



SAFEGUARDING ADULTS POLICY

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1. Policy Statement

1.1 Our Commitment to Safeguarding Adults

- 1.1.1 At Eastlight Community Homes (hereafter ‘Eastlight’), we take our responsibility to ensure the safety of our residents seriously. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of adults who may be at risk of harm.

1.2 A Collaborative Approach to Safeguarding

- 1.2.1 We recognise the importance of collaboration in safeguarding adults. We fully support Local Authorities in their role in running Local Safeguarding Adults Boards (SABs), and we adhere to their framework. Our commitment extends to meeting all legal, statutory and regulatory obligations under UK legislation.

1.3 Defining Our Safeguarding Approach

- 1.3.1 This Policy outlines Eastlight's approach to safeguarding adults at risk of harm, abuse or neglect. It is supported by comprehensive safeguarding procedures and specialised training.

2. Scope

2.1 This Policy applies to:

- Adults living in our properties
- Adults visiting our properties
- Staff, Board Members, contractors, sub-contractors and agents working for us.

2.2 Everyone at Eastlight shares the responsibility for safeguarding adults and must promptly act on concerns of abuse or neglect.

3. Think Customer

- 3.1** At Eastlight, we exist to provide the best possible homes and services for our residents.
- 3.2** Our ‘Think Customer’ approach aims to guide and support colleagues whenever they make decisions that affect our residents, directly or indirectly.
- 3.3** ‘Think Customer’ ensures our people fully consider how residents will experience and be impacted by the service we provide. Before acting, our people are required to think about:
- The short and long-term effects of their actions
 - The residents’ individual needs and preferences
 - Whether their communication is clear, respectful and appropriate
 - If they can draw on any past insights or experiences to help them when making tough decisions
 - Whether they, themselves, would be happy with the service being provided.
- 3.4** The ‘Think Customer’ model is designed to complement and work alongside all Eastlight policies and procedures, including this Safeguarding Adults Policy.

4. Our Guiding Principles

- 4.1** Eastlight aligns with the principles of adult safeguarding as defined in the Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance:
- **Empowerment** – People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent
 - **Prevention** – It is better 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
 - **Partnerships** - 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.
- 4.2** Adults have the right to make their own decisions and lead independent lives. They possess the legal right to consent and participate in addressing safeguarding concerns.

5. Definitions

- 5.1** An adult is defined as anyone aged 18 or over.
- 5.2** The Care Act stipulates that safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:
- Has care and support needs, whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs
 - Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect
 - As a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.
- 5.3** Eastlight considers a safeguarding concern where an adult is suspected or known to be experiencing:
- Physical abuse
 - Domestic violence
 - Sexual abuse
 - Psychological abuse
 - Financial or material abuse
 - Modern slavery
 - Discriminatory abuse
 - Organisational abuse
 - Neglect and acts of omission
 - Self-neglect.
- 5.4** Details of the relevant legislation, including statutory and regulatory requirements, can be found under Section 12.

6. Reporting Concerns of Abuse

- 6.1** All staff must report any alleged, suspected or witnessed abuse incidents promptly.
- 6.2** In cases where staff members suspect abuse by a colleague, they should contact their Head of Service, the Operational / Strategic Lead or the Human Resources Department. Serious allegations against staff members will also be reported to the Executive Team and the Board.
- 6.3** Accurate and timely record-keeping is essential when managing allegations of abuse. (Please see the Safeguarding Adults Procedure for details).

7. Eastlight Staff – Roles & Responsibilities

7.1 All staff and contractors who work on Eastlight’s behalf are expected to:

- Complete safeguarding training as required by the organisation
- Be vigilant for indicators of abuse and neglect, and report concerns accordingly
- Manage situations presenting risks responsibly
- Ensure their teams are aware of safeguarding policies and procedures.

7.2 Eastlight’s strategic and operational roles and responsibilities are as follows:

Board Lead	Eastlight will designate a Non-Executive Board Member to ensure the Board is given the necessary information to enable it to discharge its responsibilities and that safeguarding matters are carefully considered at Board level.
Strategic Lead	The Head of Neighbourhoods and Head of Housing Operations are responsible for providing oversight on Eastlight’s approach to safeguarding and reporting to the Board. Ensuring the service is compliant with our legal, statutory and regulatory requirements.
Operational Lead	The Intensive Housing Support Manager and Regional Neighbourhood Manager are responsible for the operational management and delivery of Eastlight’s Safeguarding service.
Safeguarding Champions	Safeguarding champions are responsible for ensuring that policies and procedures regarding safeguarding are adhered to in their departments and relevant concerns are appropriately raised.
Intensive Housing Support Coordinator Senior/Neighbourhood Lead	These teams within Housing Operations and Neighbourhoods are responsible for managing safeguarding concerns in line with our organisational procedures, including making referrals to the relevant Local Authorities.
Managers	All Eastlight Managers are responsible for ensuring their teams are aware of Eastlight’s Safeguarding policies and procedures, and that they have completed mandatory safeguarding training. Managers are expected to discuss safeguarding regularly as part of 1:1s and team meetings to ensure awareness.

All Staff

All Eastlight staff are expected to report all cases of suspected abuse or neglect in line with Eastlight procedures.

All staff are expected to attend Safeguarding training as and when required (frequency dependent on role).

8. Eastlight Contractors – Roles & Responsibilities

- 8.1** Contractors are expected to report concerns of abuse in line with Eastlight's procedures.
- 8.2** Contractors are expected to undertake safeguarding training which will be provided by Eastlight as stipulated as part of the procurement process.

9. Confidentiality & Information Sharing

- 9.1** Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis to safeguard adults at risk while respecting confidentiality laws and regulations.
- 9.2** Eastlight will ensure that our service supports the work of any statutory organisation involved in dealing with issues of neglect or abuse. This will include data sharing in line with relevant legislation, policy and protocols. We will work closely with local Safeguarding Adult Boards to share information and promote the safety and well-being of adults at risk.

10. Review

- 10.1** Eastlight will formally review this Policy every three years, considering any changes and making amendments accordingly. In addition, amendments considered of sufficient magnitude or importance will be implemented in between review dates where appropriate.

11. Equality Impact Assessment

- 11.1** An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) for this Policy was conducted. As a result, actions have been put in place to mitigate any negative impacts.

12. Statutory & Regulatory Requirements

12.1 Care Act 2014 (and Care & Support Statutory Guidance Issued under the Act):

- 12.1.1 Section 42-47 and Section 68 of the Care Act, defines Safeguarding adults, provides a definition of adults at risk, details the roles and responsibilities of a range of organisations and how they must work together to respond to adult safeguarding concerns. This includes Registered Providers of Social Housing.
- 12.1.2 The Act sets out a statutory basis for safeguarding adults and the legal duties that local authorities will have to fulfil in their lead and coordination roles. The supporting Statutory Guidance on adult safeguarding replaces previous 'No Secrets' official guidance.
- 12.1.3 As a Registered Provider of Social Housing, Eastlight is not a statutory partner under this Act, but is obliged to:
- Have a safeguarding lead
 - Attend and provide information for Local Safeguarding Adults Boards if necessary. Housing providers will also be asked to participate in relevant Safeguarding Adult Reviews
 - Cooperate with local authorities in enquiries of suspected adult safeguarding concerns - these may result in Eastlight needing to take action to protect the adult from any actual or risk of abuse or neglect as part of a safeguarding plan
 - Have a Safeguarding Policy and procedure
 - Keep clear and accurate records of adult safeguarding allegations, responses and actions, and then share these with appropriate organisations when in the best interest of the adult
 - Have safe recruitment practices and training relevant to safeguarding.

12.2 Sexual Offences Act 2003

- 12.2.1 This Act strengthened measures to protect the public from sexual offending.
- 12.2.2 Part One of the Act provides specific protection from abusive sexual activity for those adults with an 'arrested or incomplete development of mind, psychiatric disorder and any other disability of the mind'.

12.3 Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

- 12.3.1 This Act sets out the responsibility we have for vetting and barring people working with children and vulnerable adults.

12.4 Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA)

- 12.4.1 The MCA and the associated 'Code of Practice' provides a framework to empower and

protect people over 16-years-old who may lack capacity to make some decisions for themselves, for example, people with dementia, learning disabilities, mental health problems, stroke or head injuries, who may lack capacity to make certain decisions.

12.4.2 The MCA introduces a criminal offence of ill treatment or willful neglect of a person who lacks capacity. This is intended to deter people from abusing, ill-treating or neglecting people who lack capacity.

12.4.3 The MCA applies to anyone who works with people who are unable to make all or some decisions for themselves, including Registered Providers. It requires Registered Providers to:

- Know about the MCA
- Always presume that people have capacity to make decisions for themselves
- Refer people for assessment if they lack mental capacity to make their own decisions
- Cooperate with relevant statutory organisations, Independent Mental Capacity Advocates, someone with Power of Attorney or carers
- Share appropriate information where this is in someone's best interests but maintain confidentiality where necessary.

12.5 Data Protection Act 2018

12.5.1 The regulation controls how personal and sensitive information is used by organisations, such as Registered Providers.

12.5.2 Organisations must ensure data is:

- Used fairly and lawfully
- Used for limited, specifically stated purposes
- Used in a way that is adequate, relevant and not excessive
- Accurate
- Kept for no longer than is absolutely necessary
- Handled according to people's data protection rights
- Kept safe and secure
- Not transferred outside the UK without adequate protection.

12.6 Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

12.6.1 Part Five of this Act created the current disclosure, vetting and barring scheme, which applies to people working with or have access to children and vulnerable adults.

12.6.2 The Disclosure and Barring Service is now responsible for assisting employers, such as Registered Providers, in England and Wales to make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups.

12.7 Modern Slavery Act 2015

- 12.7.1 The Modern Slavery Act is a globally leading piece of legislation. It sets out a range of measures on how modern slavery and human trafficking should be dealt with in the UK. Whilst not all of the Act is directly relevant for business, Section 54 entitled ‘Transparency in Supply Chains’ impacts the corporate sector. The Act came into force on 29 October 2015 and requires many businesses to disclose a ‘slavery and human trafficking statement’.

12.8 Human Rights Act 1998

- 12.8.1 The Human Rights Act 1998 sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to. It enshrines the rights set out in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into British law. Human rights are increasingly being considered in safeguarding cases, so it is important that all staff understand how a person’s human rights can be compromised when dealing with a safeguarding case.
- 12.8.2 The following are particularly relevant to safeguarding adults from abuse:
- **Article 3** provides: ‘No-one shall be subjected to torture, or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment’. This is an absolute right: inhuman or degrading treatment is unlawful, whatever the situation. We must act if an adult at risk is subject to degrading treatment or living in inhuman conditions.
 - **Article 6** entitles everyone to a ‘fair hearing’ when a decision is made about their civil rights and obligations. This includes the right to be consulted before decisions are made, and to be given reasons for decisions.
 - **Article 8** ECHR provides: ‘Everyone has the right to respect for (their) private and family life, (their) home and correspondence’. Public authorities may only interfere within the interests of:
 - Public safety
 - The prevention of disorder or crime
 - The protection of health or morals
 - The protection of the rights and freedoms of others.
 - The interference by public authorities must be proportionate to the risk or other reason for acting.
 - **Article 14** prohibits discrimination on any ground in the way that people access their rights under the Convention.

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