

Who this policy is for

This policy is for all residents of Wyedean Housing Association.

Introduction

As a registered social landlord, we have a responsibility to keep our residents safe from harm, abuse and neglect. This policy explains:

- what safeguarding is
- the different types of harm, abuse and neglect
- the steps we take to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns.

What is safeguarding

Safeguarding is action taken to protect a person's health, wellbeing and human rights and to help them live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

Forms of harm, abuse and neglect

Harm is physical and psychological injury.

Abuse is any behaviour used to control or harm another person. It can include physical, emotional, psychological or sexual mistreatment.

Neglect is failure to meet a person's basic needs.

There are many types of harm, abuse and neglect. They include:

- neglect, such as a lack of food
- self-neglect, such as poor hygiene or hoarding
- emotional or psychological abuse, such as bullying
- controlling behaviour, such as restricting what someone can do
- coercive behaviour, such as isolating someone so they become dependent or threatening someone so they feel afraid
- physical abuse, such as slapping, punching, kicking or biting
- financial abuse, such as withholding money or pressuring someone to give money
- sexual abuse, such as making someone do things they don't want to do
- discriminatory abuse, such as treating someone differently due to their beliefs
- domestic abuse, such as hitting a partner or family member
- modern-day slavery and human trafficking, such as forced labour or withholding documents
- radicalisation and extremism, such as influencing others to encourage them to develop extremist views
- organisational abuse, such as neglect or poor practice
- online abuse, such as cyber-bullying, doxxing (sharing personal information without consent) and



- trolling (deliberately provoking or upsetting others online)
- child sexual exploitation, such as grooming and giving 'gifts' in return for sex
- forced marriage
- female genital mutilation.

Our approach to safeguarding

Safeguarding is a complex and sensitive issue. Because it's so important to us, our chief executive is our safeguarding lead.

Our approach to safeguarding includes an understanding that it's everyone's responsibility. Everyone in our staff team is trained to identify vulnerable people and encouraged to raise any concerns they have.

We have clear procedures to raise and record concerns, follow them up and support both our staff and the person who is, or may be, at risk.

When we identify safeguarding concerns, we'll always report them to the local authority or the police, who have a statutory duty to investigate. We'll then work with the relevant authorities to help address the concerns.

We work in line with the 'Making Safeguarding Personal' initiative, which is part of the Department of Health's statutory guidance. As a result, our approach is:

- person-led
- outcome focused
- collaborative, enabling the vulnerable person to be involved in and have a choice about what happens so they have control over their life
- designed to improve our residents' quality of life, wellbeing and safety.

Prevention

To prevent abuse, harm and neglect, we:

- provide information and advice to our residents
- encourage everyone to report concerns to us or their local authority safeguarding team
- promote different ways for residents to report their concerns, including through our contractors and visiting employees
- provide training and support to frontline staff, including our contractors and contact centre team
- work with local statutory safeguarding teams and adults' and children's safeguarding boards, focusing on areas of high risk.

What we'll do when we have a safeguarding concern

If we suspect or identify possible harm, abuse or neglect, we'll report it to the local safeguarding team. If



there's an immediate risk to anyone's safety or a crime has been committed, we'll call the police and, when necessary, an ambulance.

We'll:

- listen to residents' concerns and try to understand what the issue is
- provide clear, accurate and straightforward advice
- give residents time to explain their situation and the impact it's having on them, particularly where the resident has difficulty communicating
- treat the report seriously and respond quickly
- work with the resident, their family, carers and support network to help them stay safe
- be aware of the needs and risks for families with disabled children
- take time to think about what life might be like for the resident, their family and carer if they have one, so we can better understand their situation
- be sensitive to a resident's needs, including in respect of their age, gender, race, disability or sexual orientation
- consider how we can minimise the risk for both the resident and us
- treat reports as confidential unless there's a risk of serious harm.

When we report concerns to a statutory body

We'll:

- always report a concern to the statutory agencies if it's about a child
- seek the resident's permission before we report the concern, unless there's a risk of serious harm
- report concerns if we think a resident is being pressured into not giving their consent, and explain to the local authority that the person doesn't want action taken and why we think this is
- provide clear information about our concerns, highlighting the risks involved, considering our residents' preferred outcomes and explaining what life is like for them
- work with family members and support agencies to improve residents' safety
- use our legal powers to protect our residents and their families and to act against those who are committing harm, abuse or neglect.

Challenging a local authority's decision

Occasionally, we won't be happy with the response from a local authority or the police if they decide no further action is necessary but we think the person is still at risk.

When this happens, we'll ask a senior manager in the statutory agency to investigate the concern, explaining the risk, why we're worried and what we'd like to happen. If we're still concerned, our chief executive will ask the equivalent officer in the local authority or chair of the safeguarding board to consider the case



Supporting our staff team

We:

- train our employees to spot signs of harm, abuse, and neglect
- make sure our employees know how to report concerns
- provide support and advice to anyone who deals with or has been affected by safeguarding issues, offering confidential counselling and other support as appropriate.

Review

If a resident feels we haven't kept to our safeguarding policy, they can ask us to review our decision.

A manager will carry out the review. We'll only review a decision once.

Allegations against our staff team

If we receive an allegation that one of our employees has abused or neglected a resident, we'll report it to the police, local safeguarding team and our senior management team.

We'll then work with the police and local authority safeguarding team to investigate the allegation.

Understanding and responding to our residents

Treating everyone fairly is an essential part of our culture. However, we recognise that some groups may face discrimination or be disadvantaged. We want our services to be inclusive and accessible, so we recognise these inequalities in our policies and the way we work.

We expect all our employees to treat our residents with honesty and respect, regardless of their age, gender, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, race, nationality, religion, ethnic or national origin.

If anyone raises concerns that we've acted unfairly, we'll treat this as a formal complaint.

