

## CONTROLLED DOCUMENT

N.B. Employees should be discouraged from printing this document. This is to avoid the risk of out of date printed versions of the document. The Intranet should be referred to for the current version of the document.

## TENANCY SUSTAINMENT AND SUPPORT POLICY

<b>CATEGORY:</b>	Policy
<b>CLASSIFICATION:</b>	Housing and Property
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	To document Brunelcare's approach to tenancy sustainment and support
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<b>APPROVED ON:</b>	26 June 2024
<b>IMPLEMENTED ON:</b>	4 July 2024
<b>REVIEW PERIOD:</b>	This policy should be reviewed at least every three years or if there is a significant change to regulation/legislation or service delivery.
<b>REVIEW DATE:</b>	June 2027
<b>ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS:</b>	Tenancy Policy Resident Engagement Policy Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Crime Policy
<b>Essential Reading for:</b>  <b>Information for:</b>	Housing Team ECH Team Housing Customer Services Team

## Document Consultation and Review Process

<b>Groups/Individuals who have overseen the development of this Policy:</b>	Housing Team ECH Team Housing Customer Service Team Health and Wellbeing Team
<b>Groups/Individuals Consulted:</b>	Senior Leadership Team, PQ&E Committee

## Document version control:

Date	Version	Amendments made	Amendments Approved by
June 2024	V001	Included within new policy format and including vulnerabilities in the definitions and throughout the policy	<b>Board</b> - 26 June 2024

## For the Use of the Corporate Governance Team only:

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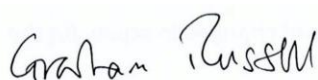
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## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 This policy sets out Brunelcare's approach to tenancy sustainment and support in order to help a resident maintain their tenancy, pay rent and live as independently as possible.

- 1.2 This policy acknowledges that everyone should have the opportunity to access and benefit from tenancy sustainment and support services offered by Brunelcare but it is understood that for some residents, who are vulnerable, barriers may exist which could prevent them from engaging or participating with housing related support.
- 1.3 The policy recognises that a person may be vulnerable as a result of a single problem, a condition or due to a combination of factors. Vulnerability can occur at different times (e.g following a bereavement) and can be either for a temporary period or permanently.
- 1.4 This policy should be read in conjunction with the Resident Involvement Policy and Brunelcare's Together with Customer Charter.



Graham Russell  
Chair of the Board



Oona Goldsworthy  
Chief Executive Officer

## 2. AIM OF THE POLICY AND RELATED LEGISLATION

- 2.1 Brunelcare aims to support all residents to maintain a tenancy as well as assisting them to access services which assist with well-being and mental health.
- 2.2 Where more intensive support is required for vulnerable adults, Brunelcare will work with other agencies to meet those needs and provide a tailored approach to access to Housing Services.
- 2.3 Brunelcare will take steps to identify vulnerabilities and/or disabilities in order to safeguard and protect vulnerable adults, along with adapting the Housing Service to meet the needs of the vulnerable adults.

### Relevant Legislation and Guidance

[Equality Act 2010](#)  
[Mental Capacity Act 2005](#)  
[Care Act 2014](#)

## 3. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

- 3.1 To document Brunelcare's approach to residents living in Sheltered Housing and Extra Care Housing to enable tenancy sustainment and access appropriate support.

- 3.2 To adapt Housing Services to ensure access to support and meet the needs of vulnerable adults.
- 3.3 This policy is not bound by legislation and because of the general definition of 'vulnerability' has been adopted for the purposes of identifying tenants who may requires tenancy sustainment, support or an enhanced housing service (such as correspondence in large print) or who requires signposting to other service, the definition does not replace statutory definitions.
- 3.4 When referring to residents, this means all tenants, shared owners, and leaseholders of Brunelcare.

#### 4. DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 *Tenancy Sustainment* means assistance provided to help residents to maintain their tenancy, avoid breaches of tenancy and avoid enforcement action being taken.
- 4.2 *Tenancy Support* means liaising and signposting someone to appropriate agencies, and identifying any factors or vulnerabilities that may help the resident and/or assist them in sustaining their tenancy.
- 4.3 A *disability* is defined as '*a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities*' (Section 6 of the Equality Act 2010)
- 4.4 A *vulnerable adult* is defined as '*anyone 18 or above who may be in need of community care services or an enhanced housing service*'. It is not correct to assume that all older people or disabled people are vulnerable.

## 5. KEY PRINCIPLES AND REQUIREMENTS

### Identifying Individual Support Needs

- 5.1 When communicating with residents and applicants for properties, Brunelcare will aim to get as full a picture as possible so that diverse and changing needs can be identified (including disability, vulnerability, language and literacy). The information the resident communicates is used to understand these differing needs to work in appropriate ways.
- 5.2 Brunelcare will:
- 5.2.1 Where someone is identified as having support needs, develop and maintain a plan with a clear accurate account for each resident based on their needs and desired outcomes.
  - 5.2.2 Regularly review this plan, outlining tasks, progress and who is responsible for completing them to reach the desired outcomes collaboratively.
  - 5.2.3 Accurately record and document plans and meetings in the Charity's Housing Management system.
  - 5.2.4 Close cases, in discussion with the Tenancy Services Manager, Housing Support Coordinators, Support Services Manager, and the individual resident.
  - 5.2.5 Ensure that a support plan is completed, which identifies any risks and action to be taken to mitigate risks, referring any sensitive issues to the Support Services Manager or the Tenancy Service Manager.
  - 5.2.6 Deal appropriately with any referrals, queries, or requests for information. Information will be handled in line with the Data Protection Act 2018, and GDPR, to support the resident in achieving agreed objectives or outcomes.
  - 5.2.7a When it is identified that there is an agency (statutory or voluntary) better able to provide support, ensure that cases are referred/ signposted to a more appropriate or specialist agency to address a tenant's individual support needs. In some cases it may not be appropriate to seek permission from the resident before a referral is made.
- OR
- 5.2.7b Ensure that referrals are made to the Health and Well-being team, to assist with any plan in place and to assist with referrals and signposting to the appropriate agencies
  - 5.2.8 Liaise with agencies that have regular contact with residents about support requirements and safeguarding issues.

- 5.2.9 Keep information provided by residents on the Housing Management System so that the needs of vulnerable adults and specified communication preferences (e.g large print or Braille) can be met.
- 5.2.10 Ensure housing management and health and well-being staff are given training to recognise/identify potential care and support requirements.
- 5.2.11 Support residents to access physical aids and adaptations to enable them to stay in their homes with as much independence as possible, liaising with internal colleagues who are Trusted Assessors and qualified to carry out assessments, before liaising the Local Authority or other agencies to provide a personal service or Disability Facility Grants or funding.
- 5.2.12 Support and empower residents to access services that offer employment, training and volunteering opportunities, if requested and appropriate.

### **Support with Budgeting and Other Financial Problems**

- 5.3 Brunelcare aims to prevent residents from being financially excluded and to ensure that they can sustain their tenancy by paying rent on time and/or clearing monies owed to the Charity. Although Brunelcare does not give financial advice, support will be provided to:
  - 5.3.1 Provide guidance with budgeting.
  - 5.3.2 Provide guidance to residents to claim the appropriate benefits (welfare/means tested) or refer residents to an appropriate Money Advice/Debt Advice service.
  - 5.3.3 Support eligible tenants to make applications for Brunecare's Financial Support Fund (subject to availability).
  - 5.3.4 Signpost residents to employment and training opportunities, if requested, by liaising with local authorities, Job Centre/Department of Work and Pensions and promote training providers to help residents become ready for work.
- 5.3.5 Promote the Credit Union, or support residents to sign up for an appropriate bank account.
- 5.3.6 Support residents who have rent or other debts relating to their tenancy, ensuring they are informed about the debts at an early stage, understand any particular issues that have caused the arrears, and help residents to pay in manageable/instalment amounts through Rent Arrears Agreements.

### **Other Support Needs**

- 5.4 Brunelcare will:

- 5.4.1 Listen to resident needs and complete relevant assessments and support plans with individual residents where support needs are identified.
- 5.4.2 Empower residents to seek educational opportunities if requested.
- 5.4.3 Arrange mediation, if appropriate, where there are disputes between neighbours who are unable to sort out the problem themselves.
- 5.4.4 Refer residents who have experienced domestic abuse to MARAC (multi agency risk assessment conference) or any other domestic abuse support services, as appropriate, to ensure the tenant is fully safeguarded and supported.
- 5.4.5 Refer residents for Occupational Therapy assessments through the Local Authority if additional aids and adaptations are required and if Brunelcare cannot provide the additional aid or adaptation.
- 5.4.6 Refer residents to specialised support agencies (e.g. drug and alcohol or mental health, if required). This will usually be by signposting the resident to the Health and Well-being team.
- 5.4.7 Refer residents to the local Authority if there are concerns of welfare, neglect or abuse (financial or physical/mental) or if the adult is at risk via an adult safeguarding referral.

### **Anti-Social Behaviour, Hate Crime and Vulnerable Residents**

- 5.5 Brunelcare helps residents to sustain their tenancies by being clear about the behaviour that is expected of residents in ensuring their neighbours can experience peaceful enjoyment of their homes, and in encouraging tolerance. Enabling residents to feel secure in their homes, free from intimidating behaviour and any form of hate crime, is key to ensuring vulnerable residents, and any witnesses to this behaviour, are supported.
- 5.6 A definition of a vulnerable victim is '*If the conduct in question causes an adverse impact on their quality of life. Adverse impact includes the risk of harm; deterioration of their health, mental or emotional wellbeing; or an inability to carry out a normal day to day routine through fear and intimidation*', either the victim or the perpetrator could be regarded as vulnerable.
- 5.7 The Anti-Social Behaviour Policy sets out Brunelcare's approach towards the effective management of anti-social behaviour, including the actions that will be taken to identify the risk to other tenants who may be vulnerable.

### **Customer Care**

- 5.8 Brunelcare aims to provide excellent customer service through the following:



- 5.8.1 As far as possible, accommodating physical or mental disabilities and lifestyles in arranging visits and making appointments.
- 5.8.2 Making mutually convenient appointments to visit residents in their homes and working flexibly to ensure effective service provision (this may involve evening appointments).
- 5.8.3 Offering residents in a variety of ways to meet their communication needs, such as face to face, phone (including SMS/text), letters (large print or Braille), emails, home visits and appointments at the site office (if available on site).
- 5.8.4 Ensuring that professional boundaries are established and maintained, and that the support given empowers the individual to manage independently, rather than having to rely on continuing support.
- 5.8.5 All staff receiving customer service training and equality training.
- 5.8.6 Ensuring staff behave at all times in a respectful way towards residents, and expecting this to be returned when carrying out their work.
- 5.8.7 Making residents aware that other formats and languages, including sign language, are available for all occasions when staff communicate with a resident.

## **6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **The Board of Brunelcare (Employer and Landlord)**

6.1 The Board has overall accountability for the activities of the organisation, which includes arrangements for tenancy sustainment and support. The Board will ensure that it receives appropriate assurance that the requirements set out in this policy are being met.

6.2 The Board discharges its responsibilities for tenancy sustainment and support through the Chief Executive Officer. The Board will report back to tenants and residents or their family representatives on how Brunelcare manages its tenancy sustainment and support arrangements.

### **Chief Executive Officer**

6.3 The Chief Executive officer has overall accountability for the provision of efficient and effective tenancy sustainment and support arrangements.

6.4 The Chief Executive Officer discharges the day to day operational responsibility for tenancy sustainment and support through the Director of Housing Services.

### **Director of Housing Services**

6.5 The Director of Housing Services is responsible for the operational delivery of this Policy and the associated procedures.

6.6 The Director of Housing Services will put clear mechanisms in place:

- to monitor and measure compliance with the policy, including setting a performance framework that includes key Performance Indicators (KPIs);
- to provide regular performance reports to the Board; and
- ensure performance against key performance indicators is regularly reported to Brunelare's customers.

### **Tenancy Services Manager and Support Services Manager**

6.7 The Tenancy Services Manager will oversee the tenancy process and Housing Team, ensuring its efficient and effective operation.

6.8 The Tenancy Services Manager will report to the Director of Housing Services on the performance of the service.

6.9 Everyone has a professional, individual and collective responsibility to implement the policy with guidance and advice from the Tenancy Services Manager and Director of Housing Services as necessary.

6.10 Overall responsibility for the effective management of each individual case lies with the relevant Housing Team Manager/Tenancy Officer, Health and Well-being Officer for the patch, or the Centre Manager/ECH Officer for Extra Care Housing.

### **Tenancy Officer/Extra Care Housing Officer/Health & Well-being Officer, Housing Support Coordinator/ECH Centre Manager**

6.11 The Tenancy Officer/Health and Well-being Officer, Extra Care Housing Officer/Housing Support Coordinator will be responsible for implementing this policy and ensuring residents are supported to sustain their tenancy, complete an assessment of support needs and make appropriate referral to statutory or voluntary agencies to provide support. This will require working with the Health and Well-being Team if ongoing support is required due to complexities of the individual's needs or circumstances or vulnerability.

6.12 The ECH Centre Manager and on site care team will be responsible for implementing this policy and ensuring residents are supported to sustain their tenancy, complete assessment of support needs and make appropriate referral to statutory or voluntary agencies to provide support.

## **7. EQUALITY AND DATA PROTECTION**

### **Equality and Diversity**

7.1 Brunelcare seeks to embed an environment where all clients, visitors, employees, agency workers, contractors, Trustees, volunteers and the self-employed are treated as individuals, fairly and in a consistent way. We work within the spirit and the practice of the Equality Act 2010 by promoting a culture of respect and dignity and actively challenging discrimination, should it ever arise. This Policy will be applied in a way that is consistent with these principles.

## **Data Protection**

7.2 Brunelcare is committed to ensuring protection of all personal information that it holds, and to provide and protect all such data.

7.3 Brunelcare is dedicated to safeguarding the personal information under its control and in maintaining a system that meets the Charity's obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation. Brunelcare's practice is set out in the Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.

7.4 It is recognised that dealing with tenancy issues will involve sensitive data, particularly from applicants and third-party agencies and therefore particular care will be taken when processing data relating to this policy.

## **8. IMPLEMENTATION AND TRAINING**

8.1 Housing staff, ECH staff and Customer Services staff will be referred to this policy upon induction. Ensuring that staff are given training to recognise/identify potential care and support requirements. Training is subject to ongoing review or if there is a change in practices or regulatory/legislative guidance.

## **9. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

9.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years, or following any major statutory or regulatory changes, significant changes in procedures or practices, or if the author deems it to be required.

9.2 Information gathered through the housing management system will be reported to the Board on a regular basis to allow benchmarking against tenancy standards, and to ensure the effective implementation of this policy.