



SELF-NEGLECT and HOARDING

Policy:
Approved by: Leadership Group
Date Approved: 31st May 2024
Last Full Review: June 2023

POLICY STATEMENT:

Broadland Housing Association (BHA) is committed to meeting all its safeguarding responsibilities. The Care Act 2014 has now clarified the relationship between self-neglect and safeguarding. It has made self-neglect a category of harm about which the Local Authority, in conjunction with local partners, has a duty to make enquiries and assess need with the promotion of well-being at heart. Self-neglect can cover a wide range of behaviours such as neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

Hoarding and self-neglect behaviours are not the same and do not always present together. Managing the balance between protecting adults at risk from self-neglect or hoarding behaviours against their right to self-determination is also a challenge for services.

BHA are committed to working in partnership with other agencies to ensure services are provided in a co-ordinated way, to develop appropriate strategies for working with and responding to the needs of those tenants who compulsively hoard and by developing best practice in this area.

This policy has been developed to ensure BHA complies with current legislation, regulatory expectations, and good practice, and will be subject to ongoing review.

SCOPE:

The aims and objectives of BHA's Self-neglect and Hoarding Policy & Procedure are as follows:

- To assist in improving the quality of life for individuals and help them to live in a **safe and habitable environment**.
- To highlight when a self-neglect or hoarding case is also a safeguarding case.
- Coordinating a joint multi-agency approach to dealing with cases and sharing connected risks and actions.
- To identify and implement an effective range of support and enforcement measures.
- We will monitor cases to identify...
 - Progress/Blockages/Relapses
 - Costs
 - Best practices and learnings
 - Long-term outcomes

KEY STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES:

All staff members including Board members, partners and contractors will implement the principles of this policy.

The policy is for all employees but recognises that frontline workers and contractors have greater contact with tenants and have a responsibility to report any concerns as per our procedure. Services delivered by external organisations on behalf of the Association are also required to show how they work to these procedures and how they are compliant.

The Assistant Housing Director will be responsible for the management of this policy. The Frontline Housing Teams will be responsible for dealing with any reports of Self-neglect and Hoarding, ensuring that the Group's policy and procedures are followed.

The Tenancy Support and Safeguarding Manager is responsible for monitoring all cases and feeding back to the Local Delivery teams about case management, learnings or best practice.

Neighbourhood Officers are responsible for the management of cases in their area, including the decision to commence legal proceedings

Definitions:

Self-neglect

Self-neglect is defined in the Care Act Guidance as a wide range of behaviours that involve neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

Self-neglect is often defined across three domains; neglect of self, neglect of the environment and a refusal to accept help.

Neglect of self may include the following:

- Poor hygiene
- Dirty/inappropriate clothing
- Poor hair care
- Malnutrition
- Dehydration
- Medical/health needs unmet e.g., Diabetes – refusing insulin, treatment of leg ulcers etc.,
- Eccentric behaviour/lifestyle leading to harm etc.,
- Alcohol/substance misuse
- Social isolation
- Where there is evidence that a child is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm due to self-neglect by an adult

Definitions contd.,

Neglect of the environment may include:

- Unsanitary, untidy, or dirty conditions, which create a hazardous situation that could cause serious physical harm to the individual or others etc.,
- Hoarding
- Fire risk e.g., Smoker with limited mobility/hoarder
- Poor maintenance of property
- Keeping lots of pets that are poorly cared for etc.,
- Vermin
- Lack of heating
- No running water/sanitation
- Poor finance management e.g., bills not being paid leading to utilities being cut off. Unexplained money being drawn from accounts etc.,
- Prevents or precludes the use of **living spaces for what they were designed for** etc.,

Any of the above may be accompanied by a refusal to engage with services.

Hoarding

Hoarding can be described as collecting and being unable to discard excessive quantities of goods or objects and at times animals. Hoarding can also become a concern for others when health and safety are threatened by the nature or amounts of “clutter” accumulating within and sometimes overflowing from, the person’s environment.

RELVANT KEY LEGISLATION AND RELATED DOCUMENTS: (not limited to)

Legislation	Documents
Care Act 2014 Children Act 1989 Children Act 2004 Children and Families Act 2014 Equality Act 2010 Housing Act 1996 Housing Act 2004 Human Rights Act 1998 Mental Capacity Act 2005 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 Data Protection Act 1998 and General Data Protection Regulation 2018	Anti-Social Behaviour Policy Data Protection Policy Domestic Abuse Policy Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy Group Health Safety Policy Hate Crime Policy Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) Procedure Manual Repairs Policy Recharge Policy Safeguarding Policy Tenancy Agreement

EIA – EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

As this policy, would be implemented in a consistent manner in all cases, there would be no disadvantage to any group. Therefore, there is no need for a full EIA.

Policy Name: Self-neglect & Hoarding
Latest Revision: May 2024

Revised by: Stephani Davis
Verified by: Leadership Group

DATA PROTECTION:

This policy (and associated procedures) requires a Data Privacy Impact Assessment (DPIA) and one was completed on 19/06/2023 and appropriate risk mitigations implemented.

Please refer to the Tenant and Employee Privacy Notices, and the Data Protection Policy and Procedures, for details on Broadland's use, security, sharing and retention of personal data.

IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES:

Broadland recognises that no two individuals, or cases, are the same and that people who self-neglect and/or hoard often have a variety of physical, mental, financial, and other support needs. Therefore, partnership and multi-agency working is essential in meeting the needs of the tenant and others living in or near the property.

We will consider the most appropriate method of solving the problem considering a range of available options and considering the severity and urgency of the situation. Options may include:

- We are committed to supporting tenants with a self-neglect and hoarding tendency and who are willing to engage with support. The appropriate support will be identified following an assessment with the tenant to identify the level of need and appropriate services for the individual tenant.
- Where support from internal Officers is not the most appropriate a referral to floating support or another local service provider will be made.
- We will work with Tenants and External Agencies/Partners to implement an agreed plan of action.
- We will sign post Tenants to relevant statutory and non-statutory organisations including Social Services and follow Safeguarding procedures for anyone identified at immediate Risks.
- Where it is suspected someone may lack mental capacity the staff member should refer to social services for a mental capacity assessment as a matter of urgency.
- We will assist Tenants to source grants to aid funding for helping with the management of the case i.e., provision of skips, removal costs etc.,
- The relevant Neighbourhood Officer will manage cases.
- We will hold regular strategy meetings with the tenant as well as all relevant professionals identified in the case, this will be chaired by the lead Neighbourhood Officer.

IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES contd.,

- We reserve the right to serve a NOSP (Notice of Seeking Possession) at any time if or when engagement and/or progress is not maintained, dealing with this as a breach of the tenancy Ground 13.
- Damage to the fabric and fittings of the home because of Self-neglect and Hoarding will be addressed under our Recharge Policy and any subsequent Property Neglect Procedures.
- We aim to raise awareness of self-neglect and hoarding disorder, with respect to the impact on the tenant, others living within the property, neighbours and the wider community through appropriate training, communications, and publicity.
- We will participate in the Housing Sub-Group of the Norfolk Safeguarding Board, which includes Self-neglect and Hoarding.
- We will work in partnership with the Norfolk Safeguarding Adults Board in line with their Self-neglect and Hoarding Strategy
- We will support tenants in ensuring their home is **safe and habitable** supporting them in addressing their self-neglect and hoarding behaviours. However, enforcement action will be implemented...
 - where significant harm to the tenant or others is identified.
 - there has been continuous failed engagement by the tenant whose actions have a detrimental effect on the tenant, property, or others.
 - access to the property is denied by the tenant for statutory gas and electrical safety checks is required to ensure we meet our duties under relevant safety regulators.
- We will regularly review our Policy and Procedures in line with new legislation or recommended good practice.