



Safeguarding Policy for Almshouse Independent Living

(To be read alongside the Independent Living & Care Needs in Almshouse Accommodation Policy)

1. Policy Statement & Purpose

Thorner's Homes CIO is committed to safeguarding the wellbeing, dignity, and rights of all residents, staff, trustees, volunteers, and contractors. We recognise that older residents living independently within almshouse settings may experience vulnerabilities associated with ageing, isolation, or external pressures.

This policy outlines our approach to preventing and responding to abuse, neglect, or exploitation while maintaining our residents' independence and autonomy.

2. Legal & Regulatory Framework

This policy is informed by the following statutory and regulatory frameworks:

- Care Act 2014
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Local Safeguarding Adults Board (LSAB) guidance
- Charity Commission safeguarding guidance for trustees
- Thorner's internal policies on Independent Living, Mental Capacity, Fire Safety, and Risk Management

3. Definitions & Types of Abuse

We recognise the 10 categories of abuse outlined in the Care Act 2014:

- Self-Neglect
- Physical Abuse
- Domestic Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Psychological / Emotional Abuse
- Financial or Material Abuse
- Modern Slavery
- Discriminatory Abuse
- Organisational Abuse
- Neglect and Acts of Omission

Abuse may occur in person, remotely, or through coercion and control by others (including family or visitors).



4. Specific Safeguarding Concerns in Almshouse Settings

We acknowledge the following risks that may arise in an independent almshouse context:

- Cognitive decline or dementia
- Conflicts between residents
- Financial exploitation by relatives or visitors
- Domestic abuse (including coercive control)
- Self-neglect, isolation, and refusal of support
- Carer breakdown or exploitation by informal carers
- Mental health crisis or suicidal ideation
- Hoarding and associated fire safety risks
- Unclear or misused legal authority (e.g. LPA issues)
- Substance or alcohol misuse in later life

These risks require proportionate, respectful responses that maintain residents' independence wherever possible.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- All staff, trustees, and volunteers must be alert to safeguarding concerns and report them.
- A Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will manage concerns, referrals, and internal responses.
- Trustees are responsible for oversight, policy approval, and ensuring compliance with Charity Commission expectations.

6. Safeguarding Procedures (4 Rs)

When a concern arises, staff and volunteers should follow these steps:

1. **Recognise** Know the signs of abuse, neglect, self-neglect, or control
2. **Respond** Reassure the person, ensure immediate safety, do not promise confidentiality
3. **Report** Inform the DSL immediately; if someone is at immediate risk, contact the local authority or emergency services
4. **Record** Make a timely, factual, written record (who, what, where, when, what action taken)

Note: Thorner's Homes does not investigate allegations or assess capacity, we refer to the appropriate statutory agencies.

7. Working with Social Services and External Agencies

Where a safeguarding concern involves:

- Suspected abuse, neglect, or coercion
- Self-neglect posing serious harm
- Concerns about mental capacity affecting safety or consent



Thorner's Homes will make a safeguarding referral to the Adult Social Care Safeguarding Team at the local authority.

We will cooperate fully with investigations and best interests processes, in line with our Mental Capacity and Risk Management policies.

8. Training and Prevention

- All staff and trustees must complete safeguarding induction and refresher training every three years
- Staff must read this policy and related documents upon appointment
- Thorner's will maintain a community-focused culture that reduces isolation, promotes respect, and encourages open communication

9. Safer Recruitment & Conduct

- All staff, trustees, and volunteers will be vetted via appropriate recruitment processes, including DBS checks
- A Code of Conduct will be issued and monitored
- Professional boundaries and resident safeguarding will be a core part of induction

9. Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier if law or guidance changes
- A confidential log of safeguarding concerns and outcomes will be kept by the DSL
- An annual safeguarding summary will be reported to the Board of Trustees

Approved by: Trustees of Thorner's Homes CIO

Date: September 2025

Next Review Due: September 2027