



BINGLEY FLOWER FUND HOMES LIMITED

(Established 1962)

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ADULT SAFEGUARDING POLICY

At Bingley Flower Fund Homes, we believe every person has the right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Adult safeguarding is the term used to describe the process and activity of protecting adults with care and support needs from neglect or abuse. These adults are termed, for the purpose of this policy, 'adults at risk'. Bingley Flower Fund Homes has a central role in safeguarding adults within general needs housing, as we are well placed to spot early signs of the abuse or neglect of tenants who may need, but do not receive, care and support services.

Bingley Flower Fund Homes is committed to taking a pro-active approach to the safeguarding requirements under the Care Act 2014 and furthermore, to ensuring our staff understand their individual responsibilities to our tenants and the wider community and are supported to act accordingly.

This document has been designed to set out the safeguarding adults' policy statement and standards in a manner that recognises the diversity of roles, responsibilities, degree, and mode of contact with tenants. The document is designed for clarity and quick reference in day-to-day operations. It is important that staff members reads the policy and reflects on their understanding of it.

Policy aims

- To provide guidance for staff to be able to recognise and identify the types and signs of abuse or neglect.
- To provide guidance for staff to enable them to feel confident to act on and, report suspected or actual incidents of abuse or neglect, including responding to any immediate safety needs.
- To identify the reporting pathway for raising an alert and making a safeguarding referral.
- To ensure that staff are able to record any concerns and the action taken.
- To clarify the support and advice available to staff who are involved in a safeguarding situation.
- To ensure that Bingley Flower Fund Homes balances its duty to safeguard adults who use our services whilst enabling them to maintain as much control over their lives as possible.



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The policy

This policy and associated procedures applies to:

- All Bingley Flower Fund Homes employees Yorkshire Housing employees
- All contractors to Bingley Flower Fund Homes
- The Bingley Flower Fund Homes committee

What do we mean by adult safeguarding?

Adult safeguarding is the term used to describe the process and activity of protecting adults with care and support needs from neglect or abuse (adults at risk). However, the person does not have to be in receipt of care and support to be included.

The Care Act 2014 describes the scope of safeguarding as being where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that an adult in its area (whether or not ordinarily resident there):

- Has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs)
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
- As a result of those needs is unable to protect him or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

An overriding principle in adult safeguarding is to ensure that we are at all times person centered and not process driven, it is about outcomes not just a tick box or form filling exercise.

The Care Act (2014) states:

“Making safeguarding personal means it should be person-led and outcome-focused. It engages the person in a conversation about how best to respond to their safeguarding situation in a way that enhances involvement, choice and control as well as improving quality of life, wellbeing and safety.” (p.233).

The principles of safeguarding.

- **Empowerment** – presumption of person led decisions and informed consent.
- **Prevention** – it is better to take action before harm occurs.
- **Proportionality** – proportionate and 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.
- **Accountability** – accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.



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Who could be defined as an 'adult at risk'?

At Bingley Flower Fund Homes we know that we provide support for many tenants who may be at risk of abuse and neglect (including self-neglect) and that this can happen anywhere, including in their own home. Tenants who become 'at risk' do so for a variety of reasons, including homelessness, the list below is not exhaustive but it may be an individual with:

- Dementia
- Learning disabilities and/or autism
- Physical or sensory impairment/s
- Mental health need including misuse of substances/alcohol
- A long term condition or illness
- Frailty in older age
- An inability to make day to day decisions and is in need of care and support

Adults at risk may also be carers who may be under extreme stress and/or subject to abuse by the person they care for who may be a relative, friend or neighbour.

Perpetrators of abuse may also be 'adults at risk' for example; someone who has dementia who is abusing a peer in supported living or a neighbour in sheltered accommodation.

We must also remember when considering whether an adult is at risk of abuse and neglect, their own ability to protect themselves and how able they are to make and, carry out, their own informed choices.

What do we mean by abuse and neglect?

Abuse can take many forms and may consist of a single act or repeated acts; it may constitute a crime and be a serious violation of the persons' human and civil rights.

Abuse can be physical, verbal and/or psychological and includes acts of omission or neglect to garner help or resources to someone who may need assistance.

Sometimes the abusive act is wilful on the part of the perpetrator but sometimes it may be unintentional. In the latter situation it is important to remember that abuse and/or neglect has still taken place and requires a safeguarding response.

Abuse can happen in any relationship between the adult at risk and another person/s. It can include transactions to which the adult at risk has not consented, or is incapable of consenting to, for example sexual or financial.

The following are the categories of abuse commonly used. The examples to illustrate each type of abuse are not exhaustive. It should be remembered that several types of abuse may be happening to the same person by the same or different perpetrators.



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- **Physical abuse:** hitting, pushing, pinching, shaking, scalding, misuse of medication, and the misuse or illegal use of restraint or other sanctions.
- **Emotional or psychological abuse:** threats, deprivation of contact, shouting, ignoring, cruelty, bullying, humiliation, coercion, enforced isolation, negating the right of the adult at risk to make choices and undermining self-esteem.
- **Sexual abuse:** any involvement in sexual acts, directly or indirectly, to which the adult at risk did not or, could not, have consented to.
- **Financial or material abuse:** theft, misuse of property, finances and benefits, fraud, coercion in relation to gifts, wills or other forms of inheritance, exploitation, misuse of lasting or, enduring power of attorney or appointeeship.
- **Modern slavery:** including human trafficking, domestic servitude, forced labour and sexual exploitation.
- **Radicalisation and extremism:** safeguarding people, often young adults, from extremism and violence.
- **Domestic violence and abuse:** include controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse by those who are or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. It also includes so called 'honour'-based violence, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.
- **Discriminatory abuse:** occurs when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies opportunity, such as access to health care or justice. It includes racial, religious, gender-based abuse, or abuse based upon an enduring condition or disability, or a person's age. Generally, any adults at risk who would be described as having 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010.
- **Institutional abuse:** lack of respect for human rights, lack of dignity, maltreatment abuse or neglect by routines, regimes, teams and/or individuals. It can take place in where the person lives or services, they use such as a day service.
- **Neglect and acts of omission:** failure, intentionally or not, to meet the needs of an adult at risk. This includes lack of protection from hazards, failure to meet health, social or educational needs and the need for appropriate shelter. It can include withholding vital requirements such as warmth, food and fluids and supports to the person e.g. spectacles, hearing aids, walking frames etc.
- **Self-Neglect:** neglecting to care for oneself to the extent that it threatens personal health and safety, a lack of self-care for hygiene, health or surroundings. It includes hoarding behaviour



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which could also be a sign of an underlying health condition and is of itself, now a recognised mental disorder.

The prevention of abuse and neglect.

The first component of any adult safeguarding strategy is prevention.

Bingley Flower Fund Homes can make a huge difference to the lives of tenants and their families by early intervention and/or preventing a deterioration in their situation. This includes:

1. **Tenant profiling and risk assessment:** knowing which tenants may be 'adults at risk' of abuse or neglect. For example; adults living alone who may be at higher risk of self-neglect due to age, mental illness or deterioration in general health. Those living with care and support, who may be at increased risk of financial abuse, peer on peer or institutional abuse. By recognising the importance of explicitly addressing safeguarding issues within initial assessments, risk assessment and support plans for all people who use our services we can ensure that any potential and actual risks of abuse and neglect can be identified, and action taken accordingly to minimise.
2. **Good governance:** putting systems in place to identify and reduce risks to tenants in relation to abuse and neglect. This includes, collecting information that may indicate something might be going wrong for them e.g. number of falls, learning lessons from safeguarding incidents and ensuring action is taken to prevent recurrence.
3. **Access to clear information for all staff on adult safeguarding:** ensuring all staff have access to, and understand, the adult safeguarding policies and procedures.
4. **Clear operational policies and procedures for staff who provide support:** ensuring staff have clear standards and information to provide safe and high quality support.
5. **Recruitment:** ensuring vigilance in recruitment practice specifically, references and appropriate use of Disclosure and Barring Services for all customer facing employees including contractors. Minimising the use of bank and agency staff in care and support services. Clear expectations and standards of conduct for staff, including contractors and volunteers.
6. **Understanding:** development of staff understanding and practice of safeguarding adults at risk, reinforcing of policies and sharing lessons learned.
7. **Information for tenants:** helping tenants, and their families, to understand their rights and what to do if they feel they are at risk, or experiencing abuse or that, for whatever reason, they may be neglecting themselves to the detriment of their health and safety.



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8. **Accessing natural and universal supports:** encouraging the use of facilities or groups in their local areas that can provide support to adults at risk and their families and reduce isolation. For example, self help organisations, dementia cafés and carers groups and agencies that can provide employment, benefit and welfare advice.
9. **Person centered approaches:** focusing on the needs of the individual not the requirements of the service. Promote individual choice and control. Good record keeping and observations to enable early identification of behavioural or physical changes that may be early indicators of abuse or neglect.
10. **Partnership working and information sharing:** as and when necessary, collaboration with local agencies concerned with adult safeguarding such as police, GP's, NHS, local authority and regulators is a key aspect of effective practice. This includes ensuring there is a local agreement or protocol setting out the principles and process for sharing information about an adult at risk or potential/actual perpetrator of abuse. The Data Protection Act (1998) enables the sharing of information and sets out the law in relation to this.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Committee has responsibility for ensuring policies and procedures are in place relating to the safeguarding adults at risk and to provide guidance and support to staff.

Staff have the responsibility to:

- Taking seriously, listening carefully and reporting appropriately any adult safeguarding concerns as appropriate.
- Ensuring immediate action is taken if the person/s are in serious danger or a crime is likely/or has been committed.
- Acting in accordance with this policy, procedure and protocols.

Agencies involved with Adult Safeguarding:

There are a number of agencies involved with the safeguarding of adults at risk these include:

- Local Authorities
- NHS
- Police
- Education
- Housing
- Voluntary and charitable groups



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- Advocacy

It is important that Bingley Flower Fund Homes works in partnership with these and other agencies as required to support the prevention of abuse and to deal swiftly and decisively to secure the protection of adults at risk.

Reporting a safeguarding concern – what to do if the person does not give consent to intervene:

There may be occasions when an employee has safeguarding concerns about someone who does not want any help and refuses any requests for information about their situation to be shared with other safeguarding partners' e.g. local authority. In this situation, we should respect their wishes although it is perfectly acceptable to share such information within our organisation e.g. with the Chairman or committee member.

There are, however, circumstances where it is reasonable for an employee to override the wishes of the individual and inform appropriate external agencies, these include where:

- a crime has been committed or sharing the information could prevent a crime
- the person lacks mental capacity to make the decision
- the person has mental capacity to make the decision but may be under duress, threatened or coerced
- other people are, or may be at risk, including children or young people
- staff are implicated
- the alleged abuser is also an adult 'at risk'
- the information is requested by court order or other legal authority

The safeguarding principle of proportionality should underpin decisions about sharing information without consent.

Record keeping of a safeguarding concern

It is important for staff to keep accurate records of any safeguarding concerns and actions. Appendix 1 offers an example template detail what information should be collected. This information can be captured in written form.

In making any record, staff need to remember to:

- Make a record as soon as you are able to safely do so in order that important details are not forgotten.
- Ensure you record the date, time and setting and what you witnessed or, was reported to you clearly and using the person's own words as told to you.



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- Be objective and ensure fact and opinions are clearly indicated.
- If you make any handwritten notes they must be legible, remember it may be required as part of future legal or a disciplinary action.
- Keep your notes safe and inform your line manager as soon as possible.

Distressed or vexatious allegations

Occasionally, there may be service users/tenants who are 'at risk' who make distressing or vexatious allegations that Bingley Flower Fund Homes staff have in some manner abused or neglected them. This is rare and it is important to remember that the person making the allegation may have a mental disorder or cognitive impairment.

However, when it does happen it is important for the service user/tenant and staff that it is dealt with by contacting the Chairman and discussing the situation, explaining why you believe the report to be untrue and any evidence you have and seeking their advice as to how to proceed. In these cases, it is vital to ensure that detailed records are maintained as to the type of complaint made, which staff it involved and action taken.

Staff who are lone workers can be particularly vulnerable to allegations of this nature and it is important to recognise and support them should they experience such as situation, reassuring them that any investigation or suspension without prejudice is routine practice.

Equality and diversity implications

This policy, by its nature and focus, supports the needs and promotes the safety and wellbeing of people as defined by the nine protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010). We are aware there is good practice in safeguarding the needs of particular groups of adults and have listed a selection of resources below.



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Appendix 1

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PERSON RAISING THE CONCERN	
Date the concern is being raised:	
Details of the person raising the concern	
Name:	Your position:
Place of work:	Contact phone number:
Details of adult at risk	
Name:	
Contact details:	
Date of birth (if known):	
Other relevant details about vulnerable adult/adult at risk: <i>E.g. What marks this person as vulnerable, type of accommodation, family circumstances, support networks, physical and mental health, any communication difficulties.</i>	
Care giver/significant other/next of kin: Name: Address/contact details:	
Details of the allegations	
Summary of the nature of allegation/observation:	



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Details of person alleged to be inflicting harm/abuse (<i>current whereabouts/likely movements in next 24 hours if known</i>):	
Is the alleged perpetrator also a vulnerable adult/adult at risk? Y/N	
Date and time of any specific incident?	
Details of the allegation/your observations State exactly what you were told / observed and what was said. Use the persons own words as much as possible:	
Are you aware of any previous concerns or incidents reported?	
Summary of information given to the vulnerable adult/adult at risk:	
Expectations/wishes of vulnerable adult/adult at risk, if known:	
Action taken so far:	
Signed: Print name:	Date