

# SAFEGUARDING ADULTS AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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# Safeguarding Adults and Child Protection Policy

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| Responsible Officer           | Group Director of Housing       |
| This policy is applicable to  | Karbon Group                    |
| Policy version                | 4                               |
| Date this version implemented | 28 <sup>th</sup> September 2026 |
| Date of next review           | March 2027                      |

## Policy Statement

The Karbon Homes Group (the Group) is committed to creating safe communities where adults, children and young people can live free from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm. This Safeguarding Adults and Child Protection Policy explains how the organisation works to protect customers, residents and service users, particularly those who may be vulnerable because of age, disability, illness, mental health needs or other circumstances

The policy sets out the Group's commitment to recognising, preventing and responding to safeguarding concerns. All colleagues have a responsibility to identify potential signs of abuse, take concerns seriously and report them appropriately. The organisation works closely with local authorities, the police, social services and other partner agencies to ensure concerns are managed effectively and that people receive the support and protection they need.

The policy covers a wide range of safeguarding issues, including physical, emotional, financial and sexual abuse, domestic abuse, neglect, modern slavery, self-neglect, discrimination and radicalisation. It also recognises the importance of protecting children's welfare and promoting the rights, dignity, independence and wellbeing of all individuals.

The Group supports customers by providing reasonable adjustments where needed, promoting equality, and ensuring information and services are accessible to everyone. The organisation also provides colleagues training, designated Safeguarding Advisors and clear procedures to ensure safeguarding concerns are identified and acted upon promptly.

Overall, this policy demonstrates The Group's commitment to keeping people safe, empowering individuals to live independently wherever possible, and ensuring that safeguarding remains a shared responsibility across the organisation and its partners.

## Risk the policy is designed to control

1. Health & Safety – risk of failure by the Group to take all reasonable health and safety measures leading to serious injury or loss of life.

4. Customer Service & Satisfaction – failure of the Group to keep its promises to customer by meeting its customer service and TSM targets

6. Governance and Compliance - failure to comply with statutory and regulatory requirements and failure in the arrangements for managing the organisation at the highest level.

## **Key performance measures**

- Number of safeguarding alerts received.
- Number of safeguarding alerts referred to a local authority.
- Nature of alerts.
- Time taken to investigate/refer alerts.
- Percentage of colleagues completing safeguarding training

## **Definitions**

|                   |                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The Care Act 2014 | Defines safeguarding as protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. This policy is written in accordance with statutory guidance under this Act. |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## **Abbreviations**

|    |                       |
|----|-----------------------|
| SA | Safeguarding Advisors |
|----|-----------------------|

# **Policy Detail**

## **1.0 Purpose of policy**

1.1 This policy has been produced to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of residents and service users, to protect those groups from abuse (with regard to the relevant legislation and issues of consent) and to support the abused person and their relatives. It is also to protect children and young people living in our properties and to provide colleagues and anyone working on our behalf with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection. We believe in the following:

- Everyone has the right to live his or her life free from fear, violence or harm.
- Everyone has the right to be protected from harm or abuse.
- Everyone has the right to an independent lifestyle and the right to make choices, some of which may involve a degree of risk.
- Actively promoting the empowerment and wellbeing of vulnerable residents and service users through the services we provide.
- Acting in a way that supports the rights of the individual.
- Recognising people who are unable to take their own decisions and/or protect themselves, their assets and bodily integrity can be subject to abuse.
- Recognising that the right to self-determination can involve risk.
- Promoting the safety of residents and service users.
- Respecting the rights of the alleged perpetrator.
- No child or young person should experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe.

## **2.0 Objectives**

2.1 The Policy aims to fulfil the following objectives:

- Protect adults at risk, children and young people from abuse and neglect.
- Promote wellbeing, safety, independence and individual rights.
- Ensure colleagues recognise, report and respond to safeguarding concerns.
- Work with partner agencies to prevent harm and protect vulnerable people.
- Maintain effective safeguarding systems, training and oversight.

## **3.0 Policy Detail**

3.1 We are committed to working collaboratively with our partner agents and statutory authorities to prevent or reduce the risk of abuse or the mistreatment of vulnerable adults and children. We will:

- Raise awareness and recognition of the issues involved.
- Implement and monitor a vulnerability database.
- Exercise professional curiosity where concerns exist by seeking to understand the circumstances, behaviours and lived experiences of customers when indicators of abuse, neglect or exploitation are identified.
- Develop our approach to monitoring reasons behind, for example, missed appointments/rent arrears/refused access/none engagement with support, in order to identify possible vulnerability.
- Take action when abuse is suspected.
- Ensure that colleagues have a knowledge and understanding of our policy and procedures through appropriate training.
- Support monitoring, reviewing and evaluation of our own practices.
- Ensure that our customers and carers have access to information about adult and child protection, this policy and the associated procedures and that we promote the wider safeguarding agenda.
- Operate safe recruitment practices and routinely take up and check references.
- Support colleagues who raise concerns.
- Safeguarding is taken into account in all appropriate OD/HR strategies, systems, policies and procedures and those of our partners, suppliers and contractors.
- Colleagues and volunteers in contact with customers with support needs have regular supervision and support to help them identify and respond to possible abuse and neglect.
- Out of hours services will record the facts concerning the alleged abuse or neglect and report their concerns in accordance with their service level agreement.
- All colleagues at all levels have a shared responsibility to take appropriate action where there is a suspicion or allegation of abuse.

## 3.2 Types of Abuse

3.2.1 We recognise the potential for adults and children to experience abuse. The Care Act stipulates that limitations should not be placed upon what constitutes abuse or neglect. Abuse and neglect include (taken from the Care Act 2014):

- **Discriminatory abuse** - including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.
- **Domestic violence** - including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called 'honour' based violence.
- **Financial or material abuse** - including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- **Modern slavery** - encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.
- **Criminal exploitation** - including county lines activity, cuckooing, gang involvement, coerced criminality and the exploitation of adults or children to facilitate criminal activity.
- **Neglect and acts of omission** - including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- **Organisational abuse** - including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.
- **Physical abuse** - including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.
- **Psychological abuse** - including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.
- **Radicalisation** - the process of a person being influenced or coerced into supporting violent extremism including terrorism. Vulnerable individuals may be susceptible to exploitation / coerced into violent extremism by radicalisers.
- **Self-neglect** - this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.
- **Sexual abuse** - including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the person has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

- **Online or digital abuse** - including cyber bullying, online grooming, romance fraud, online exploitation, coercive control through technology and internet-enabled financial abuse.

#### 3.2.2 Abuse can:

- Consist of a single act or repeated acts.
- Be an act of neglect or an omission to act.
- Be intentional or unintentional or result from lack of knowledge.

#### 3.2.3 Signs of abuse can include the following:

- Behavioural problems.
- Mental health problems.
- Physical signs, e.g. bruising.
- Relationship difficulties.
- Drug and/or alcohol problems.
- Financial problems, e.g. rent arrears.
- Attempted suicide or self-harm.
- Sudden changes in behaviour or presentation.
- Evidence of coercive or controlling relationships.
- Signs of exploitation by others.
- Significant deterioration in living conditions.
- Unexplained withdrawal from services, support networks or family.

#### 3.2.4 People who live in accommodation and/or receive services provided by us should do so in an environment that is safe and free from abuse. All colleagues have a responsibility to safeguard children and adults who are at risk of and/or are experiencing abuse or neglect.

#### 3.2.5 We will safeguard children and adults from abuse by taking all reasonable steps to prevent and detect abuse and raise alerts where abuse is suspected.

#### 3.2.6 This will be achieved by all colleagues following the procedure set out in the Safeguarding Adults and Child Protection Procedure.

#### 3.2.7 We will continue to work in partnership with statutory and other agencies in performing our obligations to safeguard children and adults.

### 3.3 Who is at Risk?

#### 3.3.1 A vulnerable adult at risk is a person aged 18 or above who is, or may be eligible for community care services and whose independence and wellbeing is at risk due to abuse or neglect.

#### 3.3.2 Children and young people - individuals who have not reached their 18th birthday.

#### 3.3.3 A person may be at risk or vulnerable because they:

- Have learning or physical disabilities.
- Have mental health problems.
- May be old, frail or ill.

- Cannot always take care of themselves or protect themselves without help.

#### 3.3.4 Additionally:

- Some children are particularly vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.

#### 3.3.5 It must not be assumed that someone is automatically at risk because of age, disability or gender.

### 3.4 Safeguarding Advisors

#### 3.4.1 We have colleagues designated as **Safeguarding Advisors (SAs)**. They receive and act on alerts but also have a role in advising and supporting other colleagues. These individuals are listed in Appendix 1 of the procedure guide.

## 4.0 Customer Vulnerabilities

#### 4.1 This policy is applied in line with our Customers in Vulnerable Circumstances Policy. We want people to be treated fairly, have equality of opportunities, freedom, respect, and access to our services.

#### 4.2 We will support people in vulnerable circumstances to help us deliver this service. We will work alongside external agencies such as social services, the police and fire services and other appropriate agencies to help and support people in vulnerable circumstances and to ensure we meet our statutory and regulatory requirements as a social landlord.

#### 4.3 Policies and key information are made available on our website.

## 5.0 Monitoring and Review

#### 5.1 This policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years. The review will be brought forward if there are significant changes to good practice, regulatory or legislative requirements.

#### 5.2 The Group Director of Housing is responsible for the monitoring, review and implementation of this policy.

## 6.0 Equality and Diversity

#### 6.1 This policy is applied in line with our Inclusion and Belonging Policy. This includes the legal requirements of the Equality Act 2010, Workers Protection Act 2023 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

#### 6.2 At the Karbon Group we aim to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, foster good relations and define the nine protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

- 6.3 If you would like this or any other policies in a different language or format please contact [inclusion@karbonhomes.co.uk](mailto:inclusion@karbonhomes.co.uk).

## **7.0 Data Protection and Privacy**

- 7.1 We have a clear policy on data protection and sharing data with other partners/third parties under the requirements of the UK General Data Protection Regulation, the Data Protection Act 2018 and other associated legislation. This is clearly set out in the Data Protection Policy for the Karbon Group which, along with its associated procedures, must be followed throughout the operation of this policy.
- 7.2 In cases of safeguarding children and adults at risk, organisations do not have to tell people that they are processing their data, for instance if it will cause them harm or prevent a referral, nor give them access to their data, nor delete their data if requested.
- 7.3 Colleagues will ensure that when completing a Safeguarding referral that they clearly record whether the customer is aware of the referral and if consent was given for the referral. If consent was neither given or requested, the colleague must fully explain why they feel the sharing of the information is necessary, this is to enable the Group to establish the lawful basis applicable for the sharing of the information which must be performed in line with the Lawful Basis procedure.