

Safeguarding Policy

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Related documents:

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To establish a policy for safeguarding children and adults at risk, which is relevant and delivers legislative and regulatory compliance in relation to safeguarding.
- 1.2 This policy, together with its appendices, states Cromwood Housing Group's (CHG) position on safeguarding and the approach to be taken by staff, contractors, volunteers and third parties who, while carrying out their duties, have concerns, allegations or actual evidence concerning the abuse or neglect of children or adults at risk.

2 Policy Statement

- 2.1 CHG will establish clear lines of responsibility and accountability for the detection, recording and reporting of safeguarding concerns. This includes clear robust processes and timescales for sharing information with lead agencies and local safeguarding boards. Some aspects of safeguarding apply only to adults, others only to children and young people and some apply to both. We have set out this policy accordingly.

3 Safeguarding adults

- 3.1 CHG is committed to improving outcomes for those experiencing abuse or neglect. We will observe the six key principles that underpin all adult safeguarding work as our framework for safeguarding adults as required by the Care Act 2014 statutory guidance.

4 Mental Capacity

- 4.1 The Mental Capacity Act applies to everybody who has dealings with people who may lack capacity, and particularly if they have a professional relationship with the person. CHG will comply with the requirements set out in the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and will consider the Act's five key principles during interactions with customers.
- 4.2 We will take the opportunity to confirm capacity when appropriate (eg. at tenancy sign up, review and termination; during arrears discussions, anti-social behaviour incidents and complaints).
- 4.3 We will carry out an assessment when a person's capacity is in doubt, either because their behaviour causes concern about lack of capacity or because they have been diagnosed with an impairment or disturbance that affects the way their mind or brain works. Any mental capacity assessment undertaken should be securely stored (in line with the safeguarding procedure).

5 Safeguarding children

- 5.1 Due to the nature of CHs work, it is possible that young people may be customers in their own right or be the children of customers or visitors to CHG accommodation.
- 5.2 We are committed to safeguard children and young people who use or are connected to our service and to protect them from abuse. In doing so, we will act in accordance with the two key principles of the Children Acts by “making safeguarding everyone’s responsibility” and adopting a “child-centred approach”. We will always act in the best interests of the child when there is a safeguarding concern, which may mean contradicting their wishes.

6 Domestic Abuse

- 6.1 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 places obligations on the police and local authorities to respond to and support victims of domestic abuse and their children. CHG will cooperate with the authorities and assist people subject to domestic abuse.

7 Modern Slavery

- 7.1 CHG is fundamentally opposed to slavery and human trafficking and we will do what we can to ensure it is not taking place in our business or supply chains. We will require new contractors, suppliers and consultants to understand their responsibilities under the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

8 Reporting to statutory agencies

- 8.1 We will record and refer concerns, suspicions and allegations of abuse, harm or neglect to the lead statutory agency responsible for carrying out safeguarding assessments and enquiries. In most cases, this will be the Police or local authority. We will record all decisions made not to refer a concern, and the reason why.
- 8.2 We will ensure that all safeguarding referrals that staff or customers have made are recorded appropriately, and we will also record any incidents where we refer onto another agency.

9 Liaising with other agencies

- 9.1 We will engage with, and fully contribute to, multi-agency working in response to safeguarding concerns. This includes responding to requests for information from the local authority, Safeguarding Adult Boards, Safeguarding Children Boards, Child Protection Conferences and Serious Case Reviews, Domestic Homicide Reviews wherever appropriate.
- 9.2 “Complex safeguarding” is used to describe criminal activity (often organised) or behaviour associated with criminality, involving vulnerable children where there is exploitation and/or a clear or implied safeguarding concern. We will ensure that a multi- approach is taken when managing concerns of this nature.

10 Continuous improvement

- 10.1 We are committed to learning from safeguarding reviews to improve our safeguarding practices. We will complete section 11 reviews and adult assurance statements as required by local authorities to demonstrate the extent to which CHG we meet safeguarding requirements and standards.

11 Managing Allegations against Professionals

- 11.1 Abusive behaviour between a member of CHG staff and a child, young person and/or adult at risk will always be managed under the investigations procedure. Staff believed to have made a malicious allegation will be dealt with in line with the CHG Disciplinary Procedure.

12 Recruitment

- 12.1 CHG follows safer recruitment practices and ensures all procedures take account of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. All appropriate staff will be subject to the relevant Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and updates in line with best practice. All relevant job roles will include safeguarding within the role profile.

13 Resolving Professional Disagreements/Escalation

- 13.1 Challenge is essential in effective safeguarding practice. When escalating a safeguarding concern to the Local Authority, CHG staff should utilise the escalation procedures provided by that service.

14 Risk Management

- 14.1 Safeguarding is a key responsibility for housing, care and support providers. CHG will seek to mitigate business risk through this policy in order to ensure that it is compliant with the standards for safeguarding children set within The Children's Act 1989 & 2004 and standards for safeguarding adults set within The Care Act 2014.
- 14.2 The risk here is not just risk to the business – the first and most crucial risk is to customers. Where it is practicably possible CHG will always try and safeguard children and adults at risk who live in our properties or receive our services.

15 Performance Management of this Policy

16 Responsibilities

- 16.1 The Chief Operating Officer is responsible for resourcing and monitoring the requirements of this policy.

17 Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation

- 17.1 The board will receive a report at least annually which will include details of mandatory safeguarding training, reported safeguarding incidents, action taken and lessons for improving future services.
- 17.2 This policy will be subject to review no later than three years from the date of approval, or sooner if a substantial change in circumstances requires.