



Craigdale
HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Policy

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Date of Next Review: 2029

Craigdale Housing Association can provide this document on request, in different languages and formats, including Braille and audio formats.

Craigdale Housing Association – Child Protection & Vulnerable Adults Policy

1. Introduction

Craigdale Housing Association (Craigdale) provides housing and related services to a wide range of people some of which may, at some point, be vulnerable to abuse or neglect.

Craigdale is committed to ensuring that staff and other relevant persons are aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children, young people and adults and recognises its responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children and vulnerable adults from harm, abuse and exploitation.

Craigdale acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to all allegations, reports and suspicions of abuse.

Through the implementation of this Policy and detailed procedures, Craigdale aims to do everything it can to protect children and vulnerable adults, and to ensure that all concerns for the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult are reported to the appropriate authorities.

2. Scope of Policy

This policy and related procedures apply to all employees, managers, board members and volunteers.

3. Definition of “children” and “adults at risk” and “abuse”

Child: the “Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003 states a child will be considered anyone under the age of 18.

Adults at risk: The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 seeks to protect and benefit adults at risk of being harmed and describes adults at risk as being person (aged 16 and over) who are:

- a) unable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights or other interests
- b) are at risk of harm, and
- c) because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, are more vulnerable to being harmed than adults who are not so affected.

An adult is at risk of harm for the purpose of the above if:

- a) another person’s conduct is causing (or likely to cause) the adult to be harmed, or
- b) the adult is engaging (or is likely to engage) in conduct which causes (or is likely to cause) self-harm.

Abuse: is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. Friends, strangers, family members and professional staff can all be guilty of abuse. Abuse can include physical, mental, sexual, financial, discriminatory abuse and neglect.

4. Legal and Policy Framework

This policy is informed by the following legislation and guidance:

- Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007
- Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000
- Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)
- National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021, updated 2023)

5. Responding to suspected or alleged abuse or neglect

If a member of staff suspects abuse or has received a report of abuse they will:

- **report** it to a Manager or the CEO immediately;
- **refer** any concerns over the abuse to neglect of a child or a vulnerable adult to Social Services in the first instance and where appropriate, Police Scotland;
- **record** any discussions and actions carried out following suspected to alleged abuse or neglect accurately, thoroughly and promptly;
- **co-operate** with any agencies involved with cases of alleged abuse or neglect;
- **work with other agencies** to investigate any alleged breach of tenancy agreement and take action through policies and procedures where appropriate

5. Prevention of abuse

As a provider of social housing and related services Craigdale recognises the important role our staff play in building and maintaining partnerships with local authorities and key specialist agencies and we work with them on a regular basis to safeguard children and vulnerable adults.

Front line staff may enter tenant's homes to carry out housing, maintenance or other visits. These staff may see evidence of abuse or neglect and will report any concerns they have to the appropriate agency such as Social Services.

Staff will signpost vulnerable individuals to support agencies where appropriate and will work with the local authority and agencies to make sure they link up with local procedures for safeguarding vulnerable adults and children.

Child Protection

The Association supports the Scottish Government's Child Protection Improvement Programme and follows the current National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021, updated 2023).

The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland sets out how organisations and professionals should work together to protect children from abuse and neglect. It provides a national framework for safeguarding practice across health services, education, housing, police, social work, and third-sector organisations.

6. Staff training, recruitment and conduct

Craigdale's recruitment, selection, support, supervision and training of staff will take into account the need to promote the health and safety of residents and customers and safeguard them from abuse.

Training on awareness of their responsibilities to protect children, young people and adults at risk. Training will include this policy and procedures and will highlight the need to report child protection issues or concern about conduct towards adults at risk.

All staff and board members are subject to Craigdale's Code of Conduct.

7. Young Board Members

In accordance with Scottish law, individuals aged 16 or over may serve as members of the Board of the Association. Where a Board member is aged 16 or 17, the Association recognises that they remain legally classified as a child under safeguarding legislation and appropriate safeguarding considerations will apply. The Association will ensure that young Board members are supported to participate safely and effectively in governance activities. This may include providing appropriate induction, support from senior staff or mentors, and ensuring that meetings and organisational practices take account of safeguarding responsibilities in line with relevant child protection guidance.

8. Confidentiality and Data Protection

In certain circumstances (and subject strictly to conditions set out in the Data Protection Act 2018, UKGDPR and other applicable data protection legislation) personal information may be shared with other agencies. Before sharing personal we must consider all of the relevant legal implications of doing so. Where required legal advice may be taken and/or further support and assistance from our Data Protection Officer.

9. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed as necessary every 3 years in line with relevant legislation and/or best practice or earlier if required.

10. Complaints

If tenants and/or residents wish to complain about our approach to buying back shares, they should refer to the Association's Complaints Policy.

11. Equal Opportunities

The Association is committed to ensuring equal opportunities and fair treatment for all people in its work.

In implementing this policy, our commitment to equal opportunities and fairness will apply irrespective of factors such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or other personal attributes.