



Safeguarding Policy 2022/25

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1.0 Introduction

Living are 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 cooperate with a range of organisations including registered providers of social housing in the exercise of their functions which include safeguarding.

This Safeguarding Policy is an over-arching policy and is applicable across all departments. It is important that all employees, contractors, board members, and involved customers are aware that safeguarding is 'everyone's responsibility' and that all have a responsibility to act on concerns of abuse or neglect.

Safeguarding Adults Definition

The Care Act 2014 statutory guidance defines adult safeguarding as:

Protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

Safeguarding Children Definition

The definition of child safeguarding, as per the Department of Education's Working

Together to Safeguard Children 2021 statutory advice is:

Protecting children from maltreatment.

Preventing impairment of children's health or development.

Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the

provision of safe and effective care

Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Every local authority is required by law to set up a local safeguarding children's board. This requirement is set out in section 13 of the Children Act 2004. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 amended the law to make these arrangements more flexible. The three key safeguarding partners are:

- Children's services
- The police
- The NHS

These services must work together to protect children at risk but are free to decide how best to organise this. Legally, 'children' refers to all individuals under the age of 18.

adopt the General Medical Council's definitions:

The term 'children' refers to younger children who do not have the maturity and understanding to make important decisions for themselves.

The term 'young people' refers to older or more experienced children who are more likely to be able to make these decisions for themselves.

In practice will refer all safeguarding cases for those under the age of 18 to the relevant Local Authority multi agency safeguarding children hub where believe there is a risk of harm or where a child or young person is experiencing harm.

It is for statutory and specialist agencies to personalise their response based on the age and capacity of the individual to make decisions for themselves, Livin role is to ensure any concerns are reported and that child or young person is effectively safeguarded.

2.0 Policy Statement

Livin will take preventative, proportionate, and appropriate proactive action to ensure all individuals experiencing harm, or at risk of harm, are safeguarded.

Livin will work collaboratively with statutory and non-statutory partners, advocating for individuals recognising Livin remit as a registered provider, and will take a person-centred, and supportive approach.

Livin will empower the individual(s) to make their own decisions regarding their welfare. Livin approach will be transparent, professional, and based on empathy and respect.

Policy Delivery

Livin's 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.

Livin believe that living a life that is free from harm and abuse is a fundamental right of every person. Livin recognise that safeguarding those at risk of abuse is everyone's responsibility and are committed to ensuring the health and wellbeing of tenants and customers is effectively safeguarded.

To deliver an effective approach to safeguarding will:

- Have clear operational policies and procedures to address safeguarding
- Ensure that all employees and those of Livin contractors are familiar with the six principles underpinning safeguarding and are trained in recognising the signs of abuse and potential abuse

- Be vigilant and able to respond appropriately and effectively to safeguarding concerns
- Develop a culture that does not tolerate abuse and which encourages people to raise concerns
- Have robust governance in place with a senior manager taking a lead role in organisational and inter-agency safeguarding arrangements

Livin recognise 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.

3.0 Principles

Livin 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 act 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

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

- Livin recognise that Livin's employees and contractors are well-placed to identify people at risk of abuse and neglect
- Livin recognise that safeguarding requires a multi-agency approach and that regular and sustained joint working is essential to protect people who may experience of be at risk of abuse
- Livin recognise the lead responsibility of local authorities in coordinating safeguarding work and Livin's own role in alerting the appropriate services and the police of any safety concerns. Any suspected or actual criminal offence will be referred to the police
- Livin recognise that appropriate information sharing between organisations is essential to safeguard people at risk and Livin will act in accordance with agreed inter-agency information-sharing protocols. Where possible, Livin will seek a person's consent to share information however Livin cannot guarantee full

confidentiality when Livin's responsibility to safeguard adults or children at risk, or the public interest, is greater than Livin's responsibility to an individual

- Livin recognise responsibility to be vigilant regarding the welfare of children and adults at risk and to train employees and partners to recognise the signs of abuse and/or neglect
- Livin recognise that abuse may be committed by an employee, contractor, agent, or by others who are in a trusting relationship with a vulnerable person. Any such incident will be managed through relevant HR procedures
- Livin recognise Livin's obligation to ensure Livin only recruit and employ staff working with children, young people and adults at risk who are competent and safe to do so. Livin 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. Livin will ensure via Livin procurement processes that, where appropriate, Livin contractors and sub-contractors also comply with these requirements
- Livin 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 Livin policy and processes
- Livin recognise that good record keeping that is clear, concise, factual, accurate and timely is essential in safeguarding, enabling an appropriate response to concerns and effective governance
- Livin recognise that anyone raising a safeguarding concern in good faith should always be listened to, believed and assured that Livin will act on their concern
- Livin recognise the value of promoting safeguarding so that customers can safeguard themselves
- Livin recognise most of Livin's customers have the capacity to keep themselves safe and to make informed choices and decisions. Livin will not assume someone is vulnerable to abuse because of a disability however Livin 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
- Livin recognise the importance of operating a victim-centered approach, which treats people with dignity, respect, and without prejudice. Livin will also respect the rights of the person causing harm as far as is possible.
- Livin recognise Livin 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.

Livin will work in partnership with;

- Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) which coordinates holistic support to those experiencing domestic abuse or
- Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), which coordinates strategies for tackling perpetrators of domestic abuse, in this respect

Livin role is to support these specialist frameworks and not to deliver specialist domestic abuse services which are beyond the scope of housing management.

4.0 Equality and Diversity Statement

This Policy has been developed in line with Livin 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.

Livin recognise that specific groups may be more vulnerable to abuse, for example, women and people from religious communities may be victims of honour violence.

Livin will be vigilant in these communities; however, Livin will not make assumptions based solely on a person's gender or religion/beliefs.

5.0 Confidentiality

Employees have a professional responsibility to share information with other statutory agencies to safeguard adults and children. This includes but is not limited to;

- Local Authority Safeguarding Teams and Boards
- Local Authority mental health teams, crisis intervention, and community wellbeing teams
- Police and Probation Services
- Fire Service
- Schools and child social workers
- Medical professionals (GP / Community Mental Health Practitioner etc)

To this effect, employees will be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so. Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

6.0 Data Protection and Privacy Statement

All personal data gained regarding individuals as part of a safeguarding case will be processed in line with Livin Confidentiality, Privacy, and Data Protection Policy and Data Storage Security and

Copyright Procedure and associated policies, and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

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

7.0 Customer Voice

This Policy has been reviewed and developed in collaboration with tenants to ensure their voice is heard.

8.0 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 Communities.

End of Policy