of this Policy:

- Director of Housing
- Head of Intermediate Rents and Agency Services
- Head of Income Management
- Head of Neighbourhood Services
- Head of Older Person Services
- Head of Income Management & Welfare Services
- Head of Customer Contact Centre
- Customer Contact Team Leaders
- All Housing Management Managers & Team Leaders
- Safeguarding Champions-the champions will amend our Intranet so colleagues can search on who their safeguarding champions are.

6.6 Network Homes will record all cases of safeguarding concerns following our procedures. Cases will be reviewed and monitored at monthly meetings. The meetings are used to close cases where Network have sign posted cases to external agencies or case where it is felt that Network are not required to carry out any further actions.

7. Training

7.1 All staff at Network Homes will receive basic, online safeguarding training because Network Homes recognises that Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

7.2 Frontline staff (e.g. Neighbourhood Officers/Property Managers/Scheme Managers) will receive specialist Safeguarding training.

7.3 Safe Guarding Champions will provide "tool-box talks" for contractors to ensure that they feel confident to raise any concerns they may have visiting Network Homes properties.

8. Related documents

8.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Network Homes policies

- Data Protection Policy
- ASB Policy and Procedure
- Equality and Diversity Policy

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- Grievance and Whistleblowing Policy
- Code of Conduct for Employees
- Disciplinary and Dismissal Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Allocations and Lettings Policy

This is not an exhaustive list, other relevant policies and procedures will also apply, depending on the relevant occupancy or tenure of individuals concerned

9. Legislation and regulation

The legislation listed below is not intended to cover all legislation applicable to this policy. To meet the required HOMES Governance & Financial Viability outcome on adherence to all relevant law, Network will take reasonable measures to ensure compliance with any and all applicable legislation by reviewing policies and procedures and amending them as appropriate. The legislation listed within this policy was considered at the time of the development of this policy, but subsequent primary and secondary legislation, case law and regulatory or other requirements will be considered and the policy reviewed and adopted in accordance with the requirements set out therein, even should such subsequent legislation not be explicitly listed within this policy. Any queries relating to the applicable legislation should be directed to the policy author.

- Care Act 2014
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Sexual Offences Act 1985
- Human Rights Act (1998)
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Data Protection Act (1998 as amended) *
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Equality Act 2010
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Act 2006
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty)
- Housing Act 1985 &1996

10 Complaints

Any tenant, or other stakeholder who is dissatisfied with how we have managed their safeguarding concern or case is able to submit a complaint using our Complaints process. Once our Complaints policy is complete and if they remain dissatisfied then they can contact the Housing Ombudsman.

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11. Performance Monitoring

Each individual case is reviewed at our Safeguarding and Intervention Panels. More high level performance information regarding the : number of cases, the case type and the length of time the case was open are submitted to the Director of Housing on a quarterly basis. An Annual performance report is submitted to our Customer Services Committee and to our Local Panels'

12. Equality and diversity

10.1 We will apply this policy consistently and fairly and will not discriminate against anyone based on any relevant characteristics, including those set out in the Equality Act 2010.

13. Review

13.1 This Policy will be reviewed on every 2 years from July 2021, or sooner if there is a specific legislative, regulatory or service requirement or change in guidance, law or practice.

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