

POLICY STATEMENT

At Caldmore Housing we believe that it is important that everyone has real choice and opportunity in their lives, as well as being respected as valued members of the community in which they live. We seek to extend or develop services in response to changing needs and we take an inclusive and holistic approach, thus aiming to offer as wide a range of options as possible in order to enable a seamless transition to independence, where this is desired.

Our care and support services are delivered by teams of experienced and trained staff, enabling us to meet the cultural and care needs of the local diverse population. These services are designed sensitively to meet the needs of individuals through innovative models of care and support whether accommodation based support, registered care, day care or floating support.

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear and agreed principles and priorities for how the services are delivered and developed whilst also making clear the importance of our relationships with other local agencies.

This policy is particularly relevant to our corporate values relating to accountability, enabling, fairness, inclusion, and respect.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, student placements, agency staff and board members of the Association.

All services are required to co-operate with each other and with external agencies to find appropriate solutions to the issues that face vulnerable residents within our operating area.

1. General Principles, Legislation & Relevant Regulation

1.1 The following long term aims and goals are the main drivers behind this policy:

1.1.1 All of our services are in demand and strategically relevant.

1.1.2 The design and layout of our care homes and supported housing provides a good level of comfort and security to the occupants and meets either the appropriate standards as prescribed by the National Minimum Standards relating to registered care homes, and/or the Quality Assessment Framework relating to supported housing.

1.1.3 We maintain a position from which we can identify, and respond effectively to, changes in need and emerging needs.

1.1.4 The recovery rate for our clients with support needs is markedly better than for those in similar circumstances who are not supported by us.

- 1.1.5** At least 10% of our residents and service users should be regularly engaged with us via a recognised channel for feedback. As a result our services always address their demands.
- 1.1.6** We should be regarded as an excellent organisation supporting our local communities
- 1.1.7** We should remain viable as a business and demonstrate value for money in our key services
- 1.1.8** We should make a positive impact on equality and community cohesion within all of the areas where we operate
- 1.1.9** We should be recognised as an excellent employer with skilled & motivated staff who are sensitive to the needs of the people and communities we support
- 1.2** The Association's approach to delivery of care and support services is to work in co-operation with stakeholders and residents. It therefore follows that resident involvement and stakeholders' views are key factors that must always be taken into account when planning services.
- 1.3** We will also work with local voluntary agencies which are in a position to contribute additional and/or specific expertise; enable us to strengthen our position through partnership working; enhance our services with additional opportunities for service users; or enable an appropriate response to the needs of those ready to move on to greater independence.
- 1.4** We will offer genuine choices to our residents wherever this can be achieved practically, safely and within budget.
- 1.5** The wellbeing of service users is paramount and we will aim to achieve the highest standards of service delivery as prescribed by the Quality Assessment Framework and the National Minimum Standards.
- 1.6** We will seek grant and charitable funding in order to enhance services and service users experience with a range of social activities and recreational interests which encourage individual development and integration.
- 1.5** We will comply with all legislation and current regulation relevant to care and support services including the following:
- The Care Standards Act 2000
 - Valuing People 2001
 - The Children Act 2004 and Every Child Matters
 - Mental Health Act 2007
 - All current regulations related to Health and Safety at work (see also the Association's Health & Safety Policy)
 - Disability Discrimination Act 2005
 - Disability Equality Duty
 - Gender Equality Duty
 - Housing Corporation Regulatory Code
 - European procurement directives

2. Responsibilities

2.1 The Board of Management

The Board of Management has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Association meets its legal responsibilities. Review of policy and strategy for implementation of this policy will be monitored via the Neighbourhood and Care Committee, which in turn delegates day to day responsibility to the Executive Team.

2.2 The Director of Housing and Care, Heads of Support and the Finance & Monitoring Manager

The Director of Housing and Care has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Care and Support Policy is put into practice and for ensuring that the Neighbourhood and Care Committee are informed of practice and outcomes. The Heads of Support and the Finance & Monitoring Manager must work to support this policy by making sure sufficient budget and other resources are made available to meet identified demand. In particular the Director will ensure that:

2.2.1 The Heads of Support and the Finance & Monitoring Manager are aware of their responsibilities in line with this policy and implement the related strategy which details the key priorities and long term aims as set out in the guiding principles.

2.2.2 The development of policy, strategy and plans to ensure growth and opportunity are in line with this policy and the statements therein.

2.2.3 Those responsible for developing services liaise appropriately with the Head of Housing and other staff to ensure cooperative and integrated planning processes leading to implementation.

2.2.4 Arrangements are in place to monitor and implement this policy.

2.2.5 That arrangements are in place to monitor management agreements with other agencies who provide services to our tenants.

2.3 The Finance & Monitoring Manager will ensure that:

2.3.1 The Director and Heads of Support are kept informed of relevant local strategies, and strategic reviews.

2.3.2 Routine quality and compliance checks are carried out and that feedback from service users is also routinely collected.

2.3.3 Service improvement plans address concerns resulting from internal and external inspection processes and service user feedback.

2.3.4 Opportunities to develop new services are identified and, by liaising with Heads of Support and Housing, that appropriate responses are prepared.

2.3.5 Regulatory bodies are provided with required information relating to performance and reportable occurrences.

2.3.6 There is a co-ordinated response to threats to services.

2.4 Heads of Service

The overall role of the Heads of Service is to ensure:

- 2.4.1** All staff are aware of the appropriate standards and regulatory frameworks which prescribe these standards
- 2.4.2** The production and maintenance of business or service development plans, operational manuals and service user manuals.
- 2.4.3** Effective day to day service delivery.
- 2.4.4** Involvement of service users in the development and delivery of the services.
- 2.4.5** That all relevant parties are properly informed about plans, priorities and current performance related to this policy

2.5 All Staff, Placements and Volunteers

All staff, student placements and volunteers are expected to co-operate with putting this policy into practice by effective communication and by demonstration of the Association's values. All paid employees have a duty to report identified concerns within the Association's jurisdiction that, to the best of their knowledge, may potentially put a resident or service user at risk.

3. Implementation of Policy

- 3.1** Service standards are prescribed by the National Minimum Framework and the Quality Assessment Framework. We will ensure that these standards are reflected in:
 - service criteria
 - criteria for referral and assessment
 - support planning
 - outcome measures
 - policy
 - staff induction and training
 - service user induction
- 3.2** Scheme specific service manuals and handbooks will detail service delivery and will provide a clear framework to enable effective delivery of services. These will be the principle guides for operational staff. All staff, service users and other professionals will be invited to put forward suggestions which could inform and influence review of the manuals and/or policy.
- 3.3** Expansion and development of services is a corporate objective and we will respond quickly to opportunities with reference to evidence of need and value for money principles. We will use opportunities inherent in recommissioning and contract review processes to increase the number of units in existing services; develop additional related services and reduce unit costs *providing that we can maintain our commitment to existing service users, work within agreed budgets, and can cover direct costs with additional income.* Evaluation of viability in the agreed format will ensure that appropriate consideration is given to these drivers.

- 3.4 We will periodically review the range of services provided, the appropriateness of location and related stock in the context of changing and emerging needs, and value for money principles. We will also carry out reviews when faced with particular challenges as a result of problems arising in service delivery and stock investment, shifting priorities in local and central government strategy and other challenges which may destabilise services. We will involve the Heads of Housing and Asset Management in such reviews as appropriate. We will thus ensure the most appropriate use of existing stock whilst maximising opportunity for service development whether that be in relation to qualitative or quantitative measures.
- 3.5 As members of the Matrix Housing Partnership, we also aim to work in collaboration with other members to share benchmarking data and improve the overall quality of service or to drive down costs.
- 3.8 Internal quality checks will be both planned and unannounced and service managers will address the resulting recommendations in improvement or development plans which will also address issues arising from service user feedback. Meanwhile good practice will be shared with other CAHAL services.
- 3.9 Serious concerns may result in unscheduled quality checks.

4. Exceptions to Policy

- 4.1 No action that falls outside this policy is permitted without the consent of the relevant Committee, or the Board of Management if the action also requires funds beyond those in the agreed annual budget. Where action is required urgently, the normal process identified within standing orders and financial regulations will apply and the matter must be reported to the next available Board meeting for retrospective approval.
- 4.2 In the event that circumstances arise whereby there is a conflict between this policy and the company values, the values must take precedence. However, the matter must be reported to the Board at the earliest practical opportunity and a review of this policy will be triggered.

5. Monitoring and Consequences

- 5.1 Failure to comply with this policy and with relevant legislation could result in severe consequences for the Association and may result in disciplinary action for any individual member of the staff team who has been responsible for the failure
- 5.2 The Neighbourhood and Care Committee will take the lead in setting and monitoring performance standards in accordance with this policy.

6. Policy Review

- 6.1 We will review this policy every three years. If there are any changes to legislation within this period that affect this policy, we will update it accordingly.

7. Consultation

- 7.1 Service users and their representatives will be given an opportunity to comment on policy in ways appropriate to their needs and their views will be taken into account.

8. Related Documents

8.1 This document must be read in conjunction with the Associations Corporate Policies and Procedures together with the relevant legislation that applies to individual services.

The significant Policies, Procedures and Codes of Practice that will impact on the day to day operations within the scope of the care and support services are contained in the Service Handbooks or Operational Manuals, and the most relevant are listed here:

- Adult Protection Procedure
- Lone Working Guidelines
- Control of Illegal Drugs in Supported Housing
- Bullying & Harassment Procedure
- Complaints Procedure – Supported Housing and General Needs Housing
- Confidentiality and Disclosure of Information Procedure
- Equal Opportunities and Race Equality Procedures
- Health and Safety Statement
- Incident Procedure
- Financial Standing Orders
- Recruitment and Employment Procedure
- Grievance Procedure & Disciplinary Procedure
- Whistleblowing Procedure

8.2 Also relevant are policy and procedures in relation to procurement, Equality & Diversity and Health & Safety.

Chief Executive Signature _____ **Date** _____

Policy Agreed by Board at meeting held: _____ **Date** _____