

## Safeguarding Policy

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### 1. Context

- 1.1 Sapphire Independent Housing aims to take all reasonable measures to provide safe accommodation and services for all its service users who may include children, and adults at risk.
- 1.2 The protection and safety of children, and adults at risk is everybody's responsibility.
- 1.3 All staff must recognise this and must report any concerns for the well being of all service users.
- 1.4 Sapphire Independent Housing recognises its responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of those who are at risk. This requires us to:
- Provide effective management for staff, through supervision, support and training
  - Include continuous risk assessment within our work with service users
  - Develop and maintain effective information sharing with statutory services and other key partners
  - Recruit safely ensuring all necessary checks are made

### 2. Objectives

- 2.1 The objectives of the policy are
- To explain the responsibilities the organisation and its staff have in respect of vulnerable adult protection
  - To provide staff with an overview of safeguarding and a clear procedure to be implemented when issues arise
  - To develop a culture that does not tolerate abuse and which encourages people to raise concerns
  - To ensure that safeguarding concerns and referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the needs of the client.

### 3. Definitions

#### 3.1 Abuse

The Department of Health's No Secrets (2000) defines abuse:

*"Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons"*

#### 3.2. An Adult at Risk

An 'adult at risk' (DoH, 2000) is an adult aged 18 years or over who:

- Is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and
  - Who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself
- OR**
- Unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation

Adults outside of this definition may also be vulnerable to abuse due to low self-esteem, social exclusion, drug or alcohol misuse, domestic violence victims

### 3.3 Children

The Children Acts 1989 and 2004 define a child as:

*“Anyone who has not yet reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday”.*

### 3.4 Disclosure

Disclosure is when a person tells someone else of abuse that has happened to them

### 3.5 Alerting

The process of reporting concerns of actual or suspected abuse or neglect to the relevant authority.

### 3.6 Capacity

Capacity is the ability to make a decision about a matter at the time the decision needs to be made. There is a presumption that adults have mental capacity to make informed decisions about their lives. If someone has been assessed as not having mental capacity, decisions will be made in their best interest.as set out in the Mental Capacity Act 2005

## 4. Key policy principles

### 4.1 The following principles shape Sapphire Independent Housing’s approach to safeguarding. We recognise that

- The majority of our clients have the capacity to keep themselves safe and make informed choices and decisions. We will not assume someone is vulnerable to abuse e.g. because they have mental health needs. We will act to support clients and assist them in seeking protection from abuse, in light of particular concerns and in response to an individual’s particular needs.
- Our duty to train staff to recognise the signs of abuse
- Our obligation to ensure we only recruit and employ staff who have undergone DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) We will share information on staff found to be unsuitable to work with people at risk by referring their details to the DBS
- That clear ,concise ,factual and accurate record keeping is essential in safeguarding
- The value of promoting safeguarding so that clients can safeguard themselves
- Safeguarding is a multi- agency approach which depends on effective joint working.
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## 5. Legal Framework

### 5.1 The following legislation and guidance applies

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- Care Bill 2013
- Children Act (1989 and 2004)
- Public Interest Disclosure Act (1998)

**6. Cross References**

6.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with other policies for the organisation including

- Recruitment Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Professional Boundaries Policy
- Needs Assessment, Risk Assessment and Support Planning
- Serious Incident Reporting
- Whistleblowing Policy

**7. Review**

7.1 This policy will be reviewed every two years and a Safeguarding Report will be presented annually to the Board

## Safeguarding Procedure

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### **8 The Role of Staff**

- 8.1 Staff have a responsibility to be aware and alert to signs that all is not well with a vulnerable person. They are not responsible for diagnosing, investigating or providing a therapeutic response to abuse. In addition, not all concerns relate to abuse, there may well be other explanations. It is important to keep an open mind and consider what is known about the client and their circumstances.

### **9 Safeguarding List**

- 9.1 Any clients at risk, or those who pose a risk to others, can be monitored by way of an internal Safeguarding list, to be discussed daily as part of the shift handover.
- 9.2 Some clients identified as at risk, or identified as posing a risk to others, may not wish to be on the Safeguarding List. The level of risk they face or pose to others will need to be considered as to whether we are able to respect their wishes.
- 9.3 As an alternative, staff may wish to consider arranging more frequent keywork sessions with a client rather than placing them on the Safeguarding List.
- 9.4 The Safeguarding list should be linked into the client's risk assessment and support planning process to ensure that protective measures are in place for those identified as at risk or those who pose a risk to others.
- 9.5 The aim of the Safeguarding list is to inform all staff members of any ongoing information with the aim of the prevention of harm or abuse to individuals.

### **10 Consent**

- 10.1 Where an adult at risk is capable of giving informed consent, it is good practice to seek their consent for any safeguarding interventions.
- 10.2 If an adult at risk with mental capacity does not give their consent for any safeguarding intervention, their wishes will be respected unless:
- There is a public interest, for example, by not taking any action will place other residents, adults or children at risk
  - We have a duty of care to intervene e.g. a crime has been or may be committed
- 10.3 Any refusals for safeguarding interventions by a client should be recorded.
- 10.4 Where staff feel that a client lacks the mental capacity to make an informed decision, a referral should be made to the local Community Mental Health Team for a professional assessment of capacity under the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

### **11 Information sharing with relevant agencies**

- 11.1 Staff should never promise confidentiality to any individual who discloses abuse. Within that context, staff should assure the client that the matter will only be disclosed to people who need to know about it

- 11.2 Where risks are particularly high and to ensure the safety of an adult or child at risk, the sharing of information (without consent) with relevant agencies, such as social services or police, is permitted under the Data Protection Act 1998, Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Human Rights Act 1998..

## **12 Managing an Incident of Suspected or Actual Abuse**

- 12.1 Concerns may be raised as a result of:

- A direct disclosure by the adult or young person
- A concern raised by staff, other clients, a carer etc.
- An observation of the behaviour of the client or of the behaviour of another person towards the client

- 12.2 The first priority for all staff should be to ensure the safety and protection of the adult or young person at risk (*See Section 12. If the perpetrator of abuse is a client in the service*).

- 12.3 In situations where there is no risk of significant harm to an individual, staff should report any concerns or suspicions to the Service Manager at the earliest opportunity in strict confidentiality and follow the procedure outlined in *Section 9 Safeguarding List*.

- 12.4 If an incident or concern is raised out-of-hours, staff should consider whether there is a risk of significant harm to an individual. If there is such a risk then staff should contact the On Call Manager for advice.

- 12.5 There may be certain situations where staff may need to contact other services without informing a Manager first, for example:

- Where there is an urgent need for medical assistance
- Where there is an immediate risk of significant harm indicating that urgent action is required to protect an adult or child at risk
- Where a crime has been committed and there may be a need to preserve evidence

- 12.6 A Serious Incident Reporting Form should be completed by staff within 24 hours for all serious safeguarding concerns that are alerted to Social Care Teams.

- 12.7 The report should be a factual and accurate account of the incident including what the adult at risk said happened in their own words, what any witnesses saw and what action has been taken e.g. calls made, people spoken to, referrals made etc.

- 12.8 A member of staff will be available for general support to the victim and perpetrator, and they may arrange support from other professionals as listed in Appendix II.

- 12.9 Managers should also ensure that appropriate support and guidance is made available to staff who are dealing with any concerns or incidents. (For any serious safeguarding concerns where there is a risk of significant harm to an individual, support can also be sought from the On-Call Manager).

- 12.10 If a concern is raised in good faith but it is not upheld e.g. due to lack of evidence, Sapphire Independent Housing will take steps to ensure that all parties feel safe in line with our Confidential Reporting Policy.

- 12.11 The Service Manager will relay any serious safeguarding concerns to the relevant Local Authority Adult/ Children's Social Services (see Appendix II for contact details), to the Service Commissioner and Senior Management.
- 13 Is the perpetrator of harm/abuse a client in our service?**
- 13.1 If the alleged perpetrator is a client in our service, they should be spoken to about the incident or concern with a Line Manager/Service Manager.
- 13.2 The risk assessment should be reviewed to assess the risk that the perpetrator poses to others and appropriate protection measures should be put in place.
- 13.3 A key consideration will be the level of the risk that the perpetrator poses to others and what protection measures need to be put in place e.g. is it appropriate for them to remain in the service, should they be moved to another room or should a referral be made to another agency for support.
- 13.4 If an allegation of harm or abuse against a client is upheld, action will be taken in consultation with them, taking into account their needs. If necessary, action may be taken in accordance with their Tenure Agreement.

**Guidance in the area of safeguarding identify seven discrete but related forms of abuse.**

**PHYSICAL ABUSE** is the non-accidental infliction of physical force that results (or could result) in bodily injury, pain or impairment

Example behaviour hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, intentional misuse of medication, confinement, restraint or other inappropriate sanctions.

Signs of physical abuse --- Unexplained bruising, fractures, burns, cuts or marks, Several different explanations provided for an injury, Unexplained weight loss, dehydration or complaints of hunger, Any self-inflicted injury, Untreated medical problems, Over or under medication, Poor personal hygiene including incontinence

**EMOTIONAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE** is any action which has an adverse impact on the emotional wellbeing of individuals, causing suffering or affecting their quality of life and can occur with other forms of abuse.

Example behaviour being ignored, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact or communication, withdrawal from services or supportive networks, humiliation, blaming, bullying, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment or verbal abuse/excessive criticism.

Signs of emotional abuse --- Unexplained fear or defensiveness, Anxiety, withdrawal, low self-esteem, depression, self harm, Lack of concentration, Difficulty in gaining access to the individual on their own, or the individual having the opportunity to contact you

**SEXUAL ABUSE** is the direct or indirect involvement of an individual in sexual activity which they do not have the capacity to understand, have not consented to, or to which they were pressurised into consenting.

Example behaviour includes non-contact acts such as indecent exposure, pornography, serious teasing, innuendo or harassment and contact acts such as being coerced to touch parts of the body, rape or assault

Signs of sexual abuse --- Sexually transmitted disease or pregnancy, Pain, injury or itching in the anal, genital or abdominal area, Sexual inappropriate behaviour, Not wanting to be touched, Obsession with washing

**DISCRIMINATORY ABUSE** is abusive or derisive attitudes or behaviour motivated by prejudice against an individual because he/she is perceived to belong to a specific group; this may be age, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexual orientation amongst others.

Example behaviour includes harassment, belittling or humiliation, racist/ sexist slurs or hate crime.

Signs of discriminatory abuse --- Over critical or insulting remarks about an individual, Lack of self-esteem, Emotional withdrawal and symptoms of depression, Religious and cultural needs are not met, Regarding someone as being intrinsically different from other human beings

**FINANCIAL ABUSE** is the theft, or misuse of money or personal possessions.

Example behaviour includes theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Signs of financial abuse --- Person lacking goods or services they can afford, Person not having normal home comforts as others, Unusual difficulty with finances, Not paying bills, Visitors whose visits always coincide with the day a person's benefits are cashed

**NEGLECT or acts of omission** means an individual is treated unsatisfactorily, which causes them harm, by not providing an adequate standard of care or failing to act when appropriate, either deliberately or by default.

Example behaviour includes ignoring physical or medical care needs, failure to respond to a person's needs or preventing someone else from meeting these needs, failure to support access to health, social care or educational services, preventing someone from interacting with others or the withholding of the necessities of life e.g. medication or heating.

Signs of neglect --- Malnutrition, Neglect of accommodation, including adequate lighting or heating, Failure to provide basic personal care needs, Failure to give correct level of medication, Failure to ensure appropriate privacy and dignity

**INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE** is when abusive behaviour of staff may be part of the accepted system or custom within an organisation such as a hostel, residential home or supported housing. Staff that are employed to support people in their own homes may also abuse clients.

Institutional abuse usually takes place because staff are inadequately trained, receive minimal support from management, are discouraged from raising concerns about poor practice or work where there are inadequate staffing levels.

Example behaviour includes inappropriate use of rules and procedures, deprived environment, lack of stimulation or lack of tailored support

Signs of institutional abuse --- Instances of professionals having treated individuals badly or unsatisfactorily, or acting in a way that causes harm to them, Lack of personal clothing and possessions.

## APPENDIX II - USEFUL CONTACTS

Organisation	Purpose	Contact Details
Action on Elder Abuse	Protect, and prevent the abuse of, vulnerable older adults	<a href="http://www.elderabuse.org.uk">www.elderabuse.org.uk</a>  Elder Abuse Response Line - 0808 808 8141 or enquiries@elderabuse.org.uk
SeniorLine	Telephone helpline run by Help the Aged, providing information and advice for people over 50	0808 800 6565 or seniorline@helptheaged.org.uk
Values into Action	Working for rights, equality and citizenship for all people with learning disabilities	<a href="http://www.viauk.org">www.viauk.org</a>
Men's Aid	Free practical advice and support for men who have been abused	0871 223 9986 (8am – 8pm seven days a week)
Women's Aid	National charity working to end domestic violence against women and children.	<a href="http://www.womensaid.org.uk">www.womensaid.org.uk</a>  National Domestic Violence Helpline - 0808 2000 247
Samaritans	24 hour helpline providing non-judgemental, confidential, emotional support to anyone in a crisis	<a href="http://www.samaritans.org">www.samaritans.org</a> 0845 7 90 90 90
Victim Support	Free and confidential help to victims of crime, their family, friends and anyone else affected	<a href="http://www.victimsupport.org.uk">www.victimsupport.org.uk</a> Supportline - 0845 3 0 30 900
Childline	Free confidential helpline for children needing advice on abuse, bullying and other concerns	<a href="http://www.childline.org.uk">www.childline.org.uk</a> 0800 1111
Kidscape	A charity working to prevent bullying and child sexual abuse	<a href="http://www.kidscape.org.uk">www.kidscape.org.uk</a> 08451 205204
Women's Aid	National charity working to end domestic violence against women	<a href="http://www.womensaid.org.uk">www.womensaid.org.uk</a> 0800 2000247



## APPEXDIX III - CONTACT DETAILS TO REPORT INCIDENTS OF ABUSE

<b>BOROUGH</b>	<b>CONTACT DETAILS</b>
Brent	Adult Social Services 020 8 937 4300 Police Community Safety Unit 020 8 733 3742 (to report a crime)
Camden	Adult Social Care Services Information and Access Team – 020 7 974 4000 (Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm) Out of Hours – 020 7 974 4444  To report a crime: Camden Police Community Safety Unit – 020 7 404 1212 <a href="mailto:csu.camden@met.police.uk">csu.camden@met.police.uk</a>
Hertsmere	Adult Care Services – 01923 471 400  To report a crime: Hertsmere Community Safety Unit – 020 8207 7801
Islington	Social Care Access Team – 020 7 527 2299 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm) Out of Hours – 020 7 226 0992 (Mon-Fri 5pm – 9am, Sat, Sun, Bank Holiday) <a href="mailto:Information.accessteam@islington.gov.uk">Information.accessteam@islington.gov.uk</a>  To report a crime: Islington Police Community Safety Unit – 020 7 421 0174
Westminster	Safeguarding Adults Team – 020 7 641 2176 (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm) <a href="mailto:safeguardingadults@westminster.gov.uk">safeguardingadults@westminster.gov.uk</a>  Out of Hours – 020 7 641 6000  To report a crime: Police Community Safety Unit – 020 7 486 1212

## Appendix IV - Action to be taken after disclosure of abuse

