



Safeguarding Adults Policy

Author: Angela Aldis Operations Manager

Date Issued: 2025

Next Review: 2028

Contents

Items	Page No
Introduction	3
Aims and objectives	3
Who is at risk?	3
Scope	4
Definitions	4
Responsibility and confidentiality	5
Sharing information	6
Service standards	7
Performance review and monitoring	7
Contacts	7
Associated Policies, Strategies and Procedures	8

Introduction

Harrogate Housing Association Limited (HHA) has a key safeguarding role alongside other partners in social care, health and the police. HHA are committed to acting when our staff become aware of/or suspect situations where abuse of a “person with care and support needs” may be taking place. We will not knowingly ignore or allow any situations to continue unchallenged and staff will be empowered to take action in all cases where it is suspected that abuse of a vulnerable person is occurring.

The Care Act 2014 sets out six principles that underpin all adult safeguarding work.

- **Empowerment** - People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
- **Prevention** - It is better to take action before harm occurs.
- **Proportionality** - The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- **Protection** - Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- **Partnership** – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
- **Accountability** – Accountability and transparency in safeguarding practice.

This policy re-in forces that safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility and that staff, board members and contractors all have the same responsibility to report concerns to the relevant lead officer for the Association.

This policy has been written to reflect the procedures in the Care and Support (Eligibility Criteria) Regulations 2015 in dealing with “people with care and support needs”.

Aims and objectives

The aim is to ensure staff, board members and contractors working in our homes are aware of their obligations to recognise and report any circumstances which fall under the Act. The objective is to provide clarity on those people identified as falling under the Act and the actions required to be undertaken when a safeguarding matter arises.

Who is at risk?

The Care Act puts Adult Safeguarding on a legal footing. Under the Care Act an adult is at risk if they are:

- aged 18 and over;
- have care and support needs; and
- are experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect.

They may be vulnerable and already in receipt of or need of community care services by reason of mental or other disabilities, age or illness and may be unable to take care of themselves or take steps to protect themselves from significant harm.

Customer groups could include

1. People with learning disabilities.
2. People with mental health problems
3. Older people
4. People with physical disabilities.
5. People with visual and sensory impairment
6. People who rely on others for care and/or support.

This can also include people who are vulnerable themselves as a consequence of their role as a carer for such a person. They may need additional support to protect themselves for example from:

- Domestic violence.
- Physical frailty or chronic illness.
- Sensory impairment.
- Challenging behaviour.
- Drug or alcohol problems.

Scope

This policy covers the responsibilities of Harrogate Housing Association, staff, board members and contractors working in our homes.

Definitions

- **What is abuse?**

Abuse is the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person/persons. Abuse can consist of single or repeated acts. It can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person being abused. Anyone can be the perpetrator of abuse, it can occur in a relationship, by an individual, group or organisation.

- **Types of abuse**

Physical - includes hitting, pushing, pinching, shaking, misusing medication and anything else that causes physical harm.

Emotional - includes threats of harm or abandonment, depriving of social contact, humiliation, controlling, blaming, coercion, verbal abuse or being prevented from receiving support or services.

Sexual - includes rape, sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult would not or could not have consented to, or to which they were pressurised into consenting, being shown sexual material or being sexual humiliated.

Financial - includes theft, fraud or exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance and misuse of property, possession and benefits.

Institutional – includes repeated incidents of poor professional practice, widespread and persistent ill treatment or gross misconduct.

Discriminatory - on grounds of race, faith, religion, age, disability, gender, sexual preference or political views.

- **Where can abuse take place?**

Abuse can take place anywhere including

- Individual's own home.
- Homes of family and friends.
- In public places/the community.
- Places of work.

Abuse may result from a deliberate intention to cause harm but may also occur where a provider of a service lacks the knowledge or skills to respond to an individual's needs appropriately.

- **Neglect**

This includes having medical or physical needs ignored, preventing access to health, social care or educational services or withholding necessities such as food, drink and heating.

Concerns arise over self – neglect as a result of an individual's own lack of self-care or risky behaviour. These cases may not be considered eligible for social care support but HHA will work in partnership with the social care staff and the local authority to agree appropriate support for people who self-neglect.

- **Adult safeguarding**

Means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

The aims of adult safeguarding are to prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs and stop abuse or neglect wherever possible.

Responsibility and confidentiality

HHA is committed to its responsibility and duty on safeguarding and will make clear to its staff, contractors and customers what that responsibility means. HHA will do this by:-

1. Understanding the importance of safeguarding by raising awareness amongst staff, contractors and customers about the risks of abuse.
2. Ensure that staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and are trained to identify potential vulnerability, abuse and risk. This will include training on how to:
 - Identify people with care and support needs who may be at risk.
 - Identify possible dangers.
 - Identify indicators of abuse.
 - Know who to report to, when and with whom to raise concerns.
 - Know how to respond to a disclosure of abuse.

3. Have mechanisms in place for recording safeguarding information – this will be achieved by vulnerability flags on the Housing management system and recording and actioning any changes to risk on the bi-annual Home Review of customers.
4. Equipping customers and if appropriate their family or next of kin with information to safeguard themselves.
5. Working with customers whose behaviour poses risks to the wider community, engaging where necessary with the relevant agencies.
6. Develop good communication links with partners and stakeholders to ensure good safeguarding practices are maintained.
7. Working with partners in social care and North Yorkshire Council, examining situations carefully, consider any risks, regularly review and renew offers of support and always act in the best interests of the individual.
8. Supporting staff if they need to raise concerns with North Yorkshire Council.
9. Provide a lead officer within the association for safeguarding; this is the Operations Manager.

Confidentiality

An important facet for Adult Safeguarding is that HHA staff can understand when information should be shared to prevent or reduce the risk of abuse. This needs to be balanced with keeping people safe without overriding their rights to privacy and autonomy. Information can be shared without a person's consent if this is necessary and is not the same as sharing information without their knowledge. If others are not at risk and the person has the mental capacity to make choices then there may be a breach of confidentiality, in these cases staff should speak with the safeguarding lead for clarification. However it has been stated that;-

“If a person lacks the mental capacity to make a decision about their safety, housing officers should seek support from social care. Professionals have a duty to act in the person's best interest” The Mental Capacity Act 2005.

Sharing information

Sharing information between HHA and other partners and stakeholders about known or suspected risks may help to prevent abuse taking place. HHA will work with multi agency safeguarding hubs to improve;-

- Identification of risk leading to early intervention.
- Case management, preventing things getting lost in the system.
- Efficiency through better resource allocation and a reduction in duplication.

HHA staff will have due consideration to the General Data Protection Regulations, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the right to respect for family life under Article 8 of the Human Rights Act 1998. HHA is aware that, without overriding these responsibilities, any person may disclose information to a relevant authority under Section 115 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Support on this is available through the lead for safeguarding.

Service standards

In support of adult safeguarding responsibilities HHA will:-

1. Appoint a Safeguarding Lead – with the appropriate skills and knowledge to provide help and support to staff and act as a lead on safeguarding issues. This is the Operations Manager.
2. To ensure that staff and contractors are aware of the safeguarding policy and procedure.
3. To provide training for staff.
4. Notify the North Yorkshire Council Safeguarding team if abuse is identified or suspected.
5. DBS check all employees that have access to work with people with care and support needs.
6. Adopt a proactive preventative approach to safeguarding.
7. Ensure that information shared is necessary for the purpose for which we are sharing it, is shared only with those people who need to have it, is accurate and up to date, is shared in a timely fashion and is shared securely.
8. Keep a record of safeguarding decisions and the reasons for them.

Performance review and monitoring

HHA will inform Board of any Safeguarding Adult referrals that have been made in the Operational Report.

Provide a lessons learned summary on HHA's approach to a Safeguarding matter to the HHA Board if appropriate.

Contacts

Safeguarding Key Contacts in North Yorkshire and Links to Key Information

Early Help Service (replaced the old Prevention Service).	To support this there are nine Locality North Yorkshire Council (NYC) Early Help Consultants based across North Yorkshire. Their role is to offer support, advice and guidance to all Practitioners in the Early Help system.
Email through website	https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/adult-social-care/protecting-adult-harm/report-adult-abuse-safeguarding
North Yorkshire Council Customer Contact	0300 131 2 131

Emergency Duty Team (EDT)	0300 131 2 131
Duty Local Authority Designated Officer – LADO	lado@northyorks.gov.uk or 01609 533080 within office hours.

In an Emergency call North Yorkshire Police on 999 or for non urgent enquiries call them on 101.

For further guidance follow the link: <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/adult-care/safeguarding/safeguarding-adults>

Associated policies, strategies and procedures

- Whistleblowing Policy
- Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy
- Staff Handbook