

MUIRCROFT HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

A Co-operative and Community Benefit Society Reg. No. 19876R

ADULT SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN

MCHA Staff are required to act on all safeguarding concerns, however they become aware of them.

- **In an emergency**, or if you suspect you or someone else is in immediate danger, **phone 999**, to report to the police.
- If you **need help urgently, within the next 24 hours**, contact **Hampshire Adult Services on 0300 555 1386**, or the **police on 101**.
- If the matter is **not urgent**, concerns can be reported online to Hampshire Adult Services www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/adultsocialcare/contact/start-a-referral or via Hampshire Adult Safeguarding Board www.hampshiresab.org.uk
- If the matter is not urgent you can report concerns to a Scheme Manager or your line manager.
- **MCHA's Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP) should be made aware of all safeguarding concerns.**

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING PERSON (DSP) for MCHA

Helen Barber - MCHA Chief Executive

Telephone: 02380849481 Email: Helen@muircroft.co.uk

Adult Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

Safeguarding duties apply to an adult who has care and support needs (regardless of whether any of these needs are being met) and as a result, is unable to protect themselves from the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

REMEMBER

It is not your job to judge or investigate, BUT to inform.

This policy covers the following areas:

- WHAT IS ADULT SAFEGUARDING?
- AIMS OF ADULT SAFEGUARDING
- ACHIEVING THE AIMS OF ADULT SAFEGUARDING
- THE SIX KEY PRINCIPLES OF ADULT SAFEGUARDING
- WHAT CONSTITUTES ABUSE OR NEGLECT?
- WHAT ARE POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT?
- WHO MIGHT ABUSE OR NEGLECT ANOTHER PERSON?
- WHERE MIGHT ABUSE OR NEGLECT OCCUR?
- WHO MIGHT BECOME AWARE OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT?
- PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN
- DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING PERSON (DSP) for MCHA
- WHAT ARE MY RESPONSIBILITIES WHEN I AM AWARE OF A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN?
- WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN HAS BEEN RAISED?
- WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ALLEGATIONS ARE ABOUT A MEMBER OF STAFF OR VOLUNTEER?
- MULTI-AGENCY WORKING
- POLICY HISTORY
- OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

WHAT IS ADULT SAFEGUARDING?

Adult Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

Safeguarding duties apply to an adult who has care and support needs (regardless of whether any of these needs are being met) and as a result, is unable to protect themselves from the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

The Care Act 2014, Sections 42 to 47, Schedule 2, places the safeguarding of adults at risk of abuse or neglect, on a statutory footing. Supplementary guidance can be found under Care and Support Statutory Guidance

The Local Authority (LA) is the lead agency for Adult Safeguarding, in partnership with the police and National Health Service. However, safeguarding is everybody's business, including individuals and organisations (such as MuirCroft Housing Association). Everybody should be clear about their roles and responsibilities.

MuirCroft Housing Association (MCHA) will work together with other organisations to prevent and stop, both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect for an adult, whilst also promoting the adult's wellbeing.

AIMS OF ADULT SAFEGUARDING

The aims of adult safeguarding are to:

- prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs.
- stop abuse or neglect wherever possible.
- safeguard adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live.
- promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults concerned.
- raise public awareness so that professionals, other staff and communities as a whole, play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect.
- provide information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or well-being of an adult.
- address what has caused the abuse or neglect.

ACHIEVING THE AIMS OF ADULT SAFEGUARDING

To achieve the aims of adult safeguarding, MuirCroft Housing Association will:

- ensure staff and volunteers are clear about their adult safeguarding roles and responsibilities, by providing appropriate training, guidance, and support.
- ensure staff and volunteers have the appropriate level Disclosure and Barring Service checks.
- create strong multi-agency partnerships that provide timely and effective prevention of and response to abuse or neglect.
- support the development of a positive learning environment across these partnerships and at all levels within them, to help break down cultures that are risk-averse and seek to scapegoat or blame practitioners.

- promote access to community resources or groups, that can reduce the social and physical isolation which may increase the risk of abuse or neglect.
- provide access to adult safeguarding information and support.
- maintain appropriate record keeping and follow up safeguarding reports.
- implement changes where appropriate to address the causes of abuse or neglect.
- follow the six key principles which should underpin all adult safeguarding work.

THE SIX KEY PRINCIPLES OF ADULT SAFEGUARDING

EMPOWERMENT – People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.

I am asked what I want as the outcomes from the safeguarding process and these directly inform what happens.

PREVENTION – It is better to take action before harm occurs.

I receive clear and simple information about what abuse is, how to recognise the signs and what I can do to seek help.

PROPORTIONALITY – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.

I am sure that the professionals will work in my interest, as I see them, and they will only get involved as much as is needed.

PROTECTION – Support and representation for those in greatest need.

I get help to report abuse and neglect. I get help so that I am able to take part in the safeguarding process to the extent to which I want.

PARTNERSHIP – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting abuse and neglect.

I know that staff treat any personal and sensitive information in confidence, only sharing what is helpful and necessary. I am confident that professionals will work together and with me to get the best result for me.

ACCOUNTABILITY – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

I understand the role of everyone involved in my life and so do they.

WHAT CONSTITUTES ABUSE OR NEGLECT?

There are different types and patterns of abuse and neglect, as well as many different circumstances in which they may take place. The following is not intended to be an exhaustive list, but a guide to the sort of behaviour which could give rise to a safeguarding concern.

- **Physical Abuse** – Including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate physical sanctions.
- **Domestic Violence and Abuse** – *Cross-government definition - Any incident or pattern of incidents of 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.* The abuse can encompass but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse, or 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, 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, 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. **Financial Abuse often occurs alongside other forms of abuse.**
- **Modern Slavery** encompasses – slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude, traffickers and slave masters using 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 care setting, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to ongoing 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 such as neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. Self-neglect will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may not prompt an enquiry. A decision as to whether a safeguarding response is required, will depend on the adult's ability to protect themselves by controlling their own behaviour. A point may come when the adult is no longer able to do this without external support.

Abuse or neglect may be one-off or multiple incidents and affect one person or more. Professionals and others should look beyond single incidents or individuals to identify patterns of harm. In order to see these patterns, it is important that information is recorded and appropriately shared.

Patterns of abuse vary and include **serial abuse, long-term abuse or opportunistic abuse.**

WHAT ARE POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT?

Possible indicators of abuse are signs that draw attention to the fact that something might be wrong. They do not confirm that abuse has occurred but suggest a need for further enquiries to be made.

It is not always easy to spot the signs of abuse. Someone being abused may make excuses for why they are bruised, may not want to go out or talk to people, or may be short of money.

A person may tell you they are being abused or say something that worries you.

You may see or hear someone being bullied or intimidated, made to feel frightened or unhappy, or in a situation of unnecessary risk.

The following is a guide to the range of possible indicators that someone may be experiencing abuse.

You may notice someone:

- becoming quiet and withdrawn
- being aggressive or angry for no obvious reason
- looking unkempt, dirty or thinner than usual
- exhibits sudden changes in their character, such as appearing helpless, depressed or tearful
- displays physical signs – such as bruises, slap marks, black eyes, bleeding, burns/scalds, cigarette marks, other wounds, fractures or other unexplained or untreated injuries
- has the same injuries more than once
- wearing torn or bloodstained clothing
- has sleeping problems
- not wanting to be left by themselves, or alone with particular people
- being unusually light-hearted and insisting there is nothing wrong

You may notice:

- their home may be cold, or unusually dirty or untidy, or you might notice things missing
- a lack of food or drink available
- inappropriately dirty or soiled clothing
- a sudden change in their finances, such as not having as much money as usual to pay for shopping or regular outings
- unexpected debts, bills not being paid, services e.g. telephone being cut off
- unusual official or financial documents in their home or possession
- documents relating to their finances suddenly go missing

You may notice the behaviour of a colleague or other person involved:

- having a dismissive or intolerant attitude
- being task/routine orientated rather than person focused
- insisting on doing tasks alone or being secretive about contact
- overstepping professional boundaries or being over friendly

WHO MIGHT ABUSE OR NEGLECT ANOTHER PERSON?

Abuse or neglect may be perpetrated by a wide range of people, including relatives and next of kin members, professional staff, paid care workers, volunteers, other service users, neighbours, friends and associates, people who deliberately exploit others, or strangers.

There is often particular concern when abuse or neglect is perpetrated by someone in a position of power or authority who uses his or her position to the detriment of the health, safety, welfare and general wellbeing of a vulnerable person.

WHERE MIGHT ABUSE OR NEGLECT OCCUR?

Abuse or neglect can happen anywhere: for example, in someone's own home, in a public place, in hospital, in a care home, or education environment. Abuse can take place when adults live alone or with others.

WHO MIGHT BECOME AWARE OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT?

Anyone can witness, or become aware of information, suggesting that abuse or neglect is occurring or might occur.

Once a safeguarding concern is identified, it is important that a person understands what to do, and where to go locally to get help and advice.

Everyone should be vigilant on behalf of those unable to protect themselves by

- knowing about different types of abuse and neglect, and their possible indicators
- supporting adults to keep safe
- knowing who to tell about suspected abuse or neglect
- supporting adults to think and weigh up the risks and benefits of different options, when exercising choice and control

All MuirCroft Housing Association staff receive Adult Safeguarding training and are familiar with the Association's Adult Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. Staff are therefore aware of different types of abuse and neglect, and their possible indicators.

All MuirCroft staff support adults to keep safe.

A safeguarding concern may be noticed by anyone, including volunteers, contractors, external care staff or support workers, tenants, tenants' friends and family members, or other visitors. Information on who to report safeguarding concerns to is available on noticeboards inside the schemes, at Muir House and Priest Croft, as well as in the Association's main office. [This policy is also available on MuirCroft Housing Association's website.](#) ~~Information can also be found on the Association's website.~~

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WHAT ARE MY RESPONSIBILITIES WHEN I AM AWARE OF A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN?

If someone discloses a safeguarding concern to you directly:

- Assess the situation i.e. **are emergency services required?**
- **Ensure the safety and wellbeing** of the adult, or others.
- **Remain calm.**
- **Listen Carefully** – Do not ask questions but acknowledge regret and concern about what has happened.
- Let the adult tell the story in **their own words**, and **in their own time**.
- **Reassure** the adult that you believe them, and they are right to share this information.
- **Never promise to keep a secret.**
- Try not to show shock, unease or signs of disbelief.
- **Establish** what the **individual's views** are about the safeguarding issue and procedure.
- **Maintain any evidence.** Leave intact and untouched.
- **Do not take photos** or examine injuries.
- **Seek any medical attention** if necessary.
- **Explain the next steps** you will take and **reassure them they will be involved in any decisions** about what will happen next.
- Inform the adult that **you have a duty of care to share the information** with a manager or relevant authority, to prevent harm.
- Make **relevant referral** to Hampshire Adult Services, police, line manager and/or MCHA Designated Safeguarding Person.
- **Make an accurate written record as soon as possible**, of what the adult has told you (using the **exact language they used**), **what you have seen** and **what actions** you have taken. Keep notes factual, **DO NOT** include your own beliefs or background details. **Date and sign this record** and store it safely.

If an adult with mental capacity does not give permission to refer the matter further:

- If consent to share information is not given by an adult with capacity, advise them that you can make an anonymous report.
- Discuss why it is important to share information including the benefits to them and others.
- Explain the possible results of not passing on the content of their disclosure.
- Explore the reasons for their objection to sharing the information.

- **Tell them who will be informed and why.** Make sure they are aware that **information will only be passed to people who need to know.**
- Make sure the adult knows what **support is available** to them.

The **Mental Capacity Act** says:

- assume a person has the capacity to make a decision themselves, unless it's proved otherwise
- wherever possible, help people to make their own decisions
- do not treat a person as lacking the capacity to make a decision just because they make an unwise decision
- if you make a decision for someone who does not have capacity, it must be in their best interests
- treatment and care provided to someone who lacks capacity should be the least restrictive of their basic rights and freedoms

Post disclosure or event:

After a safeguarding concern has been raised in any way, it is important to check that the adult(s) and anyone else affected, are safe and have support, and that all appropriate safeguarding actions have been taken.

Check that accurate records of any disclosure or events have been made and are signed, dated, and stored safely, electronically or on paper.

If you are **supporting someone who has received a disclosure** from an adult, make sure they too are safe. Check they have been able to make signed and dated, accurate records of the disclosure and take these for secure keeping. Keep your own notes that a disclosure has been made, including what they said the adult told them. Your own signed and dated notes should also be stored safely, electronically or on paper.

Check that MCHA's Designated Safeguarding Person has been informed.

REMEMBER

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WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN HAS BEEN RAISED?

- If a disclosure or event raises issues about how **MCHA** is run/managed this must be addressed immediately by the DSP.
- The safeguarding concern may be able to be addressed by MCHA staff, perhaps by obtaining more support for an adult.
- If the **emergency services** have been involved, a safeguarding referral to the Hampshire Adult Services may have been made.
- If you are concerned about abuse or neglect **you** should make a referral to Hampshire Adult Services.

When **making a referral to Hampshire Adult Services**, some basic information will be needed about the adult you are concerned about:

- Name
- Date of birth
- Address, including postcode
- If they are known to Social Services, give ID number if possible
- Type of care/support needs the adult has
- Basic facts about the concern ie details about injuries – type/where/severity?
- Name and address of any alleged perpetrator
- Alleged perpetrators relationship to adult concerned
- Your role and relationship with adult concerned.

The **Local Authority**, Hampshire County Council, have a duty to make enquiries, or ensure others do, where there is 'reasonable cause' to suspect an adult with care and support needs is being abused or neglected, or is at risk of this. **Section 42 of the Care Act 2014.**

The **Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Board (HSAB)** was established in 2003 and is a multi-agency partnership providing strategic leadership for adult safeguarding across the local authority area.

Hampshire Adult Services may undertake a '**Section 42 enquiry**'. This may be a simple conversation first, or a more formal multi-agency response.

An enquiry will aim to:

- Establish the facts
- Find out what outcomes the adult wants
- Assess any protection or support required
- Protect the adult from abuse or neglect in accordance with their wishes
- Decide any follow up action to be taken regarding a person/organisation responsible for abuse or neglect
- Enable the adult to achieve resolution and recovery

Hampshire Adult Services should keep MCHA informed of decisions and actions.

Hampshire Adult Services **may not take any action** if they do not regard the disclosed facts as meeting their threshold level for an enquiry.

If you feel this is incorrect, follow up the matter with MCHA's DSP. There will also be details on the Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Board website about who to contact to escalate your concern. www.hampshiresab.org.uk

Following any safeguarding concern that is raised, **the situation should always continue to be monitored**, keeping yourself and the adult safe.

If **new information** arises, or **circumstances change**, do not hesitate to **make another safeguarding referral**.

Report any criminal offences directly to the police.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ALLEGATIONS ARE ABOUT A MEMBER OF STAFF OR VOLUNTEER?

If a safeguarding concern raises allegations about a member of staff or volunteer, such as a member of the Board of Management:

- Take notes about the facts of the allegation
- Make sure everyone is safe

- Report the allegation to MCHA's DSP
- Report the allegation to the relevant authority, such as the police, if necessary
- It may be necessary to suspend, or place on leave, the member of staff or volunteer concerned, whilst the allegation is investigated. **Ensure MCHA Disciplinary Procedure in Employee Handbook is followed.**
- Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Board should be made aware
- It may also be necessary to inform the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

If the allegation is about MCHA's Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP), the allegation should be reported directly to the Association's **Chairman of the Board of Management**.

MuirCroft Housing Association requires all members of staff to have a **Basic DBS Check**.

MCHA has a responsibility to report to DBS if a member of staff has:

- Had their employment terminated because they have/or may have harmed someone
- Resigned before MCHA could action a planned termination of their employment for the above

MCHA staff and volunteers must always act whenever abuse or neglect is suspected, including when a legitimate concern is not acted upon. **Whistle blowers** are given protection under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. Whistle blowers will not be treated unfavourably because of a safeguarding disclosure. Staff should contact MCHA's DSP and refer to MCHA's Whistleblowing Policy.

Complaints from staff will be dealt with in accordance with MCHA's Grievance Procedure which can be found in the Employee Handbook.

MULTI-AGENCY GUIDANCE

Local Multi-Agency Guidance on Adult Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities, which includes housing sector staff, can be found on the Hampshire Adult Safeguarding Board website.

www.hampshiresab.org.uk

POLICY HISTORY

Created by	Jacqui Willbourne	March 2021
Approved by	Board of Management	
Policy circulated		
Review		
Next review due		

USEFUL CONTACTS

ACTION ON ELDER ABUSE The National Careline	0800 0699 784
ELDER ABUSE RESPONSE HELPLINE 9-5 Mon to Fri	0808 8088 141
AGE UK 8am to 7pm daily	0800 055 6112
CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU National Phone Service	0800 144 8848
PROTECT (Formerly PUBLIC CONCERN AT WORK) (Practical and legal advice on how to raise concern at work)	020 7404 6609 and 020 3117 2550 whistle@protect-advice.org.uk
RAPE CRISIS 12.00-14.30 and 19.00-21.30	0808 802 9999
SAMARITANS Call 24/7 24 Hour response to emails	Call 116 123 Email jo@samaritans.org
WOMEN'S AID	womensaid.org.uk
VICTIM SUPPORT 24/7 Support line	0808 1689 111 www.victimsupport.org.uk