

# Gloucester City Homes



## GCH Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy



## Contact us

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You can also contact us using our online reporting forms.

Please note our website is speech enabled and you can adjust the size of the text and translate it to other languages.

Customer Services Line: 0800 408 2000  
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GCHTV on the Looking Local Service on Sky, Virgin Media, Nintendo Wii and mobile phone.

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Bengali

যদি আপনি এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায় বা ফরমেটে চান অথবা যদি আপনার একজন ইন্টারপ্রেটারের প্রয়োজন হয়, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন।

Chinese

本文件可以翻译为另一语文版本，或制作成另一格式，如有此需要，或需要传译员的协助，请与我们联系。

Gujarati

જો તમને આ દસ્તાવેજ બીજી ભાષા અથવા રચનામાં જોઈતો હોય, અથવા જો તમને ઇન્ટરપ્રિટરની સેવાઓ જોઈતી હોય તો, કૃપા કરી અમારો સંપર્ક સાધો.

Polish

Aby uzyskać ten dokument w innym języku lub formacie, albo jeżeli potrzebujesz usług tłumacza, skontaktuj się z nami.

Urdu - یہ دستاویز اگر آپ کو کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہو، یا اگر آپ کو ترجمان کی خدمات چاہئیں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے رابطہ کیجئے۔

[Translation reads: If you would like this document in another language or format or require the services of a translator, please contact us.]

STATUS (Draft / Approved / Updated / Archived)	REFERENCE
<b>APPROVED</b>	<a href="#">P:\06 Policies &amp; Procedures\06 Current GCH Policies &amp; Procedures\12 Human Resources\GCH Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable adults policy CONTROLLED DOCUMENT.doc</a>
<p>Important Notice: Printed paper copies of this procedure are <b>uncontrolled</b>. The current version of this procedure is available on the Intranet</p>	

**Documentation Master Sheet**  
*Amendments to this Document are detailed below*

Version Number	Date Amended	Comments	Date Approved	Author	Approved By
1	6/06	Approved	01/07/06	AP	EMT
2	10/09	Approved	14/10/09	AP	EMT
3	01/10	Approved	27/01/10	AP	Services & Ops
4		Reviewed and validated by Safeguarding team	19/01/10	AP	Glos County Council Safeguarding team

**Summary of most recent changes:**

Following the lessons learnt from the baby P case the Child and Vulnerable adult protection policy has been developed and updated in line with current legislation and best practice. GCH has worked closely with a safeguarding children and vulnerable adults consultant and has had this policy approved and sanctioned by the safeguarding teams at Gloucestershire County Council.

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## GLOUCESTER CITY HOMES SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Children and vulnerable adults have the right to be safe in the services provided for them and the activities they choose to participate in. Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults is every ones responsibility and Gloucester City Homes is committed to a delivery of service that promotes good practice and protects children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm. This policy sets out the company's protection procedures and specifies the roles and responsibilities of GCH's employees and representatives who are covered by it.

Abuse of children and vulnerable adults occurs regardless of their age, racial origin, social class, gender, culture, religious belief, disability or sexual identity. Perpetrators of abuse are usually known and trusted by a victim. Abuse by strangers is much more rare.

Gloucester City Homes is committed to providing safe services and opportunities for all tenants and residents who use our services.

#### Definitions

For the purpose of this policy a child or young person is defined as anyone under the age of 18.

A vulnerable adult is defined by law, as anyone over the age of 18 years who is or may be: 'in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation' ('No Secrets' Department of Health 2000)

GCH representatives are defined as:

- Employees
- Agency Staff
- Board Members
- Employees of partner organisations working on our behalf
- Contract Staff
- Volunteers - when working for and on behalf of GCH

In practical terms this means that GCH has a responsibility to provide a safe environment for children, young people or vulnerable adults in which their welfare is of paramount importance.

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## 2. PURPOSE

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The purpose of this policy is to help protect children and vulnerable adults who use our services and to ensure staff and Board members respond appropriately by:-

- Ensuring anyone working on behalf of Gloucester City Homes who comes into contact with children and vulnerable adults is well informed, supported and protected.
- Ensuring that children and vulnerable adults are listened to and kept safe from harm.
- Raising the level of awareness of Board members, staff, volunteers and those working on behalf of Gloucester City Homes about child and vulnerable adult abuse and the different forms it can take.
- Developing effective procedures for reporting and responding to incidents and complaints.

The Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy is for all those employed by or working with Gloucester City Homes (whether paid or unpaid, permanent or temporary) who may come into contact with children and vulnerable adults as follows: -

- GCH staff and representatives visiting a tenants or residents home where children or vulnerable adults may be present.
- GCH staff and representatives visiting a tenant or resident who may be categorised as a vulnerable adult.
- GCH staff and representatives, volunteers and Board members attending action days, estate walkabouts or other community based events where either children or vulnerable adults may be present and may participate.
- GCH staff and representatives dealing with anti-social behaviour issues who may come into contact with other children, young people or vulnerable adults whether in a group or on a one to one basis.
- GCH staff and representatives providing a service to vulnerable adults on an ongoing basis e.g. Community Scheme Managers and Life-link officers.

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### 3. POLICY STATEMENT

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**Gloucester City Homes will:**

- Implement procedures to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults and protect them from abuse.
- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Promote good practice that encourages a safe environment and seeks to protect all parties from harm or abuse.
- Recruit, train and supervise representatives to ensure that they are properly equipped to:
  - Identify where there may be a problem
  - Know how to obtain speedy and professional advice
  - Refer concerns to relevant specialists
  - Protect themselves from false accusations of abuse
- Ensure representatives of GCH, who work with or have substantial access to children, young people or vulnerable adults are subject to an **Enhanced** Criminal Records Bureau Check (which includes a check against the ISA Children's barred list and Vulnerable adults barred list ) prior to appointment and that this check is repeated every 3 years until the ISA registration scheme is in place. Where volunteers are being used for one-off events then a self-disclosure form will be required.
- Require staff and GCH representatives to adopt and abide by GCH's Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults policy and procedures
- Respond to any suspicions or allegations involving staff promptly and take the appropriate action.
- Review this policy on a regular basis or whenever there is a major change in the organisation or in the relevant legislation/best practice.
- Work effectively with partner organisations and statutory agencies, sharing information as appropriate and in line with data protection legislation and participating in case conferences and service improvement reviews etc as required.

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## 4. PRINCIPLES

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The procedures contained within this policy are based on the following principles:

- The welfare of the individual is the primary concern.
- Everyone has the right to protection from abuse.
- All representatives have a responsibility to report concerns of suspected abuse or poor practice to a Designated Safeguarding Officer (List of Designated Officers in appendix C).
- All incidents of poor practice and allegations or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- Staff and GCH representatives will work in an open and transparent way and should avoid any conduct that may lead a reasonable person to question their motives and intentions.
- Confidentiality shall be upheld in line with current data protection and human rights legislation.
- All GCH representatives will work effectively and co-operate with relevant statutory agencies as appropriate.

**This policy applies to all Gloucester City Homes representatives.**

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## 5. SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

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### **Managers:**

- Are responsible for making sure that all of their staff are aware of, and understand the importance of this policy and related guidance.
- Must ensure that their staff undertake GCH safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adult training within 3 months of their commencement and participate in any relevant training provided by GCH or other partner organisations as and when required.
- Must, in conjunction with the HR team, make sure that any contractors, agents or other representatives whom they engage to undertake duties on their behalf, which involve contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults, understand and comply with the policy.
- Will ensure that where appropriate, in the case of Vulnerable Adults, a risk assessment is completed prior to, or as soon as possible after the customer moves into sheltered accommodation or takes up a particular service such as life-link.

These will be reviewed in line with support plans and when ever there is a significant change.

### **Human Resources:**

- Will regularly review changes to legislation and best practice and update policy, procedures and guidance as required
- Will, through the recruitment and selection processes, ensure CRB/ISA checks and references that refer to the candidates' suitability to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults are taken up for all appropriate posts. (further details can be found in section 8 - Safer Recruitment)
- Will include appropriate training in the Company Training Programme and ensure that Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults training is part of the induction programme for all new frontline staff and those with access to children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- Will ensure staff participate in any relevant training provided by partner organisations and statutory agencies as required.
- Will maintain a record of all staff that have completed a CRB check and are considered suitable for work involving substantial access to children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- Will ensure that CRB checks and references of staff are kept secure and confidential.

### **Designated Safeguarding Officers:**

- Will act as a collation point for all disclosure referrals with staff feeding back information on any issues raised or referrals made to either the police or social services. (using the GCH Referral Form - Children & Young People in appendix A or the GCH Referral Form - Vulnerable Adults in appendix B)
- Will review issues raised and referrals made on a regular basis and alert either the Adult protection unit, Children and Young People's services, Safeguarding Children's service, Social Services and or the Police as appropriate to any emerging patterns or repeated referrals.
- Will act as a point of contact for staff who want to discuss concerns about a Child, Young Person or Vulnerable Adult or refer a disclosure from a Child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- Will act a key point of contact for Child/Vulnerable Adult protection services, the Police and other relevant agencies.

### **All Staff:**

- Must ensure that they read and implement this policy.

- Must attend GCH Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults training if their role is frontline and/or involves substantial access to children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- Will not begin any unsupervised activity involving substantial access to children, young people or vulnerable adults prior to receiving a satisfactory **Enhanced** CRB /ISA check.
- Will be made aware of what GCH considers to be appropriate and inappropriate staff behaviour when working with children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Are provided with two trained Designated Safeguarding Officers who can provide advice and guidance on issues relating to both Children and Vulnerable adults.
- Are expected to act on any suspected or potential case of child, young person or vulnerable adult abuse. GCH will support anyone who, in good faith, reports his or her concerns that a child, young person or vulnerable adult, is being abused or is at risk of abuse, even if those concerns prove to be unfounded.

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## 6. RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

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The Green Paper, **Every Child Matters**, was published for consultation in September 2003 and outlined a programme of reform setting out a framework of services that cover children and young people from birth to nineteen. The new Children Act 2004 provides the legal framework for this reform. The new legislation was accompanied by the launch of a major strategy document for English authorities, **Every Child Matters: Change for Children**, which is intended to set the direction for the major programme of change in the delivery of children's services.

**The Children's Act 2004** puts a duty on key statutory agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The act embodies 5 principles that are key to wellbeing in children and young people.

Being healthy  
Staying safe  
Enjoying and achieving  
Making a positive contribution  
Achieving economic well being

**Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006** provides the legislative framework for the new vetting and barring scheme for people who work with children and vulnerable adults

No secrets: guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse gives guidance to local agencies who have a responsibility to investigate and take action when a vulnerable adult is believed to be suffering abuse. It offers a structure and content for the development

of local inter-agency policies, procedures and joint protocols which draw on good practice nationally and locally and was subject to a major review in 2009

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## 7. SERVICE STANDARDS

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In the course of their work Gloucester City Homes employees and representatives will come into contact with children and vulnerable adults. We all have a responsibility to play a role in the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

GCH is committed to: -

- Ensuring all GCH employees and representatives, who may come into direct contact with children and vulnerable adults, are CRB checked every 3 years (whilst the ISA vetting scheme is being implemented).
- Providing GCH employees, representatives, parents, children, vulnerable adults, support agencies staff, volunteers and board members with information about our services i.e. what the services provide and what can be expected.
- Ensuring that our employees are appropriately selected, supervised and trained in the use of clear procedures and have access to information and guidance if they have any concerns.
- Providing clear procedures for GCH employee, representatives, parents, children and vulnerable adults to voice their concerns or lodge complaints if they feel unsure or unhappy about anything.
- Holding information relating to concerns or investigations securely within the HR team, in line with Data Protection principles