



Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Procedure

1.0 Objectives

- 1.1 This procedure sets out how the Association's Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy will be implemented. This procedure must be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 We recognise that some groups may be particularly vulnerable to abuse or have difficulty in getting help. Throughout this procedure we will consider ethnicity, culture, language, religion or belief, gender, trans-gender, disability and sexual orientation of any parties involved. An interpreter will be used where necessary to ensure efficient communication.

- 2.2 The types of abuse/neglect as identified in the Care Act statutory guidance 2014, but which can apply to both adults and children, include:

- Physical abuse – for example punching, hitting and pushing.
- Verbal abuse – for example offensive language and insults.
- Sexual abuse and sexual exploitation – which can be suffered by adults and children.
- Discriminatory abuse - towards age, gender, trans-gender, race, religion, disability or sexuality.
- Financial and material abuse – for example financial or material gain through intimidation or deception.
- Psychological or emotional abuse, coercive control and neglect/acts of omission.
- Organisational abuse – also known as 'institutional abuse', for example neglect and poor care practice in a facility such as a care home or hospital, or care provided in one's own home.
- Domestic abuse – abuse or violent behaviour between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. Domestic abuse can encompass psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional abuse. The definition includes honour-based violence and forced marriage.
- Honour-based violence – a crime or incident which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the perceived 'honour' of a family or community.
- Forced marriage – in which one or both of the parties are married against their will. Forced marriage is illegal in the UK.
- Female genital mutilation – procedures that intentionally alter or injure female genital organs for non-medical reasons.
- Modern slavery – for example slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude.

- 'Mate' crime – can include many of the above forms of abuse, or less overt coercion, and occurs when vulnerable people are befriended by members of the community who go on to exploit and take advantage of them.
- Abuse can also occur through the use of technology, which may include mobile phones, social media and internet chat rooms.

2.3 In addition to the above, safeguarding concerns can also encompass the following:

- Self-neglect – self neglect covers a wide range of behaviours that have the potential for serious consequences to the health and wellbeing of an individual and potentially to their community. It can include; a lack of self-care, a lack of care to surroundings and environment, or a refusal of assistance. It must be noted that the Care Act statutory guidance states that self-neglect may not, in itself, prompt an enquiry under safeguarding, and that assessment must be made on a case-by-case basis, taking into account whether the person is able to protect themselves, by controlling their own behaviour.
- Hoarding – potentially linked to the above, hoarding is a complex issue and is subject to a separate policy and procedure (see Hoarding Policy/Procedure).
- Radicalisation and violent extremism – radicalisation is comparable to other forms of exploitation such as grooming and child sexual exploitation. Radicalisation can be defined as the process by which people come to support terrorism and other forms of violent extremism and in some cases participate in terrorism and violent activities.

3.0 Procedure

- 3.1 The following procedure should be adhered to in every case where an incident or incidents of abuse (including neglect) are suspected or disclosed.
- 3.2 Due to the specific processes involved in supporting and managing cases of domestic abuse, the procedures used are subject to a separate procedure (see Domestic Abuse Procedure).
- 3.4 If abuse is disclosed it is essential that prior to any discussion you advise the complainant that whatever is discussed may not remain confidential and that it may have to be discussed with third parties; this is in accordance with our Data Protection Policy and Procedures.
- 3.5 Colleagues must listen to details impartially and if possible take accurate notes at the time or as soon as possible afterwards as these will be used once a referral is made to the safeguarding team. Offer reassurance to the complainant, allow them to speak freely, listen calmly and do not question them. Only trained social workers and police officers may question victims of abuse; asking too many questions at this stage may jeopardise later investigations.
- 3.6 The Association has appointed a safeguarding colleague lead, currently Michelle Shields, Sustainment Services Manager who is able to offer advice and assistance on operational safeguarding matters. Safeguarding disclosures or suspicions must be brought to the attention of the reporting colleague's line manager in the first instance. If required, further advice can be sought from the safeguarding colleague lead.

- 3.7 Having considered the information provided, if required the colleague will contact the relevant safeguarding team within the relevant local authority. Each local authority has dedicated teams who will deal with safeguarding concerns. They will either take the case on or offer appropriate advice and assistance to colleagues. The safeguarding team will also either contact the police or advise if the colleague should contact the police.
- 3.8 Securing immediate safety for the child or vulnerable adult is paramount. If you believe a person is in immediate danger, with evidence suggesting rape, serious abuse, recent or immediate harm, the police and paramedics must be alerted by calling 999.
- 3.9 The contact details for the local authority safeguarding teams are detailed at the end of this procedure. The colleague can refer the child/family/vulnerable adult to the safeguarding team using the referral process as described by the local authority.
- 3.10 It must be noted that the colleague who has concerns, or has information disclosed to them in the first instance may be questioned or be asked to provide a report to the local authority at a later date.
- 3.11 It is the responsibility of the statutory agencies to investigate safeguarding concerns and claims of abuse. Irwell Valley has no authority to investigate itself, although every colleague has the responsibility to ensure that every suspicion or allegation is acted on and responded to in the correct manner, whether disclosed directly by the individual themselves or expressed by a third party.
- 3.12 If the allegation of abuse indicates that an Irwell Valley colleague is an alleged perpetrator then the same procedure will take place. The safeguarding colleague lead will also notify the Head of HR, who will take responsibility for liaising with the relevant line manager and taking appropriate action, including investigation/suspension if appropriate. This procedure is set out in detail in the organisation's whistleblowing procedure.
- 3.13 If the alleged perpetrator is identified as a child or young person, they must be considered to be both perpetrator and as a child in need.

4.0 Record Keeping & Risk Assessment

- 4.1 Colleagues must keep clear and accurate notes of any allegation or suspicions of abuse. All details must be strictly factual, including specific dates and times of incidents or disclosures and this should be kept securely on file and/or the Association's IT systems.
- 4.2 Notes of safeguarding concerns relating to our general needs and leasehold customers must be logged by an appropriate colleague (Community Co-ordinator, Community Safety Officer, Tenancy Sustainment Coach, or similar) on QL. Procedural guides on how to log concerns are separately available.
- 4.3 Notes of safeguarding concerns regarding Independent & Community Living customers will be logged within the relevant area of sharepoint; this provides the required security/access arrangements and will enable the case to be clearly linked to the customer's support planning documentation.
- 4.4 Whilst all colleagues, including Homes operatives, may observe safeguarding and abuse concerns, and all must note their concerns and report them to their line manager or the safeguarding colleague lead, it is only expected that Community Co-ordinators, Community Safety Officers, Tenancy Sustainment Coaches and I&CL colleagues and

other authorised colleagues/managers would be responsible for logging concerns on QL/sharepoint and making reports to the local authority.

- 4.3 Safeguarding is fundamentally managing risk about the safety and wellbeing of an individual. Depending on the circumstances, and the point at which the colleague becomes involved in the safeguarding issue and having sought advice from the safeguarding experts both within the organisation and externally, it may be necessary to complete a risk assessment regarding the case. This would then be shared with the other agencies involved and updated as and when the risks were perceived to have changed.

5.0 Information Sharing and Confidentiality

- 5.1 When abuse is disclosed or suspected, information will be restricted to those who need to know as per the procedure above, however, colleagues must also ensure they adhere to the Data Protection and Confidentiality policies.
- 5.2 It is essential that for the purposes of adult safeguarding and child protection that all colleagues recognise the importance of inter-agency co-operation.
- 5.3 The safeguarding colleague lead or the reporting colleague will be the point of contact for the statutory authorities. Wherever possible the consent of the third party will be obtained before any additional information is shared; if consent is not possible or desirable however, the information may be shared in the interest of the individual concerned. Irwell Valley will take legal advice in exceptional cases where necessary.

6.0 Best Practice Notes

- Treat all parties involved as you wish to be treated, with dignity, respect and trust.
- Ensure that family members or other involved persons know that the victim's safety and welfare must be given first priority, but that each of them has a right to a courteous, caring and professionally competent service.
- Take care not to infringe privacy any more than is necessary to safeguard the welfare of the individual.
- Be clear with yourself and any involved individuals about your power to intervene and the purpose of your professional involvement at any stage.
- Listen to the concerns of the person making the disclosure and take care to learn about their understanding, fears and wishes before arriving at your own conclusions.
- Use plain, jargon free language to suit the age and culture of each person involved. Explain unavoidable technical and professional terms.
- Make sure that any safeguarding concerns are passed on to the safeguarding colleague lead, or your line manager, before the end of the working day.
- Make clear objective notes at all times and remember that these may be used as evidence at a later stage.
- Be open and honest about your concerns, responsibilities, plans and limitations without being defensive.
- Take care to distinguish between personal feelings and professional roles and responsibilities.

Local Authority Safeguarding Contact Details	
<p><u>Manchester City Council</u></p> <p>At risk child: 0161 234 5001 https://www.manchestersafeguardingpartnership.co.uk/</p> <p>At risk adult: https://www.manchestersafeguardingpartnership.co.uk/ 0161 234 5001</p>	<p><u>Tameside MBC</u></p> <p>At risk child: 0161 342 4101 https://www.tamesidesafeguardingchildren.org.uk/</p> <p>At risk adult: 0161 342 2400 https://www.tameside.gov.uk/socialcare/adultabuse</p>
<p><u>Trafford MBC</u></p> <p>At risk child: 0161 912 5125 https://www.trafford.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/children-and-families.aspx</p> <p>At risk adult: 0161 912 5127 https://www.traffordsafeguardingpartnership.org.uk/Safeguarding-Adults/Are-you-worried-about-an-adult.aspx</p>	<p><u>Stockport MBC</u></p> <p>At risk child: 0161 217 6028 http://www.safeguardingchildreninstockport.org.uk/</p> <p>At risk adult: 0161 217 6029 https://www.stockport.gov.uk/topic/safeguarding-adults</p>
<p><u>Bolton Council</u></p> <p>At risk child: 01204 331500 https://www.boltonsafeguardingchildren.org.uk/worried-child</p> <p>At risk adult: 01204 333333 https://www.bolton.gov.uk/safeguarding-protecting-adults/safeguarding-adults-risk</p>	<p><u>Salford City Council</u></p> <p>At risk child: 0161 603 4500 https://www.salford.gov.uk/children-and-families/safeguarding-children/</p> <p>At risk adult: 0161 909 6517 https://www.salford.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/safeguarding-adults/</p>
<p><u>Bury Council</u></p> <p>At risk child: 0161 253 5678 https://www.bury.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=10831</p> <p>At risk adult: 0161 253 5151 https://www.bury.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=10852</p>	<p><u>National Helplines:</u></p> <p>NSPCC: 0808 800 5000</p> <p>Childline: 0800 1111</p>