


The Wrekin Housing Group		Group Health & Safety Policy Number 2020/033
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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Wrekin Housing Group is a Community Benefit Society registered with the Financial Conduct Authority under the Co-operative & Community Benefit Society Act 2014. Our main business is the provision of social housing, care and support, adding social value to the lives of the people who receive our services and live in our communities.
- 1.2 The Wrekin Housing Group (WHG) has three subsidiaries – Choices Housing Association (Choices HA), our care provider; Old Park Services – a trading subsidiary; and Strata Housing Services – a development subsidiary.
- 1.3 The Group operates within Shropshire, Staffordshire, Cheshire and the West Midlands. It has a growing portfolio of over 12,000 properties. These buildings range from offices, commercial units, general domestic housings, specialist housing (including extra care), care homes, low rise and high rise blocks of flats.
- 1.4 WHG is regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) and Choices HA is regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH). The Executive Management Group (EMG) and Board set and oversee corporate strategy, including the approval of all compliance policy principles.
- 1.5 This documents sets out the management arrangements and responsibilities to deliver on our health and safety commitments, under the new Group structure (Post simplification April 2018).

2.0 Statement of Intent

- 2.1 The Wrekin Housing Group attaches great importance to the health, safety and welfare of its employees, tenants, service users, contractors and visitors.
- 2.2 It is the policy of the Group to provide safe and healthy working conditions for all employees and to enlist the active support of employees in fulfilling their own health and safety responsibilities in order that it achieves a continuous improvement to health and safety performance.
- 2.3 The objectives of the policy are:-
- 2.3.1 To promote standards of health, safety and welfare that complies with the provision and requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and all other statutory provisions, ACOP's (approved codes of practice) and guidance. With regard to our registered care activities the policy seeks to ensure we are meeting the requirements of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.
 - 2.3.2 To provide and maintain safe and healthy workplaces and working environments, the safe transportation and handling of articles and substances, safe systems and methods of work and to protect employees, and others, including tenants, service users and members of the public, in so far as they come into contact with foreseeable hazards.
 - 2.3.3 To provide all employees with the information, instruction, training and supervision that they need to work safely and efficiently and to develop safety awareness amongst employees.
 - 2.3.4 To maintain a constant and continuing interest in health and safety matters applicable to the Group activities by involving and consulting with employees on relevant matters.\
 - 2.3.5 The four statements above will be combined into a strapline that will underpin all of our future H&S communications to help embed Health and Safety awareness into the business. This will be "the Right people, with the Right equipment, following the Right procedures".
- 2.4 The Group Health and Safety Policy will be reviewed and revised as often as is necessary in the light of changing circumstances and statutory requirements, as well as annually to promote ongoing commitment to health and safety of our employees and third parties.



Wayne Gethings
Group Chief Executive
08/06/2020

3.0 Key Roles and Responsibilities / Organisation Arrangements

3.1 Any employee, including Executive Directors, Senior Manager, Managers, Supervisors, Team Leaders and other employees, may be found criminally liable if he/she has not fulfilled their duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 or relevant legislative requirements.

3.2 Group Board and Group Chief Executive.

3.2.1 The Group Board and Group Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the Health and Safety Policy, and for ensuring that adequate funds and resources are available to meet our health and safety obligations. The Board and Chief Executive will ensure that the effectiveness of health and safety policy is continually reviewed.

3.3 Executive Directors and Senior Managers

3.3.1 The Executive Directors and Senior Managers have overall responsibility for giving effect to health and safety, and will:

- Ensure that the policy on health and safety (H&S) is implemented.
- Ensure that a positive culture surrounds the management of, and compliance with Health and Safety, by delivering communications to employees that positively promotes safety in the workplace and wellbeing of employees.
- Be responsible for the effective management, monitoring and progression of health and safety issues within their directorate or service area,
- Ensure that effective management systems are in place to achieve high standards of health and safety,
- Ensure H&S is fully considered during times of acute organisational stress (as experienced with recent COVID pandemic), and RAMS reviewed as required as a response to dynamic service changes.
- Attend and take part in the relevant H&S Committee or Group in their directorate or service area, to develop monitor and implement the H&S improvement plans for the organisation, these are detailed with section 4.0
- In addition the Managing Director of Choices as the 'Nominated Individual' under the Care Act is responsible for ensuring under regulation 12 and 13 of the HSCA 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regs 2014 for the provision of safe care and treatment and safeguarding service user from abuse and improper treatment – sections 13.[1] to 13.[4].

3.4 Head of Property

3.4.1 Be responsible for the provision of an effective health and safety service to the housing service area of the business, including staff and service users.

3.4.2 Ensure adequate resource is available to deliver the health and safety service, and annual health and safety plan.

3.4.3 Be responsible for the appointment of a suitably qualified Health and Safety professional to act as the “competent person” in health and safety matters.

3.4.4 Lead and develop the health and safety service, ensuring continuous professional development.

- 3.4.5 Ensure an adequate framework exists for employee consultation involvement in health and safety matters, liaising with trade union representatives.

3.5 **Managing Director of Choices**

- 3.5.1 Be responsible for the provision of an effective health and safety service to the care service side of the business, including staff and service users
- 3.5.2 Ensure adequate resource is available to deliver services safely, and annual health and safety plan for care services.
- 3.5.3 Be responsible for the appointment of a suitably qualified professional to act as the “competent person” in care health and safety matters and as the ‘Nominated individual’ under the Care Act 2008.
- 3.5.4 Lead and develop the care service, ensuring continuous professional development.
- 3.5.5 Ensure an adequate framework exists for employee consultation involvement in health and safety matters.
- 3.5.6 At Choices some Directors and Senior Managers under the authority of the Managing Director may be charged with specific responsibility for aspects of organisational health and safety e.g. chairing focus groups, continuous improvement teams, training and development etc. Managers with such responsibility will ensure that the organisation implements good practice and adheres to any relevant regulations and legislation.
- 3.5.7 Director of Care (DoC) and the performance and Compliance Managers (PCM’s) working under the authority of the Director of Care will ensure that all staff training complies with current legislation for care homes and the requirements of the relevant care standards. The QCM under the authority of the DoC will be responsible for ensuring Registered Managers are discharging their duties and responsibilities correctly. The Managing Director as the ‘Nominated Individual’ in terms of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 care will be informed of any health and safety deficiencies in any of Choices Care Homes or other regulated activities.

3.6 **Health and Safety Partner (Competent Person)**

- 3.6.1 Be responsible to the Head of Property for continually monitoring and improving the Groups health and safety standards
- 3.6.2 Will implement projects and actions in accordance with the Health and Safety plan.
- 3.6.3 Ensure that the Group Health and Safety Policies are in line with legislative requirements and updated when necessary.
- 3.6.4 Maintain a system for the reporting of accidents, produce associated statistics and arrange a common procedure for the reporting and investigation of accidents.

- 3.6.5 Act as the recipient of and be responsible for the distribution of all documentation and guidance from the members of the team on health and safety related matters.
- 3.6.6 Liaise with and advise the Group Board, Directors, Senior Managers, Team Leaders and others on all aspects of health and safety legislation and precautions necessary to ensure good safety practice.
- 3.6.7 Give appropriate input to the design and delivery of health and safety training courses arranged.
- 3.6.8 Liaise with the Health and Safety Executive and other external bodies, with a direct interest in the health and safety of the Group's employees.
- 3.6.9 Liaise as necessary with, and maintain a register of Safety Representatives, and all members of the Group Health, Safety and Welfare Committee.

3.7 Senior Managers

- 3.7.1 Have a responsibility for the management and monitoring of the Health and Safety Policy for ensuring its effectiveness for the area they Lead or manage.
- 3.7.2 They will liaise and ensure full co-operation not only with, but also between managers and supervisors to ensure that they are in compliance with their responsibilities, company policies and procedures.
- 3.7.3 Will ensure full co-operation with appointed Safety Representatives and other personnel appointed in matters relating to health and safety whilst maintaining and encouraging a positive attitude towards health and safety and adopt and maintain the health and safety culture within the organisation.

3.8 Managers

- 3.8.1 Managers are directly responsible for ensuring that rules, regulations, procedures and codes of practice relating to health and safety of employees and others affected by the work of their section are correctly interpreted and implemented in all activities within their area of responsibility.
- 3.8.2 The Manager must therefore:-
 - Be responsible for developing, where appropriate section specific policies and procedures to complement the Group's Health and Safety Policy in order to adequately control known health and safety risks. Guidance will be sought from the health and safety team where appropriate.
 - Ensure that all employees are aware of the Corporate Health & Safety policy, when new employees start and periodically team briefings/meetings.
 - Understand and ensure the implementation the Group Safety Policy rules and statutory requirements applicable to all operations under their control.
 - In order to comply with the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 they must ensure that for their section there is adequate provision for:
 - Safe articles, protective clothing, plant tools, equipment and systems of work.

- Safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage and transportation of substances and materials.
 - Premises used by employees and members of the public shall be safe and not present a hazard to the users or service users.
 - Sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to enable all employees to avoid hazards and contribute positively to their own health and safety at work.
 - A safe access and egress to and from the place of work.
 - Adequate health and welfare facilities.
 - A healthy working environment.
- Represent and advise the appropriate Executive Directors and Senior Managers as requested on all matters of health and safety.
 - By undertaking risk assessments for all activities carried out by employees under their control, ensure that all risks to health and safety of employees, service users, tenants and members of the public which may arise from the work of the section are identified and adequately controlled by whatever means identified as appropriate by the risk assessment.
 - Ensure that all health and safety records, certificates, licenses and reports pertaining to their area of responsibility (employee and equipment) are satisfactory and up to date.
 - Ensure that all appropriate remedial action is taken in respect of all reported defects and complaints relating to health and safety.
 - Keep up to date with and implement where applicable any new health and safety measures and circulate any relevant information to each level of employee via the management structure.
 - Ensure full co-operation with appointed Safety Representatives and other personnel appointed in matters relating to health and safety.
 - Require and encourage a positive attitude towards health and safety within own area of responsibility. This must include ensuring that there is a regular formal means to pass health and safety information out to employees and also to allow employees to raise health and safety matters with their manager. Regular feedback on matters raised must also be given.
 - Take whatever disciplinary action is necessary against any employee not carrying out their responsibilities under health and safety legislation, or Group Health and Safety Policy.
 - To ensure that all employees are aware of the first aid arrangements.

3.9 Other Supervisory Staff

3.9.1 Ensure that all employees are aware of this policy.

3.9.2 Understand and ensure the implementation the Group Safety Policy rules and statutory requirements applicable to all operations under their control.

3.9.3 In order to comply with the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 they must ensure that for their section there is adequate provision for :

- Safe articles, protective clothing, plant tools, equipment and systems of work.
- Safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage and transportation of substances and materials.
- Premises used by employees and members of the public shall be safe and not present a hazard to the users or service users.

- Sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to enable all employees to avoid hazards and contribute positively to their own health and safety at work.
- A safe access and egress to and from the place of work.
- Adequate health and welfare facilities.
- A healthy working environment.

3.9.4 By undertaking risk assessments for all activities carried out by employees under their control, ensure that all risks to health and safety of employees, service users and members of the public which may arise from the work of the section are identified and adequately controlled by whatever means identified as appropriate by the risk assessment.

3.9.5 Ensure that all appropriate remedial action is taken in respect of all reported defects and complaints relating to health and safety.

3.9.6 Ensure full co-operation with appointed Safety Representatives and other personnel appointed in matters relating to health and safety, seeking specialist advice from the Health and Safety team as required.

3.9.7 Require and encourage a positive attitude towards health and safety within own area of responsibility.

3.9.8 To ensure that all employees are aware of the first aid arrangements

3.10 **Other Supervisory Staff**

3.10.1 Ensure that all employees are aware of this policy.

3.10.2 Understand and ensure the implementation the Group Safety Policy rules and statutory requirements applicable to all operations under their control.

3.10.3 In order to comply with the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 they must ensure that for their section there is adequate provision for :-

- Safe articles, protective clothing, plant tools, equipment and systems of work.
- Safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage and transportation of substances and materials.
- Premises used by employees and members of the public shall be safe and not present a hazard to the users or service users.
- Sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to enable all employees to avoid hazards and contribute positively to their own health and safety at work.
- A safe access and egress to and from the place of work.
- Adequate health and welfare facilities.
- A healthy working environment.

3.10.4 By undertaking risk assessments for all activities carried out by employees under their control, ensure that all risks to health and safety of employees, service users and members of the public which may arise from the work of the section are identified and adequately controlled by whatever means identified as appropriate by the risk assessment.

- 3.10.5 Ensure that all appropriate remedial action is taken in respect of all reported defects and complaints relating to health and safety.
- 3.10.6 Ensure full co-operation with appointed Safety Representatives and other personnel appointed in matters relating to health and safety, seeking specialist advice from the Health and Safety team as required.
- 3.10.7 Require and encourage a positive attitude towards health and safety within own area of responsibility.
- 3.10.8 To ensure that all employees are aware of the first aid arrangements.

3.11 **Statutory Safety Representatives**

3.11.1 Safety Representatives are statutory representatives of employees. They are recognised by the Group in order that they may keep under review measures taken to ensure the health and safety at work of employees, and to consult with management on the development of health and safety policy.

3.11.2 In particular Statutory Safety Representatives may:

- Investigate hazards, dangerous occurrences and accidents occurring in the workplace.
- Make representation on matters affecting the health, safety and welfare of employees.
- Make workplace inspections, as they consider necessary.
- Consult with Health and Safety Executive Inspectors.
- Be given time off work with pay in order to pursue their function or undertake training necessary to effectively fulfil their role.

3.12 **Fire Marshalls**

3.12.1 All fire marshalls located throughout our office locations and schemes have a specific duty to ensure:

- The safe evacuation of the building(s) in the event of an emergency procedure.
- To report any malfunctions with an actual evacuation procedure to the Health & Safety Team to ensure that the appropriate remedial measures can be implemented. This also includes the 6 monthly fire drills.

3.13 **First Aiders**

3.13.1 The responsibilities of the first aiders are to administer first aid to injured persons within the workplace. Learning and development team will ensure that first aiders who have volunteered are enrolled on the required course and on any refresher training required for their role.

3.14 **Employees**

3.14.1 All employees have an equal responsibility for ensuring and maintaining health and safety in the workplace.

3.14.2 All employees MUST: -

- Take personal responsibility for ensuring they understand the contents of the Group Health and Safety Policy, a copy of which is readily available on the Group intranet, and also be aware of health and safety arrangements for their particular job and place of work.
- Use the correct and safe tools and equipment for the job, also to use all safety equipment \ protective clothing provided, and adopt a safe method of working at all times.
- Keep tools, equipment, plant, machinery and protective equipment in good condition to prevent injury to themselves or others.
- Report any defects or hazards to their immediate manager/supervisor.
- Develop a personal concern for safety, both for themselves and for others around them, particularly trainees and young persons.
- Suggest ways of eliminating hazards by reporting to their immediate manager or supervisor.
- Co-operate with the Group Health and Safety Team and immediate manager or supervisor on matters relating to health and safety.
- Set a personal example and ensure safe working practices are observed at all times.
- Be aware of and carry out the requirements of health and safety legislation, and the safety instructions issued to them.

4.0 Health and Safety Committees and Working Groups

4.1 These groups are split across the Housing and Care side of our business as follows:

- 4.1.1 Health, Safety and Welfare Committee (Housing Services)
- 4.1.2 Health and Safety Operational Group (group wide)
- 4.1.3 H&S Continuous Imp Team (Care Services)
- 4.1.4 Management of Actual & Potential Aggression Focus Group (Care Services)
- 4.1.5 Safer Handling Focus Group (Care Services)
- 4.1.6 First Aid Trainers Focus Group (Care Services)
- 4.1.7 Infection Control Focus Group (Care Services)

4.2 Each group will have its own terms of reference. But in general the groups will oversee, monitor a specific area of the business, to ensure we are following our regulatory duties, and have effective control measures, safe systems of work, and measure and report on H&S related matters.

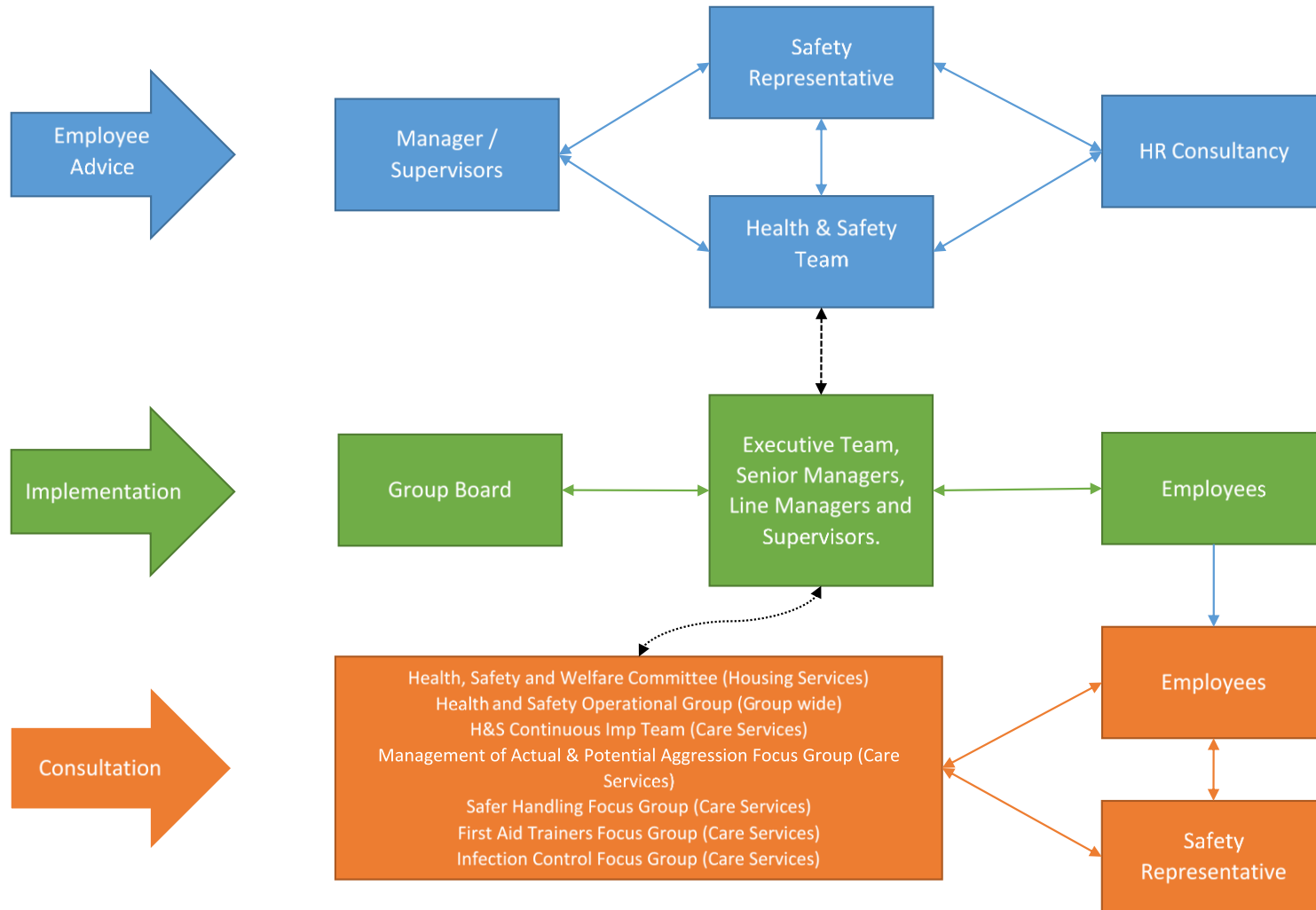
5.0 Health and Safety Arrangements

5.1 This overarching Group Health and Safety Policy forms the initial part of the wider and more specific suite Health and Safety Policies.

5.2 These corporate arrangements will be supplemented by additional corporate Health and Safety Policies detailing further specific legal and Group requirements on particular health and safety issues. e.g. Use of display screen equipment, Control and management of contractors, Personal safety, Control of asbestos, lone working, property compliance etc.

- 5.3 It will then be necessary for each manager to ensure local policies are implemented to enable these corporate requirements to be put into practice in all areas of work for which that manager is responsible.
- 5.4 With the current coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, there will be a requirement to change operational policies and procedures, therefore the RAMS will need to be reviewed in accordance with those changes.
- 5.5 See the attached flow charts for the organisation of health and safety and policy structure.

Organisation for Health and Safety



Health and Safety Policy Structure



Appendix

ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS & CONSULTATION (Choices = Registered Care Activities).

The following information details how Choices as a registered care provider organises its Health and Safety functions and responsibilities through the Continuous Improvement Teams and Focus groups referred to in the group policy to ensure the safe delivery of care and treatment to service users.

To ensure that Choices has effective health and safety policies, procedures and arrangements in place we operate a number of focus groups that have been given responsibility regarding specific aspects of organisational health and safety. The existence of these groups and supporting frameworks also ensure we consult effectively with our employees on issues that might impact on their occupational health and safety.

Through each of these groups ensure we gain the input from employees of all grades from across the organisation and build up high levels of expertise in key areas of the organisation's activities. Each of these groups has a defined and complimentary role in relation to the other. General communication of relevant matters will also be disseminated through Leadership Meetings.

1. The groups and their functions are as follows:-

- Health and Safety Continuous Improvement Team (HSCIT)
- MAPA Focus Group (Management of Actual and Potential Aggression)
- Safer Handling Focus Group
- First Aid Trainers Focus Group
- Infection Control Focus Group
- Falls prevention Focus Group

1.2 Health and Safety Continuous Improvement Team (HSCIT):

Remit:

- To oversee and co-ordinate all strategic and operational aspects of health and safety arrangements within the organisation
- To carry out as directed workplace inspections and audits
- To direct and co-ordinate the activities of other health and safety related focus groups
- To develop health and safety policies and procedures and monitor and review their effectiveness
- Monitor and review organisational health and safety performance against established key performance indicators
- Benchmark health and safety performance against sector and national standards
- To review and reflect on good practice, new regulations and legislation and make appropriate changes to workplace policies practices and procedures
- To implement, review and monitor the effectiveness of any organisational training in relation to health and safety
- Produce regular statistical information to demonstrate organisational performance in relation to health and safety

- To receive reports on serious accidents and incidents and plan and implement organisational response resulting from any investigation

Membership:

- Managing Director (Chair)
- Registered Manager
- Quality and Compliance Manager
- Staff Forum Representative
- Head Office representative

Reports to:

- The Managing Director

Meetings:

- Normally meets quarterly.
- Chairman can convene additional meetings if required.

1.3 MAPA Focus Group (Management of Actual and Potential Aggression)

Remit:

- To develop an organisational policy and strategy in relation to aggression and violence in the workplace based on professional, regulatory and statutory duties and responsibilities
- To ensure suitable and sufficient risk assessments are in place in order inform the introduction of effective control measures and safe systems of work
- To have an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of all employees in the organisation and the degree of their exposure to potential aggression and violence and ensure safe systems of work are implemented and deployed across the organisation
- To monitor the effectiveness of all control measures and safe systems of work ensuring
- To act as a resource group to facilitate innovation and learning as well as being a source of specialist advice and guidance
- To ensure the effective deployment of the organisation's training strategy in relation to MAPA, personal safety and the management of challenging behaviours by providing appropriate instruction training and supervision
- To ensure employees receive up to date policies, procedures and good practice guidance and through audits and inspections ensure the effectiveness of safe systems of work and their deployment across the organisation
- To monitor and review the number of classified violent incidents (using the Eclipse Data Base) and incident investigation
- To review all areas of MAPA activities across the organisation and identify areas for improvement, development and learning

- **Membership:**

- Director of Care (chair)
- Quality and Compliance Manager.
- All Managers who manage services in medium to high risk areas.

Reports to:

- Director (Care)

Meetings:

- Quarterly, Chairman can convene additional meetings if required.

1.4 Safer Handling Focus Group

Remit:

- To develop organisational policy and strategy in relation to safer handling activities in the workplace based on professional, regulatory and statutory responsibilities.
- To provide employee training (including the training of our own Safer Handling Trainers) and expert advice on manual handling issues by implementing a rolling programme for manual handling training
- To ensure suitable and sufficient risk assessments are in place in order inform the introduction of effective control measures; safe systems of work and the purchase of appropriate equipment
- To ensure employees receive up to date policies, procedures and good practice guidance and through audits and inspections ensure the effectiveness of safe systems of work and their deployment across the organisation
- To act as a resource group to facilitate the dissemination of good practice; give advice and guidance on manual handling concerns; assess the need for specialist equipment and advise on the use and operation of such equipment
- To monitor and review the number of safer handling incidents (using the incident reporting data base) and incident investigation
- To review all areas of manual handling activities across the organisation and identify areas for improvement, development and learning

Membership:

- Director of Care (Chair)
- Quality and Performance Manager/s
- Safer Handling Qualified Trainers

Meetings:

- Quarterly

1.5 Equipment Acquisition Focus Group

Remit:

- To determine the need for all equipment (major items such as adapted baths, hoists etc) purchased in relation to health safety; care and support activities

- To ensure that all equipment purchased is fit for purpose and meets all the necessary regulatory and relevant British standards
- To ensure that employees receive adequate training regarding the use of any equipment and are made aware of manufacturers and/or suppliers guidelines regarding its use and operation
- Through the HSCIT instigating inspections and audits ensure that all equipment is being used correctly

Membership:

- Director Care (Chair)
- Director of Housing and Assets
- Housing Administration Officer

Meetings:

- Ad hoc.

1.6 Infection Control Focus Group

Remit:

- Keep the organisations key indicators under review
- Advise and ratify Infection, Prevention and Control policies
- Receive and respond to national policy directives and best practice
- Discuss and propose a plan for the response to major outbreaks and to monitor its implementations
- Monitor all reported incidents and risks in relation to Infection, Prevention and Control
- Advise on the provision of education
- Agree on annual cycle of audit for Infection, Prevention and Control policies and procedures – disseminating findings and results
- Provide an annual report on the systems in place for the prevention and control of infection, making recommendations as appropriate

Membership:

- **Director of Care (Chair)**
- **Quality and Performance Manager/s**
- **Registered Manager/s**

Meetings:

- Every 6 months or as required in response to specific events or changes in good practice.

1.7 Falls Prevention Focus Group

Remit:

- Receive and respond to national policy directives and best practice with regard to falls prevention.
- Monitor all reported incidents and risks in relation to slips trips and falls.

- Advise on the provision of education in this area.

Membership:

- **PCM Chair**
- **Performance and Compliance Performance Manager/s**
- **Registered Manager/s**

Meetings:

Quarterly.