

# **SAFEGUARDING ADULTS POLICY**

This policy defines the arrangements and procedures in place within Age UK Surrey that ensure the protection of vulnerable adults from abuse. Age UK Surrey complies with Surrey County Council's Multi-Agency Procedures:

<http://www.surreysab.org.uk/> | Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board

## **Introduction**

Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to be safe from harm and abuse. It is a key philosophy of Age UK Surrey that everyone who engages with us has the right to freedom from abuse. This includes our staff, volunteers and anyone who comes into contact with the organisation. Safeguarding is a fundamental part of what we do at Age UK Surrey.

This policy is vital in ensuring our commitment to provide a safe environment and that all possible measures are taken to ensure that abuse of a client does not occur as a result, either directly or indirectly, of any of the services offered by the organisation.

## **Definition**

Adult abuse is the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any person or persons. We seek to uphold the rights of adults to live safely and free from abuse and neglect.

## **Policy statement**

- We believe everyone has the right to be protected from abuse and harm
- We strive to ensure that everyone we engage with does so in safety.
- We expect our staff and volunteers to understand their responsibilities around safeguarding.
- We enable our staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to safeguarding concerns.
- We provide everyone with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of staff and volunteers.

## **What is abuse and neglect?**

Abuse and neglect can take many forms and the individual circumstances of a case should always be considered. The Care Act 2014 provides the following categories of abuse and neglect:

- Physical
- Domestic abuse
- Sexual
- Psychological/emotional
- Financial and material
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory

- Organisational or institutional
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Self-neglect

### **Additional information**

- Abuse of a person at risk by others may consist of a single act or repeated acts affecting more than one person.
- It may occur as a result of a failure to undertake action or appropriate care tasks.
- It may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur where a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which they do not, or cannot, consent.
- Abuse can occur in any relationship and any setting and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the individual.
- In many cases abuse may be a criminal offence.
- Intent is not an issue at the point of deciding whether an act or a failure to act is abuse; it is the impact of the act on the person and the harm or risk of harm to that individual.

*For more information and resources visit:*

- <http://www.surreysab.org.uk/>
- <https://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults>

### **Responding to suspicions or allegations**

If a member of staff or volunteer thinks that someone is being abused, or is at risk of abuse, they must report this to their line manager and the Age UK Surrey Safeguarding Lead (this post is currently held by James Roberts).

It is not for staff or volunteers to second-guess the outcome of any enquiry in deciding whether or not to share their concerns.

### **In an emergency**

If the person at risk is in immediate danger, contact the relevant emergency service by calling **999**. It is important that concerns are still reported to a Manager and Safeguarding Lead, whether the concern you have is about a person who may be at risk of abuse, or an adult who may be causing harm, or presenting risk of harm, to other adults. Concerns about abuse or neglect must be reported whatever the source of harm is. It is imperative that poor or neglectful care is brought to the immediate attention of managers and responded to swiftly, including ensuring immediate safety and well-being of the adult.

### **Responding and Reporting**

Once a Manager and/or Safeguarding Lead has received a safeguarding concern, they should inform the person reporting the concern that they have a responsibility to take immediate action to keep the person safe, assess any immediate risks, gain the consent of the adult and ascertain the wishes of the adult, inform the Multi-Agency

Safeguarding Hub and explain why they may need to do this. This is called reporting a safeguarding adults concern. Any serious incidents MUST be reported to the Charities Commission as stated in the government guidance on their website.

A record of the concerns will be retained electronically and hard copies will be stored in locked safe storage managed under the Data Protection and Confidentiality Policies.

## **Respect**

It is important to respect the needs and wishes of those at risk of harm or abuse whilst taking steps to intervene and prompt action where this is needed (i.e.; where a person is not able to protect themselves).

In line with capacity legislation and guidance, we should assume that people are able to make their own informed decisions and give or empower them to access the support they need to do this.

We need to override peoples consent if the person has been or is at risk of being harmed by a member of staff or volunteer and to consider this in specific circumstances including if we have a reasonable belief that:

- The person lacks the decision making capacity to make their own informed safeguarding decision
- Taking action is in the public interest
- The person is under duress and this is affecting their ability to make their own informed safeguarding decision

## **Concerns about conduct of a member of staff or volunteer**

Where the concern relates to a member of staff or volunteer it should be reported to the Line Manager, Safeguarding Lead and Chief Executive. This will then be directly reported to Social Services (or, in an emergency, the police), who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the client in question, and any other client who may be at risk. This may involve the implementation of the following policies:

- Whistleblowing Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Disciplinary Policy

There may be three types of investigation:

- A criminal investigation
- A Safeguarding Adults investigation
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation

The results of the policy and safeguarding investigation may well influence a subsequent disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

Age UK Surrey will fully support any member of staff or volunteer who, in good faith, reports their concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a vulnerable adult.

### **Confidentiality**

Every effort will be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and shared on a need to know basis only. Confidentiality is not absolute and may be broken in certain circumstances where there is evidence that sharing information is necessary in exceptional cases to prevent: serious crime, danger to a person's life, danger to others, danger to the community or danger to the health of the person.

### **Recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers**

Age UK Surrey recognises that opportunities always exist for vulnerable adults to be abused and all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with them. The recruitment processes will therefore include the following:

All staff and volunteers will complete an application form. The form will seek information about the applicant's work experience and ask for self-disclosure about any criminal record, where appropriate. Two references are required.

- For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, Age UK Surrey will submit an application for a DBS Certificate. An individual should not commence in post until DBS clearance has been given, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- All staff and volunteers will have a basic introduction to safeguarding adults included as part of their induction training. Frontline staff will receive further safeguarding training.

### **Internal documents to support this policy**

<b>Document</b>	<b>Where it can be found</b>
Equality and Diversity policy	Staff handbook
Policy statement on dignity at work	Staff handbook
Whistleblowing policy	Staff handbook
Disciplinary and Grievance policies	Staff handbook
Confidentiality policy	Staff handbook
Data protection policy	Staff handbook
Safeguarding Adults Reporting Procedure	Z:\Public\Safeguarding
Safeguarding Adults Alert/Concern Form	Z:\Public\Safeguarding
Quick guide for staff and volunteers	Z:\Public\Safeguarding

## Useful contact information

<b>Age UK Surrey Safeguarding Lead</b>	James Roberts James.Roberts@ageuksurrey.org.uk 07738 278 997
<b>Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)</b>	0300 470 9100 ascmash@surreycc.gov.uk
<b>Out of Hours Adult Social Care Duty Team</b>	01483 517898
<b>Police</b>	Emergency 999 Non-emergency 101

## Review

This policy will be reviewed every year.

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Date agreed by Board of Age UK Surrey</b>	<b>Reviewed</b>
2	22 <sup>nd</sup> July 2011	July 2014
3	17 <sup>th</sup> July 2014	July 2016
4	27 <sup>th</sup> July 2016	June 2019
5	24 September 2019	