
Reference Number:	SG - 01
Date Policy Effective From:	5 September 2019
Date of Last Revision:	1 December 2016
Equality Impact Assessed	July 2019
Approved By:	Housing and Assets Committee
Date Approved:	24 November 2016

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1.0 Introduction

Purpose

Livin is committed to safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk of abuse and neglect. The Care Act 2014 places a duty on local authorities to co-operate with a range of organisations including registered providers of social housing in the exercise of their functions which include safeguarding. This policy will ensure that Livin complies with this obligation.

Our safeguarding policy and supporting procedures fit within this overall responsibility. They relate specifically to adults or children who are being abused or neglected by others, or who are at risk of being abused or neglected by others.

We believe that living a life that is free from harm and abuse is a fundamental right of every person. We recognise that safeguarding those at risk of abuse is everyone's responsibility.

Specifically, we will:

- Have clear operational policies and procedures to address safeguarding
- Ensure that all staff are familiar with the six principles underpinning safeguarding and are trained in recognising the symptoms of abuse
- Be vigilant and able to respond to safeguarding concerns develop a culture that does not tolerate such abuse and which encourages people to raise concerns
- Have a senior manager taking a lead role in organisational and inter-agency safeguarding arrangements.

Livin recognises that multi-agency co-operation is essential if children, young people and adults at risk are to be protected and will work with local authorities and Inter-agency Partnerships to ensure that this responsibility is carried out effectively.

Principles

Our policy and supporting procedures are based on six key principles which underpin safeguarding as defined by the Care Act 2014:

- Prevention – it is always preferable to take action before harm occurs
- Proportionality – the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented
- Protection – support and representation for those in greatest need

- Empowerment – people being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions through informed consent
- Partnership – local solutions through services working with communities who have a key part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting abuse and neglect
- Accountability – accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

2.0. Policy Statement

Livin is committed to safeguarding children, young people and adults by preventing and reducing the risk of significant harm. This will be achieved by meeting the following objectives;

- We recognise that housing staff and contractors are well placed to identify people at risk of abuse and neglect.
- We recognise that safeguarding requires a multi-agency approach and that regular and sustained joint working is essential to protect people who may be at risk of abuse.
- We recognise the lead responsibility of local authorities in coordinating safeguarding work and our own role in alerting the appropriate services and the police of any concerns regarding safety. Any suspected or actual criminal offence will be referred to the police.
- We recognise that appropriate information sharing between organisations is essential to safeguard people at risk and we will act in accordance with agreed inter-agency information sharing protocols. Where possible, we will seek a person's consent to share information however we cannot guarantee full confidentiality when our responsibility to safeguard adults or children at risk, or the public interest, is greater than our responsibility to an individual.
- We recognise our responsibility to be vigilant regarding the welfare of children and adults at risk and to train staff to recognise the signs of abuse and/or neglect.
- We recognise that abuse may be committed by a member of staff, contractor, agent or by others who are in a trusting relationship with a vulnerable person.
- We recognise our obligation to ensure we only recruit and employ staff working with children, young people and adults at risk who are competent and safe to do so. We will undertake the necessary DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) checks and will share information on staff found to be unsuitable to work with people at risk by referring their details to the DBS. We will ensure via our procurement processes that our contractors and sub-contractors also comply with these

requirements.

- We recognise the need to ensure that all our staff are confident and fully equipped to respond to concerns of abuse. This will be achieved by training that is targeted appropriately to specific roles and through clear procedural guidance and supporting information.
- We recognise the need to ensure that contractors and sub-contractors have an effective safeguarding policy in place and where not, that they are willing to work in accordance with our policy and processes.
- We recognise that good record keeping that is clear, concise, factual, accurate and timely is essential in safeguarding, enabling an appropriate response to concerns.
- We recognise that anyone raising a safeguarding concern in good faith should always be listened to, believed and assured that we will act on their concern.
- We recognise the value in promoting safeguarding so that customers can safeguard themselves.
- We recognise the majority of our customers have the capacity to keep themselves safe and to make informed choices and decisions. We will not assume someone is vulnerable to abuse because of a disability however we will act to support customers and help them to seek protection from abuse, in the light of particular concerns and in response to an individual's particular needs.
- We recognise the importance of operating a victim-centered approach, which treats people with dignity, respect and without prejudice. We will respect the rights of the person causing harm as far as is possible.
- We recognise our responsibility to ensure, where a customer or potential customer is a known risk to others, that a risk assessment is undertaken regarding the appropriateness of any proposed letting and to agree how risks will be managed. We will work in partnership with the relevant Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) or Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) in this respect.
- This Safeguarding Policy is an over-arching policy and is applicable across Livin. It is important that all staff, contractors, board members and involved customers are aware that safeguarding is 'everyone's responsibility' and that we all have responsibility to act on concerns of abuse or neglect.

3.0 Equality and Diversity Statement

This Policy has been developed in line with Livin's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and associated legislation. The protected characteristics of tenants' will be taken into consideration in any safeguarding case to ensure the risk of discrimination and inequality are mitigated and all cases are dealt with fairly and proportionately.

We recognise that specific groups may be more vulnerable to abuse, for example women and people from religious communities may be victims of honour violence. We will be vigilant in these communities, however we will not make assumptions based solely on a person's gender or religion/beliefs.

4.0 Data Protection and Privacy Statement

All personal data gained regarding individuals as part of a safeguarding case will be processed in line with Livin's Confidentiality, Privacy and Data Protection Policy and Procedure and associated policies and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

How Livin can use the personal data gained regarding individuals as part of a safeguarding case is set out in Livin's Privacy Notice which is available on Livin's website.

5.0 Monitoring and Review

This Policy and its supporting procedures will be reviewed no less than every three years by the Executive Director of Housing and Operations.

End of Policy