



Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

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1. Aim of policy

This policy outlines how we safeguard the welfare of adults with care and support needs. It establishes the principles and standards that are followed to:

- Hold a consistent and effective approach to safeguarding across all areas of the organisation.
- Promote a culture where safeguarding is understood to be everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively encouraged to be raised
- Support staff to be confident, informed and equipped through appropriate training and awareness to identify, respond and manage safeguarding concerns involving adults.
- Outline how we work with statutory and non-statutory partners, including local authority adult's services and the police, to support them in fulfilling their safeguarding duties
- Comply with all relevant legal, regulatory and statutory safeguarding requirements

2. Scope of policy

This policy applies to all staff employed directly by us, board members, and those working with us or on our behalf including contractors and volunteers.

This policy is specifically for the safeguarding of adults. For the purposes of this policy, an adult is any person over the age of 18. Our approach to safeguarding children is covered in the Safeguarding Children Policy.

This policy applies across all services. Anyone working with or encountering adults or families through the course of their role is required to understand and follow this policy.

3. Policy statement

Safeguarding adults underpins our role as a social landlord and supports our wider objectives, legal and regulatory compliance, and public trust.

We take all concerns seriously and respond fairly, respectfully and without delay, adopting a person-centred approach that promotes dignity and acts in the adult's best interests.

We record safeguarding concerns and act promptly and proportionately, including through early help and partnership working to prevent escalation. Where necessary, we take timely action, escalating and making referrals to adult social care and/or the police. Where safe to do so, we involve the adult and their family and support multi-agency arrangements. Further detail is set out in the Safeguarding Procedures and Appendix 1.

Our approach reflects the six safeguarding principles set out in the Care Act 2014, which inform our culture, decision-making and practice:

- Empowerment – recognising the importance of listening to children and young people and, where appropriate, supporting informed involvement in decisions that affect them
- Prevention – acting at the earliest opportunity to prevent harm from occurring, including through early identification and intervention
- Proportionality – responding to safeguarding concerns in a manner that is appropriate, balanced and least intrusive to the level of risk
- Protection – providing support and representation for adults who are most at risk
- Partnership – working collaboratively with local authorities, the police, health services, communities and other partners to prevent, identify and respond to safeguarding concerns
- Accountability – ensuring transparency, clarity and responsibility in how safeguarding is managed and delivered across the organisation.

We maintain a strong safeguarding culture where staff and those working on our behalf feel supported to raise concerns, recognising safeguarding as everyone's responsibility, supported by clear safeguarding leadership and accountability arrangements (Appendix 2).

We support staff involved in safeguarding, including through line management and the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP).

4. Policy

4.1 Our Approach/Position

4.1.1 We recognise adults as victims where they experience or witness domestic abuse, and we treat cases as safeguarding concern, in line with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

4.1.2 We treat radicalisation, extremism, modern slavery and human trafficking and exploitation as safeguarding issues. We respond proportionately, share information appropriately, and work in partnership with relevant statutory agencies in line with local safeguarding arrangements.

4.1.3 If we believe statutory action has not reduced risk, we will escalate via the local escalation protocol and internally agree next steps, including senior escalation where needed.

4.2 Prevention

4.2.1 We take all reasonable steps to prevent adults being impacted by abuse, harm or neglect. To achieve this, we:

- Recognise and respond to safeguarding risks linked to household circumstances, property conditions and community factors, using clear reporting routes to identify, record and escalate concerns (including domestic abuse, exploitation, neglect and unsafe living conditions).
- Work with statutory, voluntary and community partners to improve outcomes
- Embed safeguarding in service delivery, training, supervision and governance
- Promote a culture where staff raise concerns and challenge poor practice ("See Something, Hear Something, Say Something")
- Learn from cases, audits and reviews to improve practice and reduce risk

4.2.2 We recognise that statutory responsibility for safeguarding rests with local authorities and the police. However, we play our role in safeguarding as a responsible housing provider.

4.3 Recruitment & Staffing

4.3.1 We apply safer recruitment and appropriate vetting processes (including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks where required) to help reduce the risk of harm to adults at risk.

4.3.2 Staff, volunteers and others working on our behalf must comply with this policy and our Code of Conduct.

4.3.3 Allegations or concerns relating to staff or others working on our behalf that may constitute a safeguarding issue will be managed promptly in line with relevant procedures, including referrals to the local authority and other agencies where required.

4.3.4 We encourage staff to raise concerns via our Speak Up arrangements to support a culture of openness and accountability.

4.4 Training

4.4.1 Staff receive appropriate learning and development to support an understanding of adult safeguarding and to enable them to fulfil the requirements of this policy and associated procedures. Learning is relevant and proportionate to role and refreshed as needed through training, briefings and supervision. Learning will normally be refreshed at least every two years, or sooner where guidance, risk or practice changes.

4.5 Information Sharing

4.5.1 We share information with relevant partners where necessary for safeguarding, lawfully and proportionately under the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR. Where there is risk of harm or suspected criminality, we share information without delay with the appropriate authority. We will record information-sharing decisions and rationale.

4.6 Contractors

4.6.1 Contractors must comply with this policy and report concerns via agreed routes, in line with contractual requirements.

4.6.2 Safeguarding will be discussed during contract management arrangements. All updates, risks and relevant concerns will be discussed and formally recorded in accordance with agreed reporting and governance arrangements.

4.7 Volunteers

4.7.1 Volunteers are recruited in line with appropriate safer recruitment practices (including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks where relevant) and receive training proportionate to their role. Any safeguarding allegations or concerns regarding a volunteer's conduct will be managed promptly in accordance with relevant procedures, including referrals to appropriate agencies where required, and through our Speak Up arrangements.

4.8 Raising Awareness

4.8.1 We raise awareness of adult safeguarding with customers, families and communities, working where appropriate in partnership with relevant safeguarding agencies and organisations.

4.8.2 We use appropriate channels to promote safeguarding messages and signpost support.

4.9 Perpetrators of Abuse

4.9.1 Where substantiated abuse involves a customer, we consider proportionate housing management action in line with tenancy conditions and relevant policies.

4.9.2 We may refer perpetrators to relevant agencies where appropriate to reduce risk.

4.10 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

4.10.1 We apply this policy fairly and without discrimination, in line with the Equality Act 2010.

4.10.2 We make reasonable adjustments and provide accessible information where needed; concerns about unfair application will be addressed under relevant policies.

5. Statutory requirements

Safeguarding adults is supported by legislation and statutory guidance. This policy is informed by the statutory framework and guidance for safeguarding adults, including:

- Regulator of Social Housing – regulatory standards
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021

- Care Act 2014
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent)
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR (information sharing)

We keep relevant legal, regulatory and guidance changes under review to ensure our safeguarding arrangements remain effective and compliant.

6. Related policies

The following policies and procedures are related to this policy:

- Safeguarding procedures (children and adults)
- Housing management and neighbourhoods (including ASB, allocations, income)
- Domestic abuse
- Equality, diversity, inclusion and reasonable adjustments
- Information governance and data protection
- People policies (recruitment, conduct, disciplinary)
- Speak Up (whistleblowing) and procurement/contract management

We keep relevant legal, regulatory and guidance changes under review to ensure our safeguarding arrangements remain effective and compliant.

7. Monitor and review process

We monitor safeguarding practice to ensure it remains effective and proportionate, with case reviews and audit activity providing oversight and identifying learning and risk.

Themes and assurance are reported annually to the Board. Relevant learning from external reviews will inform updates to policy, procedures, training and practice.

This policy is reviewed at least every three years, or sooner if legislation, guidance, local arrangements or learning requires it

8. References and appendices

Appendix A Definitions

Appendix B Safeguarding Role Responsibilities

Co-Creation	Not applicable for this policy
Equality Impact Assessment	This policy underwent an Equality Impact Assessment – approved by Beth Holmyard 14.05.26
Policy Author	Kelly Smith, ASB and Tenancy Sustainment Manager
Policy Owner	Beth Holmyard, Head of Neighbourhoods
Approved by	Directors Group

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Appendix A

Definitions

The following definitions apply to both Adult Safeguarding and Children's Safeguarding policies and procedures. They are intended to support a whole-household approach to safeguarding, recognising that households may include adults, children and young people living together, and that risks may impact individuals differently depending on age, vulnerability, capacity, and care and support needs.

Safeguarding concerns may relate to:

- Children and young people under the age of 18 or un-born babies
- Adults with care and support needs
- Households where risks to one individual may increase the risk to others

Child - A child is any person under the age of 18.

Young person - A person who has attained the age of 14 and is under the age of 18.

Safeguarding Children - is the action taken to protect children and young people from abuse, neglect and exploitation, to prevent impairment of their health or development, and to ensure they grow up in circumstances consistent with safe and effective care, enabling them to achieve the best possible outcomes. It includes:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing harm to children's health or development
- Ensuring children grow up with safe and effective care
- Taking action to identify risk early and reduce harm

Safeguarding Adults - means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect, while supporting their wellbeing, independence and choice.

Under the Care Act 2014, safeguarding duties apply where an adult:

- Has care and support needs (whether or not those needs are met by services), and
- Are experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
- Are unable to protect themselves from harm as a result of those needs

Care and support needs:

- Do not require a formal assessment to have taken place
- May be temporary, fluctuating or long-term
- May include needs related to physical disability, mental ill-health, learning disability, sensory impairment, substance misuse, cognitive impairment, or frailty due to age

Safeguarding responsibilities remain even where an individual is reluctant to engage, lacks insight into their needs, or declines support.

Partnership Working - Partnership working refers to individuals, professionals and organisations working together to prevent, identify and respond to abuse, neglect and exploitation, and to reduce the risk of harm.

Mental Capacity - Mental capacity is a person's ability to make a specific decision at the time it needs to be made, based on their ability to understand, retain, use or weigh relevant information and to communicate their decision.

Capacity assessments are decision-specific and time-specific, and it is assumed that a person has capacity unless it is established otherwise. The Mental Capacity Act 2005 applies to young people aged 16 and over. Children under 16 are subject to different legal and developmental considerations.

Abuse - Abuse is the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons and includes any action or failure to act that causes harm, distress, or exploitation, or places an individual at risk of harm. It may be a single incident or repeated behaviour, deliberate or unintentional, including neglect, coercion, or pressure where a person has not consented or is unable to consent due to age or lack of capacity. Abuse often occurs where there is an expectation of trust, may constitute a criminal offence, can happen in any setting, and is never acceptable or justifiable for cultural or religious reasons; all concerns must be taken seriously and reported in line with safeguarding procedures.

Examples of abuse

There are many types of abuse – the categories generally recognised in Adult Safeguarding and in the Safeguarding of Children & Young People are listed below. This list is not exhaustive. Our Safeguarding Procedure details how we manage our safeguarding cases.

Psychological/Emotion Abuse - Threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation, unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

Physical Abuse - Assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint.

Sexual Abuse - Rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, sexual assault, sexual exploitation and/or acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

Financial or Material Abuse - Where someone else controls your spending, access to cash, assets or finances.

Domestic Abuse - Controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality, so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage. Please see Domestic Abuse Policy and Domestic Abuse Employee Support Policy.

Discriminatory Abuse - Harassment, slurs or similar treatment because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion.

Institutional or Organisational Abuse - Neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, neglect and poor care practice in relation to care provided in one's own home. Neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

Modern Slavery - Trafficking in persons' and 'human trafficking' for the act of, recruiting, harbouring, transporting, providing, obtaining a person for compelled labour or commercial sex acts through use of, force, fraud, coercion. Children and young people may be at risk of exploitation through forced labour, domestic servitude, criminal activity, sexual exploitation or trafficking, often linked to vulnerability, coercion, control or abuse of power.

Exploitation or Grooming - The act of using an adult / child for, profit, labour, sexual gratification, or some other personal or financial advantage.

Prevent Duty – radicalisation or extremism - The act or process of causing someone to adopt radical positions on political or social issues. The aim of early identification and early intervention is to divert people away from being drawn into terrorist activity.

Neglect (including acts of omission)

Neglect involves the persistent failure to meet a child or young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs. This may include failure to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing, supervision, medical care, or protection from harm, and may result in serious impairment to health or development.

Self-Neglect - Self-neglect refers to a person's inability or unwillingness to care for their own essential needs. This may include neglect of personal hygiene, health, nutrition or living environment, and refusal of necessary support.

Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) - A Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub is a single point of contact where safeguarding concerns are received, shared and triaged by partner agencies to support timely and coordinated responses.

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

A MARAC is a multi-agency meeting where information is shared on cases assessed as high risk (typically relating to domestic abuse), with the aim of reducing risk and improving safety for victims and their children.

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)

MAPPA are the arrangements through which statutory agencies manage the risks posed by sexual and violent offenders to protect the public and reduce the likelihood of harm.

Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships (LSCPs)

Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships are the statutory arrangements through which local authorities, police and health services work together, with other partners, to coordinate and oversee safeguarding and child protection in a local area.

Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR)

A Child Safeguarding Practice Review is undertaken when a child has died or been seriously harmed and abuse or neglect is suspected. The purpose is to identify learning that can improve safeguarding practice and help prevent similar incidents in the future.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

The DBS helps employers make safer recruitment decisions by providing criminal record checks and barring information for individuals working with children or vulnerable people.

Appendix B

Safeguarding Role Responsibilities

Chief Executive

- Holds overall accountability for safeguarding arrangements within VIVID.
- Ensures appropriate governance, resources, and leadership are in place to support effective safeguarding practice.

Head of Neighbourhoods

- Provides strategic leadership for safeguarding across the organisation.
- Acts as the senior point of escalation for safeguarding concerns with local authorities and statutory partners where required.
- Ensures organisational compliance with safeguarding legislation, regulatory expectations, and internal policy.

ASB & Tenancy Sustainment Manager

- Provides operational leadership for safeguarding across VIVID.
- Leads the review of learning from serious incidents and ensures that learning is embedded into practice
- Reviews safeguarding performance and trends within the organisation.
- Contributes to the development and review of safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Supports safeguarding development, including identifying training needs and improvements to practice based on learning from cases and serious incidents.
- Responsible for preparing and coordinating the annual safeguarding report to the Board, providing assurance on safeguarding activity, performance, learning, and emerging risks.

Safeguarding Officer

- Supports the implementation and day-to-day operational compliance of this policy.
- Provides specialist safeguarding advice, guidance and training (where required) to staff and managers.
- Oversees the development and monitoring of safeguarding improvement plans.
- Maintains and reviews safeguarding tools, guidance and training resources and content, including the safeguarding training matrix.
- Undertakes regular quality assurance reviews and audits of safeguarding cases.
- Supports the communication and consistent application of safeguarding procedures across the organisation.

Responsible Managers

- Ensure safeguarding concerns within their area of responsibility are identified, managed, and escalated appropriately.
- Provide advice, oversight and support to responsible officers managing safeguarding cases.
- Monitor safeguarding cases against agreed performance expectations and ensure actions are completed before case closure.
- Ensure safeguarding activity is accurately recorded in line with policy and data protection requirements.

Responsible officers

- Responsible for completing referrals, investigating and monitoring cases, reviewing actions and reporting critical incidents or immediate concerns to the Line Manager or safeguarding officer