SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS IN NORTHAMPTON

A GUIDE FOR CONTRACTORS

Safeguarding is everyone’s business

Landlord Services

Please read this in conjunction with the Council’s full policy document Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedure which can be found at http://www.northampton.gov.uk/safeguarding
NORTHAMPTON Borough Council is committed to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and protecting them from abuse. This is a responsibility that the Council takes very seriously. As a contractor, providing services on behalf of the Council, to Council tenants, you are required to play your part in meeting this policy commitment.

WHAT DOES ‘SAFEGUARDING’ CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS MEAN?

- Protecting children from maltreatment and abuse
- Preventing impairment of children’s health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Enabling those children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully

Children includes young adults and young persons under the age of 18

Vulnerable adults means people aged over 18 who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited. This may be because of:
- Mental health problems
- Disability
- Sensory impairment (e.g. hard of hearing)
- Age and frailty
- Some form of illness

WHAT RESPONSIBILITY DO CONTRACTORS HAVE?

It is not the contractors’ responsibility to determine whether abuse is taking place. However, it is your responsibility to pass on concerns raised by your employees. You need to make sure that your employees are aware of what abuse might occur. Your employees need to be alert and to make sure they pass on all concerns to a named person in your organisation. That person then needs to take responsibility for passing those concerns on to the Council immediately.

Do not worry about being wrong – abuse can be hard to identify, even for those experienced in working with abuse.

Your responsibility is to make sure that any concerns are passed on.
HOW DO YOU REPORT YOUR CONCERNS?

Any concerns should be reported to, or discussed with, Adam Evans in the Property Maintenance Department of Northampton Borough Council. His e-mail address is aevans@northampton.gov.uk. He will then arrange for you to fill in a referral form and for the matter to be investigated.

If the above contact is unavailable or further support or advice is required, contact a Designated Safeguarding Officer from the following list:

- Darren Berwick - 01604 838106
- Marion Goodman - 01604 838273
- Debbie Ferguson - 01604 838731
- James Ogle - 01604 838950

Out of office hours, please contact

Safeguarding out of hours team: 01604 626938

WHAT SHOULD YOU AND PEOPLE WORKING FOR YOU LOOK OUT FOR?

Abuse and neglect includes physical, emotional or sexual abuse; neglect and financial abuse. More information is included in our policy on our website or can be provided upon request.

Indicators of abuse and neglect include:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns
- An injury for which the reason given seems inconsistent
- The child/vulnerable adult describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him or her
- Someone else expresses concern about their welfare — e.g. neighbours tell you of their concerns
- Unexplained changes in behaviour — for example becoming very quiet or very angry
- Inappropriate sexual awareness
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour
- Distrust of adults
- Difficulty making friends
- The person is dirty or unkempt
- Signs of inadequate care by parents or carers — for example, lack of warm or suitable clothing; lack of heating or food, or poor hygiene.

Please consider if repairs should be dealt with more urgently because of any potential risk to children or adults in the property.

More details are available in the policy document on our website.
HOW WELL IS THE TENANT COPING?

As well as abuse, you need to look for signs of tenants not coping with day-to-day life. Contact Adam Evans and report this to him. Whilst this is not abuse, it may be that the tenant needs help. For example:

- Very dirty property
- Tenant ‘hoarding’ items – for examples, piles of newspapers, rooms over filled with items
- Uncared for animals – for example, excrement on floors or furniture
- Tenant not eating or looking after themselves
- Unexpected money worries or reports that money may have gone missing or has been taken

If your employees see any such signs, please tell us straight away so that we can make sure help and support are provided.

Remember – we may not have had contact with the tenant. You or people working for you may be the only contact with the household for sometime.

IF YOU ARE UNSURE ABOUT ANYTHING .... Contact us for advice.

INSTRUCTION AND GUIDANCE

You are not permitted to work in a Council home where minors are present without adult supervision, if you experience such when attending work on the council’s behalf you are required to:

- Refrain from undertaking any work.
- Notify the Council’s area works supervisor.
- Contact the customer to arrange suitable supervision.
- Re-appoint the scheduled work with the customer if necessary.

WORKING IN COUNCIL PROPERTIES – OUR STANDARDS

All representatives undertaking work on behalf of the Council are required to adhere to the following codes of behaviour:

- Introduce yourself to the customer displaying photo identification before entering a property.
- Treat our customers with respect and behave in a professional manner and be dressed appropriately.
- Give explanation on what you are going to do and discuss how your actions will impact on the customer providing updates as the work progresses.
- Ensure all belongings are protected from damage with appropriate use of dustsheets etc…
- Ensure tools and materials do not pose a danger to anyone.
- Clear rubbish away and clear it at the end of each working day.
- Ensure electricity, water and gas is connected at the end of each day.

NB: You are reminded this is supplementary information in addition to that provided through the arrangements held between yourselves and Northampton Borough Council.