

Title:	Safeguarding Policy
Issue Date:	April 2024
Effective Date:	April 2024
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Post of Document Owner:	Tenancy Sustainment and Safeguarding Manager
Date Approved by SMT:	July 2024
Date Approved by HASC:	24 th April 2024
Version number	3
Date of Next Review	April 2027

1. Purpose of this Policy

1.1. The purpose of this policy details how Women’s Pioneer Housing (WPH) will seek to safeguard adults and children at risk.

2. Our commitment

- 2.1. Women’s Pioneer is committed to ensuring that concerns about safeguarding residents are reported to designate officers and acted on effectively.
- 2.2. Concerns about the actions of a colleague must be raised with the relevant line manager or a designated safeguarding lead.
- 2.3. We will take preventative action where possible. This includes, but is not limited to identifying abuse, acting on our own concerns and reports from others, and liaising with the relevant agencies.
- 2.4. All employees have a duty to be alert to any signs of abuse or potential abuse and to act, immediately, by escalating their concern to one of the designated safeguarding leads. Safeguarding is everyone’s business.
- 2.5. We expect external partners and contractors to have appropriate safeguarding procedures of their own in place.

3. Legal framework

3.1. As a registered provider of social housing, we are required under the terms of the Care Act to co-operate with local authorities in matters regarding safeguarding. Legislation and best practice include:

- The Care Act, 2014 (Designed to place the safeguarding of adults at risk on a statutory footing for the first time, with local authorities given clearly defined responsibilities).
- Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015 (Department of Education statutory guidance).
- Children Act, 2004 and Every Child Matters, 2003 (Issued following the Victoria Climbié case to ensure that local government functions regarding children's welfare are unified under Directors of Children's Services and that there is co-operation between multiple official entities to improve the overall well-being of children).
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners, 2015 (Department of Education guidance).
- Mandatory reporting duty- subject to consultation for those working volunteering/working with children- strengthening of Sarahs Law
- Sexual Offences act- 2003
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Safeguarding vulnerable groups act 2006
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding
- Disclosing of Barring Service 2013
- Making safeguarding Personal Guide 201

4. Designated Safeguarding Lead

4.1. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for WPH is the Housing Inclusion Manager.

5. Safeguarding Duties

- 5.1. As defined in the Care Act 2014, safeguarding duties will apply to an adult (someone over the age of 18) who:
- Has needs for care and support (whether or not the Local Authority is meeting any of those needs).
 - Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect.
 - Because of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk, or experience, of abuse or neglect.
- 5.2. We will apply the Department of Health's six key safeguarding principles when working with adults and children at risk of abuse:
- Empowerment;
 - Protection;
 - Prevention;
 - Proportionality;
 - Partnership;
 - Accountability.
- 5.3. A child is a person under 18. All children are considered to be in need of protection. This policy does include our obligation to safeguard those children who are few with our predominantly single women housing stock.
- 5.4. The respective Local Authority from our list of partners has the co-ordinating role and legal responsibility to work with WPH once a case is referred or highlighted to them.
- 5.5. WPH staff, its partners and contractors are a vital component of local multi-agency safeguarding partnerships. WPH should promote partnership working with Social care staff. WPH will work with each Local Authority to get a clear understanding of the parameters of adult and children safeguarding for effective working between sectors.
- 5.6. WPH staff have a key safeguarding role to play, alongside their colleagues in social care, health, the police and any other relevant agency in keeping people safe. They are well placed by access to its homes to identify people with care and support needs, at risk of abuse, able to share information and work in partnership to coordinate responses and resolve cases.

6. Safeguarding in Housing

- 6.1. There are often complex networks that can cause difficulties in identifying and reporting safeguarding concerns.
- 6.2. Staff, partners and contractors are empowered to be professionally curious when serving our residents in their homes and in the office. Safeguarding must be a priority.

- 6.3. The local authority may be reluctant to get involved where there are concerns about an individual who is not eligible for social care support. If that should be the case, staff must seek the appropriate agency to address any safeguarding concerns including reports to the police.
- 6.4. WPH staff have local knowledge of anti-social behaviour, which may be a trigger to an individual/s developing care and support needs due to age, disability or illness and are not known to Social Care.
- 6.5. Information sharing is essential. WPH staff will be advised via procedures when it is appropriate to share information.

7. Vulnerable Residents

7.1. People with care and support needs are not all vulnerable to abuse. WPH maintain a list of vulnerable tenants. A person with care and support needs may:

- Be elderly, with poor health, a physical disability or cognitive impairment
- Have learning disabilities
- Have a physical disability and/or a sensory impairment
- Have mental health needs including dementia or a personality disorder
- Have a long-term illness/condition
- Be dependent on substances or alcohol to an extent that it has a serious impact on their ability to cope with day-to-day living.
- Children not allowed to attend school
- Children who are neglected
- Children not engaged to what is happening in the home such as a visitor

7.2. People may be at greater risk because they are:

- Socially isolated which may provide an opportunity for exploitation
- Unsure of who to trust
- Dependent on others to manage their finances or to withdraw or collect money for them
- Unable to escape abuse or they tolerate it due to their reliance on the abuser, adapted accommodation or the lack of suitable alternative accommodation and care provision.
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8. Sheltered Scheme Housing

- 8.1. WPH residents who live in our sheltered housing may be particularly vulnerable to abuse. Although our schemes are independent living dwellings, our daily on site Scheme Managers and other WPH staff are obligated to prevent abuse by being vigilant and respond appropriately and proportionately when it occurs or is suspected.