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## **Tenancy Support Policy**

**SER-POL-14**

**Version 2.0**

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**Date approved: 11 January 2018**

**Approved by: Chief Executive**

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This policy outlines the approach Southway Housing Trust (the Trust) will take to support some of our tenants to sustain their tenancies and live fulfilled lives.
- 1.2 The Trust will provide holistic support to some tenants who are in in complex situations, with a focus on early intervention where possible.
- 1.3 Our Community Support Officers will have specialist knowledge and experience to support tenants who will benefit from more intensive involvement, on a case management basis.
- 1.4 The Trust will provide a holistic approach to support tenants who hoard, to address hoarding behaviour and to reduce the hoard and associated fire, health and safety risks. We may take a flexible approach to tenancy breaches in order to resolve the situation.
- 1.5 We will link across multiple agencies when providing early and comprehensive interventions, to achieve shared objectives including those based on Confident and Achieving Manchester (Complex Dependency), Health and Social Care Reform, and Early Help.

## **2. The Trust's Approach**

- 2.1 For new tenants, the Trust will identify those who are at most risk of tenancy failure at pre-tenancy interview and starter tenancy visits.
- 2.2 For existing tenants, the Trust will identify tenants who will benefit the most from intensive involvement during all interactions, in particular Tenancy Audit visits, rent arrears collection and anti-social behaviour complaints. Non-specialist staff will be trained to identify causes of concern and report these for further investigation.
- 2.3 Within Sheltered Schemes, support will be provided by a Scheme Manager to promote wellbeing and maintain independence, and a Community Alarm will be provided in each property.
- 2.4 The Trust will not directly provide personal care services, but will assist tenants, particularly those in our sheltered housing schemes, to access these services where necessary to help them to live independently. The Trust will monitor the quality of these services with the tenants and their families and representatives.

- 2.5 Families and individuals with complex needs and high levels of dependency (see section 4) may be provided with a Key Worker, dependent on available capacity, or will be referred to the Early Help Hub or other statutory and non statutory agency for the most appropriate intervention.
- 2.5.1 We will use a Strengths Based approach, focusing on what's working well, to empower tenants to increase their life skills and employment chances.
- 2.6 The Trust will continue to develop best practice and expertise in supporting tenants who hoard, and wherever possible will support these tenants without the need to take legal action to enforce tenancy conditions.
- 2.7 In addition the Trust will have a role in referring, case planning and contributing to action plans where a statutory organisation or another intervention is taking the lead, in particular in safeguarding children (including Child in Need status) or adults with care and support needs.

### **3. Confident and Achieving Manchester**

- 3.1 The Trust is committed to the Manchester Housing Providers Partnership (MHPP) Resource Agreement, in partnership with Manchester City Council (MCC) and other partners, to deliver a Confident and Achieving Manchester.
- 3.2 The partnership agreed to align resources to improve key outcomes for Manchester, to:
- Support independence;
  - Reduce demand for complex, expensive public services;
  - Provide an integrated Key Worker approach to the whole household;
  - Support more families and individuals, including those at risk of becoming complex in the future;
  - Promote sustainable employment as the goal for more residents; and
  - Be part of the Early Help offer within localities.
- 3.3 The Community Support Team will take the lead in delivering Key Worker interventions and will work in partnership with the South Early Help Hub in the allocation and management of cases.

## **4. Tenants with Complex Needs**

4.1 The tenants who will benefit most from intensive support will have a combination of some of the needs listed below:

- Leaving residential or institutional care, care home, prison or temporary foster care;
- Homeless or have been in temporary or supported accommodation;
- Fleeing Domestic Violence and Abuse;
- Refugees granted asylum status;
- Need help to stay at home and not go into residential care or hospital;
- Misuse of drugs and/or alcohol;
- Hoard and/or neglect their property;
- Socially isolated, with no support network;
- Not receiving statutory or other (voluntary/family) support to manage their physical and/or mental health;
- Workless, in debt, in fuel poverty and/or in food poverty.

## **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

5.1 The Safeguarding Policy refers to, and the procedure details, all staff's responsibilities to identify and report safeguarding concerns for children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect.

5.2 All People and Places staff will:

- Signpost and/or refer tenants to external support agencies, statutory and voluntary. This will include activities provided by the Trust in our communities such as employment support, volunteering opportunities, and activities to prevent social isolation.
- Signpost tenants to and/or assist tenants with referrals for, major and minor adaptations to their home, to enable independent living and tenancy sustainability.

5.3 The Community Services Team will:

- Undertake a low level Key Worker role, providing additional advice and support, using an action plan if required with short term timescales, to resolve an issue.

5.4 The Community Support Team will:

- Receive and triage referrals for support. Cases most at risk of tenancy failure will be prioritised. If the Team doesn't have capacity the referral will be passed to the Services team for low level key work and signposting pending the start of the intervention.
- Case manage more complex situations to support tenants to sustain their tenancies, pay their rent, achieve greater independence and live fulfilled lives.
- Manage hoarding cases, using the good practice developed by the Tidy Homes, Tidy Minds project.

5.5 The Community Support and Action Teams will:

- Co-manage cases involving tenants who lack capacity under the Mental Capacity Act 2005, wherever possible ensuring that a comprehensive package of support is in place from statutory agencies.
- Co-manage cases involving Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA), ensuring that appropriate advice, safety planning and support is in place to mitigate the impact of DVA on survivors and the negative effects on children exposed to DVA.

5.6 Within our sheltered housing schemes, the Scheme Managers will:

- Monitor the health and wellbeing of tenants at an agreed frequency, providing advice, advocacy and referrals to promote and maintain independent living.
- Work with residents and non-residents (other Southway tenants and local residents) along with partner agencies, to deliver a range of social events and activities to tackle social exclusion and loneliness.

5.7 Within our sheltered housing schemes, the Trust will work in partnership with an accredited call centre to provide monitoring of any emergency calls using the Community Alarm and appropriate response and reassurance to tenants, within agreed timescales and to agreed service standards.

## 5.8 Managers

- The Community Support and Age Friendly Manager will oversee operational delivery of the support service, including Sheltered Schemes.
- Community Support and Action Managers will oversee certain complex cases involving breaches of tenancy.
- Senior Managers will report on performance measures, including number of cases and outcomes, to the People and Places Committee on a quarterly basis. Outcomes are specifically linked to the Trust's core management functions: the impact on rent arrears, nuisance and anti-social behaviour, property condition and social inclusion.

## **6. Partnership Working**

- 6.1 Southway Housing Trust will attend strategic and operational multi-agency partnership meetings, in particular with MCC and other statutory and voluntary agencies including MHPP Connecting People, South Safeguarding Fora and South Early Help Hub allocations meetings.
- 6.2 The Trust will engage in multi agency working, seek new partnerships, and work to sustain and improve existing relationships with partners that deliver support and other services to enable independent living. This includes for example Social Services, Manchester Mental Health Team and Early Help Intervention Team.

## **7. Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

- 7.1 As part of the process of providing and organising support for tenants, the Trust will need to share information with other organisations, statutory and voluntary.
- 7.2 Before sharing information the Trust will agree this with the tenant, including which agencies information can be shared with, and obtain a signed consent form.
- 7.3 Where there are safeguarding concerns about the tenant or another person who may come to harm if information is not shared, information will be shared without consent. This is detailed in the Safeguarding Policy.

## **8. Implementation and Training**

- 8.1 This policy will be implemented through the Safeguarding and Hoarding Procedures, as well as operational practices developed in partnership with MCC and other providers delivering Complex Dependency / Early Help interventions.
- 8.2 Specialist staff will be trained on:
- (a) Relevant strategies and legislation, e.g. the Care Act 2014, Mental Capacity Act 2005, and domestic abuse awareness;
  - (b) Safeguarding children and adults with care and support needs; and
  - (c) Approaches to intensive support, e.g. Early Help assessments, support planning, strengths based interviewing, cognitive behavioural therapy techniques.
- 8.3 Specialist staff will develop areas of expertise, and will identify their own training needs and opportunities to network and gather good practice.
- 8.4 Places and People staff will be trained on:
- (a) An overview of the work of the Community Services Team;
  - (b) Safeguarding reporting;
  - (c) Recognising tenants with support needs; and
  - (d) An overview of the role of statutory and voluntary agencies.

## **9. Related Policy Documents**

- Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- Domestic Abuse Policy
- Hate Crime Policy
- Equipment and Adaptations Policy

<b>POLICY REVIEW HISTORY</b>	
<i>To be completed during each review</i>	
<b>Previous versions</b> (version number – approved by – approval date – title if different)	
v1 – Shadow Board – 19/06/2007 – People with Support Needs Policy	
<b>Date of last EIA:</b>	15/02/2018
<b>Review lead by:</b>	Claire Davies, Community Support and Age Friendly Manager
<b>Main points or amendments made and reasons</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The policy has been substantially changed to reflect the service model introduced in the People and Places Department.</li> <li>▪ Title change to focus on support service delivered by Community Support and Sheltered Scheme support.</li> <li>▪ Key Objectives changed to Policy Aims.</li> <li>▪ Key targets and Performance Indicators changed to Policy Statement.</li> <li>▪ Key Policy Statements changed to a section on Confident and Achieving Manchester.</li> <li>▪ Special Needs changed to Definitions, wording changed in this section to reflect current terminology.</li> <li>▪ Service Promises changed to roles and responsibilities.</li> <li>▪ Partnership working is updated with the current delivery models in Manchester for social care.</li> <li>▪ Training section updated as above.</li> </ul>	
<b>Next review due:</b>	<b>Q4 2019/20</b>
<b>Approval level:</b>	<b>Chief Executive</b>