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## **Safeguarding Policy**

**SER-POL-19**

**Version 6**

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**Date approved: 03 February 2026**

**Approved by: Audit and Risk Committee**

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This policy sets out how Southway will identify and report safeguarding concerns for children and adults.
- 1.2 Southway will work with others as part of the Manchester Safeguarding Partnership to safeguard and promote the welfare of adults, children, young people, and their families.
- 1.3 This policy applies to adults, children and young people that live in, or visit, our properties and use our services.
- 1.4 Southway expects all employees, volunteers and contractors working on our behalf to be able to identify, report and act on safeguarding concerns.

## **2. Staff Responsibilities**

- 2.1 Southway staff have a responsibility to notice, record and report concerns about children or adults living in our homes and communities who may be at risk of abuse and / or neglect, and to work in partnership and share information when appropriate.
- 2.2 The Head of Housing Management and Support is the Safeguarding Champion for Southway and the main point of contact for Manchester City Council on Safeguarding matters.
- 2.3 All managers are responsible for ensuring that their staff understand safeguarding issues and the importance of raising concerns.
- 2.4 Frontline officers and operatives who visit tenants' properties must report any concerns they have about the tenant or other occupants.

## **3. Relevant Legislation**

- 3.1 Southway has responsibilities under the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 to safeguard children at risk of abuse and neglect and under the Care Act 2014 and the Mental Capacity Act 2005 to safeguard adults with care and support needs.
- 3.2 Southway as part of the Manchester Safeguarding Partnership defines safeguarding as protecting a child or adults right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Organisations and communities should work together to support children and young people to make decisions about the risks they

face in their own lives and protect those who lack the capacity to make these decisions.

#### **4. Southway's Approach**

- 4.1 Southway employees, volunteers and contractors visiting our homes and delivering services in our neighbourhoods will understand their role in reporting safeguarding concerns.
- 4.2 Southway employees will record and refer all concerns, suspicions or allegations of abuse or neglect.
- 4.3 Where someone is in immediate danger or discloses abuse that is a criminal offence, we will report this to the Police using 999.
- 4.4 Southway will report concerns of abuse and neglect to partners that have statutory responsibility to investigate safeguarding referrals, the Local Authority and Police.
- 4.5 Where possible, consent will be sought before making a safeguarding referral. If consent is refused but there remains a significant risk to a child or an adult with care and support needs, Southway will proceed without consent in line with statutory guidance. All decisions and rationale must be recorded.
- 4.6 For safeguarding concerns arising outside normal working hours, staff should contact the Local Authority Emergency Duty Team or the Police (999 for emergencies). Details are provided in the Safeguarding Procedure.
- 4.7 Southway will share information lawfully under the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 for the purposes of safeguarding. Information will be shared specifically to respond to requests from the Local Authority and MSP as part of a safeguarding children or adult enquiry, learning case review or serious case review. Safeguarding is a recognised exemption that permits sharing without consent where necessary to protect a child or adult at risk. All staff must ensure that information shared is proportionate, relevant, and recorded accurately.
- 4.8 Southway will ensure that all staff understand that data protection does not prevent the sharing of information where it would safeguard children and adults with a care and support need.
- 4.9 Southway's internal procedure will detail the clear lines of responsibility for reporting, processing and monitoring safeguarding.

4.10 Southway has a designated Safeguarding Lead at Senior Manager level. The Safeguarding Lead will attend relevant multi-agency forums and be responsible for ensuring the organisation is kept up to date with legislative changes and learns from best practice.

## **5. Safe Recruitment**

5.1 Southway's recruitment processes will include Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks at either Standard or Enhanced levels for new staff where it has been identified and agreed by Southway's Vetting and Barring provider that the post being recruited to is a position that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended, and where appropriate Police Act regulations.

5.2 Staff subject to DBS checks will be required to advise their managers of any investigations and/or convictions that may impact upon their job role immediately.

5.3 Managers will, following consultation with Human Resources, take appropriate action, up to and including dismissal to protect vulnerable adults and children.

5.4 Southway will ensure DBS checks are updated every 3 years.

## **6. Whistleblowing**

6.1 Southway's Whistleblowing Policy encourages and supports staff to report concerns about the conduct of staff members. The policy includes a named designated Whistleblowing Officer that Southway staff can approach for advice and guidance.

6.2 Southway will report any safeguarding concerns raised about the conduct of staff members in relation to children, to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and act in accordance with the LADO's advice and guidance.

## **7. Staff Training and Continuous Improvement**

7.1 Southway will provide a procedure, training, and guidance to new and existing staff on:

- The different types of abuse
- Where abuse occurs and by whom
- Recognising the signs of abuse

- Reporting safeguarding concerns internally and to statutory bodies
- How to deal with a disclosure of abuse

7.2 All Southway employees, volunteers and contractors will be provided with role appropriate training.

7.3 Southway will implement learning points from relevant reports, Serious Case Reviews, and best practice.

7.4 Southway will complete self-assessments and carry out internal audits of its safeguarding procedures and practices and implement recommendations.

7.5 Southway will periodically report Safeguarding activity to the Customer Voice Committee.

- Number of Concern Reports recorded
- Evaluation of investigated cases and alerts and lesson learnt
- Compliance with policy and procedures

## **8. Equality and Diversity**

8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and no negative impacts or actions identified.

## **9. Related Policy Documents**

- Anti- Social Behaviour Policy
- Domestic Abuse Policy
- Hate Crime Policy
- Single Equalities Scheme
- Customer Care Policy
- Data Protection and Information Sharing Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Tenancy Support Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy

## **Glossary of Terms**

**Children Acts 1989 & 2004:** UK laws setting duties to safeguard and promote welfare of children.

**Care Act 2014:** Legislation outlining safeguarding duties for adults with care and support needs.

**Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005:** Law governing decision-making for individuals who may lack capacity. Provides framework for assessing decision-making capacity. Five principles:

1. Assume capacity unless proven otherwise.
2. Support decision-making before concluding incapacity.
3. Unwise decisions do not equal incapacity.
4. Decisions must be in best interests.
5. Actions should be least restrictive.

**Safeguarding:** Protecting individuals' right to live safely, free from abuse and neglect.

### **Safeguarding Adults (Care Act 2014):**

Applies to adults (18+) who:

1. Have care and support needs (regardless of Local Authority involvement).
2. Are experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect.
3. Cannot protect themselves due to those needs.

### **Safeguarding Children (Working Together 2015):**

Includes protecting from maltreatment, preventing harm to health/development, ensuring safe care, and enabling best outcomes.

**MSP (Making Safeguarding Personal):** Approach focusing on person-led, outcome-focused safeguarding.

### **Six Principles of Adult Safeguarding:**

1. **Empowerment:** Supporting individuals to make informed decisions.
2. **Prevention:** Acting early to stop harm before it occurs.
3. **Proportionality:** Responding appropriately to the level of risk.

4. **Protection:** Taking action for those in greatest need.
5. **Partnership:** Working with agencies and communities to safeguard.
6. **Accountability:** Ensuring transparency and responsibility in safeguarding actions.

**Abuse:** Any behaviour that deliberately or unknowingly causes a person harm or endangers their life and is a violation of a person's human and civil rights, by another person or persons. It may consist of a single act or repeated acts. The types of abuse and indicators are listed in the Safeguarding Procedure. Harmful acts or neglect violating a person's rights; can be physical, emotional, sexual, financial, or neglect.

<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)	
<a href="#">v1 – Board – 23/11/2010 – Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy</a> <a href="#">v2 – Board – 18/11/2013 – Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy</a> <a href="#">V3 – Audit and Risk Panel November 2016 – Safeguarding Policy</a> <a href="#">V4 – Audit and Risk Committee February 2020</a> <a href="#">V5 – Audit and Risk Committee February 2023</a> <a href="#">V6 – Audit and Risk Committee February 2026</a>	
<b>Date of last EIA:</b>	January 2026
<b>Review lead by:</b>	Claire Davies, Head of Housing Management and Support
<b>Main points or amendments made and reasons</b>	
Definitions moved to Glossary  Update of job title Added paragraphs on gaining consent and what to do in an emergencies	
<b>Next review due:</b>	Q4 2029
<b>Approval level:</b>	Audit and Risk Committee