

DERBY HOMES SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Report of the Director of Housing and Customer Service

1. SUMMARY

Derby Homes Safeguarding Policy, Appendix 1, confirms our commitment to supporting people who live in our properties, particularly the most vulnerable. Having this policy in place also protects staff and enables them to know exactly what to do if they suspect abuse.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the City Board approves the policy.

3. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Derby City Council has a responsibility to safeguard children and vulnerable adults and works in partnership with other organisations and voluntary bodies to achieve this. Children and Young Peoples Department is responsible for the welfare of children whilst Adult Social Care takes responsibility for vulnerable adults.
- 3.2 Each department have their own policies, procedures and referral routes. Whilst Derby Homes adheres to these, our Safeguarding Policy is an overarching policy which takes account of children and vulnerable adults.
- 3.3 The policy outlines the way Derby Homes incorporates safeguarding into our services, explains the role of our Safeguarding Champions and takes account of our recruitment processes.

4. CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS

We will consult with all specialist interest groups and Housing Focus Group.

5. FINANCIAL AND BUSINESS PLAN IMPLICATIONS

Our commitment to safeguarding is incorporated into our plans.

6. LEGAL AND CONFIDENTIALITY IMPLICATIONS

Information sharing protocols are in place. Reporting of issues is fed through a secure safeguarding email account.

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Equality Impact Assessment is attached to the report, Appendix 2.

8. POLICY REVIEW IMPLICATIONS

This is a key policy of Derby Homes and will be included in the Key Policy Review Schedule. In accordance with minute 10/51 this policy will be reviewed no later than 3 years from the date of this meeting.

The areas listed below have no implications directly arising from this report:

- Personnel
- Environmental
- Health & Safety
- Risk

If Board members or others would like to discuss this report ahead of the meeting please contact the author, or Phil Davies, Chief Executive, phil.davies@derbyhomes.org – Phone: 01332 888528

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Background Information: None.

Supporting Information: None.

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1.0 Introduction

Children and vulnerable adults have a right to live in their homes free from abuse. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults, particularly in protecting them from harm, depends upon effective joint working between agencies and practitioners, who have differing roles and expertise.

Derby Homes staff have many opportunities to identify potential cases of neglect and abuse whilst undertaking their day to day duties. We will ensure that staff are aware of what constitutes abuse or neglect and are sufficiently trained to report anything they see that makes them uncomfortable or suspicious.

We recognise that some adults and children are more at risk of abuse and neglect than the wider population and are committed to responding to any allegations of abuse.

The emphasis in recent years has widened from merely protecting vulnerable people from abuse to promoting the welfare of adults and children. The key message therefore is not just to protect but to safeguard. This ethos is reflected in many of Derby Homes' policies and procedures and in the way we deliver our services.

2.0 Derby Homes commitment

We will:

- Clearly identify priorities for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults
- Share information when appropriate with key partners to keep children and vulnerable adults safe
- Have a strong commitment from Derby Homes Senior Management Team on the importance of safeguarding
- Have a clear line of accountability within the organisation
- Complete appropriate checks through recruitment processes for staff and volunteers
- Ensure that staff have appropriate training
- Have arrangements in place to work effectively with other organisations
- Openly seek the views of children and vulnerable adults, appropriate to their level of understanding and develop our services accordingly
- Attend appropriate meetings including: Safeguarding Board meetings, case conferences, Multi Agency Public Protection (MAPPA), Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), Family Intervention Board Meetings
- Be mindful of financial vulnerability in our service delivery

3.0 Definition of abuse

Abuse is the violation of an individual's human rights. It may be single or repeated acts. It can be physical, sexual or emotional; it also includes acts of neglect or an omission to act. Vulnerable adults may also suffer additional types of abuse such as financial manipulation or being discriminated against.

4.0 Safeguarding – Policy background

Under the safeguarding agenda, protection of vulnerable people is split into two groups:

- Children - not yet reached 18th birthday
- Vulnerable Adults

4.1 Children

Statutory definitions of abuse and neglect

Abuse and neglect are forms of the maltreatment of a child. Someone may abuse a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. This may involve physical, sexual or emotional abuse. Neglect involves a failure to meet a child's basic physical and psychological needs which is likely to result in the impairment of a child's health or development.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is the responsibility of the local authority, working in partnership with other public organisations, the voluntary sector and the wider community. The publication of 'Every Child Matters' in 2003 followed by the Children Act 2004 set out 'being safe' as one of the five important outcomes for children and young people. A provision of the 2004 Act also placed a 'duty on all agencies to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children'.

Derby Homes acknowledges its role in the shared responsibility to protect children from harm and promote their welfare. Through training, staff will recognise families where children and young people are at most risk:

- Living in poverty
- Where there is domestic violence
- Where a parent has a mental illness
- Where a parent is misusing drugs or alcohol
- Where a parent has a learning disability
- Subjected to racism and other forms of social isolation
- Living in areas with lots of crime, poor housing and high unemployment.

Derby Homes is a signatory to Derby City and Derbyshire's Safeguarding Children and Young Peoples Strategy.

4.2 Vulnerable Adults

A vulnerable adult is defined as a person over 18 years of age who:

- Requires assistance because of mental ill health, physical or learning disability, illness or age related frailty
- May be unable to care or protect him or herself from significant harm or exploitation.

Definitions of Abuse and Neglect

There are several types of abuse of older or vulnerable people including:

- Physical
- Psychological and emotional – includes abuse that is racist or sexist in nature
- Sexual
- Financial
- Neglect – deprivation of food, heat, clothing comfort, medication or services.

5.0 Training

Derby Homes has appointed eight Safeguarding Champions who are working throughout the organisation to ensure that staff have sufficient knowledge to act on any situations which make them uncomfortable.

The Champions will ensure that all staff are trained on Safeguarding from general awareness to more serious issues depending on their level of contact with children and young people, vulnerable adults or carers.

Training will include:

- Understanding Derby Homes' policies and procedures
- Understanding the role of Safeguarding Champions
- Recognising signs of abuse or neglect
- Recognising when a child may require protection and what to do
- Reporting routes.

6.0 Services that Support children, families and vulnerable adults.

Derby Homes offers many levels of support to children, families and vulnerable adults.

6.1 Family Intervention Project

The team provides intensive support to families who are under threat of eviction because of anti-social behaviour. The families are generally well known to other organisations and agencies. The team work alongside families to meet the 'Every Child Matters' outcomes.

6.2 Tenancy Sustainment

We offer this service to all new tenants to help them successfully sustain their tenancy beyond the introductory period.

6.3 Supported Living

Supported Living comprises of two services:

- Tenancy Support
- Supported Living for older people.

These services assist the Council to deliver the aims set out in their Supporting People Strategy.

6.4 Tenancy Support

Helps vulnerable people to maintain their homes and become more independent. Tenancy Support is offered to people who:

- Have been re-housed after periods of homelessness
- Are survivors of domestic abuse
- Are ex offenders, or at risk of offending
- Are young people
- Are living with HIV.

6.5 Mental Health and Housing

We have a Senior Support Officer for Mental Health who gives specific advice on the management of complex cases. The officer will liaise with doctors or other agencies when necessary.

6.6 Providing Housing and Support for other Groups

Derby Homes works with the Council, the Health Service and other agencies to provide housing, management or support to vulnerable individuals. This includes:

- Housing people with learning disabilities from residential care settings
- Working with Rethink to house people with mental health issues
- Working with Nacro
- Providing temporary accommodation for homeless individuals and families for the Council.

6.7 Victims and Witness Support

Derby Homes employs a Victim and Witness Support Officer who works with individuals or communities who are suffering from anti social behaviour or intimidation.

7.0 Other initiatives that contribute to safeguarding and wellbeing

7.1 Partnerships

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults depends upon effective joint working between agencies and practitioners who have differing roles and expertise. Derby understands the importance of working in partnership.

7.2 Community Initiatives

Derby Homes Community Initiatives Team work alongside residents in our diverse communities encouraging positive contributions to help us deliver services and capital programmes.

Junior Wardens

The Junior Warden Scheme contributes to the 'Every Child Matters' outcomes. It is a targeted youth intervention project which encourages young people in our most challenging neighbourhoods to make a positive contribution.

7.3 Resident Involvement

Derby Homes' Resident Involvement Team works and consults with many equalities groups to ensure that their views are considered when developing services. Including:

- MEAG (Minority Ethnic Advisory Group).
- SHOUT (Support Offering Unity and Trust) – a voice for older and vulnerable tenants
- TRAQ (Tenants reviewing access and quality)
- WINC (Women in Neighbouring Communities)
- LGBT (Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender).

Derby Homes' commitment to Safeguarding is reflected our Business Plans and core values and helps us to fulfil the objectives of our mission which is: 'To secure the best future for Council Housing tenants and services in Derby'.

Appendix 1

Statutory Guidance

Children's Act 1989 and 2004

Defines that a child or young person is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child is 16, living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces does not change the fact that they are entitled to services and protection.

Every Child Matters 2003 - which set out five outcomes that is key to children and young people's wellbeing

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution; and
- Achieve economic wellbeing.

The Children Act 2004 - which subsequently set out these outcomes in statute. The Children's Plan 2007 was developed having regard to the principles and articles of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, and further set out the role of Government and that of a wider range of agencies.

The Human Rights Act 1998

This act imposes an obligation on the authorities to take preventative measures to protect a child at risk from harm. It also permits lawful enquires into the private lives of families where there are concerns about a child's welfare.

Citizen and Immigration Act 2009 – important with regard to trafficking and exploitation of children.

The Rehabilitation of Offender Act (1974) – In most circumstances an employer cannot refuse to employ or dismiss someone on the basis of a 'spent' conviction. Under the act all applicants for positions which give 'substantial, unsupervised access on a sustained or regular basis' to children must declare previous convictions.

The Police Act (1997) – provision to set up Criminal Records Bureau . Under this act it is a criminal offence for an employer to:

- Not check an employee working with children or vulnerable adults
- Give a job to someone who is inappropriate to work with children or vulnerable adults.

Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 – Covers disclosures and child protection issues. Appropriate for Derby Homes:

- Caring for, training, supervising, or being in sole charge of children
- Unsupervised contact with children

- Other positions which give rise to access or influence (e.g. management committee members).

Care Standards Act 2000

CRB checks are required for most organisations providing care. The Act also sets out the Protection of Vulnerable Adults Scheme.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

In response to the Bichard Inquiry following the Soham murders. New arrangements for people whose jobs and voluntary work bring them into contact with children or vulnerable adults. (Barred lists will lie with the Independent Safeguarding Authority).

Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (section 115)

Enables the disclosure of information to a relevant authority to prevent and reduce crime or the identification or apprehension of offenders. The mal treatment of children or vulnerable adults constitutes a crime.



Equality Impact Assessment form

1) Name the Strategy, Policy, and Procedure or Function being assessed.

Derby Homes Safeguarding Policy

2) What are the aims of the strategy, policy, procedure or function being assessed?

Whose need is it designed to meet?

Are there any measurable elements such as time limits or age limits?

To assist children and vulnerable people to live in their homes free from abuse, through safeguarding processes and procedures.

Derby Homes Safeguarding Policy is designed to meet the needs of anyone who is vulnerable or at risk.

Through being able and equipped to identify abuse or neglect, be aware of how to act when suspicion occurs and having the policies and procedures which enable joint partnership working with other agencies.

3) Who has been consulted?

Special Interest Groups, Housing Focus Groups, City Board.

4) Identify potential impact on each of the of the diversity 'groups' by considering the following questions. There may be other questions you need to think about which are specific

to the strategy, policy, procedure or function you are assessing.

- Might some groups find it harder to access the service?
- Do some groups have particular needs that are not well met by the current service, policy, procedure or function?
- What evidence do you have for your judgement (e.g. monitoring data, information from consultation / research / feedback)?
- Have staff / residents raised concerns and or complaints?
- Is there any local or national research to suggest there could be a problem?

Please use the table below to record your findings / answers

Strand	No Impact	Negative Impact	Positive Impact	Comments / Evidence
Age			X	The safeguarding policy is designed to protect individuals regardless of age
Disability			X	The safeguarding policy is designed to protect individuals regardless of disability
Gender			X	The safeguarding policy is designed to protect individuals regardless of gender
Race			X	The safeguarding policy is designed to protect individuals regardless of race
Religion & Belief			X	The safeguarding policy is designed to protect individuals regardless of religion or belief

Strand	No Impact	Negative Impact	Positive Impact	Comments / Evidence
Sexual Orientation			X	The safeguarding policy is designed to protect individuals regardless of sexual orientation
Transgender			X	The safeguarding policy is designed to protect individuals
Marital Status			X	The safeguarding policy is designed to protect individuals regardless of marital status

5) Does the strategy, policy, practice or function promote equality of opportunity?

- Does it link to Derby Homes Core objectives
- Can any positive impacts be promoted as best practice

Excellent Customer Service and Decent Homes and Successful Neighbourhoods .
Also links to our core values.
Also supports the Council to achieve their key strategic outcomes, eg, being safe and feeling safe.

6) If ‘adverse Impacts’ are identified is it?

- Legal (i.e. not discriminatory)
- What is the level of impact?
-

None identified

7) Are there any changes you could introduce which make this strategy, policy, procedure or function, work better for this group of people? Detail the actions planned and any further

research or consultation required and how the actions will be monitored.

The policy has been supplemented with an intensive training and awareness programme which has been delivered to every Derby Homes Employee.
We will also train our contractor's staff.
We will ensure that all staff have appropriate refresher training. We will also ensure all new staff are inducted.

8) If actions / suggestions for improvement have been identified, what should the positive outcome be for Derby Homes customers?

The Safeguarding policy is designed to protect vulnerable people and help them to live in their homes free from abuse, which is a positive outcome for each customer

9) Do you consider a full Equality Impact Assessment is required or do the actions identified and planned meet the adverse impacts identified?

No

Monitoring

Review / New EIA (date or Timeframe)	2 years
Name of person/s completing this form	Maureen Davis
Date assessment completed	11.08.11
Name (and signature) of manager approving EIA	