

Policy Summary: Safeguarding Policy and Procedure	
This policy covers:	The Safeguarding Policy sets out how BHA ensures it can respond to concerns about vulnerable adults and children who live in our properties
Who has overall responsible for ensuring we comply with the policy?	Operations Director is overall responsible person for safeguarding for the association.
Who is involved in implementing this policy day-to-day, and how?	Head of Operations is responsible for the day-to-day operational implementation of this policy All staff are responsible for reporting any suspected abuse to the Head of Operations
The key actions we need to take under this policy are:	Provide staff and contractors with annual training to recognise and report any suspected abuse. To report externally any suspected cases of safeguarding to Islington social care and maintain relationships with social care in each instance.
The KPIs associated with this policy are:	KPIs Create safe and supported communities – safeguarding cases Consumer Standards – Neighbourhood and Communities SE2 provide safe accommodation and work in partnership with other agencies
Policy approved by:	Board November 2024
Due to be reviewed:	Reviewed February 2026 Review due February 2029
Related policies:	Lone Working Data Protection Health and Safety Allocations and Lettings Complaints Decants Equality Harassment and Hate crime Disciplinary Policy

I. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy outlines the steps BHA are to take when a safeguarding concern is raised for either a vulnerable adult or child.
- 1.2 Adults at risk are people who may have care and support needs and might be at risk of abuse or neglect and are unable to protect themselves. For adults at risk, housing providers have a statutory responsibility to report safeguarding concerns, to the local authority. This applies to all housing associations, across all their stock, not just those involved with providing care and support.
- 1.3 The term child refers to all children from birth to their 18th birthday, unless those children are under the care and classed as a looked after children then the age of 25 will apply (if known)
- 1.4 Abuse takes many forms and may consist of single or repeated acts to an adult at risk who has not consented or does not have the capacity to consent.
- 1.5 A child does not have the capacity to consent and so any form of abuse is considered a safeguarding concern.
- 1.6 Abuse may be:
 - Physical, emotional, verbal, social, sexual or psychological
 - Neglect or a failure to act
 - The persuasion of a vulnerable person into financial or sexual transactions to which they have not consented or are unable to consent, unless a child under the age of 16 (for sexual consent)
 - Discriminatory (including hate Crime)
 - Organisational or institutional
 - Self-neglect
 - Modern slavery
 - Cuckooing
 - Financial or material abuse

2. Policy

- 2.1 BHA aims to take all reasonable measures to provide safe accommodation and services.
- 2.2 It is the responsibility of everybody across BHA to raise concerns about whether tenants or their family members are subject to abuse or neglect. This responsibility should extend to contractors working on behalf of BHA.
- 2.3 All staff must report any concerns.

- 2.4 Information will only be shared with people on a 'need to know' basis.
- 2.5 BHA will follow multi-agency safeguarding procedures. Information can be shared with other organisations within the parameters of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and there is a local protocol in place which sets out the principles for sharing information between organisations.
- 2.6 Emergency or life-threatening situations may warrant the sharing of relevant information with the relevant service or agency without consent.
- 2.7 All staff will be trained in Safeguarding annually. This training may include or extend to the Mental Capacity Act.
- 2.8 The Safeguarding Lead for the Association is the Operations Director

3. **Legislation, regulation and official guidance**

BHA will abide by existing regulatory requirements and legislation such as:

- [The Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#)
- [Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003](#)
- [Sexual Offences Act 2003](#)
- [Mental Capacity Act 2005](#)
- [UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006](#)
- [Mental Health Act 2007](#)
- [Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- [Modern Slavery Act 2015](#)
- [Serious Crime Act 2015](#)
- [Mental Capacity \(Amendment\) Act 2019](#)
- [Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#)
- [Serious Violence Duty 2023](#)
- [Prevent Duty 2023](#)
- [European Convention on Human Rights](#)

3. The Care Act 2014 refers to 7 principles that relate to safeguarding:

- Empowerment - People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
- Prevention - It is better to act before harm occurs.

- Proportionality - The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- Protection - Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- Partnership - Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
- Accountability - Accountability and transparency in safeguarding practice.
- Recruitment needs to support the policy by being in accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). This should also apply to contractors.

BHA is not required to be a member of the Safeguarding Adults Board, but we have a statutory obligation to provide information.

4. Procedure

4.1 Action to be taken in an Emergency Situation

4.2 If the situation is an emergency (i.e. where the immediate safety of a child or adult is at risk) then staff members will call for assistance immediately (by calling 999 and /or getting help from another responsible adult) and intervene to protect the individual from further harm if it safe and possible to do so.

4.3 If the abuser is still present, staff should try to calm the situation but should avoid putting themselves at risk. A file note of the incident will be completed and passed to the Head of Operations

The Head of Operations alongside the Operations Director will then raise a safeguarding concern to the Local authority and follow instruction.

Islington Adult Social Care contact details for raising safeguarding adults' concerns:

Access Service

E-mail: Access.Service@islington.gov.uk

Tel: 020 7527 229

5. Action to be taken by Staff on Discovery of Abuse

- 5.1 On discovery of or if staff have any concerns about abuse staff should inform the Head of Operations straight away, or in their absence, the Operations or Chief executive who will agree on the course of action to be taken.
- 5.2 Staff will make a written record immediately of the nature and circumstances of their concern.
- 5.3 If a member of staff is the alleged abuser, then the Chief Executive must be informed. In situations where the individual asks a member of staff not to tell anyone they should reassure the child or vulnerable adult appropriately and explain that they cannot keep that confidentiality and that they have a duty to inform the Head of Operations or Operations Director.
- 5.4 A file note of the incident will be completed and passed to the Head of Operations or Operations Director.

6. Action to be taken by the designated officer on a report of or discovery of abuse

- 6.1 All cases will be referred to social care within one working day by Head of Operations BHA cannot deal with the problem alone, so it will be tackled through a multi-agency approach. It is not our role to investigate our concerns.
- 6.2 It is recognised that consent may not be possible e.g. in cases where people lack capacity. Where this is the case, they will be supported by advocates, so that their best interests are pursued. If it is unclear if the person does lack capacity to make an informed decision, a member of Islington's Adult Social Care team can undertake a capacity assessment.

BHA staff will listen to the person and respect what they want but adults have a general right to independence and choice, but in the context of adult safeguarding these rights can be overridden in certain circumstances

The designated Adult Safeguarding Lead would need to consider any mental capacity issues and whether the person is under coercion or duress. The designated Adult Safeguarding Lead will also need to consider if anyone else is at risk, particularly children.

- 6.3 Referral to the police and/or social services should include the following information:
 - Personal details of the individual

- The referrer's details
 - The substance of the allegation
 - Details of the alleged abuser
 - Details of specific incidents or events including dates, places, injuries, witnesses, etc.
 - In the case of a child if the child has expressed any indication that they wish to take the matter further.
- 6.4 We want to maintain a good relationship with families, so staff will be honest and open and will explain to the family involved as soon as we realise there may be a safeguarding issue, and that we may have to share the information with other agencies. However, parents should not be told if doing so may put the individual at greater risk of harm.
- 6.5 Where a member of staff is the alleged abuser, they should be suspended immediately in line with BHA's disciplinary policy. Any internal investigation should be delayed while a criminal investigation is in progress.
- 6.6 Where a contractor is the alleged abuser, the matter should be reported appropriately, and that individual should not be permitted to carry out any further work on BHA premises until a full investigation has been completed.

7. Training and quality assurance

- 7.1 All staff will receive refresher training in Safeguarding annually so that they are able to identify signs of abuse and be confident in how to raise their concerns.
- 7.2 The Head of Operations will ensure that in each case the risks have been mitigated, there is consistency in the administration of the cases, regulation has been followed and any follow up actions are completed
- 7.3 The Operations Director will spot check periodically

8. Equality Impact Statement:

- 8.1 We will ensure that this policy is applied fairly and consistently. We will not discriminate against any person on any grounds as set out in the Equality Act 2010.