



# Safeguarding Policy

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| <b>Overview:</b>       | This policy sets out ECBHA's approach to ensuring safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults that it encounters with the homes and communities that it serves. |
| <b>Version:</b>        | V1   |
| <b>Approved by:</b>    | Eldonians Board  |
| <b>Approved date:</b>  | 28 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2024  |
| <b>Issued date:</b>    | 28 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2024  |
| <b>Review date:</b>    | 28 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2026  |
| <b>Champion:</b>       | Chief Operating Officer  |
| <b>Document owner:</b> | Business Improvement Manager   |

# Eldonian Community Based Housing Association Ltd Safeguarding Policy

## 1. Introduction

We aim to provide the highest possible standard of service to our customers and in doing so, we recognise that we must do all that we can to protect children and adults at risk from abuse when they are engaged in services organised or delivered by us.

We have working practices in place that help to us identify the signs of abuse and enable us to take action that is proportionate, focused on prevention and that offers protection for those most in need.

Our approach is governed by the principles as set out in the Care Act (2014) and focuses on our role as a partner delivering local solutions in so far as our role as housing provider allows.

## 2. Background & Context

ECBHA, owns or manages approximately 400 homes across the Vauxhall area of central Liverpool. Within our general needs homes are families with children of all ages and we recognise that there is a growing number of older adults. We also have housing specific bungalows and flats for people who are older and/or other vulnerabilities that may present an increased risk of abuse.

## 3. Scope

The implementation and scope of the policy applies across ECBHA locations activities and tenures.

## 4. Aims & Objectives

Through this policy ECBHA aims to establish its position towards:

- Identifying and respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns.
- Ensuring a high-level awareness of safeguarding responsibilities is maintained throughout ECBHA staff, contractors and volunteers who work with us.
- Promoting and implementing working practices to safeguard the wellbeing of children and adults at risk.
- Ensuring our approach supports the objectives of the Safeguarding objectives of the Local Authority

## 5. Legislation

The policy is in place to support:

- Legislative compliance, the:

- Children Act 2004 (Sec 11)
- Care Act 2014.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Regulatory compliance, the:
  - Tenancy Standard
  - Neighbourhood and Community Standard

ECBHA is required to co-operate with and provide information to the Local Authority in relation to safeguarding of children and adults. This is legislated for in the Children Act 2004 (Sec 11) and the Care Act 2014.

These Acts set out arrangements that local authorities and their partners should have in place to reflect the importance of safeguarding and promote the welfare of children and adults. Whilst we do not have any direct statutory duties under these Acts, we have a key safeguarding role to play, alongside colleagues in Social Care, Health, and the Police, in keeping people safe.

## 6. Policy Statement & Position

Our role as a housing provider means that we are well placed to be proactive, identify people with care and support needs, recognise where there is risk of harm and share information and work in partnership to coordinate responses to keep people safe.

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) will be the designated safeguarding lead for the organisation.

Any employee or contractor who identifies potential harm or risk of harm to a customer can log a 'concern' within ECBHA and a Local Authority referral will be completed if required.

When we identify concerns regarding the welfare of children and adults at risk we will:

- Maintain strict confidentiality whilst dealing with cases where abuse occurs or is suspected.
- Make the safety and wellbeing of the person considered at risk our priority.
- Inform customers that some personal information may need to be shared even without the consent of the individual.
- Refer our concerns swiftly to the Local Authority through established referral arrangements outlined in the safeguarding procedures where the appropriate thresholds are met.
- Involve other agencies such as the police where this would be appropriate.
- Engage with key partners to facilitate effective responses to instances of abuse.

We will monitor the quantity and quality of referrals made to the local authority, keeping a confidential log of all cases.

We will monitor the progress and outcome of referrals with the local authority and, where appropriate challenge if we have professional concerns that adequate safeguarding is not occurring.

Due to its limited size, it would be disproportional for ECBHA to be a proactive member of local safeguarding Board's and partnerships, however it will be committed to acting on emerging best practice from such bodies.

ECBHA will engage in serious case reviews and multi-agency case reviews as requested by the Local Authority.

## 7. Definitions

**Child** – any person who has not attained the age of 18.

**Adult at Risk** –a person aged 18 years or over and at risk of abuse or neglect because of their need for care and support (Department of Health). An adult at risk may therefore be a person who, for example:

- is an older person who is frail due to ill health, physical disability or cognitive impairment
- has a learning disability
- has a physical disability or sensory impairment
- has mental health needs including dementia or a personality disorder
- has a long-term illness or condition
- misuses substances or alcohol
- is a carer such as a family member or friend who provides personal assistance and care to adults and is subject to abuse
- lacks the mental capacity to make decisions and needs care and support.

**Abuse** –a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons (Department of Health)

- Abuse can take many forms and can include:
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse including child sexual exploitation
- Psychological and emotional abuse
- Financial abuse
- Neglect or acts of omissions
- Institutional abuse
- Discriminatory abuse
- Radicalisation of children and young people by political and religious extremists
- Domestic abuse
- Modern slavery

## 8. Responsibilities

All employees, agency workers, contractors are responsible for safeguarding. This includes sharing information and raising alerts where there is a concern. We will ensure the staff team is equipped to do by:

- Recruitment and induction arrangements that have regard to our approach to safeguarding.

- Ensuring all employees and contractors, are made aware of our Safeguarding Policy and how to report a concern.
- Having a clear training commitment.
- Identifying a Safeguarding Lead who can advise staff within the organisation.

Introductory level safeguarding training is mandatory for all staff. This will include:

- What is Safeguarding
- How to report a concern

The designated internal safeguard lead or leads will have additional training to ensure they are equipped to work with partners, including:

- How to complete a multi-agency referral
- Child protection conferences & reports, Case management.

For the avoidance of doubt, key duties are assigned as follows:

- Board – Approval and oversight of this policy implementation and being assured of its effectiveness.
- Chief Executive Officer - Responsible for overall implementation of the policy and reporting to Board.
- Chief Operating Officer – Will be the designated safeguarding lead for the organisation, assuming responsibility for ensuring that the policy continues to be appropriate and fit for purpose alongside:
  - Receiving reported concerns from ECBHA staff and contractors
  - Making referrals to the local authority
  - Monitoring the progress and outcome of referrals
  - Maintaining the confidential log of safeguarding cases and outcomes

## **9. Sharing Information and Confidentiality**

We will have in place appropriate data sharing protocols with key safeguarding partners to enable sharing of information to safeguard customers, principally the local authority and the Police.

We will normally seek consent before sharing information but if this is not possible or refused, we will share information with other agencies if we believe it is in the best interests of the child or adult at risk.

There are also times when legally we must also share such information.

Our approach to safeguarding will be validated through the internal audit and assurance programme at least every three years, providing an independent assurance of the effectiveness of controls and processes.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years or earlier if required due to a change in Government legislation or regulatory requirements.

## **10. Equality & Diversity**

We acknowledge that some of our customers may face additional difficulties and may be more likely to experience some form of abuse. We work with our customers and partners to identify and respond effectively in circumstances where children and adults may be vulnerable or at risk.

## **11. Policy Breaches**

Any tenant or staff member witnessing a breach of the policy must raise this directly with the person concerned or draw it to the attention of a member of the Leadership Team, ideally the Chief Operating Officer as the designated safeguarding lead.

Either whistleblowing and complaints arrangements can be used should a member of the public, resident, member of staff or contractor have concern with the organisations safeguarding practices.

## **12. Monitoring and Review**

To ensure that the policy is effective and delivering the intended impact we will monitor the quantity, quality of referrals and referral outcomes. These will be reported to the Board bi-annually on an anonymised basis. Reporting will include the number of new, ongoing, and closed cases and any emerging organisational learning from cases.

## **13. Other relevant Policies & Documents**

- Confidential safeguarding log
- Safeguarding procedure
- Local external safeguarding guidance