

VOLUNTEER POLICY BOOKLET



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Bullying and Harassment Policy

Policy

We recognise that harassment and victimisation is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010. As such, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Personal harassment takes many forms ranging from tasteless jokes and abusive remarks to pestering for sexual favours, threatening behaviour and actual physical abuse. For the purposes of this policy, it also includes bullying.

Bullying is understood to be targeted and persistent offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour and can include the abuse or misuse of power to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.

Whatever form it takes, personal harassment is always taken seriously and is totally unacceptable.

We recognise that personal harassment can exist in the workplace, as well as outside, and that this can seriously affect employees' working lives by interfering with their job performance or by creating a stressful, intimidating and unpleasant working environment.

We deplore all forms of personal harassment and seek to ensure that the working environment is sympathetic to all our employees. The aim of this policy is to inform employees of the type of behaviour that is unacceptable and provide employees who are the victims of personal harassment with a means of redress.

This policy covers all areas of the Charity's organisation.

We recognise that we have a duty to implement this policy and all employees are expected to comply with it. We will also endeavour to review this policy at regular intervals in order to monitor its effectiveness.

Examples of personal harassment

Personal harassment takes many forms and employees may not always realise that their behaviour constitutes harassment. Personal harassment is unwanted behaviour by one employee towards another and examples of harassment include:

- insensitive jokes and pranks
- lewd or abusive comments
- deliberate exclusion from conversations
- displaying abusive or offensive writing or material
- abusive, threatening or insulting words or behaviour
- name-calling
- picking on someone or setting them up to fail
- exclusion or victimisation
- undermining their contribution/position
- demanding a greater work output than is reasonably feasible
- blocking promotion or other development/advancement.

These examples are not exhaustive and disciplinary action at the appropriate level will be taken against employees committing any form of personal harassment.

Examples of sexual harassment

Sexual harassment can take place in many forms within the workplace and can go undetected for a period of time where employees do not understand that particular behaviour is classed as sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is unwanted behaviour related to sex, or of a sexual nature, by one employee towards another and examples of sexual harassment include:

- lewd or abusive comments of a sexual nature such as regarding an individual's appearance or body
- unwelcome touching of a sexual nature
- displaying sexually suggestive or sexually offensive writing or material
- asking questions of a sexual nature
- sexual propositions or advances, whether made in writing or verbally.

Sexual harassment can also take place where an employee is treated less favourably because they have rejected, or submitted to, the unwanted conduct that is related to sex or is of a sexual nature. Whether less favourable treatment occurs as a result will be examined broadly and includes areas such as blocking promotion and refusal of training opportunities or other development opportunities.

Examples of victimisation

Victimisation takes place when an employee is treated unfavourably as a direct result of raising a genuine complaint of discrimination or harassment. Furthermore, any employee who supports or assists another employee to raise a complaint is also subjected to victimisation if they are treated unfavourably.

Third party harassment

The Charity operates a zero tolerance policy in relation to harassment perpetrated against one of its employees by a third party, such as a client/customer or visitor to the organisation. All employees are encouraged to report any and all instances of harassment that involve a third party in line with our reporting procedure, as outlined below.

If we find that the allegation is well-founded, we will take steps we deem necessary in order to remedy this complaint. This can include, but is not limited to:

- warning the individual about the inappropriate nature of their behaviour
- banning the individual from Charity premises
- reporting the individual's actions to the police.

In addition to this, the Charity will endeavour to take all reasonable steps to deter and prevent any form of harassment from third parties taking place.

Responsibilities

Employee responsibilities

The Charity requires its employees to behave appropriately and professional at all times during the working day, and this may extend to events outside of working hours which are classed as work-related such as social events. Employees should not engage in discriminatory, harassing or aggressive behaviour towards any other person at any time.

Any form of harassment or victimisation may lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal if it is committed:

- in a work situation
- during any situation related to work, such as a social event
- against a colleague or other person connected to the employer outside of a work situation, including on social media
- against anyone outside of a work situation where the incident is relevant to their suitability to carry out the role.

A breach of this policy by will be treated as a disciplinary manner.

Employer responsibilities

The Charity will be responsible for ensuring all members of staff, including seniors and those within management positions, understand the rules and policies relating to the prevention of harassing and bullying behaviour at work and during work-related social events. We will promote a professional and positive workplace whereby managers are alert and proactively identify areas of risk and incidents of harassment, sexual harassment and bullying.

We will also take into account aggravating factors, such as abuse of power over a more junior colleague, when deciding what disciplinary action to take.

Where an incident is witness, or a complaint is made under this policy, the Charity will take prompt action to deal with this matter. All incidents will be deemed serious and dealt within in a sensitive and confidential manner.

Complaining about harassment and/or bullying

Informal method

People are often afraid to report incidents involving their colleagues in case nobody believes them or in case they are ostracised and told they have no sense of humour or are accused of somehow provoking the incident. At worst they fear being denied future opportunities within the Charity.

We recognise that complaints of personal harassment, and particularly of sexual harassment, can sometimes be of a sensitive or intimate nature and that it may not be appropriate for you to raise the issue through our normal grievance procedure. In these circumstances you are encouraged to raise such issues with a senior colleague of your choice (whether or not that person has a direct supervisory responsibility for you) as a confidential helper.

If you are the victim of minor harassment you should make it clear to the harasser on an informal basis that their behaviour is unwelcome and ask the harasser to stop. If you feel unable to do this verbally then you should hand a written request to the harasser, and your confidential helper can assist you in this.

Although these fears are understandable, the Charity will ensure they do not happen and will treat allegations seriously and sympathetically.

All investigations will be handled quickly and in a sensitive, tactful manner but it must be emphasised that any investigations are likely to be traumatic and stressful for ALL parties.

Formal method

Where the informal approach fails or if the harassment is more serious, employees should bring the matter to the attention of their line manager as a formal written grievance and again their confidential helper can assist you in this. If possible, employees should keep notes of the harassment so that the written complaint can include:

- the name of the alleged harasser
- the nature of the alleged harassment
- the dates and times when the alleged harassment occurred
- the names of any witnesses
- any action already taken by the employee to stop the alleged harassment.

Where it is not possible to make the formal complaint to the above named person, for example where they are the alleged harasser, we would encourage the employee to raise their complaint to the Chief Executive Officer.

On receipt of a formal complaint we will take action to separate the employee from the alleged harasser to enable an uninterrupted investigation to take place. This may involve a temporary transfer of the alleged harasser to another work area or suspension with contractual pay until the matter has been resolved.

On conclusion of the investigation, which will normally be within five days of the meeting with the employee, a report of the findings will be submitted to the manager who will hold the grievance meeting.

The employee will be invited to attend a meeting, at a reasonable time and location, to discuss the matter once the person hearing the grievance has had opportunity to read the report. Employees have the right to be accompanied at such a meeting by a colleague or a union representative and they must take all reasonable steps to attend. Those involved in the investigation will be expected to act in confidence and any breach of confidence will be a disciplinary matter.

Employees will be able to put their case forward at the meeting and the manager will explain the outcome of the investigation. Employees have a right to appeal the outcome, which is to be made to their line manager within five working days of receiving the outcome.

If the decision is that the allegation is well founded, the harasser will be liable to disciplinary action in accordance with our disciplinary procedure up to and including dismissal. The Charity is committed to ensuring employees are not discouraged from using this procedure and no employee will be victimised for having brought a complaint.

Confidentiality Policy

Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne Community Support believes in the right of privacy and the need to respect clients, staff and volunteers. We want people to have trust and confidence in our group and service, 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.

Confidentiality applies to all staff, volunteers, trustees and clients and encompasses:

- all records and information about clients, volunteers, trustees 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 group

We will ensure that:

- The records of volunteers, trustees, clients and staff will be kept in a safe place. These records will only be accessed by those who need to see them, in order to run a quality service, or by the individuals themselves.
- 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.
- Nothing learned about clients, volunteers or staff will be implied or passed to anyone without the person's consent. This includes information learnt in an informal setting.
- Clients, volunteers and staff have the right to complain about breaches of confidentiality through the complaints/grievances procedure.
- Breaches in confidence will be taken seriously and may result in dismissal of the offending person, whether a client, volunteer or staff member
- The importance of confidentiality and its implications will be part of the volunteer/staff induction process and part of welcoming a new client to the service. Everyone will receive appropriate written information about confidentiality.
- Staff and volunteers will receive training on confidentiality as part of their induction and be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement.
- On receiving any information it is important that we recognise our own prejudices and control these when dealing with information. Our prejudices must not affect the confidentiality that must be given to information.

Exceptions

We sometimes have to share information with colleagues in other agencies but we do so only on the basis of their need to know and as far as possible only with the permission of the person concerned. 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 serious abuse or where there is likelihood harm will come to that person (including self-harm) 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 the Registered Individual or Agency Manager who will decide what action to take.

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

Conflict of Interest Policy

Definition:

Conflict of interest is defined as:

“a situation in which someone in a position of trust has competing professional and/or personal interests. Such competing interests can make it difficult to fulfil his or her duties fairly. Even if there is no evidence of improper actions, a conflict of interest can create an appearance of impropriety that can undermine confidence in the ability of that person to act properly.”

In the context of advocacy services, conflict of interest includes but is not limited to: breach of confidentiality; abuse of trust; personal gain; divided loyalty e.g. providing personal care and advocacy to the same person or feeling limits to ability to fully advocate due to funder also being service commissioner and / or provider.

Policy

Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne has a fundamental belief that the work of Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne should be provided in an independent manner, free from any possible conflict of interest. For the purpose of this policy a conflict of interest occurs when an individual or organisation is unable to ensure the independence of the service due to their involvement with other people groups, funders or affiliations.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for and has an obligation to ensure that all of the work of Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne staff and volunteers is undertaken in such a way as to prevent any possible conflict of interest.

Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne requires all personnel to be aware of the potential for any possible or actual conflict of interest and to follow agreed procedures to avoid any such occurrence.

The Board of Trustees reserves the right to take any necessary and timely actions in the event of any conflict of interest and these will be taken as soon as the issue arises.

The Board of Trustees will ensure that the credibility and independence of Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne is not compromised in any respect.

Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne recognises that issues arising from any conflict of interest can be difficult to manage, stressful and potentially damaging to both the advocacy partnership and reputation of the service.

Conflict of interest can adversely affect the ability of Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne to offer independent advocacy and support to the service user.

The advocacy partnership can be damaged by any conflict of interest as the service user may lose confidence and trust in the service.

The Board of Trustees has an obligation to ensure that any decisions, judgements or support is not affected by any possible conflict of interest.

Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne recognises that it cannot offer advocacy services or act in the best interest of both parties in a dispute; the impartiality and independence of the advocacy service could be brought into question.

Conflict of Interest in advocacy work may arise as a potential issue in a number of ways:-

- Where both parties to a dispute approach Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne for support.
- Where an employee or volunteer from Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne is party to the dispute either in a professional or personal capacity.
- The service user wishes to complain about Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne a member of paid staff or a volunteer.
- Where an issue arises that could result in potential action being taken against Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne.
- If a member of staff has a role outside Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne which could be perceived as them having conflicting interests.
- Individual, personal or family interests or other involvements conflict with those of Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne or the role of the advocate.
- Where the service user presents with a case based on information that is known to be false i.e. welfare benefits, tax, etc.
- If the service user asks for information about any other products or services that are commercially available from Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne.
- In some cases the potential referrer, commissioning authority or service user may perceive a conflict of interest. Where friends or family members are employed by Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne.
- In the event of Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne supplying more than one service to an individual or other group.

Procedures

Governing Body

Both new and existing trustees must declare any interests which may conflict with the work and aims of Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne.

A declaration form must be signed on an annual basis and any changes of circumstance notified to the Chief Officer.

Trustees must withdraw from any discussion or decision making where there is a potential conflict of interest.

Staff and Volunteers

All staff and volunteers will be required to declare at the initial interview any conflict of interest. A decision based on this information will be made by the Line Manager and where necessary by the Governing Body.

Members of staff and volunteers should be made aware of the need to declare any possible conflict of interest.

Any gifts, hospitality etc should be declared in accordance with the Gifts Policy of Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne.

In the event of any possible conflict of interest the matter should be discussed immediately with the Line Manager.

If a conflict of interest arises the member of staff or volunteer should not remain involved with the case or in any decisions that directly affect the service user.

All staff and volunteers should ensure that their private, personal or family interests do not affect their judgement, decisions or actions.

Staff and volunteers should not use their position for any personal or professional gain for themselves, family or friends.

Staff and Volunteers need to declare if they have worked with a service user on a previous occasion i.e. during paid employment to avoid conflict of interest. This would also apply if the volunteer was or had previously worked for any of the parties involved in the case.

Personnel wishing to undertake secondary employment should inform their Line Manager to ensure that a possible conflict of interest is avoided.

During the initial referral the Line Manager should establish whether the prospective advocate has any known involvement with the new service user.

If a potential conflict of interest is identified the service user should be referred to another advocate.

The advocate should find out who the other parties may be in relation to the service user's case and whether there could be any conflict of interest.

In some cases it may be necessary to ask the service user if he/she knows whether the other party has consulted any organisation on the matter.

Where a conflict of interest has been identified a note should be made on the case file to show a conflict check has been carried out.

Accurate case records should be maintained, kept up to date and monitored to establish whether the advocacy service already supports the other party.

If a conflict of interest becomes apparent the advocate should discuss the matter immediately with their Line Manager and it should be considered on a case by case basis.

At this stage the situation should be explained to the service user and the case passed to another advocate or appropriate alternative organisation. A record should be kept of this transfer.

If a conflict of interest does emerge following preliminary information being given to a second party, no further action should be taken with the second party. The second party should be informed that Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne is already acting for another party with regard to the issue.

No details of any work undertaken with the first party should be discussed with other parties.

Should Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne discover that unknowingly work has been undertaken with both parties or when conflict arises between the parties after the casework has begun the advocate should cease to act in the matter.

False Information – Advocates must remain impartial and support the service user to provide truthful and accurate information. However, if it becomes clear that false information is being presented; for example to the Inland Revenue or Department of Work and Pensions, the service user must be informed of the possible consequences. If the service user still wishes to pursue the matter on the basis of false information they should be informed that Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne cannot continue to act on their behalf.

Potential Legal Action against Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne

If it becomes apparent that the service user could have a claim against Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne due to negligence the Line Manager should inform the Chief Officer who may need to contact the insurers who deal with professional indemnity. A decision would then need to be taken to refer the service user to another appropriate agency.

Data Protection Policy

Aim and scope of policy

This policy applies to the processing of personal data in manual and electronic records kept by Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne in connection with its human resources function as described below. It also covers the Charity's response to any data breach and other rights under the General Data Protection Regulation and current Data Protection Act.

This policy applies to the personal data of job applicants, existing and former employees, apprentices, volunteers, placement students, workers and self-employed contractors. These are referred to in this policy as relevant individuals.

"Personal data" is information that relates to an identifiable person who can be directly or indirectly identified from that information, for example, a person's name, identification number, location, online identifier. It can also include pseudonymised data.

"Special categories of personal data" is data which relates to an individual's health, sex life, sexual orientation, race, ethnic origin, political opinion, religion, and trade union membership. It also includes genetic and biometric data (where used for ID purposes).

"Criminal offence data" is data which relates to an individual's criminal convictions and offences.

"Data processing" is any operation or set of operations which is performed on personal data or on sets of personal data, whether or not by automated means, such as collection, recording, organisation, structuring, storage, adaptation or alteration, retrieval, consultation, use, disclosure by transmission, dissemination or otherwise making available, alignment or combination, restriction, erasure or destruction.

The Charity makes a commitment to ensuring that personal data, including special categories of personal data and criminal offence data (where appropriate) is processed in line with GDPR and domestic laws and all its employees conduct themselves in line with this, and other related, policies. Where third parties process data on behalf of the Charity, the Charity will ensure that the third party takes such measures in order to maintain the Charity's commitment to protecting data. In line with current data protection legislation, the Charity understands that it will be accountable for the processing, management and regulation, and storage and retention of all personal data held in the form of manual records and on computers.

Types of data held

Personal data is kept in personnel files or within the Charity's HR systems. The following types of data may be held by the Charity, as appropriate, on relevant individuals:

- name, address, phone numbers - for individual and next of kin
- CVs and other information gathered during recruitment
- references from former employers
- National Insurance numbers
- job title, job descriptions and pay grades
- conduct issues such as letters of concern, disciplinary proceedings
- holiday records
- internal performance information

- medical or health information
- sickness absence records
- tax codes
- terms and conditions of employment
- training details.

Relevant individuals should refer to the Charity's privacy notice for more information on the reasons for its processing activities, the lawful bases it relies on for the processing and data retention periods.

Data protection principles

All personal data obtained and held by the Charity will:

- be processed fairly, lawfully and in a transparent manner
- be collected for specific, explicit, and legitimate purposes
- be adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary for the purposes of processing
- be kept accurate and up to date. Every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that inaccurate data is rectified or erased without delay
- not be kept for longer than is necessary for its given purpose
- be processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of personal data including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing, accidental loss, destruction or damage by using appropriate technical or organisation measures
- comply with the relevant data protection procedures for international transferring of personal data.

In addition, personal data will be processed in recognition of an individuals' data protection rights, as follows:

- the right to be informed
- the right of access
- the right for any inaccuracies to be corrected (rectification)
- the right to have information deleted (erasure)
- the right to restrict the processing of the data
- the right to portability
- the right to object to the inclusion of any information
- the right to regulate any automated decision-making and profiling of personal data.

Procedures

The Charity has taken the following steps to protect the personal data of relevant individuals, which it holds or to which it has access:

- it appoints or employs employees with specific responsibilities for:
 - a. the processing and controlling of data
 - b. the comprehensive reviewing and auditing of its data protection systems and procedures
 - c. overseeing the effectiveness and integrity of all the data that must be protected.

There are clear lines of responsibility and accountability for these different roles.

- it provides information to its employees on their data protection rights, how it uses their personal data, and how it protects it. The information includes the actions relevant individuals can take if they think that their data has been compromised in any way
- it provides its employees with information and training to make them aware of the importance of protecting personal data, to teach them how to do this, and to understand how to treat information confidentially
- it can account for all personal data it holds, where it comes from, who it is shared with and also who it might be shared with
- it carries out risk assessments as part of its reviewing activities to identify any vulnerabilities in its personal data handling and processing, and to take measures to reduce the risks of mishandling and potential breaches of data security. The procedure includes an assessment of the impact of both use and potential misuse of personal data in and by the Charity
- it recognises the importance of seeking individuals' consent for obtaining, recording, using, sharing, storing and retaining their personal data, and regularly reviews its procedures for doing so, including the audit trails that are needed and are followed for all consent decisions. The Charity understands that consent must be freely given, specific, informed and unambiguous. The Charity will seek consent on a specific and individual basis where appropriate. Full information will be given regarding the activities about which consent is sought. Relevant individuals have the absolute and unimpeded right to withdraw that consent at any time
- it has the appropriate mechanisms for detecting, reporting and investigating suspected or actual personal data breaches, including security breaches. It is aware of its duty to report significant breaches that cause significant harm to the affected individuals to the Information Commissioner, and is aware of the possible consequences
- it is aware of the implications international transfer of personal data internationally.

Consent

If consent is relied upon as the lawful basis for collecting, holding, and/or processing personal data, the following shall apply:

- Consent is a clear indication by the data subject that they agree to the processing of their personal data. Such a clear indication may take the form of a statement or a positive action. Silence, pre-ticked boxes, or inactivity are unlikely to amount to consent.
- Where consent is given in a document which includes other matters, the section dealing with consent must be kept clearly separate from such other matters.
- Data subjects are free to withdraw consent at any time and it must be made easy for them to do so. If a data subject withdraws consent, their request must be honoured promptly.

- If personal data is to be processed for a different purpose that is incompatible with the purpose or purposes for which that personal data was originally collected that was not disclosed to the data subject when they first provided their consent, consent to the new purpose or purposes may need to be obtained from the data subject.
- If special category personal data is processed, the Charity shall normally rely on a lawful basis other than explicit consent. If explicit consent is relied upon, the data subject in question must be issued with a suitable privacy notice in order to capture their consent.
- In all cases where consent is relied upon as the lawful basis for collecting, holding, and/or processing personal data, records must be kept of all consents obtained in order to ensure that the Charity can demonstrate its compliance with consent requirements.

Access to data

Relevant individuals have a right to be informed whether the Charity processes personal data relating to them and to access the data that the Charity holds about them. Requests for access to this data will be dealt with under the following summary guidelines:

- to make a subject access request, an email should be sent to SAR@ageukfaversham.org.uk describing, in as much detail as possible, the information you wish to have access to. If appropriate, please include any dates relevant to the information sought.
- please also confirm your full name, employee/payroll number and your address in the email.
- the Charity will not charge for the supply of data unless the request is manifestly unfounded, excessive or repetitive, or unless a request is made for duplicate copies to be provided to parties other than the employee making the request
- the Charity will respond to a request without delay. Access to data will be provided, subject to legally permitted exemptions, within one month as a maximum. This may be extended by a further two months where requests are complex or numerous.

Relevant individuals must inform the Charity immediately if they believe that the data is inaccurate, either as a result of a subject access request or otherwise. The Charity will take immediate steps to rectify the information.

Data disclosures

The Charity may be required to disclose certain data/information to any person. The circumstances leading to such disclosures include:

- any employee benefits operated by third parties
- disabled individuals - whether any reasonable adjustments are required to assist them at work
- individuals' health data - to comply with health and safety or occupational health obligations towards the employee
- for Statutory Sick Pay purposes
- HR management and administration - to consider how an individual's health affects his or her ability to do their job
- the smooth operation of any employee insurance policies or pension plans.

These kinds of disclosures will only be made when strictly necessary for the purpose.

Data security

The Charity adopts procedures designed to maintain the security of data when it is stored and transported.

In addition, employees must:

- ensure that all files or written information of a confidential nature are stored in a secure manner and are only accessed by people who have a need and a right to access them
- ensure that all files or written information of a confidential nature are not left where they can be read by unauthorised people
- refrain from sending emails containing sensitive work related information to their personal email address
- check regularly on the accuracy of data being entered into computers
- always use the passwords provided to access the computer system and not abuse them by passing them on to people who should not have them
- use computer screen blanking to ensure that personal data is not left on screen when not in use.

Personal data relating to employees should not be kept or transported on laptops, USB sticks, or similar devices, unless authorised by Clare Burgess, Chief Executive Officer. Where personal data is recorded on any such device it should be protected by:

- ensuring that data is recorded on such devices only where absolutely necessary
- using an encrypted system — a folder should be created to store the files that need extra protection and all files created or moved to this folder should be automatically encrypted
- ensuring that laptops or USB drives are not left lying around where they can be stolen.

Failure to follow the Charity's rules on data security may be dealt with via the Charity's disciplinary procedure. Appropriate sanctions include dismissal with or without notice dependent on the severity of the failure.

International data transfers

The Charity does not transfer personal data to any recipients outside of the EEA.

Breach notification

Where a data breach is likely to result in a risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals, it will be reported to the Information Commissioner within 72 hours of the Charity becoming aware of it and may be reported in more than one instalment.

Individuals will be informed directly in the event that the breach is likely to result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of that individual.

If the breach is sufficient to warrant notification to the public, the Charity will do so without undue delay.

Training

New employees must read and understand the policies on data protection as part of their induction.

All employees receive training covering basic information about confidentiality, data protection and the actions to take upon identifying a potential data breach.

The nominated data controller/auditors/protection officers for the Charity are trained appropriately in their roles under data protection legislation.

All employees who need to use the computer system are trained to protect individuals' private data, to ensure data security, and to understand the consequences to them as individuals and the Charity of any potential lapses and breaches of the Charity's policies and procedures.

Records

The Charity keeps records of its processing activities including the purpose for the processing and retention periods in its HR data record. These records will be kept up to date so that they reflect current processing activities.

Data Protection Officer

The Charity's Data Protection Officer is Clare Burgess, Chief Executive Officer. She can be contacted at SAR@ageukfaversham.org.uk.

Equality & Diversity and Equal Opportunities

Introduction

We are an equal opportunities employer. We are committed to equality of opportunity and to providing a service and following practices which are free from unfair and unlawful discrimination. The aim of this policy is to ensure that no applicant or member of staff receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance. It seeks also to ensure that no person is victimised or subjected to any form of bullying or harassment.

We value people as individuals with diverse opinions, cultures, lifestyles and circumstances. All employees are covered by this policy and it applies to all areas of employment including recruitment, selection, training, deployment, career development, and promotion. These areas are monitored and policies and practices are amended if necessary to ensure that no unfair or unlawful discrimination, intentional, unintentional, direct or indirect, overt or latent exists.

The Chief Executive Officer has particular responsibility for implementing and monitoring the Equality and diversity policy and, as part of this process, all personnel policies and procedures are administered with the objective of promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating unfair or unlawful discrimination.

All employees, workers or self-employed contractors whether part time, full time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training, or any other **benefit** will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the Charity.

Equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and compliance with the law is to the benefit of all individuals in our Charity as it seeks to develop the skills and abilities of its people. While specific responsibility for eliminating discrimination and providing equality of opportunity lies with managers and supervisors, individuals at all levels have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect. The personal commitment of every employee to this policy and application of its principles are essential to eliminate discrimination and provide equality throughout the Charity.

Our commitment as an employer

The Charity is committed to:

- creating an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of our staff are recognised and valued
- entitling every employee, worker or self-employed contractor to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated
- providing training, development and progression opportunities to all staff
- understanding equality in the workplace is good management practice and makes sound business sense
- reviewing all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.

Our commitment as a service provider

The Charity is committed to:

- providing services to which all clients are entitled regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, offending past, caring responsibilities or social class
- making sure our services are delivered equally and meet the diverse needs of our service users and clients by assessing and meeting the diverse needs of our clients
- fully supporting this policy by senior management and ensuring agreement has been reached with employee representatives
- selecting those for employment, promotion, training, or any other benefit purely on the basis of aptitude and ability
- monitoring and reviewing this policy annually
- having clear procedures that enable our clients, candidates for jobs and employees to raise a grievance or make a complaint if they feel they have been unfairly treated
- treating breaches of our equality and diversity policy as misconduct which could lead to disciplinary proceedings
- encouraging all staff to come forward with any issues they need Charity assistance and understanding with, no matter their background, identity or circumstances, such as if they are victims of domestic abuse or have caring commitments. Challenging discriminatory behaviour by clients whether this is directed against staff or other clients. If discriminatory behaviour, remarks, or attitudes are repeated we reserve the right in extreme circumstances to decline further service.

The Accessible Information Standard

All organisations that provide NHS care and / or publicly funded adult social care are legally required to follow the Accessible Information Standard. Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne aims to follow this Standard when dealing with its staff, volunteers and clients. The Standard sets out a specific, consistent approach to identifying, recording, flagging, sharing and meeting the information and communication support needs of patients, service users, carers and parents with a disability, impairment or sensory loss.

The Accessible Information Standard aims to make sure that people who have a disability, impairment or sensory loss get information that they can access and understand, and any communication support that they need from health and care services.

The Standard tells organisations how they should make sure that patients and service users, and their carers and parents, can access and understand the information they are given. This includes making sure that people get information in accessible formats.

The Standard also tells organisations how they should make sure that people get support from a communication professional if they need it, and about changing working practices to support effective communication.

By law (section 250 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012), all organisations that provide NHS care or adult social care must follow the Standard in full from 1st August 2016 onwards.

Organisations that commission NHS care and / or adult social care, for example Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), must also support implementation of the Standard by provider organisations.

What does the Standard tell organisations to do?

As part of the Accessible Information Standard, organisations that provide NHS care or adult social care must do five things. They must:

1. Ask people if they have any information or communication needs, and find out how to meet their needs.
2. Record those needs clearly and in a set way.
3. Highlight or flag the person's file or notes so it is clear that they have information or communication needs and how to meet those needs.
4. Share information about people's information and communication needs with other providers of NHS and adult social care, when they have consent or permission to do so.
5. Take steps to ensure that people receive information which they can access and understand, and receive communication support if they need it.

What does the Standard include?

The Standard says that patients, service users, carers and parents with a disability, impairment or sensory loss should:

- Be able to contact, and be contacted by, services in accessible ways, for example via email or text message.
- Receive information and correspondence in formats they can read and understand, for example in audio, braille, easy read or large print.
- Be supported by a communication professional at appointments if this is needed to support conversation, for example a British Sign Language interpreter.
- Get support from health and care staff and organisations to communicate, for example to lip-read or use a hearing aid.

More information

There is more information about the Accessible Information Standard on the NHS England website at www.england.nhs.uk/accessibleinfo.

For more information please email NHS England at england.nhs.participation@nhs.net or telephone 0300 311 22 33. Or you can write to Accessible Information Standard, NHS England, 7E56, Quarry House, Quarry Hill, Leeds, LS2 7UE.

Equal opportunity policy statements

Age

We will:

- ensure that people of all ages are treated with respect and dignity
- ensure that people of working age are given equal access to our employment, training, development and promotion opportunities and
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about younger and older people.

Disability

We will:

- provide any reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled people have access to our services and employment opportunities
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about disabled people and
- seek to continue to improve access to information by ensuring availability of loop systems, braille facilities, alternative formatting and sign language interpretation.

Race

We will:

- challenge racism wherever it occurs
- respond swiftly and sensitively to racist incidents and
- actively promote race equality in the Charity.

Gender

We will:

- challenge discriminatory assumptions about women and men
- take positive action to redress the negative effects of discrimination against women and men
- offer equal access for women and men to representation, services, employment, training and pay and encourage other organisations to do the same and
- provide support to prevent discrimination against transsexual people who have or who are about to undergo gender reassignment.

Sexual orientation

We will:

- ensure that we take account of the needs of lesbians, gay men and bisexuals and
- promote positive images of lesbians, gay men and bisexuals.

Religion or belief

We will:

- ensure that employees' religion or beliefs and related observances are respected and accommodated wherever possible and
- respect people's beliefs where the expression of those beliefs does not impinge on the legitimate rights of others.

Pregnancy or maternity

We will:

- ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity and that a positive image is promoted regardless of pregnancy or maternity
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about the pregnancy or maternity of our employees and
- ensure that no individual is disadvantaged and that we take account of the needs of our employees' pregnancy or maternity.

Marriage or civil partnership

We will:

- ensure that people are treated with respect and dignity and that a positive image is promoted regardless of marriage or civil partnership;
- challenge discriminatory assumptions about the marriage or civil partnership of our employees and
- ensure that no individual is disadvantaged and that we take account the needs of our employees' marriage or civil partnership.

Ex-offenders

We will prevent discrimination against our employees regardless of their offending background (except where there is a known risk to children or vulnerable adults).

Equal pay

We will ensure that all employees, male or female, have the right to the same contractual pay and benefits for carrying out the same work, work rated as equivalent work or work of equal value.

Unconscious bias

The Charity recognises the dangers of unconscious bias arising at work, which is where an opinion is formed on an individual by a manager or colleague without them necessarily being aware they have formed it.

There are many different forms of unconscious bias, ranging from an affinity towards those of a similar background to placing too much significance on what has been identified as a negative trait.

The Charity will work against forms of unconscious bias in all decisions taken for employment, including recruitment, promotion and training opportunities, with a focus on promoting diversity and inclusion.

Conditions of Service

It is a condition of service that all staff adhere to Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne's equal opportunity policy and failure to do so will lead to disciplinary action being taken.

All members of the Trustee Board will be expected to accept and adhere to the provisions of the equal opportunity policy.

All volunteers will be expected to abide by the provision of the policy in their work for the Charity.

Any staff member who seriously or repeatedly harasses another member of staff or anyone else connected with the Charity will be liable for dismissal for gross misconduct. Similarly, any Trustee or volunteer found to have breached the rules of this code in this regard will be asked to resign.

Gifts, Legacies & Anti-Bribery Policy

Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne believes that its clients have a right to expect that the Organisation will be run on an honest financial basis with sound procedures for dealing with and protecting the financial interests of clients. The Organisation prohibits any person employed by or associated with it from offering, promising or giving any financial or other advantage to another person. The Organisation prohibits any person employed or associated with it from requesting, agreeing to receive or receiving any financial or other advantage. The Organisation prohibits the bribing of a public official in order to obtain or retain business or an advantage in the conduct of business.

Aim of the Policy

This policy is intended to set out the values, principles and policies underpinning this Organisation's approach to the giving of gifts to Age UK staff by clients or their relatives. It also aims to set out the Organisation's policy on legacies and the Organisation's anti-bribery stance.

Policy

It is not uncommon for clients who have developed sometimes long and close relationships with individual staff to offer gifts or gratuities or to seek to include a member of staff in their will. However, such activities can lead to accusations of coercion, exploitation and fraud. It is vitally important to Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne that its staff at all times uphold the highest standards of the Organisation and always act in an honest manner with the best interest of the clients in mind.

Therefore, in this Organisation:

- personal gifts must never be accepted by a member of staff if the value of the gift is estimated to be more than £25.
- staff must never, under any circumstances, accept valuables belonging to a client or monetary gifts.
- any gift given to a member of staff must be declared as soon as reasonably practicable and details recorded in the Gifts Record in the office; this must include the date that the gift was given and its monetary value and must be signed by the recipient.
- staff must not use their personal store loyalty cards when shopping on behalf of clients.
- staff should never become involved with the making of a clients will or with soliciting any form of bequest from a client. They should never agree to act as a witness or executor of a clients will nor become involved in any way with any other legal document. If a client does need help with making a will or requests help from staff then the client should be referred to an impartial or independent source of legal advice such as the local citizens advice bureau or solicitor.
- failure to declare a gift, the accepting of a gift in excess of £25 in value, the involvement of a will or attempting to solicit money or items through a client's will or legacy will be considered a disciplinary offence.

Hospitality and Business Gifts

The following procedures should be adopted in relation to hospitality and business gifts:

- All offers of business gifts must be referred to the Chief Executive Officer
- A record of any business gift received must be recorded with the reason the gift has been made.
- The Organisation does not provide hospitality
- Cash gifts from business are expressly prohibited
- The acceptance of small promotional gifts, such as diaries, pens or similar will generally be regarded as acceptable
- All members of staff have a responsibility to prevent, detect and report all instances of bribery and must inform the Chief Executive Officer immediately.

Reference: The Bribery Act 2010

Health and Safety Policy

Purpose

The policy, read in line with the Charity's Health and Safety Policy Statement, outlines the responsibilities in relation to health and safety.

Responsibilities

The following sections describe the levels of responsibility by which health and safety is managed.

Employer

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is the designated person with overall responsibility for ensuring our compliance with health and safety legislation. They will ensure that:

- our Health and Safety policy documentation and Health and Safety Management System are implemented, monitored, developed, communicated effectively, reviewed and amended as required
- a health and safety plan of continuous improvement is created and progress monitored
- staff understand the allocated responsibilities for health and safety defined in this policy
- suitable and sufficient funds, people, materials and equipment are provided to meet all health and safety requirements
- adequate insurance cover is provided and renewed
- competent persons are appointed to provide health and safety assistance and advice
- an adequate system of maintenance exists and operates to keep premises, plant and work equipment in a safe condition
- they communicate and consult with staff on health and safety issues
- an effective training programme is established to ensure staff are competent to carry out their work in a safe manner
- the monitoring activities required by this system are undertaken
- effective contingency plans are in place with a designated competent person in charge of the planning and control measures for situations involving imminent danger
- health and safety objectives are set and their achievement is measured and reported in the annual report.

Management

Managers will ensure that in their areas of control:

- they actively lead the implementation of our Health and Safety Policy and Health and Safety Management System
- they supervise their staff to ensure that they work safely, providing increased supervision for new and young workers
- safe systems of work are developed and implemented
- risk assessments are completed, recorded and regularly reviewed covering all processes and activities where a risk to health and safety exists. The significant findings of these assessments are brought to the attention of staff who may be affected
- adequate resources are allocated to implement the safety policy and meet all safety requirements

- the health and safety plan of continuous improvement is progressed and scheduled actions are completed on time and validated
- accidents, ill health and 'near miss' incidents at work are investigated, recorded and reported
- they communicate and consult with staff on health and safety issues
- they encourage staff to report hazards and raise health and safety concerns
- safety training for staff is identified, undertaken and recorded to ensure staff are competent to carry out their work in a safe manner
- issues concerning safety raised by anyone are thoroughly investigated and, when necessary, further effective controls implemented and communicated to staff
- welfare facilities are provided and maintained in a satisfactory state
- premises, plant and work equipment are maintained in a safe condition
- statutory examinations are planned, completed and recorded
- any safety issues that cannot be dealt with are referred to a senior manager for action
- health and safety rules are followed by all
- the monitoring and checking activities required by this system are completed.

Supervisors

Supervisors will ensure that in their areas of control:

- they implement our Health and Safety Policy and Health and Safety Management System
- they supervise their staff to ensure that they work safely, providing increased supervision for new and young workers
- they communicate and consult with staff on health and safety issues.
- health and safety rules are followed by all
- health and safety checklists required by this system are completed at the designated frequencies
- the health and safety plan of continuous improvement is progressed, actions completed, and any problems are reported to a manager. Scheduled actions are completed on time and validated
- they encourage staff to report hazards and raise health and safety concerns.
- issues concerning safety raised by anyone are thoroughly investigated and, when necessary, further effective controls implemented and communicated to staff
- any safety issues that cannot be dealt with are referred to a senior manager for action
- safety training for staff is identified, undertaken and recorded to ensure they are competent to carry out their work in a safe manner
- safe systems of work are developed and implemented
- accidents, ill health and 'near miss' incidents at work are investigated, recorded and reported
- personal protective equipment is readily available and maintained, and relevant staff are aware of the correct use of this and the procedures for replacement
- hazardous substances are stored, transported, handled and used in a safe manner according to manufacturers' instructions and established rules and procedures.

Employees

All employees are responsible for acting in a safe manner whilst at work. By understanding their responsibilities and following our safety rules, they will help the Charity comply with their legal duties and contributing to the safe running of our workplace.

All employees have the responsibility:

- to take reasonable care of our own safety
- to take reasonable care of the safety of others affected by what we do or fail to do
- not to interfere with or misuse, intentionally or recklessly, anything provided in the interests of safety
- to co-operate so that we as individuals and our organisation can fulfil our legal duties e.g. comply with our safety rules
- to set a good personal example in relation to health and safety.

First aid personnel have the responsibility to:

- administer First Aid in accordance with the current legislation and approved code of practice
- record all accidents that are reported to them in the Accident Book
- re-stock first aid boxes at regular intervals and when necessary.

Fire Marshals have the responsibility to carry out the duties for which they are trained when emergency evacuation of the workplace is required.

Arrangements for the management of health and safety

Clare Burgess (CEO) is responsible for the overall health and safety in this organisation. However, everyone in the Charity has responsibilities in relation to health and safety, as set out in this policy.

On a day to day basis the Centre Managers are responsible for the Faversham and the Sittingbourne sites. Any concerns will be escalated to the CEO.

Responsibilities of the employer

The employer is responsible for ensuring that the employee's health and safety is protected in all activities at work. In particular, the employer is responsible for the following:-

- **Ensuring that there is safe and adequate plant and equipment**

The employer will ensure that all plant and equipment is regularly inspected and maintained, in accordance with a maintenance schedule. All repairs will be carried out at the earliest opportunity. If any plant or equipment is judged to be damaged or unsuitable for use for any reason it will be put out of action, with clear signage.

- **Safe premises and place of work**

The employer will ensure that the premises are safe, and that all hazards are removed where possible. If it is not possible to remove a hazard clear signage will be displayed advising employees and any other visitors to the premises of the nature of the hazard and the precautions that should be taken.

- **Competent and safe fellow employees**

The employer will ensure that all employees receive the appropriate training so that they are competent in all their work duties. If any employee acts in a manner that is likely to put others in danger appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

- **A safe system of work**

The employer will ensure that all processes of work are safe. If there are any hazards the employer will endeavour to remove them. If that is not possible appropriate signage will be displayed advising employees and any other visitors to the premises of the nature of the hazard and the precautions that should be taken.

- **Responsibilities of the employee**

The employee is responsible for ensuring that his/her actions do not cause danger to themselves or to anyone else. The primary responsibilities of the employee include the following.

- **Not to tamper with any equipment**

Employees should not carry out any alterations to equipment which might compromise health and safety. Employees who do tamper with equipment are likely to face disciplinary action, which could include summary dismissal.

- **Not to use any equipment without receiving appropriate training**

No employee should use any equipment without having the appropriate training. The employee is responsible for attending any training that is arranged, and completing any assessments that are required.

- **To take reasonable care of their own health and safety**

Employees are expected to act responsibly and to take care of their own health and safety. This includes wearing any necessary protective clothing and not acting in a dangerous manner. All employees must take care that their actions do not endanger any other employees or visitors to the Charity.

- **To use equipment appropriately**

Employees should use equipment for the purpose for which it is provided, and no other purpose. If any equipment is damaged or unfit for purpose in any way the employee is required to inform the employer immediately.

- **To follow appropriate systems of work**

All employees should follow the systems of work that have been specified by the employer. There should be no deviation from these systems without prior permission from the employer.

- **Personal protective equipment (PPE)**

The employer is responsible for supplying employees with any personal protective equipment (PPE) that is required.

If an employee does not have the appropriate PPE for a specific task then the employee should inform the employer immediately and not perform that task until the PPE is available.

The employee is responsible for taking care of the PPE that has been issued. If any PPE is damaged the employer should be informed immediately.

An employee is required to return all PPE that has been issued on leaving the organisation.

- **Chemicals and other substances**

All chemicals and other substances that are hazardous to health must be stored and used in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions. Such materials will have a COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002) label on them, and the guidance on this label must be followed in full.

- **Food Hygiene**

Line managers who have responsibility for food acquisition, storage, processing and serving, and staff induction and hygiene training, are responsible for ensuring that these functions are undertaken to the necessary legal standards. Any suspected outbreak of food poisoning or other unexplained and possibly food related incidents must be reported to the Centre Manager.

- **Risk assessments**

All line managers are required to carry out regular risk assessments of the area and activities under their management. These risk assessments should be carried out annually at least, and some risk assessments will require more regular completion.

The risk assessments should be recorded in writing, with an agreed target date for any actions that have been identified.

If there are any risks that cannot be eliminated all employees working in that area must be made aware.

- **Manual handling**

All employees who are involved in any lifting or carrying must attend training in relation to manual handling. This training must be renewed every two years. The line manager is responsible for ensuring that all employees requiring this training attend the training course at the appropriate time. The employee's training record should also be kept up to date.

- **Accidents**

Although every effort will be made to ensure a safe environment it is accepted that accidents can occur.

If an accident does occur this must be reported immediately to the Centre Manager. It must also be recorded in the accident book.

- If any of the following occur they must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive under the RIDDOR procedures (see www.riddor.gov.uk):
 - Fatal accidents
 - Major injuries
 - Accidents resulting in a period of absence of more than seven days
 - Injuries to the public where they have to be taken to hospital.

In addition, some work-related diseases and dangerous occurrences must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive.

Following any accident the situation will be investigated to determine whether changes need to be made to equipment, training or systems to work so that a similar situation can be prevented in the future.

- **Health and Safety Committee**

A Health and Safety Committee will operated on a bi-monthly basis, with at least one representative from each area of the organisation.

The Committee will be responsible for:

- reviewing all accidents and other incidents relating to health and safety
- reviewing health and safety training
- addressing any other incidents that have been brought to their attention.

Lone Worker and Protection of Staff Policy

**Health & Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2010 – Reg: 22/23
CQC Essential Standards Outcomes 13/14**

Policy Statement

The Organisation recognises that, by the nature of the services we provide, our staff are required to work by themselves in the community without close and direct supervision, sometimes in isolated work areas or out of office hours. Therefore the Organisation understands that staff, working alone and sometimes working in potentially isolated areas could be more at risk of harm. The Organisation also recognises that lone workers need to rely on their own judgment and initiative and may be at greater risk of making mistakes or errors.

For the safety of the workforce anyone using a vehicle for work purposes will be required to have vehicle insurance that includes the wording 'for business purposes'. Copies of annual renewals with this wording will be required for the files.

Policy Aims:

- To minimise risk to our workforce, most of whom are lone workers
- Increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working
- Ensure the risk of lone working is assessed and that safe methods of work are put in place to reduce risk so far as reasonably practicable
- Ensure there are sufficient numbers of suitable staff that have the knowledge, experience, training and skills to support the people who use our services
- Ensure that appropriate support, training and supervision is available that enables them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on safety when working alone
- Ensure that safe 'lone working' is part of the induction process for all new staff
- Encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working
- Reduce any accidents, incidents and injuries relating to lone working
- Put policies and procedures in place to minimise risk and inform staff that it is their duty to ensure they are aware of them, understand and abide by them

Risk Assessment

The assessment of all new referrals includes risk assessments identifying any health and safety issues, either in the home or the location, and any known challenging behaviour such as aggression and violence. If such risks exist the manager may make arrangements for workers to attend in pairs.

Care/Support workers must ensure they have read, understood and follow the Environmental, Movement & Handling, Medication and Risk Assessments for each individual client, before they start the service. Risk Assessments are put in place to keep the client and the worker as safe as possible.

Untoward incidents, including those that involve the use of threat, aggression or violence must be regularly reviewed, monitored and risk assessments showing the 'safe practice' updated.

When risk assessing the following must be considered:

- Is the person medically fit and suitable to work alone

- Are there adequate channels for them to contact in case of emergency
- Does the particular home, client or family present a risk to the lone worker
- Does the location present a risk to the lone worker
- Is the route safe for the lone worker
- Does the lone worker understand the reporting and recording arrangements
- Can the whereabouts of the lone worker always be traced whilst working

Lone Worker's Supervision

By definition lone workers are those that work without constant supervision, therefore procedures must be put in place to monitor them to ensure they remain safe. Part of these procedures are regular one-to-one or group supervisions, observational supervisions at the client's home and regular contact between the worker and their Line Manager, either face to face or by telephone.

Supervisions help to ensure the workers understand the risks associated with lone working and how necessary supervisions are. The extent of supervision depends on the risks involved and the ability of the lone worker to identify and handle health and safety issues.

Recording and monitoring

- Lone workers must report incidents such as accidents, or near misses, including all incidents where they have felt threatened, to their Line Manager and in the accident/incident book held in the office. This includes incidents of verbal abuse
- During supervision the supervisor will ask if there are any safety concerns that are not being addressed. Lone workers must seek advice if any safety concerns arise

Training

- All new staff must read and understand this policy as part of their Induction process
- All staff will be offered formal Health & Safety training, which will incorporate lone working

Procedures for Office/Community Services Staff

- Office staff that work after office hours must ensure they inform other office staff, friends/family of their intention. The main doors must be locked until they leave and keys must be ready to use quickly.
- No-one must be allowed in the office unless they are known.
- If a threatening situation arises the Police must be called immediately – do not investigate yourself.
- When taking new referrals office staff must ask if there are any known risks, if so it may be necessary to double up for the initial visit.
- If a member of the office staff is visiting a client at home or any other at any other venue they must ensure that they complete their electronic diary with details of times, name, address and telephone number of client they are visiting. Electronic diaries must be completed for all out of office work which includes meetings, access to diaries must be provided to your Manager/deputy and Community Services Clerical assistant.
- If whilst visiting they feel threatened or uncomfortable they must withdraw immediately.
- Staff must ensure all incidents, accidents or near misses are logged in the appropriate places and then monitored.
- Office staff must contact their Line Manager if there are any emergency situations.

- Out-of-hours staff must ensure they have names, addresses and phone numbers for all clients and workers.
- If health and safety situations arise the manager must make arrangements for new risk assessments to be put in place and monitored.
- Occasionally a decision may have to be made to terminate services if there is no solution to a health and safety risk to the workforce.
- If any service poses a known risk this must be explained to the care/support worker.
- All care/support workers must be given the opportunity to join the 'ring in' system and must be encouraged to do so if it is known they live alone.
- If a worker has not turned up for work and has not rung the office to explain then after a reasonable amount of time the office staff must investigate, and, if necessary, inform the Registered Manager who may have to inform the Police.
- All lone workers must carry a mobile phone and make sure the number is included in the staff telephone List.
- All lone workers must ensure that they have provided, by way of electronic calendar, the names and addresses and if possible the phone numbers of each client they visit and approximately how long they expect the visit to take.
- All lone workers must have a "buddy" who receives text messages indicating that they have safely completed a visit. Particular care must be taken to ensure a replacement "buddy" is appointed to cover the absence of the regular "buddy".

Distress Code

If any member of staff receives a phone call from a colleague who says "please let the dog out" they must immediately inform the Duty Manager. The Duty Manager will ascertain the colleague's whereabouts and contact the Police.

Please note that as part of our lone working policy and protection of staff the Organisation reserves the right to introduce, at any time, a call monitoring system, which will be able to electronically track the movements of our workforce.

Safeguarding Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Policy, Protocols and Guidance for Kent and Medway 2017. The purpose is to outline the duty and responsibility of staff, volunteers and trustees working on behalf of the Organisation in relation to Safeguarding Adults.

'It is every adult's right to live free from abuse in accordance with the principles of respect, dignity, autonomy, privacy and equity'.

The aim of safeguarding is to stop abuse, neglect wherever possible; prevent harm, reduce risk of it happening and enable adults at risk to have choice and control in how they live their lives.

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Policy, Protocols and Guidance for Kent and Medway 2017

Principles

This policy is based on the conviction that:

- (a) Adults are at risk of abuse in varied forms and allegations must be taken seriously.
- (b) Abuse may be committed by the staff of Organisations providing care or by others who are in a trusting relationship with a vulnerable person
- (c) Our Organisation has a duty to stop abuse and neglect. Everyone has a responsibility to ensure that a concern about alleged abuse of adults is addressed. Our Organisation has an obligation to work in partnership with The Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board to report incidents or suspected incidents of abuse.

Objectives

- (a) To explain the responsibilities the Organisation and its staff, volunteers and trustees have in respect of adult protection
- (b) To provide staff with an overview of adult safeguarding
- (c) To provide a clear procedure for staff to follow.

Pre-disposing factors which may lead to adult abuse.

The following factors may be relevant to any adult at risk whether living in their own home, a care or nursing home or are receiving care, support or services in hospital or community setting.

- An unequal power relationship (physical, emotional or financial) between abused and the abuser or living with people where there is a form of dependence.
- An adult with learning disabilities, mental health problems, or chronic progressive, disabling illness that can create caring needs which exceed the carer's ability to meet them.
- A personal or family history of violence; alcoholism; substance misuse or mental illness
- Emotional and social isolation of a carer and or a lack of support
- Minimal/no communication between an adult and carer
- Difficulties that can lead to substandard living conditions.

Preventative Strategies

The ultimate intention of adult safeguarding is to prevent abuse or neglect; promote early detection; aid recovery and promote the well-being of the adult. Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne believe the following factors positively contribute to prevention:

Helping Adults to protect themselves from abuse.

- Informing them of what constitutes abuse and self-protection from rogue traders, bogus callers and distraction burglaries
- Providing information on and the support provided by Trading Standards, support groups and self-advocacy schemes
- Making sure they are part of any decisions which affect their lives
- Supporting them to stay healthy, aware and involved.

How staff and carers can minimise risk.

- Understand the issues which constitute abuse
- Acknowledge that 'it could happen here'
- Having open and honest discussions about care issues and concerns
- Being aware of the issues of vulnerability and exploitation
- Investing time and resources into personal development, training and skills development
- Supporting a learning culture and feedback to each other (and in teams)
- Being prepared to question or challenge care practices that could be abusive

How our Organisation minimises risk

- Have a safeguarding adults policy
- Have a Whistle Blowing Policy
- Maintaining safe and effective employment and recruitment practices
- Assuring pre-service assessments are carried out to identify how a service can meet and adult's needs
- Make sure care plans and risk assessments are agreed and signed up to be all relevant parties
- Ensuring staffing levels and competence can meet the needs of adults at risk
- Encouraging good communication between staff, managers, families and adults at risk
- Recording and responding to complaints and positively deploying the learning from them
- Ensuring staff and volunteers receive training about how to use their practice to effectively safeguard and prevent abuse
- Support training initiatives about all areas of care, support and community engagement
- Having efficient reporting and recording systems in place
- Considering if apparently isolated incidents might be a reflection of problems within the organisation
- Having clearly identified channels of communication
- Having clear and easily accessible policies which promote good practice, prevention and wellbeing
- Ensuring staff receive regular, structured and recorded supervision which takes their development needs into account
- Appropriate links with other agencies
- Being prepared to listen and to respond to staff, users and carers when care practices are questioned

- Information about standards of care or issues of concern are discussed internally and externally when appropriate
- Visitors are welcomed and adults are supported to access their community

What Do We Mean By Abuse?

“Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons”.

It is the duty of all members of staff of Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne to be vigilant regarding the welfare of clients. All staff and volunteers will be trained to recognise the signs of abuse. Abuse may take the following forms:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Exploitation
- Financial abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Self- Neglect or self-injurious behaviour
- Discrimination
- Organisational Abuse
- Multiple forms of Abuse
- Domestic Abuse
- Inappropriate Restraint
- Hate Crime
- Modern Slavery or Human Trafficking
- Forced Marriage
- Female Genitalia mutilation (FGM)

What are the possible signs of abuse?

To assist in the identification of adult abuse the presence of indicators, the main signs and symptoms, may suggest that some form of abuse is or may have taken place. Age UK staff will not be responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred but should immediately discuss any concerns with their line manager and follow the Organisation’s Policies and Procedures.

Physical abuse signs, symptoms and indicators

- Hitting, slapping, scratching
- Pushing or rough handling
- Assault and battery
- Restraining without justifiable reason
- Inappropriate and unauthorised use of medication
- Using medication as a form of restraint
- Inappropriate sanctions including deprivation of food, clothing, warmth and health care needs
- Female genitalia mutilation
- Unexplained bruises in well-protected body areas e.g. inner thighs, upper arms etc.
- Skin imprints e.g. burns; bites or use of a weapon.

- Loss of hair in clumps or abrasions on the scalp from hair pulling
- Unexplained fractures
- Scalding or burns e.g. by cigarettes; rope etc.
- Malnutrition, ulcers, pressure sores and being left in wet clothing or beds.
- Vague, implausible or inappropriate explanations
- Unexplained fall or injuries especially at different stages of healing.
- Accumulation of prescribed medicine which has not been administered
- History of frequent changes of GP or reluctance for visiting a GP or seeking help

Sexual abuse signs, symptoms and indicators

- Sexual activity which an adult client cannot or has not consented to or has been pressured into
- Sexual activity which takes place when the adult is unaware of the consequences or risks involved
- Rape or attempted rape
- Sexual assault or harassment
- Non-contact abuse e.g. voyeurism, pornography
- Unexplained difficulty walking
- Bruising or bleeding in the rectal or genital areas
- Reluctance to be alone with a particular person
- Unexplained changes in demeanour and behaviour
- Tendency to withdraw and spend time in isolation
- Expression of explicit sexual behaviour and /or language which is out of character
- Irregular and or disturbed sleep pattern
- Torn or stained clothing
- Sexually transmitted disease or pregnancy
- Coerced, trafficked or manipulated to participate in sexual activity or porn
- Alcohol or drug induced behaviours which result in sexual activity
- Grooming activities towards adults at risk
- Being controlled and unable to please their partner
- Unfulfilled promises that abuse will stop.

Psychological abuse indicators

- Emotional abuse
- Verbal abuse
- Humiliation and ridicule
- Threats of punishment, abandonment, intimidation or exclusion from services
- Isolation or withdrawal from services or support networks
- Deliberate denial of religious or cultural needs
- Forced marriage
- Failure to provide access to appropriate social skills and educational development training
- Faith abuse
- Loss of appetite or overeating
- Anxiety, depression, confusion or resignation
- Social Withdrawal and isolation
- Inability to sleep and or long periods in bed.
- Depression
- Reluctance to engage with services or help

- Self-harm
- Inability to remove one's self from the abuser

Psychological abuse can amount to ill-treatment under the Mental Capacity Act 2005.
Emotional abuse can amount to criminal assault

Exploitation signs, symptoms

- Opportunistic or premeditated
- Unfairly manipulating someone for profit or personal gain
- Modern slavery
- Human trafficking
- Radicalisation

Financial Abuse signs, symptoms and Indicators

- Having money or property misused
- Having money or property stolen
- Being defrauded
- Being put under pressure in relation to money or property
- Pressure on a person regarding their will, property ownership or inheritance
- Misuse or misappropriation of benefits
- Inability to pay basic bills
- Withdrawal of large sums of money without reasonable explanation
- Disappearance of personal possessions
- Substandard living conditions compared to the adults accustomed lifestyle
- Extraordinary interest in adult's financial affairs and assets
- Loss of financial documents such as giro cheques, building society books etc.

Neglect, signs, symptoms and indicators

- Ignoring medical or physical care needs.
- Failure to give prescribed medication
- Failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services
- Neglect of accommodation, heating, lighting etc.
- Failure to give privacy and dignity
- Professional neglect
- Debilitation or weakness through malnutrition or dehydration
- Unexplained weight loss
- Poor hygiene- unkempt, dirty appearance, clothes or surroundings
- Inappropriate dress
- Pressure sores
- Poor skin condition and poor resistance to infection and disease

Self-Neglect

There is no accepted operational definition of self-neglect nationally or internationally due to the dynamic and complexity of self-neglect.

Cases of neglect should necessitate assessment by social and/or health care professionals which should be carried out within guidance contained within the Mental Capacity Act 2005. Staff are to follow the Kent and Medway Multi Agency Policy and Procedures to support People who Self- Neglect.

Discrimination, signs and symptoms

- Direct discrimination- this is when a person with a protected characteristic is treated less favourably than others
- Indirect discrimination- this is when a person with protected characteristics is placed at an unfair disadvantage by putting rules or arrangements in place that apply to everyone
- Harassment- this is unwanted behaviour that is linked to a protected characteristic which violates a person's dignity or creates an offensive environment for them
- Victimisation- this is when a person is treated unfairly because they have complained about discrimination or harassment
- Hate crime

What are protected Characteristics

- Age
- Being or becoming a transsexual person
- Being married or in a civil partnership
- Being pregnant or having a child
- Disability
- Race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- Religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Under the Equality Act 2010 it is against the law for anyone to be discriminated against because of these when they are at work, in education, a consumer, using public services, buying or renting property or being a member or guest of a private club or association.

Organisational Abuse

Refers to abusive, poor care and/ or clinical practices that may develop when an adult is living or staying in a care home, receiving respite, attending a day centre establishment, or receiving treatment or assessment in a hospital or other NHS service or in relation to care provided in their own home – and they are potentially vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. This can be especially so when care standards and practices fall below the Essential Standards for Quality of Care, as set out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Multiple Forms of Abuse

An individual or a group of individuals can carry out abuse or neglect. Patterns of harm may emerge and may include multiple forms of abuse, which can occur in an ongoing relationship, or in a service setting, or to several people at any one time. Patterns will be recorded by investigators and professionally shared as repeated instances of poor care may be an indicator of organisational abuse. Any or all types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent and targeting of adults at risk, negligence or ignorance.

Domestic Abuse

The definition of domestic abuse applies to males and females and is referred to as:

“a pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 and over or have been inmate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse”:

- Psychological
- Physical

- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional

Inappropriate restraint

This means restricting 'movement' or restricting 'liberty'. If good principles of physical intervention are not in place and applied appropriately, any form of physical intervention may be considered to be abusive. Age UK Faversham Sittingbourne does not currently deliver services for clients who would require restraint. Per-service assessments and regular reviews ensure that clients who may require restraint techniques are referred to a more suitable service provision.

Hate Crime

Hate crimes can be against the person or property and is perpetrated by the hatred of people as seen as different. An adult or child may be a victim because of race, religion, disability, age, sexuality or gender.

Modern Slavery or Human Trafficking

This is described by the UK National Crime Agency as:

'Movement of a person from one place to another into conditions of exploitation, using deception coercion, the abuse of power or the abuse of someone's vulnerability. It is possible to be a victim of trafficking even if your consent has been given to be moved. Although human trafficking often involves an international cross-border element, it is also possible to be a victim of human trafficking within your own country.'

Forced Marriage

Forced marriage is illegal in England and Wales and this includes:

- Taking someone overseas to force them to marry (whether or not the forced marriage takes place)
- Marry someone who lacks the mental capacity to consent to marriage (whether they are pressured or not)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM has been a criminal offence in the UK since 1985 and in 2003 it also became a criminal offence for UK nationals or permanent residents to take their child abroad to have FGM.

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS)

DOLS are set within the precepts of the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

An adult who would normally engage in the full freedom of a citizen, may only be deprived of their liberty when:

- They are aged over 18
- They experience a mental disorder
- It is in their best interests to protect them from harm
- It is appropriate response to the likelihood and seriousness of the harm
- There is no less restrictive alternative
- They lack capacity to give consent to the arrangements made for their care or treatment in a care home, hospital or community setting under public or private arrangements
- Detention under the Mental Health Act 1983 is not appropriate for the person at that time

Complex assessments are undertaken before a Deprivation of Liberty authorisation or order is made. These assessments include a mental capacity assessment, risk assessments and best interest decisions.

Where appropriate the DOLS process for obtaining a standard or urgent deprivation of liberty can be used where adults lacking capacity are deprived of their liberty in a hospital or care home. The Court of Protection can also make an order for the deprivation of liberty in domestic settings such as the adults own home. This route is also available for complex cases in hospital and/or care home settings.

The definition of deprivation of liberty is 'the person is subject to continuous supervision and control and they are not free to leave' When an employee becomes aware that an adult is experiencing this scenario, knows that none of the required assessments have taken place and there is no deprivation of liberty authorisations or orders they should consider the adults situation a safeguarding concern.

Priority for Raising Concerns and Making Decisions.

The Organisation is committed to ensuring the safety and care of adults and children and all staff and volunteers have a professional and moral duty to immediately report any witnessed or suspected abuse to their line manager.

If there is sufficient cause for concern, the line manager will ensure that the information is referred immediately to Social Services.

Staff should be aware that if they have concerns that their managers may be implicated, they have grounds for thinking that the manager will not take the matter seriously or act appropriately to protect clients, they fear intimidation or have immediate concerns for their own or for a client's safety they can approach Kent County Council Social Services or the Police directly.

Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne will take vigorous action against anyone trying to suppress a possible report of abuse and respond positively to reports on matters of poor care or malpractice as identified in the Raising Concerns at Work Policy -"Whistle Blowing"

Responding to initial Disclosures of Adult Abuse

Although staff are encouraged to be alert to the signs and signals which may indicate that someone is being abused, many incidents will only come to light because the person discloses this themselves. Disclosure may take place many years after a traumatic event or when someone is afraid and this should not cast doubt on the person truthfulness. Age UK staff will not be responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. This is a task for the adult protection agencies, following our prompt referral.

If someone discloses abuse to you, you should:

- Stay calm and try not to show shock or disbelief
- Listen carefully to what they are saying
- Be sympathetic ("I am sorry that this has happened to you")
- Be aware of the possibility that medical evidence might be needed
- Ensure their immediate safety.
- Make contact with the Police if you think a crime has been committed.
- Ensure immediate medical attention if required

Tell the person that:

- They did the right thing to tell you
- You are treating the information seriously
- The alleged abuse was not their fault
- You have to inform the appropriate person
- You and Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne will take steps to protect and support them.

You must:

- Use open questions, such as “Can you tell me what happened/ Can you tell me what was said/ Can you describe that to me?”
- Report to your line manager who will report to social services, or police (or CQC in a regulated setting) as soon as possible, certainly within 24 hours.
- Quickly record what was said, using exact words and phrases with ink that can be photocopied
- Describe the circumstances in which the disclosure came about
- Note the setting and anyone else who was there at the time
- Record factual information not opinion
- Be aware that your report may be required later as part of a legal action or disciplinary procedure.

You must not:

- Press the person for more details
- Interrupt when a person is freely recalling significant events ;(e.g. don't say “hold on we'll come back to that later”) as they may not say it again.
- Ask leading questions that could be interpreted as putting words or suggestions forward.
- Promise to keep secrets because this information cannot be kept a secret but can be managed confidentially.
- Make promises you can't keep (such as “This will never happen to you again”)
- Contact or confront an alleged abuser
- Start an investigation on your own
- Be judgemental (for example “ Why didn't you run away”)
- Pass on information to anyone other than those with a legitimate ‘need to know,’ such as your line manager or other appropriate person.

Procedure to use In the Event Of an Allegation or Disclosure.

This procedure must be followed whenever an allegation of abuse is made or when there is a suspicion that a vulnerable adult has been abused. Promises of confidentiality must not be given as this may conflict with the need to ensure the safety and welfare of the individual.

- a) The Chief Officer or Senior Departmental Manager on duty must be informed immediately.
- b) The Senior Departmental Manager should contact KCC Social Services on 03000 41 61 61 and have a Pre-Referral Consultation discussion. It is essential that following the consultation, clarity exists regarding the Social Service decision to make enquiries or not and if we should proceed with the disclosure referral. It is also important to establish if the adult is known to a Social Care Health and Wellbeing Case Management Team
- c) The Senior Departmental Manager must maintain a full Organisational record as to the nature of the allegation, the name and position of the person to whom the matter was reported, the dates and times any actions are taken. Information regarding any

Pre-Referral Consultation, who was consulted, decisions made and recommendations given. If required a copy of the Kent Adult Safeguarding Alert Form should also be retained along with acknowledgement of its receipt. A copy should also be kept in the clients file.

- d) Complete a Kent Adult Safeguarding Alert Form. (KASAF. Appendix 1) This can be completed on the computer using the word programme or by hand. (Guidance notes Appendix 2) All documents required for reporting purposes are stored within the red safeguarding box file and held in the offices of the Organisations 3 centres.
- e) The KASAF must be completed as fully as possible and include;
 1. Name, personal, contact and next of kin details of the adult.
 2. Whether the adult or their representative is aware that the referral is being made, unless it is unsafe for the client to be told, they should be informed.
 3. Full details about the allegation, including the date, the time, and the place where the alleged abuse happened also include Information about the adults care and support needs and why you are making the referral.
 4. Any mental capacity assessments that have been undertaken or if any Deprivation of Liberty safeguards are in place.
 5. Any other significant family members involved in caring or supporting the client.
 6. Any professionals involved in supporting the adult. E.g. GP, District Nurses, Mental Health workers.
 7. Have you consulted with a Case Manager or Central Duty Team so that an immediate risk reduction plan could be put in place.
 8. **Record in their own words what they would like to happen.**
 9. Details of any medical attention sought. Describe details of any physical injuries. The use of a body map may be useful. (Appendix 3)
 10. Identify the main and all types of abuse involved.
 11. The current situation of the adult you are concerned for.
 12. Details of the alleged perpetrator/Organisation. Consider what actions may be needed if the alleged perpetrator lives with the adult, is a carer for others or may pose a risk to children or other adults with care and support needs.
 13. An explanation as to your views on whether the adult continues to be at risk from harm.
 14. A view on whether the alleged perpetrator poses a risk to others.
 15. A view on whether the alleged perpetrator is a danger to staff undertaking the safeguarding investigation.
 16. In circumstances where there is further risk of violence to the adult provide a safe point of contact so that investigators do not inadvertently make contact in an inopportune time.
 17. Your personal details and how you or a colleague can be contacted in your absence.
 18. Full details of the person if the information was provided by someone else and if they wish to remain anonymous.
- If there is information you do not know record “not known”
- It may not be possible to supply all this information straight away and the sending of the form should not be held up. Missing information will be captured later by those carrying out further investigations.
- If the adult is not known to a Social Care Health and Wellbeing Case Management Team send the form to the Central Duty Team (See Appendix B for contact details)
- If the adult is known to a Social Care Health and Wellbeing Case Management Team please send the form directly to that team. (See appendix C for contact details)

- Completed forms should be password protected and password details sent in a separate e-mail. (See Appendix A for further instructions)

From the information provided the designated officer will assess if the case reaches the criteria for a statutory section 42 enquiry. The criteria are for an adult who is believed to:

- Be experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect; AND
- Have needs for care AND support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs); AND
- As a result of those care AND support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

The local authority are not required by law to carry out enquiries on behalf of adults who do not meet the Statutory section 42 enquiry criteria but may do so at their own discretion. Such enquiries are known as a non-statutory safeguarding enquiry.

If a decision is made not to proceed with an enquiry a referrer will be informed. The client will be offered other appropriate support to meet their needs.

Action in Emergency Situations

In a situation where there is immediate risk of harm or need for treatment, all staff are authorised to call the police or ambulance service without referring to a Senior Manager. By not doing so could cause unnecessary delay in protecting the adult, this may later be construed as negligent or failing in duty of care.

Calling the Police

The Police play a vital role in Safeguarding Adults with cases involving alleged criminal acts. Staff should obtain the consent of an individual before calling the police unless to do so would endanger any person or interfere with the effective investigation of a crime or result in the interference with, loss or destruction of any evidence. If staff call the police and there is any likely evidence this should be preserved, if in doubt consult with the police whilst making the emergency call.

Safeguarding of Children

Under the Children Act 2004 everyone has responsibility to carry out their normal functions with regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and ensuring that they are protected from harm. If in the course of their work Age UK staff come into contact with children, those on work placements or delivering intergenerational activities, they should be mindful that they may be approached with a disclosure. In this event staff should follow the same procedures as for adults. Initial telephone contact should be made to Social Service County Duty Service on 03000 41 11 11.

In most circumstances the agreement/ consent of the parent/ legal guardian of the child must be sought before a referral is made, providing this will not place the child at an increased risk of harm or compromise any evidence.

A Specialist Children's Services Child in Need & Child Protection Referral Form (Appendix 6) Guidance notes are available (Appendix 7) As with adult referrals submissions need to be password protected and emailed to Central.duty@kent.gov.uk Or Faxed to 03000 412345.

Action to be taken when there are Instances of Alleged Abuse Involving Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne Staff.

In the instance of an alleged abuse of a client the Chief Officer, or in her absence, the Deputy Chief Officer will implement the Organisations disciplinary procedures to protect a client and implement the procedures for safeguarding adults. Where a client refuses their consent for an allegation of abuse against a member of staff of Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne, the appropriate manager should nevertheless proceed with an internal investigation as laid out in the Organisations Disciplinary Policy.

If the member of staff is working within our Domiciliary Care service, registered under the Health and Social care Act 2008, and the alleged abuse involves one of its clients, a report will also be submitted to the Care Quality Commission.

Confidentiality

Concern about abuse or neglect of an adult provides sufficient grounds to warrant sharing information on a 'need to know' basis and/or 'in the public interest' and unnecessary delays in sharing information should be avoided. Whenever possible an adult must be consulted about information being shared on their behalf. Where they have capacity and they are not being pressured or intimidated, their agreement should be sought and their refusal respected. If however, others are at risk, then the 'public interest' principle may override their decision.

Staff need to remember it is inappropriate for agencies to give assurances of absolute confidentiality in cases where there are concerns about abuse or neglect, particularly in situations where others may be at risk.

Recruitment

Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne takes great care in the recruitment of staff and carries out all possible checks on recruits to ensure that as far as is possible staff have no criminal history that would affect their ability to provide safe support to our clients. Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne also co-operates in all Government initiatives regarding the sharing of information on staff who are found to be unsuitable to work with vulnerable adults and children.

Breaches of Policy

Failure to comply with the Age UK safeguarding policy may be managed in a number of ways, depending on the nature and consequences of any incident. In some cases a combination of responses may be required.

- Local authority co-ordinated safeguarding investigation
- Police investigation
- Referral to the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS)
- The disciplinary process
- Serious incident reporting to The Charity Commission
- Internal review or co-operation with an external review

Volunteering Policy

Introduction

The aim of Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne is to identify need and work closely with statutory and other voluntary bodies to provide services to support older people in accordance with the service principles of the Organisation.

In Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne we are committed to involving a diverse range of local people in our work in both formal volunteering and community activity. We do this because we believe that:

- Volunteers, in their diversity of age, experience, cultural background and their involvement within the community, bring to our work a value which adds to our understanding of and response to older people's needs.
- Through the involvement of volunteers we contribute to the building and support of active and sustainable communities based on social justice and mutual respect
- The development and support of vibrant community networks and individuals within them is vital to the well being of older people
- We work more effectively with and on behalf of older people by providing opportunities for local people to use their skills, knowledge and experience through volunteering
- As volunteers who reflect the diversity of their communities, local people bring a different perspective to that of professional paid staff, which adds value to our work
- People of all ages care about and want the opportunity to contribute to making life a more fulfilling and enjoyable experience for everyone
- Older people with whom we work value the involvement of volunteers
- By involving volunteers we can offer opportunities for genuine involvement, learning and development for individuals
- Without the contribution of volunteers, we would be able to achieve only a small percentage of our work with and for older people.

In Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne, a volunteer is any one who freely chooses to undertake work through giving of their time, skills and experience without financial remuneration other than the reimbursement of out of pocket expenses. It is work undertaken by choice and is unpaid.

In Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne volunteers:

- Serve on our Board of Trustees
- Help with the delivery of our services
- Campaign with and on behalf of older people
- Help raise funds to support our work

We believe that our relationship with volunteers is one of mutual responsibility and commitment within which Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne and volunteers have both rights, trust, respect and responsibilities. We aim to ensure that volunteers enjoy their involvement with us and gain from it in terms of their own personal objectives.

Purpose of this Policy

Our purpose in adopting this policy is to:

- Highlight and acknowledge the value of the contribution made by volunteers
- Reflect the purpose, value, standards and strategies of Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne in its involvement of volunteers
- Recognise the respective roles, rights and responsibilities of volunteers in Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne
- Confirm Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne's commitment to involving volunteers in its work
- Establish clear principles for the involvement of volunteers, clarify their roles and the relationships between them, those who involve them and those who receive their services or work alongside them
- Help to ensure the quality of both the volunteering opportunities on offer and the work carried out by volunteers
- Acknowledge the current areas of volunteer involvement in Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne

Recruitment and Selection

Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne's equal opportunities statement will be adhered to when recruiting and selecting volunteers.

Volunteers will be required to complete an application form.

It is our practice to request references and to carry our DBS disclosure.

Volunteers will be placed in activities which match their skills, talents and interests and once placed they will be required to comply with Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne's existing policies and procedures.

Support for Volunteers

- We will provide an induction programme for volunteers
- We will provide out of pocket expenses for volunteers- they will be given clear information about what expenses can be claimed and how to make a claim
- Volunteers will be given information on legislation and policies which may affect them e.g. Health & Safety and Equal Opportunities. In these respects volunteers will be treated in the same way as staff for liability purposes.
- All volunteers will be offered access to support and supervision on a regular basis, with a named person, and will be informed of who to contact in an emergency.
- Volunteers will be offered access to appropriate training to enable them to develop their capabilities and competence in relation to their volunteering role.
- Volunteers will be made aware of Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne's complaints procedure and who they should contact if they have a grievance about any aspect of their work.

Volunteers on Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne Board of Trustees

To support our trustee board we will provide:

- An induction on the role and responsibilities of board members and Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne's work
- Ongoing training
- A trustee induction pack containing useful information about being a trustee, our Organisation and its service provision
- Opportunities to meet staff and key volunteers of their choice
- Written information and reports in good time on matters related to the governance of the Organisation, Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne's constitution and other relevant legislation

Rights and Responsibilities of volunteers

In engaging volunteers, we recognise the rights of volunteers to:

- Know what is expected of them and to be given clear information
- Have clearly specified lines of support and supervision
- Be shown recognition and appreciation
- Have safe working conditions
- Be insured
- Know what their rights and responsibilities are if something goes wrong
- Be paid out of pocket expenses
- Receive opportunities for learning and development
- Be free from discrimination
- Experience personal development through their participation as volunteers
- Ask for a reference
- Be consulted on decisions which affect what they do
- Withdraw from voluntary work

We expect that volunteers will:

- Carry out their tasks in a way which corresponds to the aims and values of Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne
- Work within agreed guidelines and remits
- Be reliable
- Respect confidentiality, follow our confidentiality policy and sign a confidentiality agreement
- Attend training and support sessions where agreed
- Not discriminate against volunteers, staff, clients and others associated with Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne
- Maintain the good name of Age UK

Relationship with paid staff

- We will ensure that paid staff at all levels are clear about the role of volunteers and that good working relationships are fostered between them and volunteers
- Volunteers on Age UK Faversham & Sittingbourne's board of Trustees will observe fair and non-discriminatory standards and conditions of employment and health and safety in respect of paid staff

General

We will use opportunities to promote volunteering.

We will ensure the impact of volunteering and its benefits are promoted and acknowledged in our work and relationships with other groups, organisations and partners.

We will promote good practice in volunteering.

We acknowledge the value of employees' volunteering activity and encourage their participation in voluntary activities. Each request from an employee to undertake such activity will be considered on its merits.

Responsibility for the policy

Overall responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and review of policies and procedures lies with the Board of Trustees and on a day to day basis with the Chief Officer.

References: Equality Act 2010

Whistleblowing

Definition

Whistleblowing is the name given to the act of the disclosure of information to the employer or the relevant authority by an individual who knows, or suspects, that the Charity is responsible for or taken part in some wrongdoing.

Those making qualifying disclosures are protected against dismissal or detriment by The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

Qualifying disclosures

Certain disclosures are prescribed by law as “qualifying disclosures”. A “qualifying disclosure” means a disclosure of information that the employee genuinely and reasonably believes is in the public interest and shows that the Charity has committed a “relevant failure” by:

- committing a criminal offence
- failing to comply with a legal obligation
- a miscarriage of justice
- endangering the health and safety of an individual
- environmental damage or
- concealing any information relating to the above.

These acts can be in the past, present or future, so that, for example, a disclosure qualifies if it relates to environmental damage that has happened, is happening, or is likely to happen. The Charity will take any concerns that you may raise relating to the above matters very seriously.

Employees must reasonably believe that the disclosure is “in the public interest”. We encourage you to use the procedure to raise any such concerns.

Should the concern not meet the requirement to be a qualifying disclosure, you should raise this under the Charity’s grievance policy. Where a concern is raised under the whistleblowing policy where it is not appropriate to do so, i.e. it relates to a personal grievance, the receiving manager will confirm that the matter will be addressed under the grievance policy.

The procedure

In the first instance the employee should report any concerns they may have to their line manager or the Chief Executive Officer where the concern relates to their line manager or it is not appropriate to make the report to their line manager. All concerns reported will be treated in the utmost confidence.

If the employee does not report their concerns to the Chief Executive Officer they should take them direct to the appropriate organisation or regulatory body with authority for that area.

Following receipt of a disclosure made under this policy, an investigation meeting will be held with the employee. The purpose of this meeting is to gather as much information as possible from the employee regarding their concerns, including whether they have any supporting evidence or can identify any witnesses.

After this meeting, the investigating manager will commence a full investigation into the concerns raised. The investigation will aim to gather all relevant information including relevant documentary evidence or witness statements.

Once the investigation is complete, the investigation manager will write to the employee confirming the outcome.

If the employee is not satisfied with the explanation or outcome, they may raise the matter with the appropriate official organisation or regulatory body. Alternatively, employees may raise a formal complaint under the Charity's grievance policy.

Formal action

Should formal action be required as a result of any disclosure made under this policy, this action will be carried out in accordance with the applicable internal policy. Any potential sanctions imposed will be fair and reasonable in line with the relevant policy.

Protection against detrimental treatment

All employees who raise matters of concern under this policy are protected against detrimental treatment, up to and including dismissal, because they have made a disclosure.

Bullying, harassment or any other detrimental treatment afforded to a colleague who has made a qualifying disclosure is unacceptable. Anyone found to have acted in such a manner will be subject to disciplinary action.

Recording and Monitoring

The Charity will:

- Record the number of whistleblowing disclosures we receive and their nature
- Maintain records of the date and content of feedback provided to whistleblowers

Complaints by non-employees

Third parties outside the organisation may also raise concerns, and these may be reported to the Charity in the same way as the above procedure for employees, or they may be made direct to another organisation such as one of our governing bodies, e.g. the Charity Commission. Where they are raised within the Charity they will be recorded and dealt with in exactly the same way as detailed in these procedures. Where they are made externally and we are only made aware of them when the organisation to whom the concern was made makes contact with us, we will co-operate fully and record both the concern and the outcome in the same way as above. As before, the Chief Executive Officer will keep a record of such concerns, and circulate them to the Board.