



SAFEGUARDING ANNUAL REPORT

2024/25

As the Independent Chair of Midland Heart's Safeguarding Board, I am delighted to introduce the association's Annual Safeguarding Report for 2024-25. The report includes a summary of reported safeguarding cases and some information about developments over the last year. There are also three case studies which, I hope, will bring to life the association's work in this vital area.



Peter Cheer
Independent Chair
of the Midland Heart
Safeguarding Board

As well as chairing meetings of the Safeguarding Board, I have met with groups of staff involved in safeguarding and seen some of their work first hand. I've continued to be impressed by their knowledge and commitment, and by the level of awareness of safeguarding across the association. In addition, everything I have seen suggests that the association's operational processes related to safeguarding are reliable and robust; this is vital if people are to be safeguarded.

I was delighted recently to be invited to join a meeting of the association's MyImpact group, where Involved Tenants meet with managers to discuss a wide range of topics. It was great to be able to share this report with the group, and to discuss how the group could feed in to Safeguarding Board discussions in the future. This will add to the regular feedback that the Safeguarding Board receives from tenants who have been involved in safeguarding situations, some of which you can read in this report.

I hope that this report will be of interest and would like to conclude by thanking all those across Midland Heart who have really taken on board the maxim that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

A snapshot of our safeguarding data this year

(Financial Year April 24 – March 2025):

856

Safeguarding cases raised
in 24/25

18.79% decrease from the previous
year 1054 in 23/24.

Over half of the cases raised were
raised and completed within this
timeframe. This is what we expected
following changes made across our Extra
Care and Independent Living Services.

34,330

Number of tenancies
managed in 24/25

33,581 tenancies in 23/24

The top 3 safeguarding concerns and
examples of what they refer to are:



Self-neglect

We have managed safeguarding cases involving self-neglect, where tenants have required coordinated support to access appropriate services that assist with maintaining personal hygiene, health, and safe living conditions.



Emotional/ psychological abuse

Cases involving emotional/psychological abuse are supported by our specialist teams, particularly where tenants have experienced domestic abuse or other adverse events that have significantly impacted their emotional wellbeing.



Physical abuse

Some of the physical abuse cases we've supported involve tenants who've experienced domestic abuse or have been affected by a physical assault.





UNDERSTANDING OUR TENANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Gaining a clear understanding of our tenants' demographics remains a key focus, ensuring our services are tailored to individual needs.

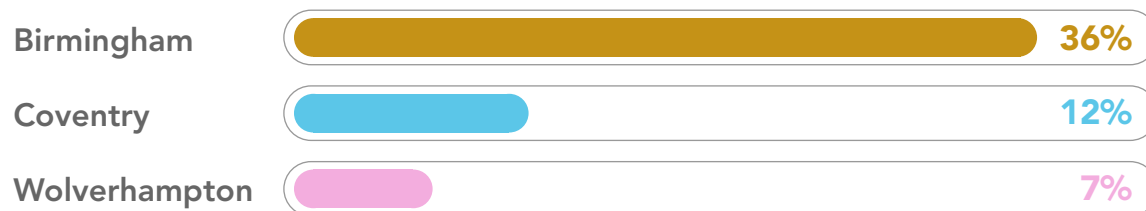
By identifying the safeguarding issues affecting our tenants, we can deliver more targeted support, strengthen partnerships with external agencies, and equip our staff with the training needed to foster a safe, harm-free environment.

Our in-depth analysis of the 2024/2025 demographic data reveals a strong alignment between safeguarding cases and tenant profiles are in line with what we would expect.

This encouraging outcome reflects the dedication of our colleagues and most importantly, the valuable contributions from our tenants, whose insights continue to shape and strengthen our safeguarding approach.

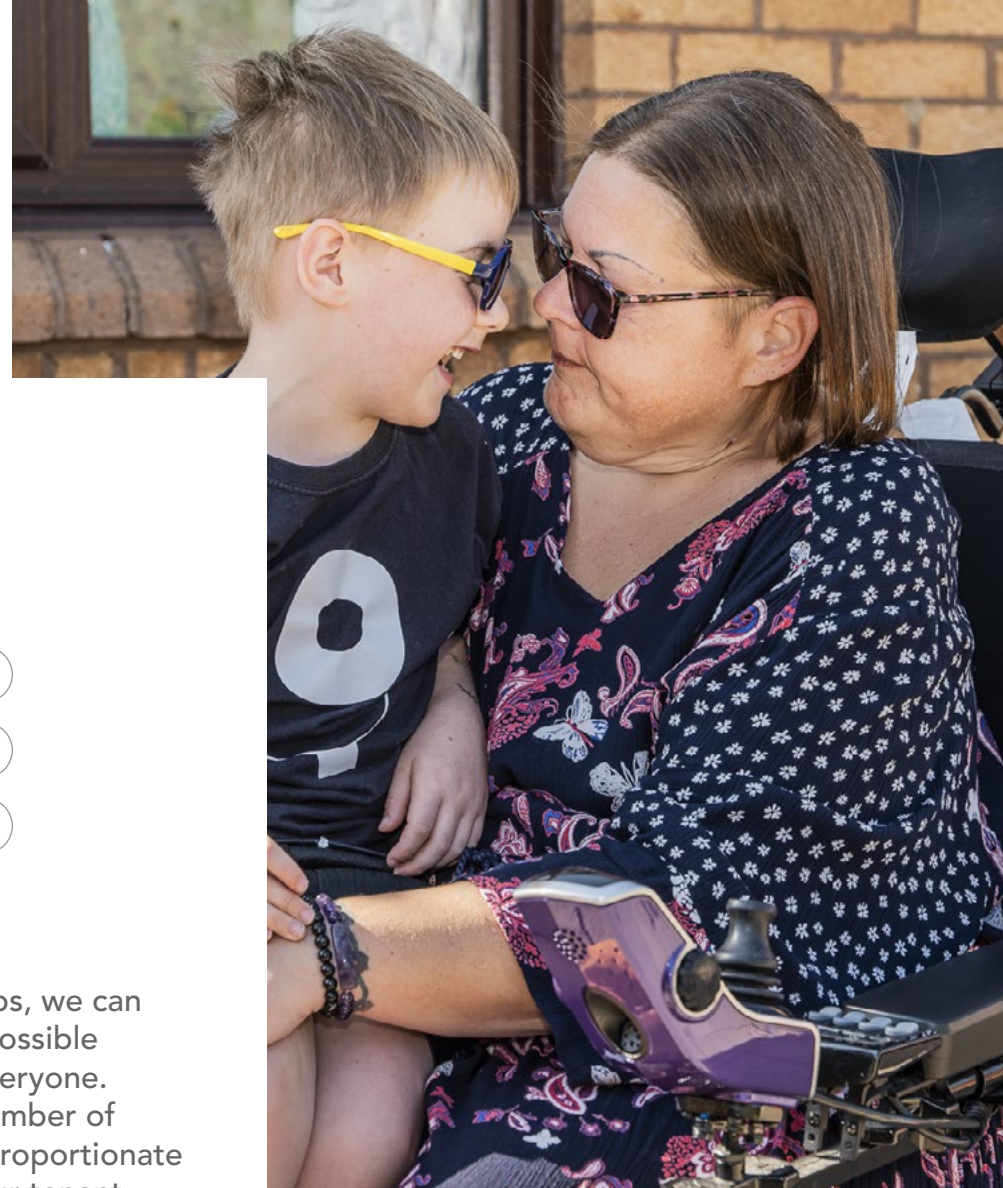
THE TOP 3 LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Our data analysis into Local Authorities and the number of safeguarding cases that are raised within those areas has shown the following:



We're committed to making sure all tenants feel safe and supported. That's why we work closely with Local Authorities to stay informed about any safeguarding concerns in the area. This helps us respond quickly and understand any outside factors that might affect our tenants or the community.

By building strong partnerships, we can continue providing the best possible support and protection for everyone. Our findings show that the number of cases within these areas are proportionate to the size of the areas and our tenant base within the area. We are committed to continuing our collaborative work with Local Authorities.



SAFEGUARDING CASES CLOSED WITH AN ACCEPTED LOCAL AUTHORITY REFERRAL

336 84 60

Safeguarding cases did not require a Local Authority statutory safeguarding to be raised.

Cases did require a statutory safeguarding.

71% (60 referrals) were accepted by the Local Authority.

Within 2024/2025, we have seen that 336 safeguarding cases did not require a Local Authority statutory safeguarding to be raised. Our analysis shows that 84 cases did require a statutory safeguarding whereby 71% (60 referrals) were accepted by the Local Authority.





01 Good Governance

We have successfully completed a full review of our policies and procedures, alongside the completion of Equality Impact Assessments and Tenant Scrutiny to ensure our policies are fit for purpose. We now have also implemented a new Domestic Abuse Policy and Vulnerability Policy.



02 Training

Our teams have successfully completed their Safeguarding Practitioner Training accredited through Social Care Institute of Excellence (SCIE) training and have a second session scheduled for the end of this year. Furthermore, teams have completed accredited training on Domestic Abuse through the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) training, in addition to all staff completing our newly introduced training for all staff around recognising and understanding vulnerability.



04 Trend Analysis

We have built a consistent process of sharing trends, case review findings and learnings from complaints through our Safeguarding Group and Safeguarding Board.



03 Assurance

We have continued to complete thematic audits focussing on key safeguarding practices and processes.

SAFEGUARDING AMBASSADORS & TENANT VOICE

Our team of Safeguarding Ambassadors make sure we're doing everything we can to keep our tenants and colleagues safe.

They help shape and develop our safeguarding policies and procedures, as well as act on the ground when something isn't quite right. We work closely with partner agencies and charitable groups to help get the best outcomes for our customers.

We're also here to support colleagues by sharing information, raising awareness, delivering training and offering advice when needed.

"[Case Officer] worked with me and other agencies to successfully move me. My family and I have all settled in well."

"[Case Officer] tried their best to understand my concerns through every step."

"[Case Officer] listened to me and even followed up with emails and documentation which showed she listened."

"On the whole, [Case Officer] she was listening to me and wanted to get a resolution."

"I felt my concerns were listened to by [Case Officer]"

"All of the officers were really helpful through each step of my case."

What are our tenants telling us?

Here is a snapshot of feedback we have received from our tenants.

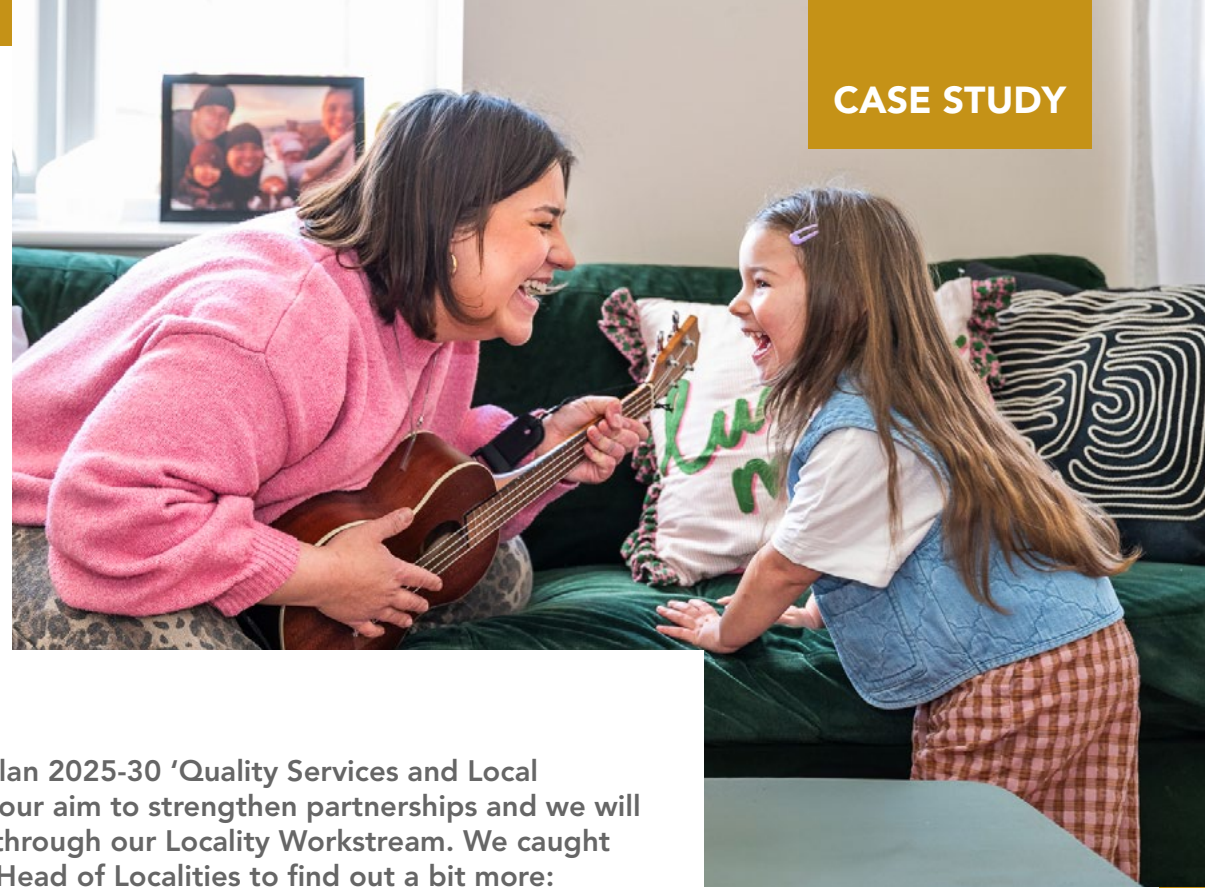
"[Case Officer] listened and kept me updated - followed up with emails, very thorough with follow-up documentation."

"[Case Officer] saw the situation and understood what I was saying."

"[Case Officer] was a good listener, I have been with Midland Heart for years and from past experience I was a bit bitter towards MH, but [Case Officer] has changed my view."



PARTNERSHIP WORKING



We have a Partnership Liaison Team, our specialist team that focusses on partnership working. We caught up with Deb, our Partnership Liaison Manager to learn more about what the team does:

“

As our Partnership Liaison Manager at Midland Heart, I work closely with supporting and building relationships with key external partners. The purpose of this work is to strengthen our ability to better deliver services, to act as a key point of contact, linking our networks together to develop a better understanding of each other's way of working. A most recent example that shows some of the work that I do is having the opportunity to help our Retirement Living Team to link in and agree a robust process with the local authority to ensure referrals were made to the right team at the right time. ”

Our Corporate Plan 2025-30 'Quality Services and Local Impact' sets out our aim to strengthen partnerships and we will do this working through our Locality Workstream. We caught up with Harriet, Head of Localities to find out a bit more:

“

Locality working is a central part of our Tenants at Heart Corporate Strategy, and this approach is designed to strengthen our presence in key neighbourhoods to improve how tenants experience our housing services, with a focus on delivering strong neighbourhood management with clearer local communications and increasing our presence.

As part of that commitment, we are piloting our new approach in Handsworth, Birmingham. Based on tenant feedback,

we have designed a framework to address local issues, working alongside partners organisations such as Local Authorities, Police, community, and voluntary sector agencies, who are helping us to address the concerns raised by tenants.

We would love to see you while we are out in your area, so please feel free to come up to us and say hello! Keep an eye out of our website and Socials to learn more about this and the future locality areas. ”

TAKING A TENANT CENTRIC APPROACH

The following case, managed by Tenancy Services Officer Abdul, exemplifies what it truly means to put our tenants first, second, and third. Abdul ensured that the tenant had a safe, clean home, with the right support in place when needed, while also focusing on long-term tenancy sustainability. This case demonstrates the value of taking ownership and the power of effective partnership working.

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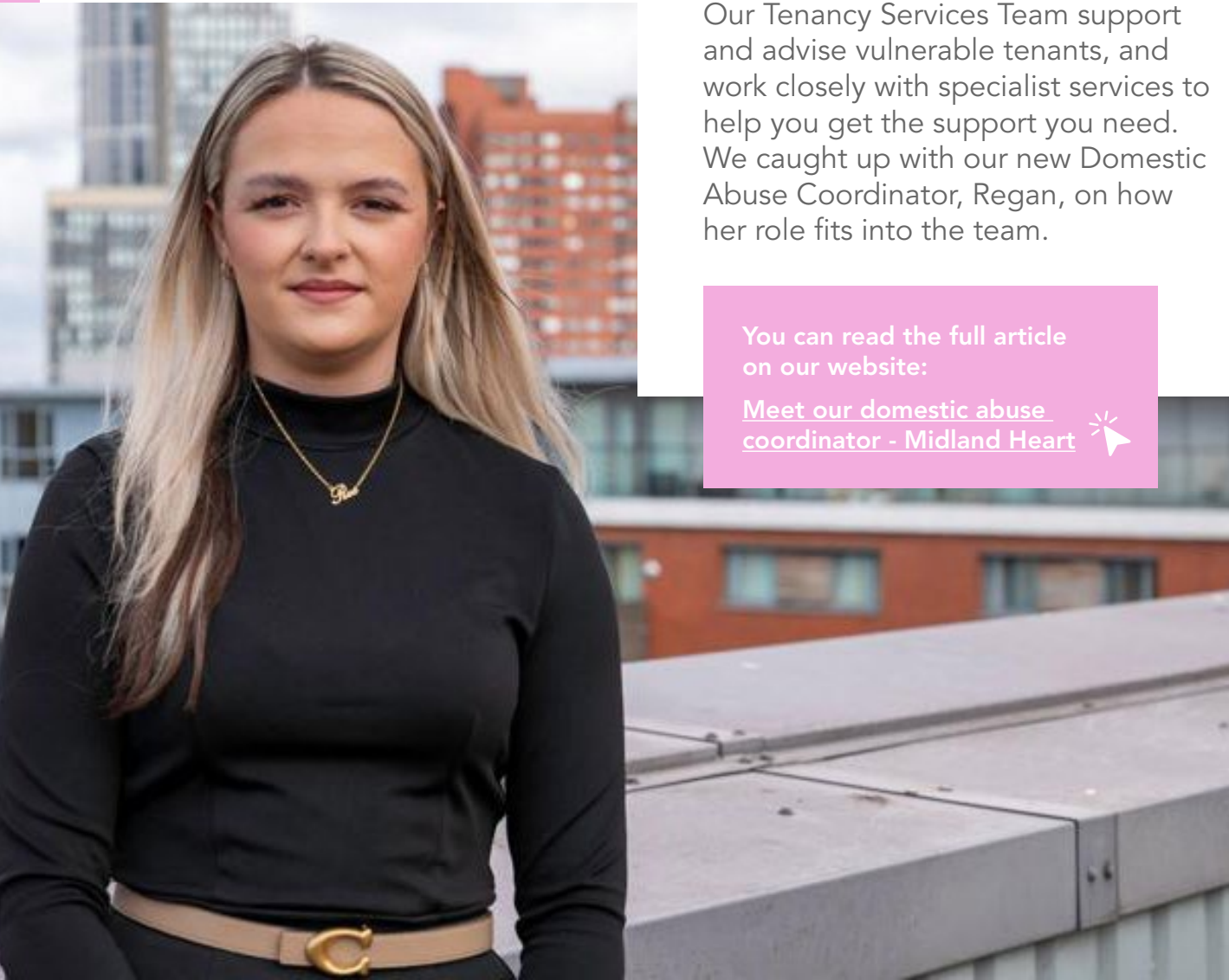
A tenant recently contacted us with her social worker to cancel an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) appointment, explaining that her property was hoarded and that she was recovering from surgery in respite care home, and couldn't return home until the property was cleaned and decluttered. A safeguarding case was raised and handed to me to coordinate a one off clean.

Through open and honest conversations, professionally challenging and timely action planning with partnership professionals, a deep clean and

de-clutter was arranged ready for our tenant to return home safely. Throughout the case, I maintained regular contact with the tenant and professionals. Once the property was decluttered and cleaned, I visited with the mental health team and support worker. We successfully completed the EICR and booked necessary repairs. With assurance from monitoring the case and keeping in contact with the tenant, I was able to conclude the case with knowledge that the right support was in place, and she was living safely in her home. ”



OUR DOMESTIC ABUSE CO-ORDINATOR



Our Tenancy Services Team support and advise vulnerable tenants, and work closely with specialist services to help you get the support you need. We caught up with our new Domestic Abuse Coordinator, Regan, on how her role fits into the team.

You can read the full article on our website:

[Meet our domestic abuse coordinator - Midland Heart](#)



“

My main responsibility is to make sure there is specialist oversight across all of the domestic abuse cases we deal with. I offer support and guidance to the Tenancy Services Officers, who are going out daily to support survivors of domestic abuse.

I audit all open cases to make sure we're acting appropriately to safeguard you and get you the support you need. I attend meetings across all the local authorities that we operate in to discuss current concerns, changes to legislation and practice, and how we can deliver excellent work through these partnerships.

Keeping our tenants safe in their home is our top priority. In my role, I coordinate multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC), which are confidential meetings with partners like the police and social services to create a joint safety plan for tenants at high risk of serious harm. I make sure our Tenancy Services Officers attend these meetings and follow through with the recommended actions. My typical day will often look like the duties listed above, but it can change at any point depending on what support the team needs.”

OUR

2025

2026

STRATEGIC AIMS



Good Governance

Our Safeguarding Board will continue to provide advice, oversee and monitor matters and trends relating to our safeguarding policies and procedures. Over the course of the next year, our Board would like to strengthen our tenant's perspective as part of this work.



Robust Learning & Training

Learning and development will continue to be central to our safeguarding strategy. This will include ensuring teams are accredited with Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) training, but continuously identifying further training needs through case reviews, tenant feedback and complaints. Our Safeguarding Ambassadors are specially equipped with knowledge and insight to develop peer "toolbox talk" training and provide consultation to spot any other training needs.



Strong Tenant Voice

Listening to our tenants and acting on their feedback is at the heart of everything we do. Through direct feedback, case studies, and the work of our safeguarding practitioners and Safeguarding Ambassadors, we've created multiple avenues for tenants to share their experiences and influence service delivery. The voices of our tenants guide our priorities and ensure that our services remain responsive, compassionate, and effective.



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