

VULNERABLE PEOPLE POLICY

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1. Management information

POLICY DETAILS

Date Policy approved by Board	11/09/2007		
Replacing/Updating	None		
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Drafted by	Supported Housing Manager		
Contributors	Service Users Staff		
Responsible Director	Operations Director		
Pages	Whole Document 9	Appendices	

2. Introduction

- 2.1 SLH is committed to ensure that all residents in the South Liverpool area have every opportunity to maintain their homes, and that SLH only use the tool of eviction as a last resort.
- 2.2 SLH's aspirations are consistent with the Regulatory Code and Guidance issued by the Housing Corporation to Housing Associations (HA) as in January 2002, which require HAs to ensure that:
- legal possession of a property is sought as a last resort (3.5a); and
 - Vulnerable and marginalized residents are provided with appropriate responsive housing services. Support and care arrangements (including liaison with other agencies) are in place, where appropriate (3.5f).
- 2.3 This document acknowledges the 'Supporting People Strategy'; and is intended to compliment this document.
- 2.4 It is recognised that the majority of residents, who take up tenancies with Housing Associations, will need little or no formal tenancy support, however some, will need such support and SLH is committed to finding ways to provide that support.
- 2.5 This document sets out a framework of involvement between SLH and local agencies operating within South Liverpool; and the various other agencies that have an interest in sustaining occupancies, to ensure that all residents have the appropriate support to assist them in remaining in their homes.
- 2.6 SLH agree to share appropriate and necessary information to enable effective first stage and specialist assessment, referral and review of the support needs of vulnerable residents and potential residents. The permission of all residents and potential residents will be sought before information is disclosed, except in exceptional circumstances as governed by data protection legislation and guidance. The information disclosed will be sufficient, impartial and valid. The information will include an initial assessment of risk to self or others posed by the resident or potential resident.

3. Aims of Policy

- 3.1 To provide a framework for SLH and it's partners to assist vulnerable and challenging residents within the South Liverpool area to sustain the best possible level of independent living.
- 3.2 The prime purpose of this policy is to provide a multi-agency approach to supporting applicants/people through any process of transition, for example from homelessness to permanent accommodation, and in finding ways to support vulnerable residents and to sustain their occupancies

4. Links to SLH Group Values & Corporate Plan

- 4.1 SLH has developed a set of organisational values designed to help provide an equitable, good quality service for its customers and meet the individual needs of the diverse groups within the community. SLH Business plan objectives are:-
 - Solid and robust business plan
 - Together we'll deliver the future
 - Attractive inclusive neighbourhoods of choice
 - Responsive, listening and learning organisation
 - Superb services

5. Statutory and Legislative framework relating to the policy

- 5.1 SLH recognises its duty to comply with current legislation and will operate this policy within the current statutory framework
- 5.2 Legislation relating to this policy is :-
 - Child Act 1989
 - Housing Act 1996
 - Date protection Act 1998
 - Human Rights Act 1998
 - Mental Capacity Act 2005

6. Service Delivery Standards

6.1 SLH are committed to supporting individuals and families resident in the South Liverpool to achieve and sustain the best possible level of independent living. In order to achieve this goal, it is important to recognise that some individuals or families will need additional support on a short term, longer term or permanent basis.

6.2 People from all walks of life can experience vulnerability at some point in their lives so any definition of vulnerability must cover a wide remit. The definition used in this document is:

An individual or household experiencing difficulties with everyday living on account of financial, educational, health, employment, learning, language, behavioural, family, social or other circumstances/issues or any combination of these.

6.3 It is essential, therefore, that consideration is given to potential vulnerability at all points of contact with residents and potential residents within the South Liverpool area. In addition to this basic aspect of customer care, SLH Group are committed to:

- ***A 'Tenancy Health Check' which is an assessment and review tool that can be used by non-specialist staff for identification of potential support needs and referral on to more specialist assessment and support services.***

6.4 The following are potential triggers for carrying out such an assessment:

- home visits;
- social/medical panels;
- supported housing move-on recommendations;
- homeless assessments;
- applications for housing;
- housing transfer inspections;
- programmes of tenancy visits/audits;
- ad hoc visits e.g. for rent arrears;
- key life cycle events such as bereavement or relationship breakdown; and
- Issue of notice of eviction.

6.5 Measurement of success of this policy will be based on:

- a reduction in the number of possession orders obtained;
- a reduction in the number of evictions carried out;
- a reduction in the incidence of neighbour complaints and antisocial behaviour; and
- a reduction in repeat homelessness.

In order for any measurement to be meaningful, it is essential that a baseline of performance be established in the areas referred to above for the period leading to the commencement of this protocol. SLH will request baseline data from partner HAs in a standard format and will provide timely feedback on the statistical data received. Each HA will ensure that they provide the data requested in a timely fashion.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

This Policy underpins the commitment of SLH to provide equality in access to and provision of services offered to all residents, regardless of their age, religion, disability, gender, race, national origin, sexual orientation, appearance, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with in justice

SLH ensures that all staff attend equality, diversity and cultural awareness training

All SLH front line are trained on how to contact language line, use type talk and mini-induction loop

8. RISK ASSESSMENT

SLH Group recognises the importance of an effective process for dealing with vulnerability in the community to minimise risks, which include:-

Financial

- Loss of rental income where the vulnerable fail to maintain rent payments on the property
- Potential increase in repair cost

Regulatory

- Failure to meet Housing Corporation performance standards

Safety

- Impact on the physical and mental well being of the vulnerable
- Potential risk to staff and contractors in the area

In order to minimise these risks, SLH, has revised its policy and procedure for dealing with the vulnerable

SLH will recode and monitor vulnerable cases in order to establish the scale of the problem.

SLH will include vulnerability issues as part of on going staff training programmes

9. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

SLH has a corporate commitment to continuous improvement

SLH will provide thorough training to staff and will when necessary provide refresher training when necessary

10. ASSOCIATED POLICIES

This policy is not designed to be used in isolation and should be linked to the following SLH policies in order to provide a holistic and effective service

- Adult Protection Policy
- Domestic Violence Policy
- Racial Harassment Policy