

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

1. Introduction

Age UK Bath & North East Somerset (B&NES) recognises and accepts its responsibilities under the Health & Safety at Work Act, 1974 and subsequent legislation. These include the provision of a safe and healthy working environment for its employees, volunteers and others affected by its activities.

Age UK B&NES aims to promote & nurture a positive health and safety culture through the provision of information, training, instruction and supervision. We operate a culture where employees are openly encouraged to report hazards, including near misses, to ensure the root causes of accidents are identified so that measures can be put in place to eliminate recurrence.

2. Associated Documents/Legal Requirements

- Health & Safety legislation
- Staff & Volunteer Health & Safety Manual
- Lone Working Policy & Procedures
- Day Centre Handbook
- Driver's Handbook & Policy

3. Preventing Injuries & Ill Health

We believe that injuries and ill-health can be prevented, and will take all reasonable steps to achieve this. These steps include: -

- Carrying out suitable and sufficient assessments of the risks arising from our work to the health and safety of employees, and to non-employees who may be affected by our work;
- Initiating and operating healthy and safe working practices, monitoring working areas, processes and methods in order to improve, wherever reasonably practicable, standards of health, safety and welfare;
- Training employees to work efficiently and safely with an understanding both of the nature of known hazards and the reasons for preventive measures;
- Providing procedures whereby a prompt and positive response is made to queries on health, safety or welfare matters raised by employees;
- Providing suitable arrangements for communication and consultation between management and employees on health and safety matters; and
- Providing the resources necessary to implement this policy.

4. Employee and Volunteer Responsibilities

Every employee and volunteer has responsibility for health and safety and a duty to co-operate with the employer on the carrying out of the employer's statutory duties and must:

- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions;
- Not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare; and
- Report immediately any injury sustained at work, any near miss and any practice or situation regarded as unsafe.
- Chief Executive will report serious incidents to the Chair / Board when they occur, all other incidents will be made to the next available Board Meeting

5. Age UK Bath & North East Somerset Responsibilities

We will achieve our aim of meeting health and safety requirements through the implementation and maintenance of a health and safety system. This will involve identifying responsibilities, monitoring legal requirements, carrying out sufficient and suitable written risk assessments and setting appropriate standards. Relevant procedures, checklists and training will be provided for trustees, staff and volunteers as a result of the risk assessments.

In particular we will also ensure, so far as reasonably practicable:

- The provision and maintenance of safe places of work
- Safe internal and external access and exits to premises under our control
- A healthy and safe working environment with adequate first aid provision
- Safe equipment and systems of work
- Safe arrangements for use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances at work
- Adequate fire prevention measures and fire and other emergency procedures which are made clear to staff and volunteers
- A system of notification of accidents and near misses, including methods of recording and investigation

Our system seeks to ensure that trustees, staff, volunteers and service users are aware of their personal responsibilities and accountabilities for health and safety at work.

The health and safety training needs of everyone will be identified. The delivery of a training program will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that everyone is aware of their responsibilities for health and safety at work and competent to undertake their activities in a safe and healthy manner.

The health and safety system will be kept up to date, particularly in responding to changes in roles and projects. It will be reviewed every two years or in line with any legislative changes or serious incident.

DRIVERS POLICY

1. Introduction

Age UK Bath & North East Somerset (B&NES) Ltd may require some staff and volunteers to drive vehicles whilst carrying out their duties. It is important that safety measures are put in place to ensure the safety of those representing Age UK B&NES and any passengers travelling with them

2. Associated Documents/Legal Requirements

- Volunteer Policy & Procedure
- Health & Safety Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Minibus Drivers Handbook
- Highway Code

3. Guidelines for volunteer drivers & employed staff

These are to ensure the safety of you and your passenger.

Drivers

- Licence - a full driving licence is required (not provisional). Minibus Drivers will need to submit their licence for inspection in order to ensure it is up to date. Certain endorsements may mean that you will not be able to carry Age UK B&NES clients.
- Vision - if you are required to wear glasses or contact lenses whilst driving, please do so.
- Fitness to drive - please remember that many factors can affect your ability to drive, medication, tiredness, illness. If you do not feel able/ well enough to drive, don't drive.
- Training - if your role requires you to offer assistance to passengers getting in and out of your vehicle, ensure that your supervisor has provided you with access to appropriate training/information. If you are to carry passengers with mobility or sensory impairment, a risk assessment should be carried out in liaison with your manager.

Your Vehicle

- Checks on your vehicle - ensure that your vehicle is roadworthy. The Highway Code sets out the regular checks that drivers must carry out on the roadworthiness of their vehicle: brakes, lights, steering, tyres etc.
- MOT - your vehicle (if appropriate) must have a valid MOT certificate
- Seat Belts - you must wear seat belts, unless you are exempt (see Highway Code)
- Insurance - ensure that you have informed your Insurance Company of how you are using your vehicle for Age UK B&NES, some insurance company's may require you to insure your vehicle for business use. Age UK BANES may request proof of business insurance for some roles.

Emergencies

- All accidents and incidents must be reported to Age UK B&NES
- In the case of a medical emergency, call an ambulance immediately and do not move passenger. First Aid should only be applied if you have the relevant training and only if there is a risk to life.
- If you are involved in an accident with another vehicle, you will need to obtain details of the other driver –registration, insurance details, name address etc. You also have a duty to provide these details to the other party.

4. Use of Mobile Phones

- **All drivers should have their mobile phone switched off whilst driving and under no circumstances should the phone be used to make or send a call or a text message unless using a hands-free phone.**
- **If you must talk, and have a hands-free phone, do not touch the phone whilst driving. Keep conversations short and simple or say that you'll find a safe and legal place to stop and phone back. Do not hold personal conversations whilst at work.**
- **Failure to follow the above procedure amounts to gross misconduct.**

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

5. Introduction

Age UK Bath & North East Somerset (B&NES) Ltd believes in the right of privacy and the need to respect users, staff and volunteers. We want people to have trust and confidence in our organisation, so they feel welcome and relaxed. The policy is not to guarantee absolute privacy, or to encourage secretiveness, but to create and maintain an environment where personal dignity and individual rights are respected.

6. Associated Documents/Legal Requirements

- Data Protection Act 1998
- Safeguarding policy and procedure
- Code of Conduct
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7. Key Principles

Confidentiality applies to all staff, volunteers and customers and encompasses:

- All records and information about users, volunteers and staff.

- Any information exchanged in a formal or informal setting where it is deemed sensitive by the individual concerned.
- Information about the internal affairs of the organisation.

We will ensure that:

1. The records of volunteers, users and staff will be kept in a safe place. These records will be accessed only by those who need to see them, in order to run a quality service or by the individuals themselves.
2. Only necessary information will be collected. The purpose of collection will be made clear to the individual concerned and information will only be used for that purpose.
3. Nothing learned about service users, volunteers or staff will be implied or passed to anyone without the person's consent. This includes information learnt in an informal setting.
4. Users, volunteers and staff have the right to complain about breaches of confidentiality through the complaints/grievance procedure.
5. Breaches in confidence will be taken seriously and may result in dismissal of the offending person, whether a user, volunteer or staff member.
6. The importance of confidentiality and its implications will be part of the volunteer/staff induction process and part of welcoming a new user to the centre. Everyone will receive appropriate written information about confidentiality.
7. On receiving information it is important that we recognize our own prejudices and control these when dealing with information. Our prejudices must not affect the confidentiality that must be given to information.

Exceptions

Information may only be disclosed without the permission of the person concerned if:

- Disclosure is required by law e.g. police investigation of theft or suspicious death.
- In circumstances of abuse or where there is a likelihood harm will come to that person (including self harm), harm to others or other matters of similar significance.
- A person is felt to lack the mental capacity to make a decision. In such a case "implied consent" may be used to take action in the person's best interest. Such an incident must be recorded and reported.

In such cases, you must only disclose the information to your line manager who will decide what action to take.

The minimum amount of disclosure possible will be expected in any such situation by anyone involved.



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EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY

At Age UK Bath & North East Somerset (B&NES) we recognise the importance of promoting equality, valuing diversity and creating an inclusive environment for everyone who we interact with. We respect the diversity of those in later life, their carers and advocates, and understand that there are different needs, choices, cultures and values. Equally importantly, we respect and value the diversity of our staff, volunteers and supporters.

As an employer, Age UK B&NES is committed to creating workplaces where every member of staff and all volunteers are able to fulfil their potential, maximise their contribution and feel comfortable in being themselves. This is vital both for a positive staff and volunteer journey and to harness creativity, innovation and talent. Age UK B&NES is also committed to responding appropriately and effectively to people in later life and other customers from a diverse range of backgrounds, by striving to deliver services that are relevant and appropriate.

Diversity and inclusion are championed at the highest levels in Age UK B&NES. Everyone is responsible for promoting equality, valuing diversity and creating an inclusive culture across the Age UK B&NES, for driving and monitoring progress, facilitating the sharing of best practice across our organisation, and ensuring that Age UK B&NES meets our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation.

This document set outs Age UK B&NES commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, reflecting our organisational vision and values. Age UK B&NES staff and volunteers, and everyone who acts on behalf of Age UK B&NES is encouraged to act in accordance with this policy and to put equality, diversity and inclusion into practice in their day-to-day work and interaction with others.

1. Purpose and Aims of the Policy

Age UK B&NES develops policies in order to build a framework for consistency and fairness. This document sets out Age UK B&NES' commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and reflects Age UK B&NES values and vision.

The policy also applies to agency workers, volunteers and contractors during their time with any part of Age UK B&NES, whether working with people in later life, directly customer facing, or working with other colleagues, volunteers or business stakeholders.

2. Age UK B&NES Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy Statement

Equalities, diversity and inclusion are core to the values and objectives of Age UK B&NES. It is fundamental that people are treated fairly with respect and dignity and in accordance with Age UK B&NES values at all times.

Age UK BANES' values are as follows:

We are respectful – We treat others as they would want to be treated

We are inclusive – We work together, we involve and we consult

We are positive – We welcome challenges and celebrate achievements

We are realistic – We are open and truthful, while remaining ambitious

We are solutions-focused – We ensure that what we do makes a real difference

We are expert – We strive to be the best at what we do

We are empowering – We support others to achieve their goals

Age UK B&NES will not tolerate any discrimination, victimisation or harassment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and

maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

We all come from different backgrounds, have different family structures and relationships, come from different geographical places, have different faith and belief systems, see the world differently and have different abilities. The differences can be very obvious but some cannot be seen.

Age UK B&NES will strive to take all practical steps to prevent discrimination (on any basis), to identify and address inequalities affecting specific groups and to promote equality during the course of its work, providing a respectful, inclusive, positive, supportive, challenging and empowering environment for all.

Age UK B&NES recognises that every person has different needs, preferences and abilities and we strive to reflect this diversity in everything we do. This includes making our services and products inclusive and accessible to people from all sectors of the community and attracting and retaining a diverse workforce. By positively valuing these differences and harnessing different life experiences, attributes and contributions Age UK B&NES will be a better place to work.

Age UK B&NES will monitor the conduct of actions taken under the framework of all our policies, including recruitment, in order to identify inequalities and formulate plans to address them, ensuring fairness of treatment at work under the 2010 Equality Act and our cultural values.

a. Who is Responsible?

Age UK B&NES Trustees are accountable for ensuring that all aspects of Age UK B&NES Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy are applied appropriately, and that Age UK B&NES complies fully with its legal obligations in respect of the Equality Act and the Human Rights Act. The Trustees will lead by example, in demonstrating Age UK B&NES' commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, by championing this programme of work, and encouraging the integration of equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of Age UK B&NES work.

Age UK Managers and Heads of Service and those staff with delegated responsibility for team leadership are responsible for demonstrating commitment to the promotion of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion programme by working with values when setting objectives and undertaking reviews, identifying appropriate training (internal or external), monitoring the effectiveness of ED&I policies and handling equality, diversity and inclusion problems promptly, fairly and consistently.

Age UK B&NES Managers are responsible for ensuring that people practices including induction, training, dispute resolution, remuneration and health and safety management reflects the Age UK B&NES commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. They will provide advice and support to Age UK B&NES staff in all the above areas, to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion issues are effectively reflected and addressed, under-pinned by clear, unambiguous ethical policy, procedures and guidance.

Age UK B&NES Staff and Volunteers are responsible for demonstrating commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion by recognising the impact of behaviours on others, behaving in a manner that supports the Age UK values, adapting behaviours, actively listening to others and taking appropriate steps to challenge discrimination of any kind.

b. The Legal Framework

A number of different pieces of legislation have sought to address discrimination. They have included the Sex Discrimination Act (1975), the Race Relations Act (1976) and the Disability Discrimination Act (1995). They have been supplemented by various amendments, many of which originate in European Union (EU) law.

The key UK law is now the Equality Act 2010 which has harmonised and brought together many previous pieces of legislation while at the same time extending protection. The Equality Act defines direct discrimination as less favourable treatment because of a protected characteristic. There are nine protected characteristics and these are:

- a) Age
- b) Disability
- c) Gender re-assignment
- d) Marriage and civil partnership
- e) Pregnancy and maternity
- f) Race
- g) Religion or belief
- h) Sex
- i) Sexual orientation

UK equality legislation now extends considerably beyond the area of employment and into the wider supply of goods and/or services, including the provision of education and training.

Age UK B&NES recognizes the three key 'limbs' of the general equality duty, a central provision of the Equality Act 2010, and is committed to ensuring that all Age UK B&NES operations and activities meet the general duty to:

- a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and for those who do not;
- c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Also relevant is the Human Rights Act (1998) which came into force in the UK in October 2000, and which incorporates the European Convention on Human Rights (1952) into UK domestic law. Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights refers specifically to the prohibition of discrimination on grounds such as gender, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.

The Human Rights Act primarily provides the UK courts and employment tribunal service with the ability to take account of judgements made by the European Commission and Court of Human Rights where these are relevant to proceedings.

Age UK B&NES is fully committed to all agreements, regulations and legislation which have implications for our role as an employer and as a provider of goods and services, including education and training, and therefore will comply fully.

For further information on the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act, see the document "Guide to Equality and Diversity Legislation".

c. Age UK B&NES approach to delivering the equality vision

Age UK B&NES aim is that the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy is fully incorporated into all our operations, systems and procedures across the organisation. Enactment of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy is the responsibility of all managers across Age UK B&NES. All staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors are responsible for complying with the ED&I policy.

Age UK B&NES vision of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion extends to all our interactions with the outside world, including our communications, media, public relations, research, campaigning and policy influencing, and through the range of goods and services provided by Age UK B&NES.

Age UK B&NES approach to delivering on our equality vision includes all our interactions with members of the public, with older people as customers and service users, with partner organisations, and with suppliers and providers.

d. Recruitment & Selection

Equality of opportunity is an important part of Age UK B&NES' recruitment and selection policies and procedures. All recruiting managers must ensure that they are familiar with this Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy, and that they have accessed appropriate guidance and training on recruitment and selection.

Advertisements, whether internal or external (this includes all media – e.g. printed and online – leaflets, posters and other aids, visual or non-visual) must not indicate, or appear to indicate, an intention to unjustifiably discriminate on any of the grounds identified within this ED&I policy.

Age UK B&NES must not confine our advertising to areas or publications which would unjustifiably exclude or disproportionately reduce the number of applicants of a particular age, gender, marital/civil partnership status, sexual orientation, religion or belief, political opinion, race, ethnic or national origin, disability, pregnancy or maternity, or carer status.

All advertisements for Age UK B&NES jobs or placements should reflect our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion through use of the following statements:

- a) Age UK B&NES is an Equal Opportunities employer and positively encourages applications from suitably qualified and eligible candidates, regardless of age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, marital/civil partnership status, or pregnancy and maternity.
- b) We guarantee an interview to disabled candidates who meet the essential criteria.
- c) We welcome requests for flexible working

As a key element in beginning to embed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Age UK B&NES' day-to-day operations, staff monitoring profile information will be regularly compiled and provided as key information for senior management teams. Senior management teams will be encouraged to use this data to develop recruitment strategies to improve the diversity of the overall staff profile in Age UK B&NES, for example, through positive action initiatives to address under-representation in specific areas.

e. Performance Management

Age UK B&NES Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy applies to the performance management process. When evaluating and reporting on performance, managers should base their assessments solely on evidence, not on assumptions about staff (e.g. about women's potential career mobility or length of future service, or the suitability of staff of particular ethnic origin to undertake specific jobs etc.)

Age UK B&NES core competencies will be used to assist with reflecting staff behaviours in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion. For example, two competencies with a specific link are:

- a) Valuing Others - requires staff to seek to understand and empathise with the views and values of others and to act with integrity and see strength in diversity
- b) Flexibility – while focussing on change and personal development it is also vital for people to be able to value diversity in situations and in people.

Consideration of equalities, diversity and inclusion issues, relevant examples and discussion will be fully integrated into training provided for Age UK B&NES staff and managers on performance management and the performance review process, to support implementation and 'roll-out' of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy.

f. Pay & Reward

Age UK B&NES has a commitment to a pay system that is transparent and based on objective criteria. Equal pay, free from gender or other unjustified bias, for the same or broadly similar work (i.e. for work that rates as equivalent and for work of equal value) operates within Age UK B&NES and we are committed to regular Equal Pay Audits.

g. Pension

With the introduction of auto enrolment and in keeping with Age UK B&NES approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Age UK is committed to going beyond the statutory requirements. All staff between the ages of 16 and 74, regardless of their earnings, will be auto enrolled in the pension scheme from the introduction date of 1st April 2015.

h. Managing Diverse Teams

Fielding and developing a team with varied cultural backgrounds and life experiences can broaden strategic perspective and ways of working. Diversity studies have shown the positive impact on Returns on Equity in organisations ranking in the top quartile in terms of their diversity. Age UK B&NES recognises that a diverse workforce is a vital source of creativity, innovation and talent. Therefore managers must ensure that whilst managing a team in all aspects, they are aware of and embrace the diversity within that team.

The organisation considers all requests from staff and volunteers for reasonable adjustments to be made including: special dietary requirements, time off for religious purposes, reasonable adjustments to premises, equipment, working environment and work-related practices and activities. Each request is considered on its own merits, taking into account the needs of the business, available resources and any financial or assessment implications. Where possible Age UK B&NES endeavours to accommodate all such requests, unless there is justification that an adverse impact may occur or there are factors present which are outside the control of the organisation.

i. Learning and Development

Age UK B&NES approach to learning and development will ensure a fair, consistent and equitable approach is applied to learning and development activity. Age UK B&NES will ensure equality of access to training and development opportunities, within agreed financial parameters, enabling all employees to have the knowledge, skills and experience to effectively carry out their roles, thereby enabling Age UK B&NES to achieve its aims and objectives.

Induction training for all staff will include issue and explanation of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy. All staff roles will be analysed to determine the equality and diversity knowledge and skill requirements and professional development ladders will steer routes for further development for individual staff.

j. Bullying & Harassment

Bullying and harassment must have no place in Age UK BANES' workplace culture or practices, and our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy requires each member of staff and all volunteers to guard against all harassment and to support a dignified work environment for all.

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious and/or insulting behaviour, or an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, or injure the recipient.

Harassment, in general, is unwanted conduct affecting the dignity of men and women in the workplace. It can be related to age, disability, ethnicity/race, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation or any personal characteristic of the individual, and it may be persistent, or an isolated incident. The crucial aspect is that the actions or comments are deemed to be demeaning and unacceptable to the recipient, creating a hostile environment.

Bullying and harassment can be manifested in a variety of ways, including by one member of staff to another of a different or equivalent level/pay grade, or by one group of staff to another

individual member of staff. If bullying or harassment includes issues of gender (including transgender), sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, carer responsibility, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religious belief, political belief, age or disability, equalities legislation may apply.

Age UK B&NES will take seriously any allegations or identified instances of bullying or harassment in the workplace and these will be investigated and handled in accordance with the appropriate policies and procedures. The grievance procedures provide a channel by which colleagues can raise concerns of this nature formally.

k. Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures

Age UK B&NES' Grievance and Disciplinary policies and procedures will be regularly reviewed to ensure they take into account the implications of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy and work programme.

Staff will be made aware of any actions which could contravene the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy, and which could therefore be subject to disciplinary procedures.

Age UK B&NES will take seriously complaints of discrimination on any of the grounds listed in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy statement, and will not victimise people who make such complaints.

l. Equality Impact Assessment

Age UK B&NES will consider, where appropriate, an Equality Impact Assessment process to help assess whether key strategies, policies and procedures could discriminate against, or otherwise negatively impact on staff, volunteers, service users or customers with protected characteristics.

The main purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will be to pre-empt the possibility that a proposed key activity or policy could affect a particular equality group unfavourably. In carrying out the assessments Age UK B&NES will also consider whether adjustments should be made in order to achieve greater equality, and/or whether good relations between different equality groups could be promoted more effectively.

m. Communicating & reviewing the policy

A copy of the Equality & Diversity policy is made accessible to all employees and volunteers on 'g' drive and on induction.

All staff and volunteers, including new joiners, must be made aware of this policy and the responsibility of both Age UK B&NES and the individual in achieving our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion objectives. In addition, to support our efforts to effectively integrate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion into everything that we do, this policy must be referred to as appropriate, for example in relevant training courses, learning and development seminars, other policies and procedures, guidance notes and manuals, and in relation to our day-to-day operations.

SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS & CHILDREN POLICY

8. Introduction

The abuse of vulnerable adults constitutes a clear infringement of their rights and freedoms as citizens. This policy aims to protect vulnerable adults, who are at risk of all forms of abuse

- It is every adult's right to live in safety and to be free from abuse or fear of abuse from others.
- It is every adult's right to live an independent life based on 'self-determination' and personal choice.
- An independent life style may involve risk for vulnerable adults. Age UK Bath & North East Somerset (B&NES) respects this choice and will support them in making such decisions.
- It is the responsibility of Age UK B&NES to work with other agencies and professionals to actively work together to help prevent abuse of vulnerable adults. This will be achieved by raising awareness, empowering people to make their own decisions and putting safeguards in place.

- Age UK B&NES recognises that people are discriminated against on the basis of race, culture, gender, age, disability, religion or sexual orientation. We are committed to working with vulnerable adults in a positive manner that values them as individuals.

9. Associated Documents/Legal Requirements

- Age UK B&NES procedures
- No Secrets, Department of Health Guidance 2000, revised in 2008 Safeguarding policy and procedure
- Care Act 2014
- B&NES Safeguarding guidelines
- Age UK B&NES Whistleblowing Policy

10. Definitions

A vulnerable adult is defined in 'No Secrets' as '*...a person aged 18 years or over, who is in receipt of or may be in need of community care services by reason of 'mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation'*'.

Abuse is defined in 'No Secrets' as the 'violation of an individual's human or civil rights by any other person or persons'.

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. It may also occur through deliberate targeting or grooming of vulnerable people and may be carried out by individuals or groups of individuals. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

Abuse may occur when a vulnerable adult:

- lives alone, with a relative, or others
- attends nursing, residential or day care settings
- is in hospital or custodial situations
- is receiving support services in their own home
- is in other places previously assumed safe
- is in public places

The Care Act 2014 explains “Safeguarding means protecting an adult’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult’s wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action.”

11. Preventing Abuse

While it is not possible to prevent all abuse, there are a number of steps those working within Age UK B&NES can take to reduce the risk of abuse occurring. They should

- Receive regular training.
- Know what abuse is.
- Understand how it can happen.
- Be alert to indicators of potential abuse situations.
- Know the procedures for reporting concerns and poor practice.

12. Dealing with Abuse

Age UK B&NES is committed to a multi-agency approach to safeguarding and will work within the guidelines set out in the Government’s guidance “No Secrets” and the Home Office Code of Practice “Safe from Harm”.

Age UK B&NES will take all allegations of abuse seriously and will respond appropriately using its own procedures and taking B&NES Council’s safeguarding policies into account. All suspected cases of abuse should be recorded and reported to a senior manager in line with

procedures and serious cases will be reported to the Board at the next scheduled meeting where the case and procedures will be reviewed.

If abuse allegations concern staff or volunteers of Age UK B&NES consideration should be made to suspend the staff member or volunteer from their duties until the matter has been fully investigated

We will co-operate fully with B&NES Safeguarding Team and the Police should there be a criminal investigation.

13. Safeguarding Children

The work of Age UK B&NES may involve contact with children and there is potential for abuse or suspected abuse to be highlighted. If concerns are raised, staff and volunteers Should follow the procedure set out in the associated *Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults & Children Procedure*, and raise the concern with a senior member of staff.

When setting up projects that involve contact with children, staff and volunteers should make appropriate arrangements with schools and other groups (such as Scouts etc) so that safeguards to protect children are agreed and in place.



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SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS & CHILDREN PROCEDURE

14. Introduction

This procedure provides staff and volunteers an approach to take when dealing with a suspected incident of abuse of a vulnerable adult or child and support the Age UK B&NES Policy. The main focus is on vulnerable adults, which is the main client group that staff and volunteers will work with, but there is a possibility that suspected abuse of a child may be encountered.

15. What is abuse?

A **vulnerable adult** is defined in 'No Secrets' as '*...a person aged 18 years or over, who is in receipt of or may be in need of community care services by reason of 'mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation'*'.

Abuse is defined in 'No Secrets' as the 'violation of an individual's human or civil rights by any other person or persons'. Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. It may also occur through deliberate targeting or grooming of vulnerable people and may be carried out by individuals or groups of individuals. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

Abuse may occur when a vulnerable adult:

- lives alone, with a relative, or others
- attends nursing, residential or day care settings
- is in hospital or custodial situations
- is receiving support services in their own home
- is in other places previously assumed safe
- is in public places

A consensus has emerged identifying the following main different forms of abuse:

- **Physical abuse**, including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, inappropriate sanctions, rough handling, pinching, punching, shaking, burning, forced feeding, the use of force which results in the pain, injury or change in the person's natural physical state.
- **Sexual abuse**, including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to, which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting. Inappropriate touching and fondling, indecent exposure, penetration (or attempted penetration) of vagina, anus or mouth by penis, fingers, or other objects.
- **Psychological abuse**, including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks, withholding affection, shouting, depriving the person of the right to choice, information and privacy. Behaviour that has a harmful effect on the vulnerable adults emotional health and development.
- **Financial or material abuse**, including theft, fraud, exploitation, and pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- **Neglect and acts of omission**, including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating and undermining personal beliefs.
- **Discriminatory abuse**, including racism, sexism, and ageism, based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.
- **Domestic violence** is "any criminal offence arising out of physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse by one person against a current or former partner in a close relationship or against a current or former family member". There is no statutory offence of Domestic violence it is a generic term to describe a range of behaviours often used by one person to control or dominate another with whom they have had a close relationship.
- **Poor professional practice** also needs to be taken into account. This may take the form of isolated incidents of poor or unsatisfactory professional practice, at one end of the spectrum, through to pervasive ill treatment or gross misconduct at the other. Repeated instances of poor care may be an indication of more serious problems, this is sometimes referred to as institutional abuse.

- **Institutional Abuse** involves the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to vulnerable people. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour that amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and stereotyping. It includes a failure to ensure the necessary safeguards are in place to protect vulnerable adults and maintain good standards of care in accordance with individual needs, including training of staff, supervision and management, record keeping and liaising with other providers of care.
- **Stranger Abuse** will warrant a different kind of response from that appropriate to abuse in an ongoing relationship or in a care location. Nevertheless, in some instances it may be appropriate to use the adult protection procedures to ensure that the vulnerable person receives the services and support that they need. Such procedures may also be used when there is the potential for harm to other vulnerable people.
- **Harm** should be taken to include not only ill treatment (including sexual abuse and forms of ill treatment which are not physical), but also the impairment of, or an avoidable deterioration in, physical or mental health; and the impairment of physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.
- **Modern slavery** – encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Any or all types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance.

16. Recognising Abuse

Social and emotional indicators

The following are indicators for assessing the risks involved where abuse is suspected.

- The vulnerable adult appears to be withdrawn or agitated and anxious.
- They may be isolated in one room of the house or confined to living in a small space.
- Their mobility is restricted due to absence of suitable mobility aids.
- They may be excluded from outside social contacts.
- They are overly subservient or anxious to please.
- Professional and other visitors may have difficulty gaining access to the vulnerable adult.
- Lack of eye contact – looking at the floor during discussions or looking to others to answer questions even when directed to the individual.
- Dramatic changes in behaviour or personality; depression or confusion, for which no medical explanation can be offered.
- Poor conditions, lack of clothing, lack of access to own money.

Indicators of physical abuse

The following are indicators for assessing the risks involved where physical abuse is suspected.

- Multiple bruising that is not consistent with the explanation e.g. a fall.
- Cowering and flinching.
- Bruised eyes, marks resulting from a slap and/or kick, other unexplained bruises.

Indicators of sexual abuse

The following are indicators for assessing the risks involved where sexual abuse is suspected.

- Changes i.e. the person starts to seek attention where previously they did not, by expressing over sexualised behaviour, or becoming fixated on sexual matters.
- Complaints of soreness in genital/anal area, no medical cause known.
- Recurring conditions such as thrush or cystitis.
- Diagnosis of a sexually transmitted disease when the person is not known to be sexually active.
- Bruising on the inner thighs or shoulders.
- Objects to being washed in genital areas, which is a change in behaviour.

Indicators of financial or material abuse

The following are indicators for assessing the risks involved where financial or material abuse is suspected.

- Unexplained or sudden inability to pay bills.
- Unexplained or sudden withdrawal of money from accounts.
- Contrast between known income or capital and unnecessarily poor living conditions especially where this has developed recently.
- Personal possessions of value go missing from the home without satisfactory explanation.
- Someone has taken responsibility for paying rent, bills, buying food etc, but is clearly not doing so.
- Unusual interest taken by relative, friend, neighbour or other in financial assets especially if little real concern is shown in other matters.

- Next of kin refuse to follow advice regarding control of property via Court of Protection, but insist upon informal arrangements.
- Where care services including residential care are refused under clear pressure from family or other potential inheritors.
- Unusual purchases unrelated to the known interests of the vulnerable adult e.g. purchases of fashionable clothes, expensive make-up, food and holidays.

17. Assessing the Seriousness of abuse

The seriousness or extent of abuse is often not clear when anxiety is first expressed. It is important therefore, when considering the appropriateness of intervention, to approach reports or incidents or allegations with an open mind.

In making any assessment of seriousness the following factors need to be considered:

- The vulnerability of the adult.
- The nature and extent of the abuse.
- The length of time it has been occurring.
- The impact on the individual and/or their carers/family.
- The risk of repeated or increasingly serious acts involving this or other vulnerable adults.

A decision may need to be made immediately about any urgent action required to protect the vulnerable adult. If the person is at great risk of harm or in need of immediate medical attention, contact should be made directly with the emergency services.

In cases where there is a potential for criminal proceedings we will ensure the scene is protected and evidence remains untouched. We will involve the police at the earliest opportunity.

18. Sharing of Information

- Every member of staff and volunteer is responsible for recognising and reporting an allegation of abuse.

- An allegation of abuse must be treated seriously, regardless of the source of the information.
- It is important for staff and volunteers to pass on information or concerns immediately to their line manager, if this isn't appropriate then the Chief Executive.
- The line manager or Chief Executive are responsible for informing the Safeguarding Lead.

The views of the vulnerable person should always be taken into account, however if the service user, does not wish action to be taken, to be involved with any investigation, and does not want any information shared with other individuals agencies, it should be explained to the vulnerable person that the member of staff does have a duty to discuss the disclosure with their line manager, even if the person does not wish further action to be taken or to be involved in the investigation.

There is a need to share information with the **Assist Team 01225 396000** and with other relevant agencies, generally permission would be asked before doing so. However in exceptional circumstances, for example if it is considered someone is at serious risk of abuse then information may be disclosed without consent.

19. Safeguarding Children

Children and young people are the most vulnerable members of our society. Protecting them from becoming victims of abuse is everyone's responsibility.

What can you do to help?

It is important that you take action straight away if you think a child or young person you know is at risk. You do not have to wait for a child or young person to tell you they are being abused. The sooner you take action, the sooner the risk can be dealt with.

Children and young people are dependant on others for survival and have a right to be protected and have someone who will act on their behalf.

How to report your concerns

If you have a concern about a child or young person, please call the Children and Families Assessment and Intervention Team on 01225 396312 or 01225 396313

If outside of office hours please call the Emergency Duty Team on 01454 615165

If a child or young person is in immediate danger then please dial 999 and ask for police assistance.

Making a referral

When making a referral it is helpful if you can state the name of the child /young person including age, address, who lives at the property including other children and details of nursery /school attended. However if you do not have all of the information, it should not stop you from making the referral.

You should always contact Children's Social Services if you are worried a child or young person is at risk of neglect or abuse.



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CODE OF CONDUCT

20. Introduction

Age UK Bath & North East Somerset (B&NES) is very much in the public eye and it is important that members of the public are confident that volunteers and its employees will behave properly and with integrity. To protect its integrity, Age UK B&NES expects employees to fully comply with the Code.

The Code is supported by Age UK B&NES' policies and procedures and all employees should be aware of, and follow, these. They can be accessed via the Staff Handbook and Volunteer Handbook. Managers must bring this Code to the attention of new volunteers/employees and arrange access to it for existing volunteers/employees and record that they have done so. Volunteers and employees are expected to carry out their duties in accordance with Age UK B&NES' policies and procedures.

21. Associated Documents/Legal Requirements

- Data Protection Act 1998
- Data Protection Policy
- Safeguarding policy and procedure
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy
- Confidentiality Policy

22. General Conduct

Age UK B&NES expects high standards of personal conduct from its volunteers/employees at work and when representing Age UK B&NES externally, who should show courtesy, efficiency, reliability, sobriety and punctuality.

If employees are in charge of funds or resources, they must only use them for the purpose intended in a responsible and lawful manner. Employees should seek to protect such funds and resources from abuse, theft or waste and should strive to ensure value for money for Age UK B&NES, its customers and any public or charitable funds.

Employees must be aware that it is a serious and disciplinary offence to intend to receive or give any gift, loan, fee, reward, or showing favour (or disfavour) to any person or organisation. Any allegation of corrupt behaviour will be investigated.

Employees must not bring Age UK B&NES into disrepute by any means including through the use of websites, social networking or other social media in and outside work and must have regard to Age UK B&NES guidance on the use of Email and the Internet and Guidance on the Use of Social Media.

Age UK B&NES is strictly non-political and should not be linked, directly or indirectly, with any political activity. Employees must ensure that Age UK B&NES' reputation or status is not damaged by their personal political activities.

23. Conflict of Interest

Volunteers/employees must not put themselves in a position where their personal interests conflict, or have the potential to conflict, with Age UK B&NES' business. Employees must disclose information about themselves and any person or body closely connected to them. This includes family members as well as close friends and business colleagues.

Employees must disclose any business trading for profit with which they, their close relatives, friends or business colleagues are connected by completing a 'Declaration of Interest'.

Employees must disclose a potential conflict of interest if a close relative applies to Age UK B&NES for employment. For the purposes of defining a close relative or close family connection, Age UK B&NES considers this would include someone's husband, wife, partner, civil partner, parents, grandparents, children, grandchildren, brothers, sisters and similar relations by marriage or by half-blood (i.e. step relations).

24. Gifts & Hospitality

Please refer to the Gifts and Hospitality Policy and Procedure for full details

25. Confidentiality & Data Protection

Volunteers/employees will, in the course of their duties, have access to information which is confidential. They must never pass on any information obtained through their employment to anyone who is not required to have that information. This includes information about the work of Age UK B&NES, its customers, contractors, consultants, suppliers and employees. It is a breach of trust to disclose such information to any unauthorised person, or for information to be used by anyone for personal advantage.

Volunteers/employees may also have access to information which would be of commercial or beneficial interest to others. Equally they may operate software applications, computer programmes or other systems and procedures which are provided on a licensed basis under copyright protection. In such cases, employees may be asked by the suppliers to sign further declarations of confidence. Volunteers/employees are prohibited from disclosing this information to a third party or to use the information for any purposes other than those directed by Age UK B&NES.

Volunteers/employees should not abuse their position by seeking information which they do not need.

If there is any doubt about who should receive information, the employee should consult their manager. Any breach will be taken seriously and may result in the use of the Disciplinary Procedure.

Please refer to the Data Protection Policy for more information

26. Equality & Diversity

Age UK B&NES commits itself to fairness and equality for all, operating with professionalism, integrity and openness. Throughout our policies and practice, we aim to make sure we do not knowingly create an unfair disadvantage for anyone, directly or indirectly. Employees must embrace this commitment.

Volunteers/employees should ensure that no person or group of people receiving services from or applying for accommodation, employment or contracts with Age UK B&NES, will be treated less favourably than any other person or group of people because of their gender (and including gender reassignment), sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, nationality, religion or belief, political beliefs, disability, age, class, responsibility for dependents, part time or shift workers, unrelated criminal offences or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice.

27. Failure to follow the Code

Volunteers/employees should recognise that failure to follow the Code may damage Age UK B&NES and its work and so will be viewed as a disciplinary matter, to be investigated under Age UK B&NES Disciplinary Procedure.

If the actions of a volunteer/employee, taking place outside of Age UK B&NES, should bring Age UK B&NES into disrepute, then Age UK B&NES may carry out a disciplinary investigation which may include suspending the volunteer/employee.