

Housing and Adult Safeguarding

A brief background paper by Imogen Parry, Independent Consultant, Researcher and Trainer for the Housing Sector

Summary

This paper is intended to brief readers on the issues regarding housing and adult safeguarding. The issues include: lack of regulation, high numbers of vulnerable tenants, drivers to engage in safeguarding, housing representation on SABs, how housing providers can improve their engagement. Issues are cross referenced to related research and publications.

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Related resource/reference</i>
1 The role of housing in preventing and addressing adult abuse is neglected in legislation, policy, practice and research.	Joint Committee on the Draft Care and Support Bill, 2013, para.163, p.42, quoting my written evidence to that committee: http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt201213/jtselect/jtcare/143/143.pdf
2 There is a lack of regulation and other incentives on social housing providers ¹ to engage in housing. ‘No Secrets’ only mentioned sheltered and supported housing. The Supporting People programme required supported and sheltered housing staff to be trained in safeguarding and to have policies/procedures – general needs staff were not covered.	Parry, I. (2013a) ‘Adult safeguarding and the role of housing’, <u>Journal of Adult Protection</u> , (1), pp.15-26. http://www.emeraldinsight.com/journals.htm?issn=1466-8203&volume=15&issue=1&articleid=17077552&show=abstract
3 Yet large numbers of vulnerable adults/adults at risk live in general needs housing. Many general needs housing providers: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack a safeguarding culture• Have insufficiently trained staff• Under-report abuse• Have limited data on tenants vulnerabilities• Don’t understand the complexities of adult safeguarding• Find almost intractable problems with partnership working regarding safeguarding.	Spurr, H. (2013a) ‘Workers fail to report abuse’ <u>Inside Housing</u> , 22.11.2013. http://www.insidehousing.co.uk/care/workers-fail-to-report-abuse/6529610.article?utm_medium=email&utm_source=Ocean+Media+&utm_campaign=3360938_IH-Daily+News-221113-JK&dm_i=1HH2,201BE,7UMPOP,774OF,1

¹ **Social housing providers** include: council housing departments; Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs); Large Scale Voluntary Transfer organisations (LSVTs); housing associations (now technically known as Private Registered Providers, also previously known as Registered Social Landlords)

4 The new drivers for ALL housing staff to engage in safeguarding include:

- Increased public, political and media awareness of abuse
- Evidence through SCRs of failures of housing providers to prevent murder, abuse and neglect of adults at risk, including those living in general needs housing. 30% of publicly available adult SCRs concern social housing tenants, of whom half lived in general needs accommodation and half lived in specialist housing.
- Safeguarding links to other agendas that housing is (or should be) engaged in: anti-social behaviour; crime reduction; domestic abuse; disability hate crime; health and well-being
- Reputational risk for housing providers
- Impact of Care Act 2014. Government statement on housing and safeguarding, May 2013: *We would be most concerned if SABs did not address the role, contribution and responsibilities of housing providers in adult safeguarding. We would also expect SABs to draw on the housing sector for in-put, collaboration and advice.*
- SCIE guide: Adult safeguarding for housing staff

My MA in Safeguarding Adults: Law, Policy and Practice dissertation research on 'Adult Serious Case Reviews: lessons for housing providers'. Published in the Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law, 2014 and available for free download until end June 2014

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09649069.2014.895506>

Evidence from my survey of Independent Chairs of SABs, 2013, reported in:

<http://www.pasauk.org.uk/upload/public/PASAUK%20Report%20'Adult%20Safeguarding%20and%20Housing'%20final%20pdf.pdf>

Department of Health (2013), p. 67. The Care Bill Explained: Including a response to consultation and pre-legislative scrutiny on the Draft Care and Support Bill, Cm 8627, 10 May 2013. London: Stationery Office Ltd.

<http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm86/8627/8627.pdf>

Published 24 April 2014

<http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/guides/guide53/>

5 Need for housing providers to be represented on SABs.

My submission to the Public Bill Care Bill Committee, December 2013: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmpublic/care/memo/cb03.htm>

- 6 Strategic and operational approaches for housing providers to improve their engagement in adult safeguarding:
- Governance level endorsement of safeguarding culture and related policies, procedures, training that impact on all staff, contractors and tenants
 - Local multi-agency policies known about and used by all staff
 - Representation on SAB, MARAC, MAPPA, MASH
 - Customer profiling of vulnerabilities
 - Middle managers or internal dedicated safeguarding leads meet with adult social care staff to address multi-agency working issues, including: exclusion from strategy meetings and investigations; failures of information sharing; high thresholds; failures of capacity and risk assessment .

7 Conclusion

Housing providers have much to do to improve their engagement in adult safeguarding. Partner agencies, particularly those in adult social care can help their housing colleagues through addressing information sharing issues in particular. The most significant improvement to the engagement of housing providers in adult safeguarding is their inclusion as a member of SABs.

Parry, I. (2013b) 'Adult safeguarding – the need for all staff to engage' in Thornhill, J.(ed.)

'Learning today, leading tomorrow – skills and learning for the housing industry of the future', Coventry, Chartered Institute of Housing.

<http://www.cih.org/resources/PDF/Policy%20free%20download%20pdfs/Learning%20today%20leading%20tomorrow/05%20Adult%20safeguarding%20Parry.p>

Parry (2013c) 'How social workers can help housing staff understand safeguarding', Community Care, 2.4.2013.

<http://www.communitycare.co.uk/articles/02/04/2013/119061/how-social-workers-can-help-housing-staff-understand-safeguarding.htm?cmpid=NLC|SCSC|SCDDB-20130402-GLOB|news>

Imogen Parry, 10 May 2014