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room to create
a better future.

Safeguarding adults policy

April 2024

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CRAWLEY FRIENDS HOUSING ASSOCIATION

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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1. Introduction

1.1 Safeguarding is defined as 'protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.' Adult safeguarding is about preventing and responding to concerns of abuse, harm or neglect of adults. Staff and trustees should work together in partnership with adults so that they are:

- Safe and able to protect themselves from abuse and neglect.
- Treated fairly and with dignity and respect.
- Protected when they need to be.
- Able easily to get the support, protection and services that they need.

1.2 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. This policy is specifically for the purpose of safeguarding vulnerable adults at risk of neglect and abuse as defined in the Care Act 2014 and applies across Crawley Friends Housing Association (CFHA). It applies to staff, trustees, contractors, volunteers and all those managing or providing services for or on behalf of CFHA.

2. Aims and objectives

2.1 The aims of the Safeguarding Adults Policy are to:

- Stop abuse or neglect wherever possible.
- Prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs.
- Safeguard adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live.
- Promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults concerned.
- Provide information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or well-being of an adult.

2.2 All safeguarding work with adults should be based on the following principles:

- The empowerment of adults underpins all safeguarding work.
- The focus of safeguarding adults should always be to identify and endeavour to meet the desired outcomes of the adult.
- Every person has a right to live a life free from abuse, neglect and fear.
- Safeguarding adults is everyone's business and responsibility.
- There is zero tolerance to the abuse of adults.
- All reports of abuse will be treated seriously.
- Every person should be able to access information about how to gain safety from abuse and violence and neglect.
- All adult safeguarding work aims to prevent abuse from taking place, and to make enquiries quickly and effectively and take appropriate action where abuse is taking place or is suspected.
- All personal data will be processed and maintained in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018.

3. Policy Statement

3.1 The Care Act 2014 sets down the requirements placed on local authorities to promote wellbeing when undertaking their adult care and support functions to help improve people's independence and wellbeing and CFHA will work to its remit. This includes protection from abuse and neglect,

personal dignity and control, physical, emotional and mental health, suitable accommodation and domestic and social wellbeing.

3.2 CFHA recognises its legal obligations and takes adult safeguarding seriously. It will, as required by law and regulation and in alignment with its mission, vision and values, have clear safeguarding and whistleblowing policies and procedures.

3.3 CFHA will, at all times, aim to protect and maintain resident safety and wellbeing by:

- Ensuring employees are aware of the signs and indicators of abuse.
- Identifying abuse where it is reasonable to do so as part of providing services to adults.
- Alerting the appropriate agencies where there is an adult safeguarding issue.
- Maintaining records of safeguarding concerns.
- Recruiting and supervising staff appropriately.
- Using agreed protocols in line with the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Reviewing safeguarding cases to ensure lessons are learned from reviews and that safeguarding is managed within the CFHA culture of continuous improvement.
- Raising awareness of safeguarding with residents.

3.4 Safeguarding is about people and organisations working in partnership to prevent and stop the risks and experience of abuse or neglect. Synonymous with this, and building on the Mental Capacity Act, they must ensure an adult's wellbeing is promoted. In addition, and where appropriate, the views, wishes, feelings and beliefs of a person must be given due regard in deciding on actions and it must be assumed that the person receiving care and support best knows their own desired outcomes, goals and wellbeing regardless of their medical condition or disability. Assumptions should not be made as to what matters most to the person.

3.5 CFHA will work in alignment with the Mental Capacity Act which requires an assumption that people have capacity and can make decisions for themselves. Unless otherwise established, every adult has the right to make his or her own decisions in respect of his or her care and support, and must be assumed to have capacity to do so unless it is proved otherwise. It must not be assumed that someone cannot make a decision for themselves just because they have a particular medical condition or disability.

4 Recognising signs of abuse

4.1 "Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons" (No Secrets: Department of Health, 2000)

4.2 Abuse includes:

- Physical abuse including hitting, slapping, punching, burning, misuse of medication, inappropriate restraint.
- Sexual abuse including rape, indecent assault, inappropriate touching and exposure to pornographic material.
- Psychological or emotional abuse including belittling, name calling, threats of harm, intimidation, isolation.
- Financial or material abuse including stealing, selling assets, fraud, misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- Neglect and acts of omission including withholding the necessities of life such as medication, food or warmth, ignoring medical or physical care needs.

- Discriminatory abuse including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment. Institutional or organisational abuse including regimented routines and cultures, unsafe practices, lack of person-centred care or treatment.
- Lack of self-care to an extent that it threatens personal health and safety, such as not taking prescribed medication or not eating properly. Neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, or surroundings, inability or unwillingness to manage one's personal affairs.

4.2 Abuse may be carried out deliberately or unknowingly. Abuse may be a single act or repeated acts.

4.3 People who behave abusively can come from all backgrounds and walks of life. They may be doctors, nurses, social workers, advocates, staff members, volunteers or others in a position of trust. They may also be relatives, friends, neighbours or people who use the same services as the person experiencing abuse.

5 Working with vulnerable adults

5.1 Risk assessments should be performed before anyone works with vulnerable adults.

Appointments all volunteers and employees will not be confirmed until they have undergone checks and received Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) clearance.

5.2 Volunteers should avoid working alone with a vulnerable adult wherever possible.

6. Training

6.1 CFHA will ensure all staff having contact with residents will receive safeguarding training, providing them with an understanding of safeguarding and enabling them to fulfil the requirements of this policy. Training will be tailored and appropriate to individual roles.

6.2 Refresher training will be provided at least annually to all staff having contact with residents and sooner if any significant changes to legislation arise.

6.3 Trustees should undergo safeguarding awareness training at least bi-annually and be advised of any legislative and regulatory changes.

6.4 Other volunteers and contractors will be provided with safeguarding training as and when this is deemed appropriate.

7 Contractors and partners

7.1 Contractors operating on behalf of CFHA will be obliged to adhere to the CFHA safeguarding policy as part of their contractual agreement.

7.2 Contractors will be obliged to report concerns about adult safeguarding to CFHA in accordance with their contract of engagement.

8 Monitoring and reporting

8.1 Safeguarding responsibilities lie with all staff and everyone has a duty to report all safeguarding incidents to the Local Authority. Staff must:

- Be alert to signs and symptoms of abuse.
- Report concerns promptly.
- Maintain a record of all referrals.
- Cooperate with any Local Authority enquiries.

- Support any protection plans put in place.
- If institutional abuse is suspected, please report immediately to the local authority.

8.2 All CFHA employees and trustees have a duty to record and report adult safeguarding concerns in accordance with the organisation's best practice guidance on reporting and recording.

8.3 All concerns relating to safeguarding must be reported to local authority safeguarding teams and documented for CFHA records.

8.4 Any allegations made against members or member of staff will be dealt with swiftly. Where a member of staff or a volunteer is thought to have committed a criminal offence the police will be informed. If a crime has been witnessed the police should be contacted immediately.

8.5 Where there is a case involving death or serious harm of a vulnerable resident the local authority will conduct a safeguarding serious case review. CFHA will work with them transparently to identify whether there were any failings on the part of CFHA. Where service failings are identified the lessons that can be learned will be established by the local authority in a serious case review and appropriate actions will be taken to rectify areas of failure. In such instances, the Trustees shall be informed and regularly updated in respect of the outcomes of any reviews that take place and CFHA will act in accordance with any recommendations.

9. Related documents

9.1 Other Crawley Friends Housing Association policies that may be used to help ensure effective Safeguarding include:

- Data Protection Policy

(Add others as they are developed – whistleblowing, code of conduct, etc.)

10. Legislation and Regulations

10.1 The legislation listed in this policy is not intended to cover all legislation applicable to this policy. To meet the required Regulator of Social Housing's Governance & Financial Viability Standard outcome on adherence to all relevant law, CFHA will take reasonable measures to ensure compliance with any and all applicable legislation by reviewing policies and procedures and amending them as appropriate. The legislation listed within this policy was considered at the time of the development of this policy, but subsequent primary and secondary legislation, case law and regulatory or other requirements will be considered and the policy reviewed and adopted in accordance with the requirements set out therein, even should such subsequent legislation not be explicitly listed within this policy.

10.2 The following is a list of key legislation relating to adult safeguarding:

- Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Care Act 2014
- Care Standards Act 2014
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Disclosure and Barring Service (for safe recruitment)
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards 2007 (as part of the Mental Capacity Act 2005)
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Mental Capacity Act 2005 (as amended)
- Modern Slavery Act 2015

- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Statutory Guidance on Care and support (updated 2018)

11. Review

11.1 This policy will be reviewed each financial year or sooner if there is:

- A significant incident relating to this policy
- An organisational change related to this policy
- A change in legislation