



# **Derby Homes Annual Safeguarding Report 2024-2025**

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## Executive Summary

Derby Homes remains strongly committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of both adults and children at risk - including those with care and support needs, individuals experiencing homelessness or rough sleeping, and others made vulnerable by their circumstances. We recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and continue to embed a culture of accountability, continuous improvement, and strength-based practice across all service areas.

This report outlines key safeguarding activity between April 2024 and March 2025. Over the past year, we have:



Maintained strong internal safeguarding governance and leadership and have appointed a safeguarding champion from the board.



Completed a review and a refresh of our domestic abuse policies for both customers and employees.



Delivered safeguarding training across all areas of the business.



Supported staff with guidance, wellbeing initiatives, and increased visibility of support tools.



Maintained a strong multi-agency approach, including continued funding for a dedicated social worker and embedding trauma-informed practice within our rough sleeper services.

Data shows 229 safeguarding referrals were submitted by Derby Homes staff in 2024–2025, an increase from 189. While this reflects greater awareness and confidence in raising concerns, we also continue to monitor quality and consistency, particularly around consent, threshold, and capacity.

### 1. Introduction and Context

#### Purpose of the Report

- This report provides an overview of Derby Homes' safeguarding activity for the period April 2024 to March 2025. It reflects on progress, highlights, and outlines priorities for the year ahead. It is intended to inform internal and external stakeholders, including the Derby Homes Board, Derby City Council, safeguarding partners, and regulators.

#### Legal and Policy Framework

- Our safeguarding responsibilities are guided by the Care Act 2014, the Children Act 1989 and 2004, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, among others. We also align our work with national statutory guidance and the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements set by the Derby Safeguarding Adults and Children Boards.

## Scope

- This report covers all aspects of adult safeguarding activity within Derby Homes. It includes internal governance, workforce development, policy review, multi-agency working, and safeguarding practice within operational service areas. It focuses on adults at risk, but also references work related to children, domestic abuse, mental health, and contextual safeguarding where relevant.

## 2. Governance and Leadership

We have a dedicated Safeguarding and Compliance Manager with a background in social work. The purpose of this role is to support the implementation and delivery of effective safeguarding practices across the organisation, and ensure that Safeguarding policies, procedures and processes are updated in line with changes in legislation. The role also includes developing, updating and delivering training.

A new Safeguarding Champion from the Board, Bob Macdonald, has been appointed and will now chair the Safeguarding Champions meeting. Bob attended his first session earlier this year and was warmly welcomed to the group.



## 3. Safeguarding Policies and Procedures

### Policy Review and Updates

- The Safeguarding and Compliance Manager is in the process of updating the customer Domestic Abuse Policy, informed by an Equality Impact Assessment. The employee Domestic Abuse Policy is also in the final stages of development. The customer policy will be subject to consultation with staff and customers, while the employee policy will be reviewed and approved by the Senior Management Team.
- The revised policies aim to provide clearer guidance on recognising domestic abuse, accessing help, and navigating processes.



### Safeguarding Champions

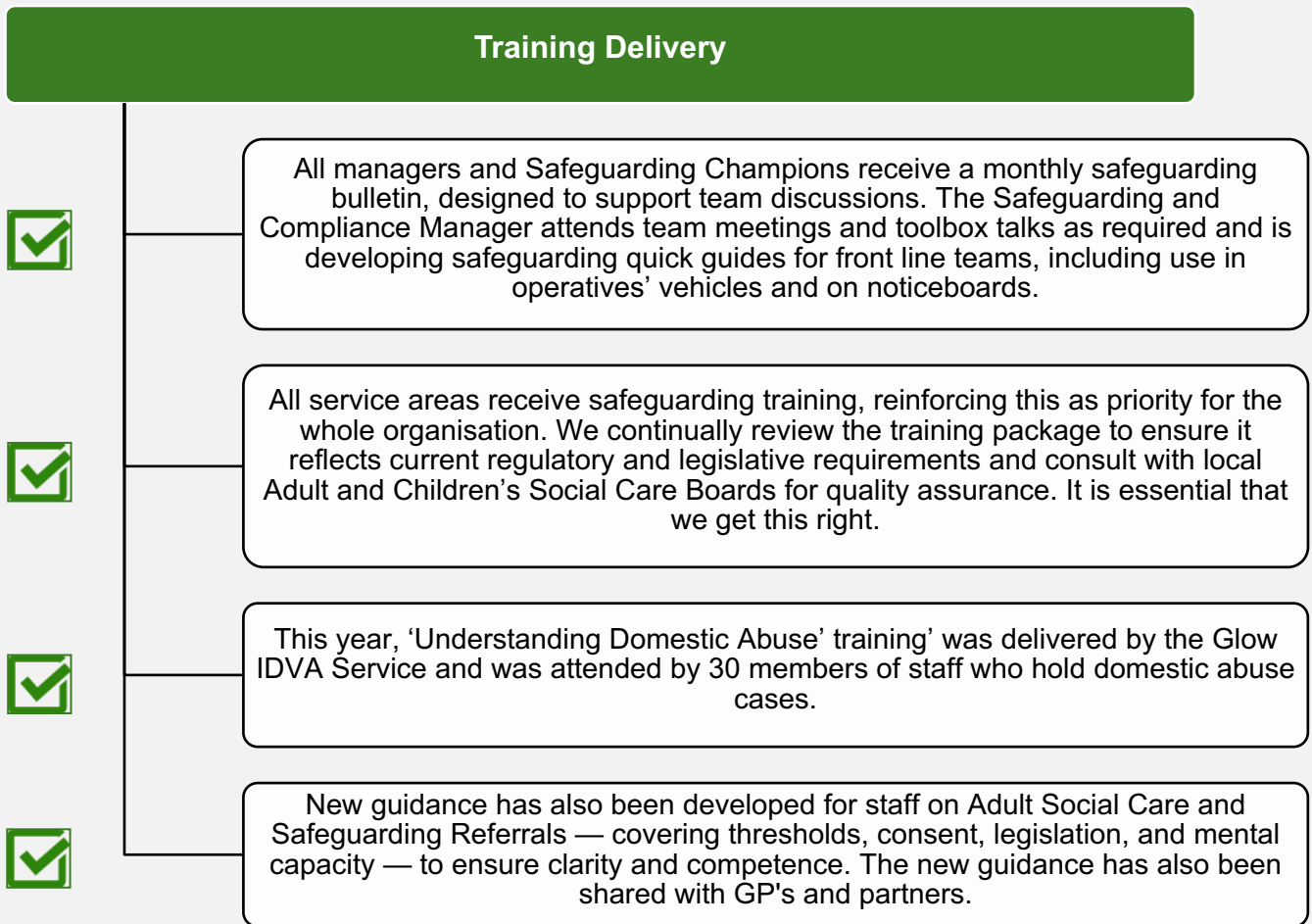
- The Safeguarding Champions model has been reviewed and refreshed. Champions are supported through 1:1 engagement, align with a terms of reference, and are recruited through an Expression of Interest process designed to encourage motivated and diverse colleagues to participate.
- There are around 30 Safeguarding Champions covering all areas of the organisation. Champions provide safeguarding advice, attend quarterly meetings, and ensure key messages are communicated within their service areas. Some also deliver training or represent Derby Homes on Safeguarding Board subgroups.



### Other Champion Groups

- Derby Homes has around 18 Workplace Domestic Abuse Champions who support colleagues experiencing abuse, offering safe, informed responses and signposting to specialist services. Visibility of this support offer will be a key focus over the coming year.
- Mental Health First Aiders also operate across the organisation, providing initial support to colleagues experiencing emotional distress. They offer early assistance and promote access to further help.

## 4. Training and Awareness



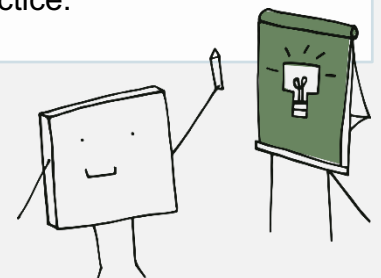
### Staff Wellbeing and Resilience

- We continue to support staff wellbeing through initiatives such as Wellbeing Wednesdays, encouraging monthly downtime across service areas. We are also delivering conflict resolution training to build resilience and to help staff manage safeguarding concerns with greater confidence and care. In addition, staff have access to a confidential Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), which offers support with personal and work-related issues, including counselling and wellbeing resources.



### Safeguarding Campaign

- In 2024–2025, our campaign 'Safeguarding – The Big Picture' focused on contextual safeguarding and place-based risk in which Derby Homes staff received training. Our 2025–2026 campaign, 'Back to Basics', will reinforce core safeguarding knowledge, through the introduction of guidance with emphasis on categories of abuse, requirements under the Care Act 2014, Making Safeguarding Personal, and standards of practice.

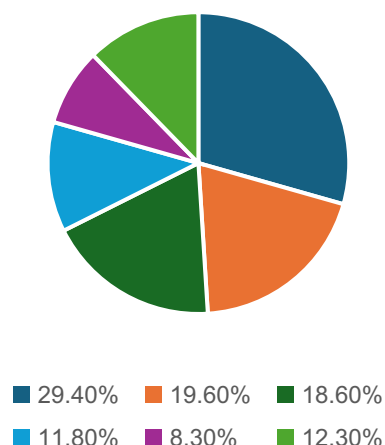


## 5. Key Statistics: Adult Safeguarding Referrals

### Key Statistics: Adult Safeguarding Referrals

- Between April 2024 and March 2025, Derby Homes colleagues submitted 154 adult safeguarding referrals, representing an increase compared to 128 referrals in the previous year (April 2023 to March 2024).
- From available data, the most common category of risk identified in adult referrals during this period was self-neglect (60), followed by financial/material (40), psychological/emotional (38), physical (24), and domestic abuse (17).
- Housing Options submitted the highest number of referrals (25), with Milestone House closely following (17), reflecting the frontline nature of their roles.

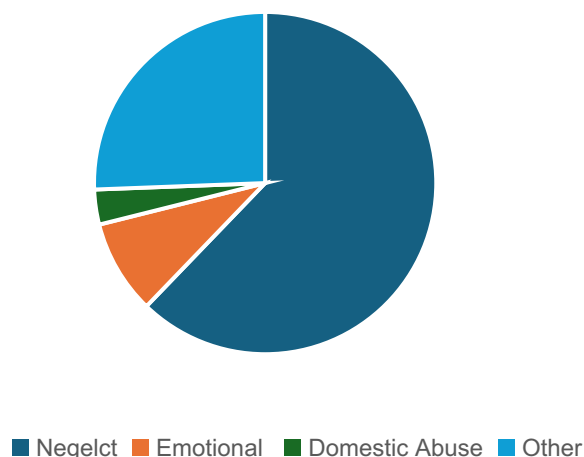
Adult Risk Factors



### Key Statistics: Children Safeguarding Referrals

- Between April 2024 and March 2025, Derby Homes colleagues submitted 90 children safeguarding referrals, representing a large increase compared to 61 referrals in the previous year (April 2023 to March 2024).
- As in previous years, the most common category of risk identified in child referrals during this period was neglect (56), followed by emotional (8) and domestic abuse (3).
- Housing Options submitted the highest number of referrals (60).
- Derby Homes have seen another huge increase in referrals made for children of non-Derby Homes tenants (52), compared to the previous year (27).

Children Risk Factors

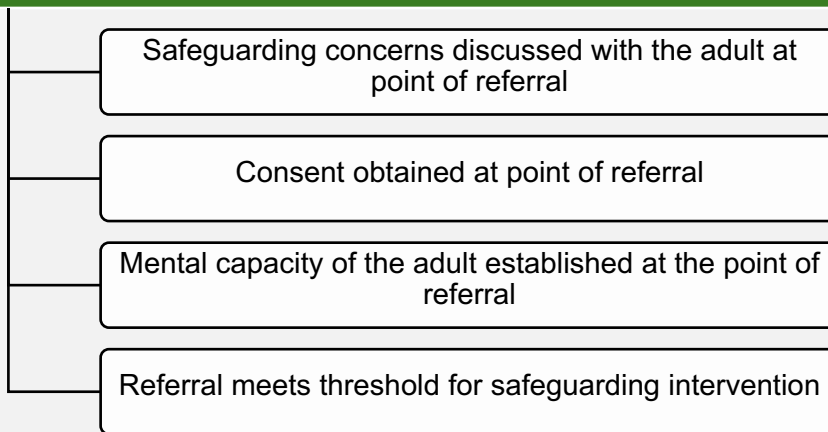


### Key Statistics: Domestic Abuse

- Between April 2024 and March 2025, Derby Homes colleagues submitted 94 referrals for Domestic Abuse cases, representing a slight increase compared to 90 referrals in the previous year (April 2023 to March 2024).
- This increase could be attributed to colleagues having a better understanding of recognising the signs of domestic abuse and greater confidence in making timely and appropriate referrals.
- There were 24 referrals submitted to MARAC which is a slight decrease from the previous year (26).

## 6. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

We continue to monitor performance against key KPIs set by the Derbyshire Safeguarding Adults Board:



Derby Homes consistently met the first three KPIs. Meeting threshold criteria remains an area for improvement. 84.42% of referrals met criteria for support but fell short of the 95% threshold. A new referral guidance document has been developed to address this, and build confidence and accuracy across staff teams.

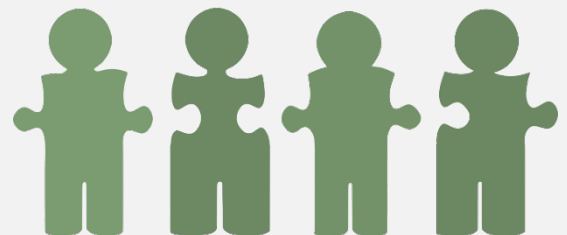
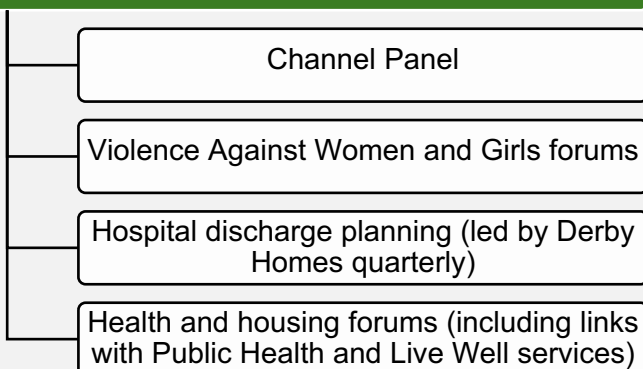
## 7. Multi-Agency Working

### Strategic Partnerships

- We continue to fund a dedicated social worker to support rough sleepers and lead our Multi-Agency Rough Sleeper Hub, ensuring coordinated, risk-informed responses. We work closely with the Council's Head of Safeguarding to review complex cases and embed learning.
- Following government direction, the Rough Sleeper Response Manager now contributes to Safeguarding Adults Board meetings, enhancing strategic alignment. Trauma-informed practice is becoming embedded within rough sleeper services through revised environments, adapted engagement methods, and targeted training.

### Wider Multi-Agency Engagement

We participate in:



We also actively participate in Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) and lead on bi-monthly partnership meetings for Imari Park.

In addition, we play an active role in safeguarding board subgroups, including:

- Policy and Procedures
- Mental Capacity Act
- Making *Safeguarding Personal*
- Quality Assurance
- Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) Operational Group
- Joint Child Safeguarding Practice Review



Derby Homes remains proud to retain its Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation and contributes to peer learning with other housing providers on the same journey.

## 8. Audit, Review and Reflective Practice

### Participation in Safeguarding Audits

**Safeguarding Peer Review**

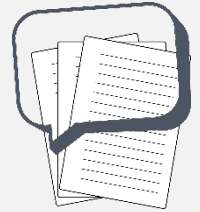
- A Safeguarding Peer Review Process has been introduced, and is used to reflect on practice, test the effectiveness of guidance, and support consistency. Peer reviews may be triggered by complex or unclear cases and will inform training, policy, and strategic oversight as the model evolves.

**Case Recording**

- We continue to review and reflect on the quality of our case note recording and are developing a new Best Practice Guide: Case Recording and Chronologies to support timely, accurate, and accountable record-keeping.
- Housing Options has adopted the same approach used by Housing Management to audit domestic abuse cases.

**Internal Collaboration**

- The Safeguarding and Compliance Manager is continuing work to strengthen understanding and collaboration between teams, and this has led to a number of improvements and opportunities to advance safeguarding within the organisation. One such example is within the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion team - whereby the Safeguarding and Compliance Manager now sits on the panel for managing Unacceptable Customer Behaviour, providing greater oversight of safeguarding implications and helping protect staff.



## 9. Priorities for the Year Ahead

Our focus for 2025–2026 includes:

<b>Annual Safeguarding Campaign:</b>	•Ensuring all staff have clear, confident safeguarding knowledge
<b>Key Policies:</b>	•Implementing revised customer and employee Domestic Abuse Policies and reviewing the overarching Safeguarding Policy
<b>Training:</b>	•Launching and delivering the revised safeguarding training package
<b>Best Practice:</b>	•Supporting staff to meet referral thresholds and improve documentations
<b>Internal Collaboration:</b>	•Promoting shared understanding across service areas
<b>Maintaining External Influence:</b>	•Sustaining our contribution to multi-agency groups and strategic forums

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