

## VULNERABLE PERSONS POLICY

### Regulation & Legislation

This policy is linked to the following regulation and legislation: Every Child Matters and the Common Assessment Framework for Children, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council's Vulnerable Persons Protocol and Promoting Quality of Life for Older people, Audit Commission KLOE 11: Supported Housing, Supporting People.

### Link to Corporate Values & Corporate Plan

- Listening to and consulting with our customers to empower them to play an active role in planning and delivering our services;
- Ensuring equality of opportunity and recognising diversity for all of our customers, treating everyone fairly and without discrimination;
- Good design for the creation and maintenance of safe and sustainable communities;
- Being an active and successful partner with other organisations to achieve real improvements to customer service and our assets

### Statement of Purpose

We are committed to providing suitable homes, creating and maintaining independence, tackling social exclusion and empowering people to have a better quality of life. We believe that assessment of need and appropriate support are key to sustaining an individual within the community.

### Our Policy

- 1.1 We define vulnerability to mean, "those in need of care and support or those who require specific needs related advice and support".
- 1.2 It is not possible to outline every situation where a resident could be considered vulnerable or have complex needs.

### Defining Principles

- 2.1 We will seek to provide good quality services and support to all who need it, linked to the principles of:
  - a. Adequacy
  - b. Fairness
  - c. Security
  - d. Clarity
  - e. Flexibility
  - f. Equality & Diversity
- 2.2 We will aim to promote and safeguard independence and to involve vulnerable persons in decision making at all levels of operation<sup>1</sup>.
- 2.3 We will strive to provide an environment in which all people can thrive, irrespective of their circumstances.

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from the Prime Ministers Social Exclusion Unit (2006) A Sure Start to Later Life ~ Ending Inequalities for Older People

### Flexible Service provision

- 3.1 We are committed to design and deliver services to meet the needs of vulnerable customers. As such, we will seek to recognise peoples vulnerability in terms of:
  - 3.1a Letting of housing – seeking to ensure that adequate support and care packages are in place for vulnerable customers;
  - 3.1b Repairs and maintenance – seeking to ensure the response to a repair reflects the needs of vulnerable customers;
  - 3.1c Management of tenancies – seeking to ensure that all policies recognise peoples differing circumstances and we will act in line with the agreed vulnerable persons protocol;
  - 3.1d Where necessary, and subject to availability, provide homes of sufficient size and flexibility to accommodate specific needs.

### Design

- 4.1 Designing new homes on suitable locations, close to local amenities, services and support networks for a variety of needs.
- 4.2 Where appropriate, provide homes with suitable aids, adaptations and assistive technology.
- 4.3 To inform and shape the delivery of flexible service provision we will develop a database of all customers to reflect the particular needs of local customers.

### Abuse

- 5.1 In all cases where abuse is suspected or known, we will take decisive action.

### Access and Information

- 6.1 Sentinel will seek to ensure access to appropriate support services.
- 6.2 Sentinel will also provide translations, interpreters, signers, audiotapes, Braille or large print documents to meet identified needs where appropriate.
- 6.3 Sentinel recognises the role of carers, advocates and personal representatives, and where appropriate, shall take their views into account when consulting vulnerable residents on issues that affect them.

### Partnership Working

- 7.1 Sentinel will work with local authorities and service providers to understand housing and support needs more fully. Planning meetings will be arranged with partner agencies wherever complex need has been identified.
- 7.2 Sentinel will continue to develop links and good working relationships with agencies providing support to customers to sustain their tenancies.
- 7.3 Where we provide direct services, our aim is to provide high quality, delivered by a well-trained workforce, strategically planned, cost effective, complementing existing services and are informed and shaped by the users.

### **Equality and Diversity Assessment**

In addition to the monitoring of key areas of our service, officers will seek to identify any Equality and Diversity issues as they arise in their work. This is a medium risk.

### **Financial Impact Assessment**

The provision of service will be directed by the business plan and managed through conventional financial regulations. This risk is low.

### **Risk Assessment**

By not adhering closely to this policy, we may not be fulfilling our duty of care towards our customers. This could result in harm to our customers and legal prosecution. This is a medium risk.

### **Consultation**

The below stakeholders have been consulted on the following dates:

Tim Part, Care and Support Manager: 4<sup>th</sup> January 2007  
Policy Committee (direction setting) with the Chief Executive: 24<sup>th</sup> January 2007  
Val Bagnall, Business Director: 26<sup>th</sup> January 2007  
Cindy Creasy, Head of Neighbourhood Services: 26<sup>th</sup> January 2007  
Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council: 29<sup>th</sup> January 2007  
Southern Housing Group: 29<sup>th</sup> January 2007  
Staff Representatives Group: 30<sup>th</sup> January 2007  
Sue Hawkins, Sheltered Housing Manager: 31<sup>st</sup> January 2007  
A2 Housing Group: 5<sup>th</sup> February 2007  
Tenant and Leaseholder Forum Groups: 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> February 2007  
East Dorset Housing Association: 8<sup>th</sup> February 2007  
Hampshire Primary Care Trust: 8<sup>th</sup> February 2007  
Whitefriars Housing Group: 8<sup>th</sup> February 2007  
Hampshire County Council: 9<sup>th</sup> February 2007  
Hart District Council: 9<sup>th</sup> February 2007  
Rosebery Housing Association: 9<sup>th</sup> February 2007  
Rushmoor Borough Council: 9<sup>th</sup> February 2007

### **Monitoring and Review**

The operation of this policy will be regularly reviewed by the Neighbourhood Services Manager, in conjunction with the Policy & Strategic Initiatives Officer and Care and Support Manager, with adequate consultation of staff and customers. The outcome of that review will be communicated to the appropriate committee of the board.

### **Approval Stages**

Named Departmental Sign off: Cindy Creasy Date: 12<sup>th</sup> January 2007

Named Director Sign off: Val Bagnall Date: 17<sup>th</sup> January 2007

Committee Approval Date: 9<sup>th</sup> March 2007

Board Approval Date: 28<sup>th</sup> March 2007

Implementation Date: 30<sup>th</sup> March 2007