

Safer Communities Approach April 2026



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1. Purpose and Scope

This Safer Communities Approach sets out Railway Housing Association's overarching framework for creating, maintaining and promoting safe, inclusive and supportive communities. It brings together and explains how our Safeguarding, Domestic Abuse, and Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Crime policies operate as a single, integrated approach.

These three policy areas are intrinsically linked. Concerns presented as anti-social behaviour may involve domestic abuse or safeguarding risk; domestic abuse cases frequently involve children or adults at risk; and safeguarding concerns often require tenancy management or enforcement action. This approach ensures responses are joined-up, proportionate, trauma-informed and focused on safety and wellbeing.

This document should be read alongside the following policies:

- Safeguarding Policy (April 2026)
- Domestic Abuse Policy (April 2026)
- Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Crime Policy (April 2026)

2. Our Safer Communities Vision

Railway Housing Association is committed to:

- Safe homes and neighbourhoods where residents feel protected and respected
- Early identification of risk and harm
- Strong partnership working
- Fair, person-centred and trauma-informed responses
- Balancing enforcement with support
- Achieving equitable outcomes for diverse communities

Safety is not delivered through one policy alone. Our Safer Communities approach recognises that people, behaviours and risks do not sit neatly in policy silos.

3. How the Policies Interlink

3.1 Safeguarding as the Foundation

Safeguarding underpins all Safer Communities activity. Any report of ASB or domestic abuse automatically triggers consideration of:

- Risk to children
- Risk to adults at risk (including capacity, care and support needs)
- Immediate safety and wider household impact

Safeguarding duties take precedence where harm or risk of harm is identified. Both domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour processes include safeguarding referral pathways and information-sharing protocols.

3.2 Domestic Abuse as Both Safeguarding and Anti-Social Behaviour

Domestic abuse:

- Is a safeguarding issue for adults and children
- May present as noise nuisance, harassment, neighbour disputes or repeated repair requests
- May require tenancy management action against perpetrators

Our Domestic Abuse Policy provides the specialist framework, while safeguarding processes manage risk and anti-social behaviour tools may be used to control perpetrator behaviour. Cases may therefore be managed concurrently under all three approaches.

3.3 Anti-Social Behaviour as a Gateway to Risk

Anti-social behaviour reports can reveal:

- Hidden domestic abuse
- Mental health or substance misuse concerns
- Child safeguarding risks
- Exploitation or coercive control

Anti-social behaviour case management embeds vulnerability assessments from the outset and escalates into safeguarding or domestic abuse pathways where required.

4. A Single Safer Communities Case Approach

Regardless of entry point, we apply a single, integrated case management approach:

1. Initial Report

Any concern (anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, safeguarding) can be reported through any channel.

2. Risk and Vulnerability Assessment

Immediate assessment of:

- Safety and urgency
- Presence of safeguarding indicators
- Domestic abuse indicators
- Hate crime indicators

3. Correct Policy Pathways Activated

One or more of the following may apply:

- Safeguarding referral (adult or child)
- Domestic abuse case management and MARAC
- Anti-social behaviour case management and enforcement tools

4. Integrated Action Plan

A coordinated plan that may include:

- Safety planning
- Support referrals
- Tenancy management or legal action
- Multi-agency case management

5. Review and Escalation

Cases are reviewed regularly and escalated where risk increases.

5. Principles That Apply Across All Policies

5.1 Person-Centred and Trauma-Informed

- We listen to residents and respect lived experience
- We avoid blame and judgement
- We understand the impact of trauma on behaviour and engagement

5.2 Proportionate and Lawful Responses

- Enforcement is used where necessary to protect others
- Decisions are fair, evidence-based and human-rights compliant
- We balance community safety with individual circumstances

5.3 Equity and Inclusion

- Services are adapted to individual needs
- Barriers to reporting are actively removed

- Reasonable adjustments and accessible communication are standard practice

5.4 Partnership Working

We work closely with:

- Local authority safeguarding teams
- Police
- MARAC and MASH
- Health and mental health services
- Specialist domestic abuse and support organisations

No single agency can manage Safer Communities alone.

6. Tenancy Management and Enforcement

Tenancy action may be used across all three policy areas where necessary to:

- Protect victims and neighbours
- Manage perpetrator behaviour
- Prevent escalation of harm

Enforcement is:

- Never automatic
- Informed by safeguarding assessments
- Used alongside support wherever possible

7. Governance, Accountability and Learning

- The Board approves and oversees all Safer Communities policies
- The Resident Committee undertakes an annual Safer Communities deep dive
- Learning from complaints, serious cases and partnership feedback informs continuous improvement

8. Complaints and Resident Voice

Residents can raise complaints about any Safer Communities response through the complaints process. We ensure:

- Fair and transparent handling
- Clear explanations of decisions

- Access to the Housing Ombudsman where needed

9. Review and Continuous Improvement

This Safer Communities Approach will be reviewed alongside the linked policies at least every three years, or earlier if legislation, regulation or operational learning requires.