



The Langstane Group

Safeguarding Policy

Senior management team approval	01 June 2018
Board / Committee	Board of Management
Approval date	25 June 2018
Implementation date	25 June 2018
Review date	25 June 2021
Version	V1

Policy Version	Date of Approval	Changes made to Policy
Version 1	25 June 2018	New policy

1. Introduction

Langstane Housing Association staff have a key safeguarding role to play, in conjunction with other agencies including health services and the police, in keeping people safe. In particular visiting staff are well placed to recognise vulnerable people who have care or support needs and can facilitate working in partnership with other agencies to share information where appropriate and legal to do so and ensure that the correct level of help is provided where necessary.

In identifying vulnerable people with care or support needs a risk may also be identified. A risk is the possibility that an event may occur with harmful outcomes for a particular person or others with whom they come into contact. Additionally there is a need to ensure that the Association's staff are safeguarded as well as the voluntary Board of Management and those agencies who provide services on behalf of the Association.

A zero tolerance approach towards abusive behaviour, violence and aggression is expected. No member of staff should be subjected to violent, threatening and abusive behaviour.

Any identified risk will be assessed and mitigated against, as far as reasonably possible which ensures that customers enjoy the same rights as others in society and are not discriminated against in any way whilst also ensuring that staff who deliver services are protected as they carry out their duties.

This policy links to the Business Plan in that it assists in meeting the Association's mission and values where we invest and value our people and our customers to ensure their safety and provide support where necessary.

2. Policy statement / aim of the policy

This policy states what safeguarding means in the context of providing support and assistance to tenants and other customers who may be vulnerable and at risk. This includes identifying and reporting abuse or neglect.

The policy also details the steps staff, the Board of Management and those who work on our behalf will take to safeguard themselves and others through their day to day interaction with the people they come in contact with.

3. Objectives

The purpose of this policy is:

- To safeguard staff, the Board of Management, tenants and members of their household (including children), and other customers, against risk
- To raise awareness and ensure that frontline staff receive training, appropriate to their role on how to identify abuse or neglect, assess risk and

- report appropriately
- To work in partnership with other agencies to resolve issues where a risk is identified
- To ensure that all tenants and other customers are treated equally
- To ensure links are established between public protection forums such as multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs), multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPAs) and community safety partnerships

4. Links to other policies / strategies

This policy links to a number of policies and strategies including but not limited to:

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Equality and Diversity Strategy
- Harassment Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Tenancy Sustainment Strategy
- Privacy Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Staff Handbook
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Social Media Policy

5. Policy

5.1. Safeguarding

Safeguarding is protecting vulnerable adults from neglect or abuse however the policy also addresses where abuse or neglect of children is suspected.

Abuse may be physical, verbal, psychological or emotional and consists of single or repeated acts. It may be an act of neglect or an omission to act. In addition abuse may occur when a person is persuaded or coerced to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which they had not consented or cannot consent. Abuse may be the result of a deliberate or unintentional act or result from lack of knowledge.

5.2. Risk

A risk is the possibility that an event may occur with harmful outcomes for a particular person or others with whom they come into contact. The identification, assessment and management of risk will promote the safety, independence and social inclusion of tenants, household members and other customers.

A risk could arise from:

- Risks associated with impairment or disability
- Age
- Threat of suicide
- Health conditions, including mental ill health
- The use of medication
- Misuse of drugs and alcohol
- Behaviours resulting in injury, neglect, abuse and exploitation by the tenant and/or members of their household
- Aggression and violence
- Extreme beliefs or views

Risk can be minimised by the support of family members or other professionals. While protecting against risk or harm there must always be a balance between safeguarding someone from harm whilst enabling them to lead an independent life where they effectively manage appropriate risk themselves. If a risk is identified by any member of staff this requires to be reported and a referral made as noted in 5.3 below.

5.3. Safeguarding Tenants, Household Members and Others

In the course of their duties, staff may become aware or suspect situations where a tenant, household member or other customer is abused or neglected, what the risk attached to this is and that protection may be needed. In these situations the Association will ensure that such incidents are not ignored and that staff will take appropriate action where it is suspected that abuse of a vulnerable person is occurring no matter who the perpetrator or the victim is.

If a staff member suspects a colleague, contractor or Board Member of being abusive then this will be discussed, in the first instance, with a line manager. If appropriate and in line with the Whistleblowing Policy this can be raised with the Chief Executive or the Chairperson if necessary.

Where abuse or neglect of children is suspected this will be reported to Police Scotland / Social Work immediately by the person who identified the risk. The staff member may seek clarification from a senior officer if they are in any doubt whether or not to report the incident. Clarification will be sought as a matter of urgency.

Any incident or alleged incident of abuse or neglect will be reported by completing an Incident Recording Form and will be passed to the Team Leader (Social Justice) or the Housing Services Manager to ensure a consistent reporting mechanism.

The Team Leader (Social Justice) will, without delay, assess whether or not the criteria for the formal definition of an Adult at Risk of Harm is met, that is, someone over 16 years of age and who:

- 1) Is unable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights or other interests AND
- 2) Is at risk of Harm AND
- 3) Affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity which defines that person as more at risk of being harmed than adults who are not so affected.

If the criteria is met or considered to have been met a formal Adult Protection Reporting Form will be completed online and e mailed securely to:

Local authority	Email	Tel Number
Aberdeen City	Adultprotectionunit@aberdeencity.gov.uk	0800 731 5520
Aberdeenshire	adultprotectionnetwork@aberdeenshire.gov.uk	01467 533 100
Moray	accesscareteam@moray.gov.uk	01343 563 999

The Team Leader (Social Justice) will also continue to monitor and review the referral where possible.

Where the definition is not met the Team Leader (Social Justice) will assess the level of support and assign an Officer to provide low level housing support or refer the case as appropriate under the Social Justice Team procedures.

Staff will also ensure that they are aware and follow the procedures for dealing with tenants who are serious offenders (including the Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). These procedures safeguard the privacy of the customer whilst also ensuring that adequate steps are taken so that staff are not placed at any unnecessary risk of harm.

Where the abuse or neglect of children is suspected this must be reported to Police Scotland / Social Work immediately and without delay. This duty to share information over-rides any Data Protection implications or the need to speak to an appropriate Manager first. The welfare of the child or young person is the most important consideration.

On returning to the office a staff member will discuss the situation with the Team Leader (Social Justice) or the Housing Services Manager and make them aware of the report. Police Scotland and Child Protection Social Workers have the statutory duty to co-ordinate any investigation or inquiry into actual or

suspected harm or abuse, however all visiting staff have a role to play in protecting children and will remain vigilant at all times.

5.4. Safeguarding Staff

In order to protect and safeguard staff the following actions are compulsory:

- Staff will complete electronic diaries
- Staff will use their Solo Protect Devices in line with Association Guidance
- Where staff have been issued with a mobile phone they will keep their mobile phones charged
- Where a risk is suspected or identified the information will be acted upon, discussed with the staff member's line manager, recorded appropriately and electronic markers where appropriate will be noted on the housing management system in order to notify others
- An Incident Recording Form will be completed and passed to the Team Leader in the Social Justice Team or the Housing Services Manager unless the matter is an emergency. Then the Officer will act immediately by contacting Police Scotland or Social Work and complete the Incident Recording Form on return to the Office
- Staff will complete their personal development form annually where any gap in skills will be identified. Training to enhance their knowledge or understanding will be considered in relation to their job role.
- Staff will ensure that they are familiar with and adhere to the Association's policies and procedures in relation to their role
- Staff will check the housing management system for any warning markers before carrying out home visits.
- Officers will withdraw from any home visit where they are concerned for their personal safety or believe the customer is under the influence of alcohol or other substances
- Where the Officer feels uncomfortable with a tenant, customer or other household member, this will be raised with their line manager and assessed for appropriate action
- Staff will consider the safeguarding policy in relation to the office environment as noted in paragraph 5.2

5.5. Legislation

The legislation noted below ensures the rights of individuals to be treated fairly and equally are upheld and are protected against unlawful discrimination. Legislation also safeguards a persons' right to confidentiality and ensures their protection particularly providing safeguards to certain groups such as people with learning or physical disabilities, older people, those with mental health issues and those who rely on others for care and /or support.

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005
- Mental Health (Scotland) Act 2015
- Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007
- Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000
- General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/79
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

5.6. Confidentiality and Sharing Information

Confidentiality is a right, but not an absolute right, and may be breached in exceptional circumstances where there is a risk of harm to the tenant, household member or other Association customer, where a threat or risk to the public is evident or where the benefits of disclosure outweigh any adverse effects of disclosure. This means that information can be shared with for example, Police Scotland or the Local Authorities to enable the required inquiries and investigations to be undertaken. The amount of information shared will be proportionate to addressing the concern.

5.7. Standards and Codes

The Association has no service registered with the Care Inspectorate however staff will have a general awareness of the following rights under the National Care Standards for Housing Support Services in that tenants, household members and other customers have a right to:

- Feel safe and secure in all aspects of life, including health and wellbeing
- Enjoy safety but not be over-protected
- Be free from exploitation and abuse
- The opportunity to make the most of their life

6. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed every three years to ensure that it meets current legislative requirements.

Right to complain

In the event you are not satisfied with the service you have received, please contact the Association for a copy of the Complaints Policy. This can also be viewed on Langstane Housing Association's website – www.langstane-ha.co.uk.

Equality and diversity

The Langstane Group / Langstane Housing Association is committed to promoting equality and diversity across all areas of work. Discrimination or harassment of any kind is not tolerated.

If you would like this document sent to you in large print, please contact Support Services on 01224 423000.