

Safeguarding adults policy

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Policy Owner	Executive Director of Customer Services
Other related documents	<p>Customer Strategy</p> <p>settle’s safeguarding toolkit</p> <p>Recruitment policy and procedures</p> <p>Common Housing Allocations Policy</p> <p>Complaints Policy</p> <p>Arrears Policy</p> <p>ASB Policy</p> <p>Domestic Abuse Policy</p> <p>Staff code of Conduct</p> <p>Disciplinary Procedure</p> <p>Vulnerable Customers Policy</p> <p>Flexicare lettings policy and procedure</p> <p>Temporary Accommodation Policy</p>

Policy statement

At settle, our purpose is to help people who are struggling to find a place to live. We help our customers to stay in their homes comfortably, so that they can live the life they choose. This policy sets out settle's responsibilities to adult residents to ensure all colleagues are clear on our moral and legal obligations.

Some of our residents are at a greater risk due to their support needs, meaning they require more intensive help to sustain their tenancy. This could be from colleagues at settle or from supporting external agencies. The rights of adults at risk of abuse do not fall away because they are at risk. At risk includes those who are unable to take care of, or protect themselves, and whose independence and well-being is at risk without support because they are vulnerable e.g. due to age, physical or mental health, having been in care, prison or other institution. All settle colleagues, including contractors and board members, have a responsibility to adults at risk of abuse. Any concern or suspicion of abuse should trigger a response in every case.

The Care Act 2014 sets out a clear legal framework for local authorities and imposes duties on them to work with housing providers to safeguard adults who have a care and support need. Housing Providers are required to have clear policies and procedures and colleagues must be trained to recognise the signs of abuse or neglect.

We will continue to raise awareness of our adult safeguarding responsibilities with training delivered to all colleagues. We are utilising opportunities to proactively engage with vulnerable customers and - through the data we hold – use our data smartly to focus time on those who are showing signs of vulnerability.

This policy seeks to improve our collaborative working with partner agencies and increase the referrals made to these partners. Colleagues can often fall into the habit of continuing to work on a case due to a lack of support from other agencies or due to pressure to try and support the family with multiple issues. Improving consistency on how and when we refer cases to external agencies is a measure of success for this policy.

Key principles

- Ensure all colleagues are accountable for safeguarding and understand their role in reporting
- Take a resident-led approach to decisions on safeguarding cases; ensuring informed consent obtained
- Responsibility at a senior level for our safeguarding arrangements with settle leaders ensuring their teams understand their legal and moral duties
- Be responsive and adaptable to changes in the way services are delivered by partner agencies
- Seek solutions with partner agencies to support at risk residents; taking action before harm occurs
- Proactively engage with vulnerable customers

- Apply learning from casework and reviews to implement changes as identified.

Policy Actions

- To meet our legal obligations as set out in The Care Act 2014 using the 6 key principles set out – empowerment, prevention, proportionality, protection, partnership and accountability
- Ensure colleagues prioritise reports received of safeguarding concerns to enable our customers to live a life free from abuse and risk of harm
- Assist vulnerable adults experiencing neglect or self-neglect to help them access the relevant care and support in accordance with their needs
- Maintain knowledge on any legislative changes that impact on our obligations to deliver services, ensuring frontline colleagues are aware of any impact this has on service delivery
- Evidence learning and improvement from incidents and case reviews including any cases where risks were not managed in other organisations
- Use safeguarding data to help determine any trends or areas of concerns, with the Director of Housing providing regular reports to the health, safety and wellbeing group
- Manage and report safeguarding issues relating to vulnerable adults living in our homes who may be at risk of abuse neglect or harm
- Take appropriate action against perpetrators of abuse where possible to do so
- Annual refresher training to ensure colleagues understand safeguarding obligations
- Recruitment processes follow the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) regulations and checks for specific roles that work closely with children are carried out.
- Gather and use data to support a preventative approach to protecting vulnerable adults from harm; aiming to mitigate risk before it escalates
- Take prompt action to ensure vulnerable adults living in our homes have a safe physical environment and that the appropriate care is in place, so they have the best quality of life possible
- Assessment and action should be collaboratively sought with specialist agencies with colleagues utilising established links; supported by the seconded community mental health worker. They will work to support anyone reporting concerns about a resident.

Desired outcomes

- Increase on existing number of referrals into external agencies (supported by clear referral pathways) which will improve the number of cases where adults are being supported by agencies appropriately placed; working with settle to sustain tenancies.
- Referring cases at an earlier stage to external partners so that risk of harm is reduced, and that support is received more promptly once we become aware of a safeguarding concern. Measured through case average time being reduced - 177 days for 2022/23

- An increased number of internal referrals achieved through greater awareness raising and training delivered to frontline colleagues. Improves outcomes through more colleagues being able to identify concerns and refer promptly and appropriately.
- Capacity to work on a higher number of cases (146 cases for 2022/23), supporting more tenants in the process and increasing the number of referrals to other agencies
- Increased visits by neighbourhood services – leading to earlier intervention and mitigating the risk of abuse, harm, and neglect to vulnerable adults

Performance indicators

- 100% of colleagues will have regular training at the appropriate level for their role
- Increased number of potential concerns being raised
- Increased number of external referrals to partner agencies
- Safeguarding data contributes to customer insight - regular reporting on levels and types of customer vulnerability
- All reports and outcomes of safeguarding monitored and reviewed if deemed a serious risk to the customer or the business discussed individually at the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Group meeting.
- All case reviews will be undertaken by designated safeguarding leads where it is identified that service delivery has failed to prevent a safeguarding issue.
- Colleague handling of cases will be reviewed by their line manager and missed opportunities or failures will be acted on in performance management meetings and reported to the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Group.
- Feedback from customers and other agencies will be factored into any changes to our approach.

Key legislation

Care Act 2014

Equality Act 2010

Mental Capacity 2005

Human Rights Act 1998

Safeguarding vulnerable groups Act 2006 – disclosure and barring service (DBS)

Sexual Offences Act 2003

Homeless Reduction Act 2017

GDPR regulation 2018

ASB Crime and Policing Act 2014

Female Genital Mutilations Act 2015

Review

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years or when there is a business need or change in legislation.