

Safeguarding Adults & Children

July 2020

Purpose and Scope:

***The safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults
is everyone's responsibility***

The purpose of this procedure is to:-

- Ensure that all staff are aware that it is all of our responsibility to take action to prevent abuse of children, young people and adults at risk;
- Set out the values and principles underpinning all work with vulnerable people;
- Indicate the legal framework within which abuse can be tackled;
- Define the different forms and signs of abuse for adults at risk, children and young people;
- Set out the procedure to be followed if abuse is suspected and how to deal with disclosures;
- Highlight that the need to respond to suspected abuse supersedes the requirements on confidentiality (GDPR).

Responsibility (Manager/Team):

Head of Housing

Chief Executive/Director Approval:



Date:
7th August 2020

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1.0 NATIONAL POLICY AND LEGAL CONTEXT

1.1 What does Safeguarding mean? Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and adults at risk to protect and prevent them from harm.

1.2 This procedure is written to ensure that staff know how to recognise and deal with suspected abuse, and where they are able to prevent abuse. The Wales Safeguarding procedures details the legal framework, principles and duties reflected in The Social Services & Wellbeing Act (2014)
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2014/4/pdfs/anaw_20140004_en.pdf

1.3 The new procedures emphasise that it is everyone's duty to safeguard children and adults at risk and any person in contact or working with a child or adult at risk is responsible for arranging services for this person to ensure their safety.

1.4 Effective safeguarding requires each practitioner and organisation to play their part in the process and to be familiar with, and follow, their organisation's procedures. The guidance 'Handling Individual Cases' (<https://socialcare.wales/hub/statutory-guidance>) describes the principles that should underpin safeguarding systems for children and adults at risk. The term 'Practitioners' means all those who are working with/have involvement with children, young people and adults at risk (including professionals, unpaid volunteers and paid employment). To provide some examples of a practitioner would be staff that visit tenants home, work out in the community and staff that work on void properties.

1.5 Key changes/shifts in practice:

- Introduction of Psychological and Financial Abuse as distinct categories within the children's procedures
- The new procedures highlight additional risks associated with Criminal Exploitation (CCS), Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Radicalisation, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Modern Day Slavery
- The new procedures highlight all those working with children and young people and adults at risk, should adopt a person centred approach; The rights of the person at risk is paramount. The child, young person or adult at risk views, wishes and feelings must be sought to ensure the voice of the individual is heard.
- When considering the vulnerable persons best interests, as far as reasonable and practicable their views should be considered.
- Emphasis placed on all individuals working with children and adults at risk have a part to play in safeguarding and the promotion of the wellbeing of children and adults at risk.

- New procedures promote co-production between agencies and services to ensure the child/young person/ adult at risk, receives appropriate care and support.
- The new procedures for children emphasise the importance of co-production with the child/ young person, developing working relationships with the child, young person and the family (In line with the SS&WA 'What Matters to the child and Family').
- The new procedures introduce Care and Support Protection Plan as required to address the needs of the child/ young person or adult at risk, including keeping them safe if they are experiencing and/or likely to experience on-going significant harm.
- The care and support still applies to address any unmet need if the person is not found to be at risk of significant harm.
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) – The new procedures outline that 'practitioners' are expected to thoroughly assess children and their families to consider the impact of ACEs that could have impacted upon the parental capacity to meet the needs of the child/young person.
- Increased emphasis on early help and prevention to reduce the need for safeguarding enquiries and intervention.

1.6 Gwent Safeguarding brings together the Gwent-wide Adult Safeguarding Board and the South East Wales Safeguarding Children and the Strategic Boards has responsibility for making sure that the local authority, Police, Health and other agencies (including housing associations) work together and are committed to ensuring that adults and children are safeguarded and to take immediate and appropriate action to protect them and keep them from harm.

2.0 THE SCOPE OF THIS PROCEDURE

2.1 Tai Calon undertakes various tasks and we offer services in tenants' homes. When we access homes we may come across issues that fall under this procedure. This procedure applies to all staff of Tai Calon and we have a clear expectation that all staff have a duty to report any issue associated with the protection of children / young people or adults at risk.

2.2 This procedure applies to the protection of both adults at risk, children and young people and covers abuse of vulnerable people by anyone, including those in a relationship of trust with them which could include friends, relatives, care staff etc

3.0 RESPONSIBILITY

- 3.1 All staff have a legal and contractual obligation to apply this procedure. Heads of Service are responsible for its implementation and keeping themselves aware of and applying good practice.
- 3.2 Protecting children / young people and adults at risk and promoting their welfare is everyone's responsibility. Different people within Tai Calon will have varying levels of contact with vulnerable people. However, it is everyone's responsibility to take note of when a child / young person or adult at risk, may be at risk of significant harm and respond accordingly, even if their day to day contact with vulnerable people is minimal.
- 3.3 Tai Calon will take all reasonable steps to ensure that its workers, both paid and voluntary are suitable for the role they carry out. Tai Calon will ensure that staff are appropriately trained so that they are able to deal effectively with their responsibilities. Where staff members suspect harm or abuse they must notify their line manager immediately. **See sections (adults) 5.1 - 5.8 and 7.1 (children).**

4.0 ADULTS AT RISK

- 4.1 An adult at risk is an adult who:-
- a. *is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect,*
 - b. *has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs), and*
 - c. *as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.*
- 4.2 It is important to note:
- The use of the term '**at risk**' means that actual abuse or neglect does not need to occur before practitioners intervene, rather early interventions to protect an adult at risk should be considered to prevent actual abuse and neglect.
 - There are three conditions necessary to demonstrate an adult is at risk of abuse or neglect and these are: -
 - That actions are required to secure the individual's safety in the future because they are unable to protect themselves.
 - Secondly, the abuse of adults deemed to be 'at risk' is often linked to their circumstances rather than the characteristics of the people experiencing harm.

- Thirdly, there is a risk that abuse or neglect may be the consequence of one concern or a result of cumulative factors.

4.3 Forms of Abuse

- **Physical abuse;** abuse such as hitting, pushing, pinching, shaking, using too much medication or not allowing a person to take their medication.
- **Sexual abuse;** such as forcing someone into unwanted sexual activity, being touched inappropriately, rape, sexual assault, or sexual acts which they have not consented to, or which they were pressurised into consenting to.
- **Psychological or emotional abuse;** such as being intimidated, threatened, verbally abused or humiliated, being blamed, controlled or harassed, being ignored on purpose or isolated from friends, family, services or support.
- **Financial abuse;** such as fraud or exploitation, stealing or withholding a person's money or spending it inappropriately. This also includes putting pressure on a person to make changes to their will or misusing a person's property, inheritance, possessions or benefits.
- **Neglect;** such as ignoring medical or physical care needs, preventing access to health, social care or educational services, not caring for a person or not providing them with adequate food, putting them at risk.

Note: Sometimes people may be being abused in more than one way.

5.0 Action to be taken if abuse is suspected (Adult at Risk)

- 5.1 If you think an adult is at risk of being abused, you should tell someone. Don't assume that someone else will tell and don't worry if you think you might be wrong - it is still important for someone with experience and responsibility to look into it. Social Services have a legal duty to do this.
- 5.2 When identifying possible emerging concerns about abuse and/or neglect, staff should ask:
- What are my concerns about the adult that if not addressed could cause them to become an adult at risk of abuse or neglect?
 - What information do I have to support these concerns?
- 5.3 Upon suspecting or witnessing abuse:
- The staff member should contact their line manager
 - The line manager must notify the Community Housing Officer (CHO) for that area

- In the absence of that CHO the Senior CHO or Community Safety Officer must be contacted.

A full account will be required of what has been observed or witnessed. In exceptional circumstances details of the witness can be anonymised if it can be shown that to be identified would compromise their own safety.

They will then complete a 'duty to report' form (the most up to date forms are located at <https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Adults/Report/Report-an-adult-at-risk.aspx>).

The form should then be emailed to DutyTeamAdults@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk. This will be sent ***as soon as possible and certainly within 24 hours to Social Services***

- 5.4 Where there is an emergency Social Services can be telephoned (Blaenau Gwent)
Tel: **01495 315700** or for out of hours call **0800 328 4432**.
- 5.5 If required, on the most serious cases where immediate action is needed, staff should use the option to ring **999**.

Note: *'Practitioners' (Staff) should share their concerns and any information obtained with their designated safeguarding person (DSP) or champion. At Tai Calon this is Rachel Rees (Head of Housing) and Gillian Barnet, Community safety Officer, is the safeguarding champion.*

5.7 Collaboration with other agencies

- Staff assessment and action on abuse must almost always be in co-operation and collaboration with other agencies, such as social services, doctors and the police. Tai Calon is committed to interdisciplinary working with its partner agencies and will also make use of joint training opportunities.

6.0 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- 6.1 The Wales Safeguarding Procedures are an essential part of safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. The common standards they provide guide and inform child protection practice in each of the Regional Safeguarding Boards across Wales. They outline the framework for determining how individual child protection referrals, actions and plans are made and carried out. They are based on the principle that the protection of children from harm is the **responsibility of all individuals and agencies working with children and families**, and with adults who may pose a risk to children. Partnership working and communication between agencies is identified as

key in order to identify vulnerable children and to help keep them safe from harm and abuse.

- 6.2 Tai Calon acknowledges the following responsibilities taken from the 'Wales Safeguarding Procedures' which states:

"If any person has knowledge, concerns or suspicions that a child is suffering, has suffered, or is likely to be at risk of harm, it is their responsibility to ensure that concerns are referred to Social Services or the police, who have statutory duties and powers to investigate and intervene when necessary."

- 6.3 A child / young person is abused or neglected when somebody inflicts harm, or fails to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. A child or young person up to the age of 18 years can suffer abuse or neglect and require protection via an inter-agency child protection plan.

6.4 A child at risk as a child who:

- is experiencing or is at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm;
- has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs).

It is important to note:

- The use of the term 'at risk' means that actual abuse or neglect ***does not*** need to occur, rather early interventions to protect a child at risk should be considered to prevent actual harm, abuse and neglect.

- Risk of abuse or neglect may be the consequence of one concern or a result of cumulative factors.

6.5 Harm to a child / young person is defined as:

- ill treatment this includes **sexual abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and psychological abuse**
- the impairment of physical or mental health (including that suffered from seeing or hearing another person suffer ill treatment).
- the impairment of physical intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development (including that suffered from seeing or hearing another person suffer ill treatment).

- 6.6 Tai Calon will work with our partner agencies to help ensure that children and young people are safe and supported.

7.0 ACTION TO BE TAKEN IF ABUSE IS SUSPECTED TO A CHILD / YOUNG PERSON

- 7.1 The same actions and internal processes should be taken as in sections 5.1 – 5.7 with the below slight variations for contact.

OUT OF HOURS/ EMERGENCY DUTY

Between the hours of 17:00pm - 08.30am Monday to Thursday, Weekends and Bank Holidays.
Friday 16:30pm – 08:30am with the exception of Blaenau Gwent 17:00pm – 08:30am

YOU MUST PHONE

your concerns through to the Emergency Duty Team

0800 328 4432

then complete the Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF) and send to Blaenau Gwent at:
dutyteam@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk

The MARF is to be sent ***as soon as possible and certainly within 24 hours to Social Services*** so that they can triage, assess all of the issues and take appropriate action.

*****If the child is in immediate danger please call 999*****

Additional advice can be sourced at:
<https://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk/en/Children/Report/Report-a-child-at-risk.aspx> . MARF form can also be located through this link.

8.0 HOW TO DEAL WITH DISCLOSURES: CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK

- 8.1 The Guidance below is referred to as 'Opening Doors' because practitioners (staff) need to know how to 'open doors' so that the vulnerable person feels safe and able to tell. You will note that there are some similarities between children and adults. We will firstly look at children and young people and then adults at risk

8.2 *The following 10 key principles should inform the approach when a child makes a disclosure: -*

1. If a child tells, plays, draws or shows abuse, listen and attend carefully, with 100% of your attention, even if you look like you are doing something else. This demonstrates that you are taking what they are saying seriously. Many children find it easier if eye contact isn't demanded of them.
2. Let the child tell you what they want to tell you, or show you, without interruption, what they want to show you, as long as they and others are safe. If the time or place is tricky, you might be able to adjust the environment rather than interrupt or stop them (e.g. move others, reduce sound in the room, and always try and have a pen and notebook nearby).
3. If you aren't sure what the child said or did, or if you aren't sure what they meant, offer an open invitation, e.g. reflect back what they have just said, or 'tell me more about that' or 'show me that again'. Avoid leading questions that could impact on further investigations by police.
4. Say things like 'uhuh' or 'mmhmm' or 'go on' to show you are listening. These are safe things to say because they encourage the child to continue, without directing their account in anyway. Saying 'OK' or 'right' or 'yes' is riskier because these can suggest approval of what is being said, and some things that they need to tell are really not OK.
5. Make clear through your behaviour and body language that you are calm, alright and not shocked and that you have time. Give the child as much physical space as they need.
6. Adapt your language and communication style in line with the child's needs. Be clear about what you need to know. Let the child use his or her own words.
7. Try to get just enough information to work out what action is required. Make a careful record of what they said and did, and any questions you asked as soon as you can.
8. If a child tries to demonstrate violent or sexual acts using your body, say calmly 'I can't let you do that' and if necessary, move away.
9. If appropriate, reflect back using the child's own words. Say exactly what they said, without expanding or amending or asking questions. If appropriate, comment to show that you have noticed what they are doing (e.g. 'you're showing me').
10. Let the person know what you will do next including who you will have to tell. This can be very simple: 'I am going to have a think and then I will come back' then perhaps 'Someone from the police is going to come. They need your help. I will stay with you when they are here'.

8.2 *The following 10 key principles should inform the approach when an adult makes a disclosure: -*

1. If an adult at risk tells or shows about possible abuse, listen and attend carefully, with 100% of your attention, even if you look like you are doing something else. This demonstrates that you are taking what they are saying seriously. Many individuals find it easier if eye contact isn't demanded of them.
2. Let the person tell you what they want to tell you, or show you, without interruption, what they want to show you, as long as they and others are safe. If the time or place is tricky, you might be able to adjust the environment rather than interrupt or stop the person (for example, move others, reduce sound in the room, and always try and have a pen and notebook nearby).
3. If you aren't sure what the person said or did, or if you aren't sure what they meant, offer an open invitation, for example, 'tell me more about that' or 'show me that again'. Avoid leading questions such as what, who, why that could impact on further investigations by police.
4. Say things like 'uhuh' or 'mmhmm' to show you are listening or repeat back what they have said to you. These are safe things to say because they encourage the person to continue, without directing their account in anyway. Saying 'OK' or 'right' or 'yes' is riskier because these can suggest approval of what is being said, and some things that they need to tell are really not OK.
5. Make clear through your behaviour and body language that you are calm and alright and that you have time. Give the adult at risk as much physical space as they need.
6. Adapt your language and communication style in line with the person's needs. Be clear about what you need to know. Let the person use his or her own words.
7. Try to get just enough information to work out what action is required. Make a careful record of what they said and did, and any questions you asked as soon as you can.
8. If an adult at risk tries to demonstrate violent or sexual acts using your body, say calmly 'I can't let you do that' and if necessary move away.
9. If appropriate, reflect back using the person's own words. Say exactly what they said, without expanding or amending or asking questions. If appropriate, comment to show that you have noticed what they are doing (e.g. 'you're showing me').
10. Let the person know what you will do next including who you will have to tell. This can be very simple: *'I am going to have a think and then I will come back' then perhaps 'someone from the police is going to come, they need your help. I will stay with you when they are here'.*

9.0 **CONFIDENTIALITY**

- 9.1 Staff must follow the Tai Calon GDPR policy and the law in respect of personal data and also respect confidentiality. Information must not be divulged unless it is deemed necessary due to risk of vulnerable person, or agreed through inter-agency protocols. However, if there is reason to believe that a vulnerable adult or child is being abused then, irrespective of GDPR or other confidentiality requirements, information must be passed on to the appropriate manager or agency.
- 9.2 Staff should never keep information relating to the concern about a potential abuse, to themselves. It is part of their professional responsibility to notify their line manager or appropriate professional of circumstances that have a bearing on the well-being of a vulnerable person. They can, however, promise that the information will be treated within the normal bounds of confidential information.
- 9.3 Any breach of GDPR policy and procedures should be reported to Tai Calon's DPO.

10.0 CONSENT

- 10.1 In cases of suspected abuse, we will seek to establish the consent of the vulnerable person where appropriate. However, given the nature of vulnerable adults and children, circumstances may not be appropriate to seek consent, and the safety of the vulnerable person must always be of paramount concern.

11.0 RECORDING

- 11.1 Staff must ensure that their recording of facts, incidents, assessments, referrals, case discussions are timely, sufficient, accurate, concise, up-to-date, legible, factual, and signed and dated. Personal opinions should be kept to a minimum, unless deemed appropriate and backed up by evidence. Dependant upon the case information will either be stored under the "React" system or Info at work. The Community Housing Officers update React for their patch areas and, if highly sensitive, the case will be passed to Tai Calon's Community Safety Officer.
- 11.2 These records are available to individuals on request (not third party information) and may be used as evidence in civil or criminal prosecutions or in disciplinary proceedings. Referrals to the Local Authority can be by phone in the first instance and then followed with any formal methods as required by the lead agencies.

12.0 TRAINING

12.1 Appropriate on-going training will be provided to staff whose work may bring them into contact with adults at risk and children. All visiting staff, will be given appropriate training, at least every three years. Training for all new starters will be embedded in the induction checklist.

12.2 Tai Calon has in place a disclosure & barring services (DBS) check procedure. We recognise the importance of safeguarding employees, tenants, customers and stakeholders across the business. DBS checks are used to advise Tai Calon of any criminal offences associated with an employee / prospective employee. DBS checks are one measure that can be used to mitigate the risk of a safeguarding issue or event.

13.0 WHISTLEBLOWING

13.1 Tai Calon has a policy in relation to whistleblowing.

13.2 If staff properly report concerns over safeguarding to their managers, and are not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken, they are encouraged to take use the whistle-blowing procedure, where there is reasonable suspicion that abuse could be occurring and this procedure is not being correctly followed,

13.3 Tai Calon will respect and not penalise those who stand up for anyone who is suspected of being abused.

14.0 ADVOCACY

14.1 Staff are encouraged to assist victims by putting them in touch with independent advocates, this will usually be through the Housing teams to organise.

15.0 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

15.1 In all its work, Tai Calon will take into consideration issues that may arise when working with people of different marital status, gender reassignment, sexual orientation race, language, ethnic or national origins, nationality, (including citizenship) religion, age, disability and or medical conditions.