

Safeguarding Policy

Reference	TBC
Purpose	Set out the association's approach to safeguarding children and adults at risk of harm abuse or neglect
Owner	Director of Governance
Related documents	Health and Safety Policy; Data Protection Policy; Safeguarding Adults Procedure; Safeguarding Children Procedure; Whistleblowing Policy; Guidance issued by Essex and Suffolk's Safeguarding Board
Approved by	Shadow Board
Date approved	TBC
Resident involvement	Reviews to be conducted with relevant resident groups
Performance Monitoring	Regular reports to the Health and Safety Committee, Leadership Team and Board
Review frequency	Every 3 years and on change to legislation and regulations
Last review	May 2020
Next review	July 2023
Version	V1.1
Author	Director of Governance

Contents

- 1. POLICY STATEMENT3
- 2. DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES BETWEEN SAFEGUARDING ADULTS AND CHILDREN3
- 3. SCOPE.....3
- 4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES4
- 5. PRINCIPLES4
- 6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.....5
- 7. MONITORING AND REPORTING.....5
- 8. REVIEW5
- 9. DATE OF POLICY.....5
- APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS6
- APPENDIX B: STATUTORY AND REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS AND USEFUL LINKS7
- APPENDIX C: SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES:.....10
- APPENDIX D: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.....13
- APPENDIX E: GUIDANCE ON ABUSE AND NEGLECT16

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1. Eastlight Community Homes Limited (“Eastlight”/ “we”/ “our”/ “us”) recognises its role as a landlord and as an employer and will seek to make homes and workplaces as safe as we reasonably can. Eastlight is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults at risk of harm. The safety and welfare of our customers and employees is always a fundamental consideration and we recognise we have additional responsibilities to protect and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.
- 1.2. The Board has responsibility for ensuring that Eastlight has an effective approach to safeguarding and to work with other agencies to promote safeguarding across our communities. The Board takes this responsibility extremely seriously.
- 1.3. Eastlight is in contact with children and vulnerable adults at risk as part of its day to day activities and is required through law, the regulator and its organisational objectives to have clear policies and procedures on safeguarding and working with local agencies. Details of statutory and regulatory requirements can be found in Appendix B.
- 1.4. This policy sets out Eastlight’s approach to safeguarding children and adults at risk of harm, abuse or neglect. It is supported by safeguarding procedures in conjunction with specific safeguarding training.

2.0 DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES BETWEEN SAFEGUARDING ADULTS AND CHILDREN

- 2.1 Adults have their own rights and responsibilities and can make their own decisions and live independent lives. This means that they have a legal right of consent and participation when safeguarding concerns are raised. Safeguarding Adults is governed by the Care Act 2014.
- 2.2 For children, due consideration must be given to the wishes and feelings of a child as far as reasonable before making decisions on what services to provide or action to take. However, authorities have a duty to act in the best interests of the child which may mean contradicting their wishes. Safeguarding Children is governed by the Children’s Acts (1988; 2004) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (updated 2018)
- 2.3 Adult safeguarding concerns may also involve children, and vice versa.
- 2.4 We have adopted separate procedures for safeguarding children and adults in order to reflect fully the differences in these areas.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1. This policy attends to Eastlight’s responsibilities for safeguarding. The policy deals with the actions that are required to be taken should there be a suspicion or evidence of a safeguarding concern.

This policy relates to:

- adults and children living in our properties
- adults and children visiting our properties
- staff, board members, contractors, sub-contractors and agents working for us.

3.2. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. We all have a duty to act on concerns of abuse or neglect.

4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

4.1 Our position is that safeguarding is a multi-agency approach, which depends on effective collaboration. We recognise the lead responsibility of local authorities in coordinating safeguarding work and our own role in alerting adult or children's services and the police of any concerns regarding safety.

4.2 The Safeguarding policy will:

- Define our organisational and management responsibilities, including the roles and responsibilities of contractors working on behalf of Eastlight;
- Outline the role of the Board and its responsibility to provide leadership and oversight regarding safeguarding;
- Ensure any suspected or actual crime is reported to the police; and
- Ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 whilst allowing effective information sharing between organisations to safeguard individuals

5. PRINCIPLES

5.1 Safeguarding Children Principles: Eastlight will work with our partners and take a centred approach to safeguarding children. Eastlight will enable employees to take appropriate action where necessary to safeguard children and be transparent in, and accountable for, our approach to child safeguarding.

5.2 Safeguarding Adults Principles: Eastlight will adopt the principles defined in the Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance: They are

- Empowerment;
- Prevention;
- Proportionality;
- Protection;
- Partnership; and
- Accountability

5.3 The detail of how these principles are applied in Eastlight's approach to safeguarding both adults and children can be found in Appendix C.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1 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 properly considered at Board level.
- 6.2 Strategic Lead: The Director of Governance is responsible for providing management oversight of Eastlight's approach to safeguarding and reporting to the Board,
- 6.3 Safeguarding Champions: Heads of Service are strategic safeguarding champions, responsible for ensuring that policies and procedures regarding safeguarding are adhered to in the departments and relevant concerns are appropriately raised. The Support and Tenancy Sustainment Manager, Support and Tenancy Sustainment Team Leader and the Tenancy Sustainment Coordinators are the operational safeguarding champions.
- 6.4 At Eastlight Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Detailed descriptions of specific roles and responsibilities with respect to safeguarding can be found in Appendix D

7. MONITORING AND REPORTING

- 7.1. All safeguarding referrals will be reported to the Leadership Team on a monthly basis. Serious allegations against staff members will be reported immediately to the Executive Team and reported to the Board
- 7.2. Trends and exceptions will be monitored by the Health and Safety Committee, quarterly. The Board will receive information regarding safeguarding concerns raised and referrals to the local authority, as part the performance information they receive. In addition, Board will receive a formal report on safeguarding annually, or as required.

8. REVIEW

- 8.1. Eastlight will formally review this policy every three years taking into account any changes and making amendments accordingly. In addition, amendments considered of sufficient magnitude or importance will be implemented in between review dates where appropriate.

9. DATE OF POLICY

- 9.1 May 2020

Appendix A: Definitions

- **Safeguarding** - Safeguarding at Eastlight means protecting the right of people we have contact with to live safely, free from abuse and neglect, and to promote their well-being and life chances, through Eastlight working with our partners and other organisations. The aim of this is to prevent both the risks, and the experience of, abuse or neglect and making sure the wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults at risk is promoted and their preferences taken into account.
- **Vulnerable adults at risk** - A vulnerable adult may become at risk of abuse because of their needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting those needs). As a result of those needs, they are unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse and neglect. Adults may become at risk of abuse because they have a high degree of dependency on others, in need of community care or specialist services due to mental health problems, physical or learning disability, age or illness and may include their ability to communicate or making known their wishes and needs.
- **Child(ren)**- A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday and includes unborn children. Due to their immaturity and dependency on others, all children are at risk of abuse.
- **Parent** - The term parent includes carers or guardians. It means, in usual circumstances, someone who is legally entitled to take decisions on behalf of the child.
- **Abuse and neglect** - Abuse and neglect takes many forms and can be caused by single or repeated acts or a failure to act by any other person or persons, or in the case of self-neglect, the victim themselves. The circumstances of each individual case will be considered as to not limit what constitutes abuse or neglect.

Appendix B: Statutory and Regulatory Requirements and Useful Links

Eastlight shall, at all times, adhere to all relevant legislation and case law, including any requirements under the Regulator of Social Housing's Regulatory Standards.

Key legislation is listed below:

Care Act (2014)

The Act creates a legal framework for how local authorities, other agencies and organisations should work together to protect adults at risk of abuse or neglect.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)

This sets out how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in accordance with the Children Act 1989 and 2004. It provides a national framework within which agencies and professionals at local level - individually and jointly - draw up and agree ways of working together.

Mental Capacity Act (2005)

The Act and supporting Code of Practice provide a framework to empower and protect people who may lack capacity to make decisions for themselves. The Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards are an amendment to the Mental Capacity Act (2005).

Children Act (1989 and 2004)

The Act relates to local authority responsibilities to improve the wellbeing of children, which includes protection from harm and neglect

Data Protection Act (2018)

This Act governs the protection of personal data. It is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about a person is shared appropriately.

Public Interest Disclosure Act (1998)

This places a duty on everyone to report something that leaves someone at risk, and protects the individual from discrimination as a result of that disclosure.

Human Rights Act (1998)

This Act includes a duty on public bodies to intervene proportionately to protect the rights of citizens.

Protection of Freedoms Act (2012)

This Act established the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) by merging the functions previously carried out by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). The primary aim of the DBS is to help employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children.

Useful Links and Information

Framework of Standards (2005)

These are issued by the Society of Directors of Social Services (ADSS). The national framework is comprised of eleven sets of good practice standards in safeguarding adults.

[Framework of Standards \(2005\)](#)

Care Act Guidance

[Statutory Guidance on Care Act 2014 \(Safeguarding\)](#)

Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET) Safeguarding Adults Guidelines

[SET Safeguarding Adults Guidelines](#)

Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET) Safeguarding Children Procedures

[SET Safeguarding Children Procedures](#)

Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board Procedure

[Suffolk's Children Board Procedures](#)

Suffolk Safeguarding Adults Board information

[Suffolk Adult Safeguarding Protection Team and Information](#)

UN Conventions on The Rights of a Child (UNCROC)

[UN Convention on The Rights of a Child and UK Law](#)

The Convention sets out the rights of every child in the world to survive, grow, participate and fulfil their potential. It sets standards for education, health care, social

services and penal laws, and establishes the right of children to have a say in decisions that affect them.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (updated March 2018)

Working Together to Safeguard Children

This is a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It states that 'children are best protected when professionals are clear about what is required of them individually, and how they need to work together.'

This encourages Registered Providers to:

- put the child's needs at the heart of their safeguarding approach;
- be alert to the risks of harm that individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children;
- make a referral to local authority children's social care or the police if necessary;
- share appropriate information in a timely way and discuss any concerns about an individual child with colleagues and local authority children's social care; and
- contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote a child's welfare.

For further information regarding safeguarding, please visit the Essex Safeguarding Adult Board Website: <http://www.essexsab.org.uk/>

Appendix C: Safeguarding Principles:

Overarching Principles:

Accountability: We will ensure that our policy and processes provide accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding, including:

- identifying a 'Safeguarding Lead' to ensure that this policy and our procedures are effective, kept up-to-date, delivered in a timely manner and disseminated to all employees
- identifying Strategic and Operational Safeguarding champions to co-ordinate our response to safeguarding concerns.
- ensuring that all employees and agents receive suitable safeguarding training and understand their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding
- Ensuring safeguarding training is refreshed at least every 2 years
- learning from incidents and case reviews, revising and improving work practices, induction, training, policy and procedures as appropriate

Partnerships: We will work in partnership with relevant authorities to safeguard children and adults to so that we:

- develop strong relationships with local authorities and other safeguarding partners at a senior and operational level, and
- co-operate with relevant safeguarding partners to investigate allegations of harm, abuse, and neglect to a vulnerable adult or child, and take actions to safeguard them. This includes:
 - appropriately referring our safeguarding concerns to the relevant local authority, or if necessary, the police;
 - supporting and contributing to enquiries and assessment as directed by our statutory partners after a referral is made
 - participating in Local Safeguarding Adults/ Children Boards;
 - making enquiries to support Safeguarding Adult/ Children Reviews, Serious Case Reviews, or Child Death Reviews;
 - keep accurate, confidential and secure records of all safeguarding concerns and associated actions; and
 - sharing information with relevant safeguarding partners.

Safeguarding Adults Principles: Eastlight will aim to protect and maintain customers' safety and wellbeing through their approach to safeguarding adults with care and support needs. NewCO will achieve this by working with their partners to apply their policy standards to the six principles as defined in the Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance (empowerment, prevention, proportionality, protection as well partnership and accountability) which underpin safeguarding work:

Empowerment: personalisation and presumptions of person-led decisions and informed consent

- We will ensure our customers are aware of how to report safeguarding concerns, and the support we can provide
- Our response to safeguarding places the adult at risk at its heart, which means listening and understanding what we are told, and respecting their needs and views in how we respond to safeguarding concern
- We adopt the 'Making Safeguarding Personal' guidance

Prevention: better to take action before harm occurs

- We will aim to hold up-to-date information on customers' support needs and vulnerabilities. We will use this data to inform our approach to safeguarding.
- We will undertake relevant disclosure and barring checks on employees that have access to or work with vulnerable adults.

Proportionality: proportionate and least intrusive response appropriate to risk presented

- We will act swiftly upon our safeguarding concerns and treat all reported concerns in good faith.
- We will notify the local authority Safeguarding Team if abuse is identified or suspected.
- We will take appropriate action against perpetrators of abuse. Where a crime has been committed, we will report this to the police.

Protection: support and representation for those in greatest need

- We will take reasonable steps, within our power, to ensure the safety and well-being of residents, including re-housing victims if appropriate.
- We recognise that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone who works for us or on our behalf. We will be vigilant to concerns for our customers' welfare, and indicators of abuse and neglect.
- We will recognise that mental capacity and consent are key issues in safeguarding cases, and every adult has the right to make their own decisions. A person is assumed to have mental capacity unless it is proved that they do not and will make a referral to the local Adult Social Care Team where we have concerns that a person being abused lacks mental capacity. This will ensure a Mental Capacity Assessment can be made.
- We will ensure that our disclosures are compliant with the need for safeguarding, and share information about concerns with agencies that need to know such as multi-agency public protection arrangements

- We will learn from incidents and case reviews, revising and improving work practices, induction, training, policy and procedure as appropriate.

Safeguarding Children Principles:

Taking a child centred approach to prevention and empowerment:

- We will place a child's needs at the forefront. which means listening, and understanding what we are told, and respecting their needs and views in how we respond to ensure that every child receives the support they need before a problem escalates
- We will aim to ensure our customers are aware of how to report safeguarding concerns, and the support we can provide
- Where a resident is proven to have committed a sexual offence or physical child abuse, we will consider legal action where a breach of the terms and conditions of the tenancy has occurred or other appropriate action relevant to the circumstance.

Enabling our employees and take proportionate actions: We will ensure that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone who works for us and works for our behalf and that employees who come into contact with children and families are alert to their needs and of any signs of abuse, including any risks abusers or potential abusers may pose to children. We will expect that all their employees (and employees and contractors who work on behalf of Eastlight):

- Are alert to concerns for welfare, and indicators of abuse and neglect
- Report all cases of suspected abuse or neglect to the appropriate individual in the organisation. Managers will monitor incidents, report concerns to, and liaise with the relevant local protection teams as necessary
- Are vigilant about their actions so that they cannot be misinterpreted, and are aware of appropriate behaviour when working with customers (for example, appropriate boundaries of personal contact)
- Take swift action to ensure the safety of any child and taking appropriate action against the perpetrators of abuse;
- Are vigilant that, through the services that we provide, that failures to act (including not reporting concerns that they are alerted to) or failures to follow policy and procedures (such as an inappropriate recruitment) may also potentially constitute abuse
- Complete safeguarding training and refresher training for all employees
- Are aware of situations which may present risks and manage these (for example, if allocating a property to a registered offender, that

consideration is given to the location)

Appendix D: Roles and Responsibilities

The role of the Board Lead:

- Ensure that safeguarding is appropriately considered by the Board during relevant meetings, and that members are aware of the risks relating to harm occurring to at risk adults as well as associated governance and reputational risks in failing to safeguard adults with care and support needs
- Ensure that the Board receive quarterly reports on Eastlight's management of safeguarding as well as an annual report to the Board., Reports will include the number of referrals made to relevant agencies

The Role of the Strategic and Operational Lead

- The Director of Governance is the strategic lead and the Support and Tenancy Sustainment Manager is the operational adult safeguarding lead.
- The role of the strategic and operational lead is to:
 - Ensure that any changes to legislation or good practice lead to corresponding policy and procedure updates.
 - Ensure that Eastlight provides appropriate resource each year to adequately train and supervise employees managing and/or reporting safeguarding concerns.
 - Notify the Board Lead in the event of a serious safeguarding incident and/or pending safeguarding adult review and report to the Board on an annual basis.
 - Report to the Board on a regular basis.
 - Review the Safeguarding Policy on an annual basis and ensure that other policies have regard to safeguarding as appropriate.
 - Work with Learning and Development to ensure that processes are in place to ensure employee training is undertaken which is appropriate for the role.
 - Ensure new employees working directly with vulnerable customers must not be allowed to work unsupervised until they have received training relating to our safeguarding policies and procedures as part of their induction.
 - Ensure all employees receive refresher training in safeguarding every two years or earlier if there are significant changes to

legislation or good practice which result in changes to our policy and procedures.

- Report to the Leadership team on a monthly basis in relation to the number of safeguarding cases and any issues of note.
- Ensure that systems are in place to accurately and appropriately record and monitor safeguarding cases.
- Promote awareness and understanding of safeguarding within the organisation.
- Work with external organisations, as appropriate, in relation to adult safeguarding
- Arrange refresher training for the Board every 2 years or as appropriate.

Operational Deputies (Operational and Strategic Safeguarding Champions)

Heads of Service within each department will take on the role of 'Strategic Safeguarding Champion' to support the work of the Strategic lead

The role of the Strategic Safeguarding Champion:

- Review Safeguarding Procedures and ensure other procedures have regard to adult safeguarding as appropriate.
- Ensure that relevant employees record and report safeguarding cases in accordance with procedures.
- Ensure that employees are appropriately supervised.
- Ensure that safeguarding is regularly discussed at team meetings and in one to one meetings.
- Set employee objectives in relation to safeguarding.
- Attend external multi agency meetings representing Eastlight, if required
- Promote safeguarding within the organisation.

The Support and Tenancy Sustainment Manager, Support and Tenancy Sustainment Team Leader and the Tenancy Sustainment Coordinators will take on the role of 'Operational Safeguarding Champions' to support the role of the Operation Lead.

The role of the Operational Safeguarding Champion:

- Investigate any safeguarding concerns raised and decide what action should be taken as a result, ensuring this is in line with Eastlight's Safeguarding Policy and procedures
- Ensure safeguarding issues are recorded in line with the procedure
- Provide advice and guidance to employees regarding safeguarding

- Meet monthly with the operational lead to complete safeguarding case reviews
- Organise and participate in professionals' meeting with other agencies to discuss safeguarding concerns and agree action plans
- Attend training to ensure knowledge regarding safeguarding is current
- Run internal safeguarding training for employees, contractors and volunteers

Appendix E: Guidance on Abuse and Neglect

Abuse and neglect takes many forms and can be caused by single or repeated acts or a failure to act by any other person or persons, or in the case of self-neglect, the victim themselves. The circumstances of each individual case will be considered as to not limit what constitutes abuse or neglect.

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Additional guidance on the types of abuse and neglect is detailed in the Safeguarding procedure. Eastlight will treat as a safeguarding concern where a child or vulnerable adult at risk is suspected to be involved in either:

- physical abuse;
- domestic violence;
- sexual abuse;
- psychological abuse;
- financial or material abuse;
- modern slavery;
- discriminatory abuse;
- organisational abuse;
- neglect and acts of omission; or
- self-neglect (Self-neglect is when someone neglects to attend to their basic needs, such as personal hygiene, appropriate clothing, feeding, or tending appropriately to any medical conditions they have. Hoarding can also result in self-neglect).