

- ## Safeguarding Policy

safeguarding process and these directly inform what happens.”

- Prevention – It is better to act before harm occurs: “I receive clear and simple information about what abuse is, how to recognise the signs and what I can do to seek help.”
- Proportionality – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented: “I am sure that the professionals will work in my interest, as I see them, and they will only get involved as much as needed.”
- Protection – Support and representation for those in greatest need: “I get help and support to report abuse and neglect. I get help so that I am able to take part in the safeguarding process to the extent to which I want.”
- Partnership – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse: “I know that staff treat any personal and sensitive information in confidence, only sharing what is helpful and necessary. I am confident that professionals will work together and with me to get the best result for me.”
- Accountability – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding: “I understand the role of everyone involved in my life and so do they.”

5. Safeguarding adults

Safeguarding adults involves a range of measures to protect an individual’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. The 2011 London safeguarding adult’s procedures use the term ‘adult at risk’ and state that such an adult may be a person who:

- Has impaired mental capacity
- Has a physical disability
- Is frail due to age or infirmity
- Has a learning disability
- Misuses alcohol or other substances
- Has mental health needs including dementia or a personality disorder
- Is a carer subject to abuse
- Otherwise in need of care or support.

Where we are delivering services to someone who may lack capacity in an area of decision making we will work to the 5 main principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005:

1. Every individual has the right to make their own decisions unless it can be shown they are incapable of doing so.
2. Individuals should be supported to make their own decisions where possible.
3. A person has the right to make decisions even if others regard the decisions made as being inappropriate. A decision deemed as inappropriate does not in itself mean the client should be deemed incapable.
4. A person making decisions on the behalf of someone lacking capacity must do so in their best interests.
5. Decisions made by a third party on behalf of someone lacking capacity should always be the option which is least restrictive on their basic rights and freedoms.

Soho Housing staff are likely to be involved in Safeguarding Adults in various ways:

- We may have concerns about a Vulnerable Adults safety or wellbeing which we need to report to Social Services and/or the Police. This may for example include observations during a property visit, or information disclosed to us in connection with an ASB case.
- Social Services and/or a Medical Professional may ask us to provide them with information about an adult at risk in relation to an assessment, investigation, or a case review.
- We may be asked to provide a specific service to an individual, for example housing support, an adaptation or enhanced security measure.

The fact that a person may be vulnerable/an Adult at risk does not preclude us from taking necessary action which may include enforcement action. The individual may be engaging in serious ASB which puts others at risk; or may be refusing us access for necessary safety checks at the property. Where we identify a Safeguarding concern we may pause action, consider alternative action, or continue with the action while seeking support for the individual.

We may adjust how we provide services to adults at risk in line with recommendations from Adult Social Care providers. For example, not visiting their property alone; or liaising through an agreed contact/support provider.

6. Safeguarding children

The Children's Act 1989 defines a child as 'anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday, even if they are living independently'.

Child Protection refers specifically to children at risk of harm and aims to keep children safe where there is serious risk of harm. This risk may arise from a single event or a series of concerns over time.

Soho Housing staff are likely to be involved in Safeguarding children in 3 main ways:

1. We may have concerns about a child's safety and wellbeing and report these to Social Services and/or the Police.
2. Social Services may ask us to provide them with information about a child in relation to an assessment, investigation or review.
3. We may be asked to provide a specific service or additional measure to a family as part of an agreed plan, such as a Sanctuary scheme where there has been domestic violence.

Our staff and Contractors will not enter a property to undertake work on behalf of Soho Housing where someone under the age of 18 is in the house without an accompanying adult. It will be recorded on our systems that we did not have access due to no adult being at home.

Where a family with children under the age of 18 residing at one of our properties are at risk of eviction, we will flag this to the relevant local authority, to enable adequate support to be put in place.

4. Roles and responsibilities

All staff will be trained to recognize the signs of abuse and behaviours which should give cause for concern for children and adults at risk.

We will respond to concerns in accordance with this policy and the accompanying procedures.

5. Monitoring and evaluation

How the policy will be monitored and reported e.g. reported to Board or sub committee.
Measure against KPI's.

6. Equality and diversity impact

SHA will ensure that this policy is applied fairly and consistently. We will not directly or indirectly discriminate against any person or group of people in line with our Diversity, Inclusion Equality Policy. We will act sensitively towards the diverse needs of individuals and communities and will take positive action or make reasonable adjustments where appropriate.

Related Documents/policies

Internal

Safeguarding procedure
Domestic Abuse Policy and procedure
Code of Conduct

Legislation

The following legislation is relevant to this policy and the procedures that implement it:

- The Care Act 2014
- The Housing Act 1985, 1988, 2004
- Disclosure and Barring Service 2013
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005
- The Children's Act 1989 and 2004
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Equality and Diversity Act 2010
- Localism Act 2011
- The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Family Law Act 1996
- The Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Mental Capacity Act

Policy Review Date

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Version	Type of change	Date	Revisions from previous issue	Approved By
1.1	Minor update	October 22	Update to strengthen staff role and responsibilities	Executive