



CONNEXUS SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility

Safeguarding is a key priority for the Care Quality Commission (CQC) as the regulator responsible for ensuring that all providers, including housing providers, have appropriate systems in place to ensure the safety of children, young people and adults with care and support needs whose circumstances make them at risk of abuse and or neglect.

Approved by	Connexus Safeguarding Advisory Group Independence Trust Board Connexus Housing Limited Board
Effective date	March 2018
Review date	March 2021
Policy developed by	Christine Duggan
Associated procedure	Connexus Safeguarding Adults Procedure Connexus Safeguarding Children's Procedure Connexus Whistleblowing Policy

Introduction

1. Purpose

Connexus Housing Limited and all associated subsidiaries are committed to ensuring that both children and adults are safeguarded, in order to comply with current legislation and our service standards. As part of their role, colleagues should be able to clearly recognise, identify and report abuse appropriately.

- 1.1 The aim of this policy is to give clear guidelines to all colleagues, volunteers and Board members, with regard to their safeguarding responsibilities for children and adults who come into contact with all Connexus services and operations.
- 1.2 Connexus has a statutory duty to ensure that all new colleagues are recruited and appointed as determined by the Connexus Safer Recruitment Policy and in particular that colleagues who come into contact with Children and Vulnerable Adults in the context of their role are vetted via the Disclosures and Barring Scheme (DBS) and that all colleague certificates are reviewed every 3 years.
- 1.3 There is a statutory requirement for the nominated Designated Safeguarding Lead for each Local Authority in which Connexus and its subsidiaries operate to maintain a Safeguarding register which documents all known and reported risk or concern for both adults living in our properties or being supported within the community or potentially the children of our tenants or support clients.
- 1.4 The Local Authorities in which Connexus currently operates include:
 - **Herefordshire**
 - **Gloucestershire**
 - **Worcestershire**
 - **Shropshire**
- 1.5 **Scope:** This policy applies to the whole of the Group. This means Connexus Housing Limited, (ultimate parent) and all of its subsidiaries.

2 Ensuring Statutory Compliance as Housing and Support Providers

- 2.1 Each Local Authority's Safeguarding Directorate takes lead responsibility for coordinating Safeguarding work through their Safeguarding Adult's Board and Safeguarding Children's Board. Other agencies, including housing and support agencies are responsible for contributing fully and effectively to work in partnership with their own Local Authority Adult's Safeguarding Board and Children's Board.
- 2.2 Where appropriate, the relevant Connexus Local Authority **Designated Safeguarding Lead (i.e. for each local authority area)** will attend their Local Authority Safeguarding Boards meetings as Connexus representatives.

3 The Legal Framework

1. The Care Act 2014;

2. Care and Support statutory guidance 2016;
3. The Mental Capacity Act (including deprivation of Liberty Safeguards DOLs) 2005;
4. Human Rights Act 1998;
5. Safeguarding Vulnerable People Act 2006;
6. Working together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (July 2018);
7. Data Protection Act 2018 (as amended) – governs the protection of personal data. It is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about a person is shared appropriately.
8. West Midlands Adult Safeguarding Policy and Procedures;
9. Multi-agency Policy and Procedure for the Protection of Adults with Care and Support needs in Gloucestershire;
10. The Children Act 1989; and
11. Section 11 of Children Act 2004 which specifically places duties on a range of organisations, including landlords, to have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

3.1 Safeguarding Adults

To ensure we comply with current legislation and practice the Group links this policy to the separate Shropshire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire Councils' Adult Safeguarding Operating Procedures.

Shropshire Council <https://new.shropshire.gov.uk>

Herefordshire Council www.herefordshire.gov.uk/

Worcestershire Council www.worcestershire.gov.uk/wsab

3.2 Safeguarding Children

To ensure we comply with current legislation and practice the Group links this policy to the separate Shropshire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire Councils' Children's Safeguarding Operating Procedures.

The Shropshire Safeguarding Children's Board
www.safeguardingshropshireschildren.org.uk

The Herefordshire Safeguarding Children's Board
<https://herefordshiresafeguardingboards.org.uk>

The Worcestershire Safeguarding Children's Board
www.worcestershire.gov.uk/safeguardingchildren

4 Methods of delivery

4.1 Key Roles:

Local Authority Designated Safeguarding Lead

The colleague who ensures that Connexus complies with the relevant Local Authority directives and procedures.

Named Senior Officer

The colleague who takes responsibility within each functional department or team for ensuring that colleagues within their teams comply with this Policy and associated procedures.

Connexus Safeguarding Manager

The colleague who coordinates the overall application of this policy and associated procedures, who convenes the Safeguarding Advisory Group meetings, and who reports on maintenance of the Registers to Boards.

Connexus takes its social responsibilities seriously and will:

4.2 Ensure Accountability to each Local Authority where we provide services by:

Nominating a named colleague to be the **Designated Safeguarding Lead** for each local authority area where Connexus provides services.

4.3 Demonstrate Leadership in Safeguarding by:

4.3.1 Ensuring that the named Head of Service for each of the following named departments (due to the frequency of their contact with customers and households) understands the organisational importance of their role in promoting safeguarding within their team, and commits to attend diarised Safeguarding Advisory Group meetings or to nominate an appropriate **Named Senior Officer** from their team who will act on their behalf.

- **Housing**
- **Repairs and Assets**
- **Human Resources (in view of their responsibilities to safeguard, recruit and train employees)**
- **Independence Trust and associated support teams across the Group**

4.4 Ensure Safe Recruitment by:

Ensuring that all new colleagues are recruited and appointed as determined by the Connexus Safer Recruitment Policy and in particular that colleagues who come into contact with Children and Vulnerable Adults in the context of their role are vetted via the Disclosures and Barring Scheme (DBS) and that these certificates are reviewed every 3 years.

4.5 Ensure appropriate training by:

Ensuring that all colleagues, including Board members and volunteers, receive induction training in safeguarding and that this is refreshed every three years as a minimum, unless a need for additional training is identified for an individual as described in the Safeguarding Training Strategy.

4.5.1 Maintaining an up to date training matrix for all colleagues to track compliance.

4.5.2 Ensuring that all colleagues are trained to recognise and record abuse and maltreatment appropriately.

4.6 Ensure appropriate Reporting by:

- 4.6.1 As detailed within the West Midlands Adults Safeguarding procedural overview, the Multi-Agency policy and procedure for the protection of adults with care and support needs in Gloucestershire and Working Together to Safeguard Children: March 2015, ensuring that all colleagues act to address any safeguarding concerns, including:
- Reporting the specific concern to the Local Authority, if appropriate. It is important to remember that the information known by Connexus about a particular adult, child or family and the actions we have taken could be examined in the event of a serious case review.
 - Notifying the **Named Senior Officer** from their team of their actions and interventions in order that the concern is recorded, that progress is updated, and that the concern is monitored within the relevant Local Authority Safeguarding register.
- 4.6.2 Ensuring the **Named Senior Officers** register and record all concerns on the appropriate Local Authority Safeguarding Register.
- 4.6.3 Ensuring the Safeguarding registers for each Local Authority are regularly updated by the **Named Senior Officers**.
- 4.6.4 Ensuring that each Local Authority Register is reviewed every month by the relevant Local Authority **Designated Safeguarding Lead**.

4.7 Governance, oversight and control by:

- 4.7.1 Ensuring that regular Safeguarding Advisory Group meetings take place with representation from the Executive Team and the Board, to oversee development of policies and procedures, and oversee practice implementation and development across Connexus.
- 4.7.2 Ensuring that the Operations Committee periodically reviews the Safeguarding Policy.
- 4.7.3 Ensuring that the Chair of the Safeguarding Advisory Group keeps the Operations Committee apprised about the contents of the registers, the application of policies and procedures and overall compliance.
- 4.7.4 Ensuring that Safeguarding is a mandatory agenda item at individual 121 meetings, team meetings and Executive meetings.

5 Monitoring and Compliance

5.1 The Connexus safeguarding registers

- 5.1.1 The purpose of maintaining safeguarding risk registers is to ensure that the Connexus Board is made aware of the numbers of vulnerable adults or children who have come into contact with our housing, support or repairs services, together with the specific nature of the risk.
- 5.1.2 The information which is added and stored on the register is confidential to the Safeguarding Register Administrators, the **Named Senior Officers** from each department, the **Designated Safeguarding Lead** for the particular Local Authority and the **Connexus Safeguarding Manager**. The register is password protected.

- 5.1.3 The specific details of the individual will not be disclosed outside of the register, but the numbers of families, children and adults who reside as tenants or who receive support from our services are collated in general terms as part of reporting against the risk registers. Children known to be on their Local Authority Child Protection Register will also be included on a password protected specific page.
- 5.1.4 The information retained on each Local Authority Safeguarding register will be current and specific and either updated on a monthly basis or closed down when the risk is removed.
- 5.1.5 Each departmental **Named Senior Officer** is required to liaise with the originating case-reporting officer on a monthly basis in order to update the safeguarding register and record all actions taken, including specific investigation and escalation arrangements from each Local Authority Children’s Services or Adults First point of Contact following an intervention or a case management meeting.
- 5.1.6 The Operations Committee will oversee the routine operation of the Safeguarding Advisory Group meeting and the effective operation of this Policy on behalf of the Connexus Group Board.
- 5.1.7 The **Designated Safeguarding Leads** will report to the Safeguarding Advisory Group meeting and in turn to the Independence Trust Board on the operation of this policy and the completion and oversight of the four Local Authority registers.
- 5.1.8 The Safeguarding Advisory Group will report to the Connexus Board Audit and Risk Committee via the Risk dashboard, in line with the following definitions. However, if more serious concerns are uncovered regarding the implementation of the Policy and associated procedures, these will also be reported to the Connexus Audit and Risk Committee.

	Policy in date & safeguarding register entries have all got evidence of a review and update that month
	Policy out of date &/or safeguarding register not updated and monitored in the last one month &/or Nhds manager and Community Service Manager identify one case that has not been correctly recorded on the Register
	Policy out of date &/or Safeguarding register not updated and monitored in the last two months &/or Failure to report on safeguarding concerns has led to a serious case review &/or Failure to follow Safeguarding procedure has resulted in a Death/Case Review &/or Nhds manager and Community Service Manager identify more than one cases that have not been correctly recorded on the Register this month

6 Roles, Responsibilities and Duties

Connexus will adopt the principles of openness and transparency throughout the Group. Responsibility for implementing the policy is as follows:

6.1 Board of Management, Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Directors

- To be aware of the Connexus Safeguarding policy and procedures for both adults and children.
- To ensure the Board and Executive Management Team are represented on the Safeguarding Advisory Group Meeting.
- To receive regular reports confirming that all cases recorded on the register have been reviewed every month (oversight by Independence Trust Board).
- To undertake Safeguarding training in order to demonstrate and champion a culture of safeguarding awareness within Connexus.

6.2 Heads of Service including particularly:

- **Housing**
- **Repairs and Assets**
- **HR**
- **Independence Trust**
- To be aware of the Connexus Safeguarding policy and procedures for adults and children.
- To produce regular reports that go to the Safeguarding Advisory Group Meeting confirming that all concerns have been recorded on the register and have been reviewed every month.
- To attend Safeguarding meetings or to designate a senior officer to represent their service at such meetings.
- To undertake Safeguarding training in order to demonstrate and champion a culture of safeguarding awareness within Connexus

6.3 MANAGERS (INCLUDING SUPERVISORS AND TEAM LEADERS)

- To be aware of the Connexus Safeguarding policy and procedures for adults and children.
- To champion a culture of safeguarding awareness within their team.
- To ensure Safeguarding Policy and procedures are implemented within their team and that team members are aware of their responsibilities.
- To monitor and record all new and emerging cases on the Group's confidential Safeguarding register. (This will be tested by periodic audits).

Connexus Equality Impact Assessment

This will follow once format for EIAs is approved