

Safeguarding Policy

1. Scope

Age UK Lancashire's Trustees are committed to proactively safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing and welfare of all the charity's beneficiaries and to take reasonable steps to protect these beneficiaries, and others who come into contact with the charity, from harm. This is a key governance priority.

Age UK Lancashire has one Safeguarding policy that encompasses the organisation's commitment to safeguarding all our beneficiaries, vulnerable adults and children, underpinned by a suite of procedures, including:

- Safeguarding Adults procedure
- Safeguarding Children's procedure
- Safeguarding management form
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy
- HR policy and procedures – detailing safer recruitment processes
- Disclosure and Barring Service procedure
- Whistleblowing policy and procedure
- Serious Incident reporting to the charity commission procedure
- Complaints policy and procedure
- Disciplinary and Grievance procedures
- Training and Development policy, procedures and matrix

2. Principles

2.1 Age UK Lancashire is committed to developing, encouraging and communicating an organisational culture that is inclusive, open, safe and trusted and where any staff member, volunteer or beneficiary feels confident to raise concerns and report through the appropriate channels. The organisation recognises the importance of good governance and strong leadership in developing such a culture.

2.2 Age UK Lancashire recognises that it comes into contact with and provides services and activities for those who may be experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect. This includes:

- adults (aged 18 and over) at risk
- children and young people under 18 years of age

2.3 Safeguarding and promoting wellbeing and welfare means:

- protecting the rights of adults to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect , as defined in the Care Act 2014

- protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of health or development; ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable them to have the best outcomes, as defined in Working Together 2015

2.4 Abuse occurs when someone's human and civil rights are violated by someone else. This can be:

- a single or series of actions of abuse
- deliberately or unknowingly causing harm
- failure to protect people from abuse

2.5 Anyone can abuse and often it can be the person least expected. Abusers could include:

- spouse/partner
- carers and care workers
- family member/relative
- friend
- neighbour
- volunteer helper
- someone not known to the person

2.6 Abuse can happen anywhere:

- In the street
- In one's own home
- In a residential or nursing home
- In a day centre or hospital
- On your computer or mobile phone
- At any time of the day or night

2.7 Everybody has the right to be safe no matter who they are or what their circumstances. Abuse and neglect can have devastating effects on individuals, families and wider society.

2.8 Age UK Lancashire will ensure that:

- The services it provides are appropriate and do not discriminate because of disability, age, sexual orientation, race, religion, culture or lifestyle.
- The dignity, safety and wellbeing of all adults is a priority within all its services and practices.
- Individuals are supported to make their own choices and are as close as possible to the decision making process.
- All interventions take account of the ability of the individual adult to make informed choices about the way they want to live their lives and the risks they want to take. This includes their ability to:
 - Understand the implications of their situation;
 - To take action themselves to prevent abuse;

- To participate to the fullest extent possible in decision-making about interventions.
- Information, advice and support is provided in a form that all beneficiaries can understand and that their views are included in all forums that are making decisions about their lives and the services being offered to them.

4. Operations

- 4.1 Age UK Lancashire will support its staff and volunteers to participate fully in Safeguarding Adult Reviews, as required and will put in place processes to disseminate learning from reviews, throughout the organisation.
- 4.2 Age UK Lancashire recognises its legal responsibilities under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (amended 2012), which states that certain activities in relation to adults at risk are regulated. In response to this the organisation undertakes Enhanced DBS checks with those roles that are deemed eligible under the Vetting and Barring Scheme. Refer to Age UK Lancashire's DBS procedure for further information.
- 4.3 Age UK Lancashire will ensure that the appropriate levels of safeguarding training are in place for staff and volunteers, as detailed within our annual training matrix.

5. Responsibilities

- 5.1 Age UK Lancashire's Trustees are ultimately responsible for safeguarding within the organisation, but certain aspects of the work are delegated to staff. The organisation's operational Safeguarding Lead is Alison Read, Engagement Director.
- 5.2 Age UK Lancashire Trustees will:
- Maintain ultimate responsibility for the safeguarding of beneficiaries, including promoting a positive and preventative culture within the organisation and monitoring and reviewing procedures and practice regularly.
 - Ensure that all employees and volunteers are aware of these procedures, where to locate them and how to put them into practice.
 - Ensure that appropriate and accessible training is provided to enable employees and volunteers to access these procedures and feel confident in using them.
 - make their commitment to safeguarding public by publishing this policy on the charity's website.
 - report all serious incidents to the Charity Commission according to its legal and regulatory expectations. A serious incident is an adverse event, whether actual or alleged, which results in or risks significant:
 - harm to a charity's work, beneficiaries or reputation
 - loss of a charity's money or assets
 - damage to a charity's property

- 5.3 Age UK Lancashire's Engagement Director will:
- Take overall responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation of the safeguarding policy and procedure.
 - Report at least quarterly to the Board of Trustees on all safeguarding allegations, reports or incidents, expediting reports should there be a serious incident.
 - Report at least annually to the Board of Trustees on learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews.
- 5.4 Age UK Lancashire Managers and Directors will:
- Ensure that staff are given an opportunity to discuss concerns, incidents or safeguarding alerts with Managers, to learn from their experiences and explore training requirements. Safeguarding supervision will be provided outside of formal appraisal processes.
 - Ensure that all information and records relating to safeguarding matters are stored safely and securely.
- 5.5 Age UK Lancashire employees and volunteers have a responsibility to:
- Report promptly any concerns or suspicions that an adult or child at risk is being, or is at risk of being, abused.
 - Use the Age UK Lancashire procedures to report all such matters.
 - Give a high priority to taking appropriate actions to protect beneficiaries from abuse.
 - Protect the dignity, safety and wellbeing of the individual as a priority.
- 5.6 Failure to follow this policy and related procedures will be dealt with as a very serious matter.

6. The role of the Charity Commission:

“In the context of safeguarding issues, the Charity Commission has a specific regulatory role which is focused on the conduct of trustees and the steps they take to protect beneficiaries and other persons who come into contact with the charity.

The Commission's aim is to make sure that charities that work with or provide services to vulnerable beneficiaries comply with their legal duties, and take reasonable steps to protect them from harm and minimise the risk of abuse. If something goes wrong in a charity, the Commission expects the trustees to take responsibility for putting things right.

The Commission will intervene in serious cases where they are concerned that trustees are not fulfilling their legal duties towards their charity. Where the Commission does act they use their powers proportionately, according to the nature and level of the risk and its potential impact.”

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>

7. Monitoring and Review

The implementation and effectiveness of this policy will be monitored, not less than annually. The Board of Trustees will also review the policy itself regularly (not less than annually) and recommend and implement action to ensure the policy is up to date and compliant with current legislation and guidance.

Link to Pan Lancashire and Cumbria Safeguarding Adults Board Procedures Manual: <http://www.lancshiresafeguarding.org.uk/lancashire-safeguarding-adults/policies-and-procedures.aspx>

Link to Pan Lancashire Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding Children Manual: <http://panlancshirescb.proceduresonline.com/index.htm>

ADOPTION OF THIS POLICY BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Victoria Buyer, Age UK Lancashire Chair

Signature:



Date: 27th Nov 2019