



PLYMOUTH COMMUNITY HOMES SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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1. Introduction

Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) is unwavering in its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children, young people, and adults at risk who come into contact with our services. We believe that everyone has the right to live free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and we will take all reasonable steps to prevent harm and protect those who may be vulnerable.

Safeguarding is a core responsibility for every member of the PCH community—employee, contractors, volunteers, and Board members. We operate a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of abuse and neglect, and we expect the same from our partners and supply chain. Our approach is rooted in the principles of empowerment, prevention, proportionality, protection, partnership, and accountability, as set out in the Care Act 2014 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.

We recognise that safeguarding is not just about responding to incidents, but about creating a culture of vigilance, respect, and support. This includes:

- Promoting the wellbeing, dignity, and rights of every individual.
- Listening to and acting upon concerns raised by residents, employees, or members of the public, including those raised anonymously or via whistleblowing.
- Ensuring that all concerns, suspicions, or allegations of abuse or neglect are reported promptly and handled with sensitivity, professionalism, and in accordance with statutory requirements.
- Supporting and protecting those who raise concerns in good faith, in line with our Whistleblowing Policy.
- Working collaboratively with statutory agencies, local safeguarding partnerships, and other relevant organisations to ensure a coordinated and effective response.
- Embedding trauma-informed practice and recognising the impact of adverse experiences on individuals' lives and behaviours.
- Ensuring that safeguarding is integral to all aspects of our work, from recruitment and training to service delivery and governance.

We are committed to continuous improvement, learning from safeguarding reviews, audits, and feedback, and adapting our policies and procedures to reflect changes in legislation, guidance, and best practice. We will regularly review and monitor our safeguarding arrangements to ensure they remain robust, effective, and responsive to the needs of our diverse community.

Safeguarding is everyone's business at PCH. By working together, we can help ensure that all children, young people, and adults at risk are safe, respected, and empowered to thrive.

2. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy is underpinned by:

- Care Act 2014 (Adults)

- Children Act 1989 & 2004 (Children)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (latest statutory guidance)
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- All relevant local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Board:** Strategic oversight and governance of safeguarding.
- **Executive Team:** Embedding a safeguarding culture and ensuring compliance.
- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** Operational lead for safeguarding, supported by Safeguarding Champions.
- **All Employees/Contractors:** Duty to report concerns, undertake training, and promote best practice.

4. Definitions

4.1 Safeguarding means protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Working with other organisations, we safeguard customers by aiming to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect. Safeguarding applies to children, young people and adults at risk.

4.2 Adult at Risk

An "adult at risk" is any person aged 18 or over who:

- Has needs for care and support (whether or not these needs are being met by the local authority or other services),
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
- As a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

4.3 Child and Young Person

A "child" is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The term "young person" may refer to individuals up to the age of 25 if they are still receiving children's services (for example, care leavers or those with complex needs supported in education settings).

Safeguarding children and young people means:

- Protecting them from maltreatment,
- Preventing impairment of their health or development,

- Ensuring they grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

4.4 Abuse (Adults and Children)

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person, persons, or an organisation. Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It can be:

- Physical, verbal, sexual, or psychological,
- An act of neglect or an omission to act,
- Financial or material exploitation,
- Discriminatory or organisational,
- Online or digital abuse,
- Self-neglect (for adults).

Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to the individual. It can be perpetrated by anyone, including family members, friends, carers, professionals, or strangers.

4.5 Cuckooing

Cuckooing is a form of exploitation where an individual or group takes over the home of another person, often someone who is vulnerable, in order to use the property for criminal or anti-social purposes such as drug dealing, storing weapons, or facilitating exploitation.

The person whose home is taken over may be subjected to intimidation, coercion, violence, control, or manipulation. In some cases, they may appear to consent due to fear, dependency, or exploitation.

Cuckooing is commonly associated with criminal exploitation, county lines activity, domestic abuse, and modern slavery, and is a significant safeguarding concern for both adults and children.

PCH recognises cuckooing as a serious form of abuse and will respond through safeguarding processes, partnership working, and enforcement action where appropriate.

4.6 Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's, young person's, or adult's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. For adults, neglect includes ignoring medical, emotional, or physical care needs, failing to provide access to appropriate health, care, or support services, or withholding the necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition, and heating.

4.7 Harm

Harm refers to the ill-treatment or impairment of health and development, including impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. Harm can be physical, emotional, or psychological.

4.8 Making Safeguarding Personal (Adults)

PCH is committed to a “Making Safeguarding Personal” approach, meaning that adults at risk are supported to make their own choices and are involved as far as possible in decisions about their own safety and wellbeing. This includes respecting their views, wishes, feelings, and beliefs, and working with them to achieve the outcomes they want, unless doing so would place them or others at risk of significant harm.

4.9 PREVENT and Channel

PREVENT is part of the government’s counter-terrorism strategy, aiming to safeguard individuals from being drawn into terrorism.

Channel is a multi-agency approach to provide support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

4.10 Contextual Safeguarding

PCH recognises that abuse and exploitation can occur outside the home, for example in schools, peer groups, online, or in the community. Contextual safeguarding means understanding and responding to risks in these wider environments.

4.11 Organisational Abuse

This includes neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting, such as a hospital or care home, or in relation to care provided in one’s own home. It may range from isolated incidents to ongoing ill-treatment.

4.12 Self-Neglect (Adults)

Self-neglect covers a wide range of behaviour, including neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health, or surroundings, and includes behaviours such as hoarding.

4.13 Online Abuse (Children and Adults)

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the web, whether through social networks, online games, or mobile phones. It can include cyberbullying, grooming, sexual abuse, exploitation, or emotional abuse.

5. Safeguarding Adults

5.1 Definition

- An “adult at risk” is anyone aged 18+ who has care and support needs and is unable to protect themselves from abuse or neglect.

5.2 Principles (Care Act 2014)

- Empowerment, Prevention, Proportionality, Protection, Partnership, Accountability

5.3 Reporting and Responding

- All concerns must be reported immediately via the internal safeguarding systems.
- Emergency action: Call 999 if someone is at immediate risk.
- Refer to Adult Social Care for assessment and intervention.
- Record all actions and decisions in the case management system.
- Cooperate fully with statutory agencies (e.g., Section 42 Enquiries).

5.4 Consent and Capacity

- Assume capacity unless proven otherwise.
- Share information without consent only if:
 - There is a risk of harm to self/others
 - The person lacks capacity
 - A crime has been or may be committed
 - Legal requirements (e.g., court order)

5.5 Making Safeguarding Personal

- Involve adults in decisions about their safety and support.
- Respect their wishes, feelings, and beliefs.

6. Safeguarding Children

6.1 Definition

A child is anyone under 18. A young person may be up to 25 if still receiving children's services.

6.2 Types of Abuse (Children Act 1989 & 2004)

Emotional, Physical, Sexual, Neglect, Online abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation, Forced Marriage, Bullying/Cyberbullying, Grooming, Radicalisation

6.3 Principles (Working Together 2018)

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- Early help and intervention are essential.

- Multi-agency working is critical.

6.4 Reporting and Responding

- All concerns must be reported immediately via the internal safeguarding system or app.
- Emergency action: Call 999 if a child is at immediate risk.
- Refer to Children's Social Care for assessment and intervention.
- No need for parental consent to refer a child at risk.
- Record all actions and decisions in the case management system.
- Cooperate fully with statutory agencies (e.g., Section 47 Enquiries).

6.5 Working with Families

- Work in partnership with families and agencies to achieve the best outcomes for the child.
- Respect diversity and cultural context but never accept abuse or neglect.

7. Safer Workforce

Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) is committed to ensuring that all employee, volunteers, contractors, and Board members uphold the highest standards of conduct and professionalism to safeguard children, young people, and adults at risk. We recognise that a safer workforce is fundamental to effective safeguarding and to maintaining the trust and confidence of our residents and communities.

7.1 Safer Recruitment

All employees and volunteers who have regular contact with residents, especially those who may be vulnerable, are subject to robust recruitment and selection processes.

This includes:

- Roles where a disclosure and barring check is required, until the check is satisfactory, employees will not work alone with children or adults at risk but may be permitted to work under the direct supervision of an existing employee who has been satisfactorily checked.
- Verification of identity, qualifications, and employment history.
- Obtaining and checking references, including from the most recent employer.
- Ensuring that any gaps in employment are explored and explained.
- Adherence to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Order 1975, as amended).

7.2 Induction and Training

- Requirements for Safeguarding training is identified on individual training matrix's, which is clearly identifiable on Kallidus the Learning Management System, where staff can book sessions through a self-service model which is then reviewed at 1-2-1's and via their line manager as well as through the Learning & Development team.

- Mandatory safeguarding training is provided for all employees, with regular refresher courses to ensure knowledge remains current and in line with legislative and policy changes.
- Additional, role-specific training is provided for those in specialist or frontline roles (e.g., housing officers, Housing with support Officers).
- Training includes awareness of different types of abuse, how to recognise signs of abuse or neglect, and how to respond appropriately.

7.3 Code of Conduct and Professional Boundaries

- All employees and volunteers are required to adhere to the PCH Employee Code of Conduct.
- These policies set clear expectations for behaviour, relationships with residents, and the use of social media and digital communication.
- Breaches of the Code of Conduct or Professional Boundaries Policy are treated seriously and may result in disciplinary action.

7.4 Supervision and Support

- Managers provide regular supervision and support to employees, including opportunities to discuss safeguarding concerns, reflect on practice, and access advice or guidance.
- Employees are encouraged to seek support if they are unsure about a situation or need help managing the emotional impact of safeguarding work.

7.5 Contractors and Supply Chain Safeguarding

PCH recognises that contractors and others working on our behalf play a critical role in delivering services to residents, including entering residents' homes and private spaces. We therefore consider contractor safeguarding to be an integral part of our overall safeguarding framework and our commitment to preventing and responding to abuse and neglect.

PCH defines and enforces safeguarding requirements for contractors through its procurement processes, contract terms and Supply Chain Code of Conduct, ensuring these expectations are consistently applied and subject to monitoring and assurance.

7.5.1 Safeguarding Responsibility

All contractors, sub-contractors, agency staff and supply chain partners working on behalf of PCH are expected to:

Adhere to this Safeguarding Policy and all related procedures

- Promote the safety, wellbeing and dignity of residents
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times
- Report any safeguarding concerns, suspicions or allegations immediately via PCH reporting processes
- Cooperate fully with any safeguarding enquiries or investigations

PCH will ensure that safeguarding responsibilities are clearly communicated and embedded within procurement processes, contract terms, and the Supply Chain Code of

Conduct.

7.5.2 Risk-Based Approach to Contractor Access

PCH applies a risk-based approach to safeguarding where contractors are required to enter residents' homes.

In doing so, we recognise that:

- Residents may be in a position of trust and reliance
- Contractors may work unsupervised within private homes
- Some residents may have additional vulnerabilities, including where these are not formally assessed

Safeguarding requirements and controls will therefore be determined proportionately

based on:

- The nature and frequency of access to residents' homes
- The level of contact with residents
- The level of supervision
- Any known vulnerability or safeguarding risk

7.5.3 Contractor Vetting and Pre-Engagement Checks

PCH requires that appropriate pre-engagement checks are undertaken for all contractor personnel undertaking resident-facing work.

Minimum requirements will be defined through procurement standards and contract conditions, and include, as appropriate:

- Verification of identity and right to work
- Confirmation of relevant qualifications and competence
- Employment and/or character references
- Confirmation that individuals are authorised and approved to work on PCH contracts

Suppliers are responsible for ensuring these checks are completed, with PCH retaining oversight, assurance and the right to verify compliance.

7.5.4 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and Safeguarding Checks

PCH recognises that eligibility for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks is defined by legislation and varies depending on the nature of the role.

- Where roles meet the legal criteria, appropriate DBS checks will be required
- Where roles do not meet eligibility criteria, PCH will not rely solely on minimum legal requirements but will implement proportionate safeguarding controls to mitigate risk

Minimum safeguarding requirements for contractor roles, including the use of DBS checks where appropriate, will be set out through procurement and contractual arrangements based on a risk-based assessment of the role and level of access to residents.

Additional safeguarding measures may include:

- Enhanced supervision or restrictions on lone working
- Specific working arrangements for higher risk situations
- Clear escalation routes for any resident concerns
- Use of risk assessments to inform access to residents' homes

7.5.5 Safeguarding Training and Competence

PCH requires that all contractors undertaking resident-facing work are appropriately trained and competent in safeguarding.

Suppliers must ensure that personnel:

- Complete safeguarding awareness training appropriate to their role prior to undertaking work on PCH contracts
- Understand professional boundaries, expectations of conduct, and how to recognise and report safeguarding concerns
- Comply with all relevant safeguarding procedures when working on behalf of PCH

Training requirements will be defined and monitored through contractual and performance management arrangements. PCH reserves the right to require evidence of safeguarding training completion prior to individuals undertaking resident-facing work

7.5.6 Standards of Conduct and Behaviour

All contractors are required to meet PCH's standards of conduct when working in residents' homes. This includes:

- Treating residents with respect, dignity and professionalism
- Maintaining clear professional boundaries at all times
- Not developing inappropriate personal, social or financial relationships
- Carrying appropriate identification and complying with PCH verification requirements
- Following agreed lone working and safety procedures

Any breach of these standards will be treated seriously and may result in immediate removal from service delivery and further contractual action.

7.5.7 Safeguarding in Procurement and Contract Management

Safeguarding requirements are embedded within PCH's procurement and contract management processes to ensure that expectations are clear, enforceable and monitored.

This includes:

- Inclusion of safeguarding requirements within contracts, specifications and the Supply Chain Code of Conduct
- Requirement for suppliers to maintain appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and training

- Defined expectations for subcontractor compliance with safeguarding standards
- Clear requirements for the reporting and management of safeguarding incidents
- Monitoring of safeguarding performance through contract management arrangements

Failure to meet safeguarding requirements may result in contractual remedies, including removal of personnel or termination of contract where appropriate.

7.5.8 Subcontractor Compliance

Suppliers must ensure that all subcontractors engaged in delivering services on behalf of PCH:

- Meet all safeguarding requirements set out by PCH
- Are subject to equivalent vetting, training and conduct standards
- Are not deployed to resident-facing work without full compliance with safeguarding requirements

PCH reserves the right to require approval and assurance prior to subcontractor engagement in resident-facing activities.

7.5.9 Assurance, Audit and Monitoring

PCH will seek assurance that safeguarding standards are met across its supply chain through:

- Contract management and performance monitoring
- Review of safeguarding policies, training records and compliance evidence
- Audit rights to verify safeguarding arrangements where appropriate

Suppliers must provide evidence of safeguarding compliance upon request and cooperate fully with any audit or review.

7.5.10 Reporting, Allegations and Escalation

Any safeguarding concern involving a contractor, including allegations of abuse or inappropriate behaviour, will be:

- Treated with the same seriousness as concerns involving PCH employees
- Subject to immediate risk assessment and escalation
- Reported to relevant safeguarding leads and, where appropriate, statutory agencies

PCH may require the immediate removal of individuals from service delivery where safeguarding concerns arise.

7.5.11 Learning, Review and Continuous Improvement

PCH is committed to learning from incidents, complaints and feedback involving contractor-related safeguarding.

We will:

- Review safeguarding arrangements following incidents or emerging risks
- Use learning to inform policy, procurement and contract requirements
- Regularly review our approach to ensure alignment with best practice, regulatory expectations and resident feedback

7.6 Whistleblowing and Reporting Concerns

- PCH has a clear Whistleblowing Policy to support an employee in raising concerns about the conduct of colleagues, contractors, or others working on behalf of PCH.
- Employees are encouraged to report any concerns about the safety or wellbeing of residents, or about the behaviour of colleagues, without fear of reprisal.
- All concerns are taken seriously and investigated promptly, with appropriate action taken as necessary.

7.7 Managing Allegations Against an Employee

- Any allegation that an employee, volunteer, or contractor has harmed or may harm a child or adult at risk is managed in accordance with statutory guidance and PCH procedures.
- This includes immediate risk assessment, referral to statutory agencies (e.g., Local Authority Designated Officer, police), and suspension or redeployment of the individual where necessary.
- PCH cooperates fully with external investigations and takes appropriate disciplinary action where allegations are substantiated.

7.8 Ongoing Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

- PCH regularly reviews its policies and procedures to ensure they reflect current legislation, guidance, and best practice

8. Partnership Working

Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) recognises that safeguarding is most effective when delivered in partnership with others. We are committed to working collaboratively with statutory agencies, voluntary and community organisations, and other relevant partners to protect and promote the welfare of children, young people, and adults at risk.

Our Approach to Partnership Working

- **Multi-Agency Collaboration:**
PCH actively participates in local safeguarding arrangements, including Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH), Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC), Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), and local safeguarding boards. We share information, attend strategy meetings, and contribute to joint decision-making to ensure a coordinated response to safeguarding concerns.

- **Information Sharing:**
We share information lawfully, proportionately, and in a timely manner with partner agencies to protect those at risk. Our employees are trained to understand when and how to share information, in line with the Data Protection Act 2018, GDPR, and statutory safeguarding guidance. We recognise that effective safeguarding sometimes requires sharing information without consent, where there is a risk of significant harm.
- **Community and Voluntary Sector Engagement:**
PCH works with local voluntary and community groups, advocacy services, and specialist agencies to ensure that residents have access to a wide range of support. We value the expertise and insight of these partners, particularly in reaching and supporting those who may be less likely to engage with statutory services.
- **Working with Residents and Families:**
We involve residents, families, and carers in safeguarding processes wherever possible, respecting their views and supporting them to participate in decisions about safety and wellbeing. We recognise the importance of building trust and working together to achieve the best outcomes.
- **Learning and Improvement:**
PCH contributes to and learns from safeguarding adult reviews, serious case reviews, and other multi-agency audits and investigations. We use learning from these processes to improve our own practice and to influence wider system improvements.
- **Joint Training and Development:**
We participate in joint training, workshops, and awareness-raising activities with partner agencies to ensure a shared understanding of safeguarding responsibilities, thresholds, and procedures.
- **Escalation and Challenge:**
Where there are concerns about the response of another agency, PCH will use established escalation procedures to ensure that safeguarding concerns are addressed appropriately and without delay.

Our Commitment

- To be an active, reliable, and constructive partner in all safeguarding forums and processes.
- To build and maintain strong relationships with statutory, voluntary, and community partners.
- To ensure that partnership working is embedded in all aspects of our safeguarding practice, from frontline service delivery to strategic planning and governance.

9. Confidentiality and Data Protection

Under the Data Protection Act 2018, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Human Rights Act 1998, all personal and sensitive organisational information,

however received, is treated as confidential. This includes:

- anything of a personal nature that is not a matter of public record about a resident, client, applicant, employee or board member
- sensitive organisational information.

PCH employees will ensure that they only involve other agencies and share information where there is a legal basis for processing the information.

Circumstances in which sharing confidential information in making a referral without consent will normally be justified in the public interest are:

When there is evidence that the adult/child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm; or

- There is reasonable cause to believe that an adult/child may be suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm; or
- To prevent significant harm arising to children and young people or serious harm to adults, including through the prevention, detection and prosecution of serious crime

In some cases, it may be appropriate to carry out a data protection impact assessment before sharing data without consent. This is not a requirement in cases of potential significant harm and urgency

10. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

PCH will apply this policy consistently and fairly and will not discriminate against anyone based on any relevant characteristics, including those set out in the Equalities Act 2010.

PCH will make this policy available in other languages and formats on request. We will carry out an equality impact assessment on this policy, in line with our corporate procedure.

PCH comply with the Equality Act 2010 by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity for people who share protected characteristics and those who do not; and
- Foster good relations between different groups.

We will ensure that no resident is treated less favourably on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. We will make reasonable adjustments to support residents with additional needs, ensure accessible information, and review our processes regularly to identify and address any inequalities arising from the implementation of this policy.

All contractors employed by PCH or carrying out works on PCH owned or managed premises are required to adhere to the commitments we have made to valuing and

promoting equality, diversity and inclusion across our services.

11. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed on a 3 yearly basis or more frequently in response to changes in legislation, regulatory guidance, good practice or changes in other relevant PCH policy.

Our performance in relation to the delivery of the services and activities set out in this policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis through our established reporting mechanisms to our Senior Management Team, Executive Team, Board and associated committees.

12. Related Policies and Procedures

- Safeguarding Adults Procedure
- Safeguarding Children Procedure
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Employee Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

- Domestic Abuse Policy

13. Appendices

Appendix 1: Types of Adult Abuse (Care Act 2014)

Appendix 2: Types of Child Abuse (Children Act 1989 & 2004)

Appendix 3: Six Key Principles of Safeguarding (Care Act 2014)

APPENDIX 1 – Types of adult abuse

The Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance identifies the following main categories of safeguarding related abuse.

Physical abuse – including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.

Domestic violence – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called ‘honour’ based violence.

Sexual abuse – including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

Psychological abuse – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion,

harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

Financial or material abuse – including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Modern slavery – encompasses slavery; human trafficking; forced labour; and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Discriminatory abuse – including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

Organisational abuse – including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

Neglect and acts of omission – including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating

Self-neglect – this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

It is important to note that these categories should not limit our view of what constitutes abuse or neglect, as they can take many forms and the circumstances of the individual case should always be considered. Exploitation is a common theme across the types of abuse and neglect listed above.

APPENDIX 2 – Types of child abuse

The Children Act 1989 makes provision for the care and protection of children and young people at risk from significant harm. The definitions of abuse below are included in this Act.

Emotional abuse – Actual or potential severe effects on the emotional and behavioural development of a child/young person. This may be caused by continuous ill treatment or rejection.

Physical abuse – The actual or possible physical injury to a child or young person, this aspect also includes failure to protect the child or young person from such injury.

Sexual abuse – The sexual exploitation of a child or young person.

Neglect – Failure to protect a child or young person from risk of any form of danger. This can include failing to address essential aspects of care, such as starvation.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010) also sets out factors which may make children more vulnerable to abuse:

- Multiple disadvantage and poverty
- Domestic abuse
- Parental mental illness
- Parental problem drug misuse (in particular heroin and crack)
- Parental problem drinking
- parents with a learning disability

More information on the forms of abuse, possible signs and behavioural changes is detailed in the accompanying procedure documents.

Other forms of Abuse.

Online abuse: Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the web, whether through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phones. Children and young people may experience cyberbullying, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or emotional abuse. Children can be at risk of online abuse from people they know, as well as from strangers. Online abuse may be part of abuse that is taking place in the real world (for example bullying or grooming). Or it may be that the abuse only happens online (for example persuading children to take part in sexual activity online).

Child sexual exploitation: Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse in which children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. Children or young people may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. They may also be groomed online. Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Sexual exploitation can also happen to young people in gangs.

Forced marriage can affect children as young as nine and is a safeguarding issue, taking away their freedom, education and often health. Forced marriage is also illegal in

England under the Anti-social behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014'.

Bullying and cyberbullying: The intentional hurting of one person by another, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It is usually repetitive or persistent, although some one-off attacks can have a continuing harmful effect on the victim. It can take many forms, but the 3 main types are physical e.g. hitting, kicking, theft; verbal e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling and emotional e.g. isolating an individual from social activities / acceptance of her/his peer group. Bullying that happens online, using social networks and mobile phones, is often called cyberbullying. A child can feel like there's no escape because it can happen wherever they are, at any time of day or night.

Grooming: Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation. Children and young people can be groomed online or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional. Groomers may be male or female. They could be any age. Many children and young people don't understand that they have been groomed, or that what has happened is abuse.

Radicalisation: is the way a person comes to support or be involved in extremism and terrorism. It's a gradual process so young people who are affected may not realise what's happening. Children and young people can be radicalised by various means; groomed either online or in person by individuals or groups seeking to draw them into extremist activity. Older children or young people might be radicalised over the internet or through peers. Their parents might be unaware or feel powerless to stop their child's radicalisation. Family members who hold harmful, extreme beliefs can also groom their children and siblings.

Appendix 3: Six Key Principles of Safeguarding (Care Act 2014)

Principle	What this means for our customers	What we promise to do
Empowerment	Customers are asked what they want as the outcomes from the safeguarding process and these directly inform what happens.	Engage directly with our customers and ask for input on our approach, to help them make informed decisions.
Prevention	Customers receive clear and simple information about what abuse is, how to recognise the signs and what they can do to seek help.	Take a proactive approach that reduces the risk of serious harm and allows us to become a stronger voice in our local areas regarding safeguarding.
Proportionality	Customers can be sure that professionals will work in their interest and only get involved as much as needed.	Provide appropriate training to enable our employees to respond properly to concerns and help them determine when a concern becomes a safeguarding issue.
Protection	Customers get help and support to report abuse and neglect, and to participate in the safeguarding process as much as they want.	Liaise with local user-led groups and customers, getting their views on how to best support them with safeguarding concerns and identifying those in need.
Partnership	Employees treat any personal and sensitive information in confidence, only sharing what is helpful and necessary. Customers can be confident that professionals will work together and with the customer to get the best result for them.	Seek partnerships with other local providers and create strong links with local authorities and safeguarding boards.
Accountability	Customers understand the role of everyone involved in their life, and so do employee.	Ensure that our systems are reliable and transparent, and that requests for information are dealt with in accordance with statutory requirements.

Document Control – Change History

Version	Effective Date	Responsible Policy Lead	Details of Review / Amendments
3.0	July 2026	Head of Supported Housing and Safeguarding	Policy reviewed and updated, reference to Designated Safeguarding Lead. Policy name change to Safeguarding Policy.
2.1	November 2020	Head of Project, Performance and Policy (Homes & Neighbourhoods)	Updated to reflect changes to child safeguarding.
2.0	May 2019	Head of Project, Performance and Policy (Homes & Neighbourhoods)	Policy updated to include safeguarding children.
1.0	May 2015	Head of Project, Performance and Policy (Homes & Neighbourhoods)	New Safeguarding Adults Policy created.