

Document Name:	Safeguarding Policy and Procedure	
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Owner (Responsibility)	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	
Document Description:		
Age UK Wiltshire is committed to safeguarding and protecting people from abuse. This Policy and its appendices provide an overview of safeguarding principles and give clear procedures to staff and managers.		
Implementation and Quality Assurance		
Implementation is immediate and this Policy shall stay in force until any alterations are formally agreed.		
The Policy will be reviewed every two years by the Board of Trustees, or sooner if legislation, best practice or other circumstances indicate this is necessary.		
All aspects of this Policy shall be open to review at any time		
Revision History		
Revision date	Summary of Changes	Other Comments
18.06.24	Addition of Southampton	
30.11.24	Reviewed by Designated Safeguarding Lead; further amendments made following Trustee Board meeting	

Glossary of Terms

AUKS – Age UK Southampton

AUKW – Age UK Wiltshire

Board – Board of Trustees, the collective term for all Trustees (see below)

Casual Workers – the paid personnel of the charity with a Terms of Engagement rather than a contract of employment, their terms and conditions differ from those of employees; distinct from employees

CEO – Chief Executive Officer, the most senior paid employee within the charity, accountable to the Board of Trustees

the Charity – Age UK Wiltshire

CharityLog – the database used to record & store details of AUKW clients, staff, volunteers, Trustees and other contacts

Client – an individual in receipt of support from one or more of AUKW services

DBS – Disclosure and Barring Service; used to refer to the check made on an individual to ensure they are suitable to work with vulnerable individuals

Employees – the paid personnel of the charity with a Contract of Employment, whether that be permanent, temporary or fixed term; distinct from Casual Workers

Senior Management Team (SMT) – comprises the CEO, Operations Manager -Deputy CEO, Programme Manager.

Staff – collective term for all paid personnel within the charity irrespective of their contract type; includes both employees and casual workers

Trustees - The people who share ultimate responsibility for governing the charity and directing how it is managed and run. The Trustees are legally responsible for the charity. Trustees are volunteers and are not paid other than reimbursement of expenses.

Volunteers – the unpaid personnel of the charity, volunteers give their time freely and are not obliged to do work for the charity, equally the charity is not obliged to provide them with work, volunteers do not have rights under employment law

Policy Statement

Age UK Wiltshire is committed to the right of all adults to live in safety without fear of abuse, neglect or exploitation, and to have their dignity and preferences respected.

It is recognised that abuse can be perpetrated by anyone: staff, volunteers, clients, family or members of the public.

Age UK Wiltshire follows Wiltshire Council's / Swindon Borough Council's / Southampton City Council's Adult Safeguarding Board's Safeguarding guidance, to ensure that reported concerns and allegations are followed up in a professional, timely and respectful manner.

Age UK Wiltshire works to promote the health, safety, and wellbeing of all adults with whom it works.

Age UK Wiltshire recognises that it is the right of adults who have mental capacity, to make their own choices, irrespective of how unwise it may consider certain decisions to be. Age UK Wiltshire adopts the Mental Capacity Act 2005 Presumption of Mental Capacity, unless a person's apparent comprehension of a situation gives rise to doubt.

Age UK Wiltshire recognises the right of people to make their own decisions. The mental capacity of the adult concerned to consent to information being shared, is a key element in considering any onward disclosure to another agency. This is important in helping to take appropriate and proportionate action in response to a concern.

Age UK Wiltshire also has a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

1. Key Principles of Adult Safeguarding

Six key principles are followed which underpin all adult safeguarding work.

- **Empowerment:** support for individuals to make their own decisions and decide the degree of risk they wish to carry.
- **Prevention:** It is better to take action before harm occurs or risk escalates.
- **Proportionality:** the least intrusive response or restrictive intervention appropriate to the risk presented.
- **Protection:** support and representation for those in greatest need.
- **Partnership:** services working across agencies and with their communities to prevent detect and report neglect and abuse.
- **Accountability:** accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

2. What is Abuse?

Abuse can take many forms, including:

- Physical – e.g. pushing, slapping, rough handling, hitting, over-medicating, restraint;
- Sexual – e.g. rape, sexual assault, sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting to inappropriate touching;
- Psychological – e.g. shouting, continual criticism, undermining confidence, humiliation and threats. Emotional abuse such as threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact; coercion, unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.
- Exploitation: - e.g. unfairly manipulating someone for profit or personal gain
- Financial or material: – e.g. theft, fraud, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or withholding benefits, 'borrowing' and not paying back, misuse or misappropriation of benefits, property and possessions
- Neglect and acts of omission: – e.g. ignoring, excluding, or not offering appropriate medical or physical care. This can include withholding referral to other agencies e.g. GP, dentistry or welfare rights; or the withholding of medication, adequate nutrition or heating.
- Discrimination – e.g. discrimination on grounds of age, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or personal prejudice resulting in harassment or slurs.
- Institutional – where the culture in an institution or specific care setting, undermines individual choice and self-determination, such as where a client is prevented from accessing services and goods to which they are entitled; neglect or poor care practice
- Self Neglect: e.g. lack of self-care, squalor or hoarding.
- Domestic abuse – e.g. physical or sexual violence or threats, controlling behaviour.
- Modern slavery, e.g. forced labour or domestic servitude.

3. Who is an Adult at Risk?

The Care Act 2014 redefined who may be seen as a 'vulnerable adult' and refers instead to 'adults at risk'. An adult at risk may be any person aged 18 years or over who:

- has care and support needs *and*
- is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect *and*
- is unable to protect themselves because of their care and support needs.

4. Safeguarding Children

Age UK Wiltshire works with adults, but from time-to-time will come into contact with children under the age of 18, through students on work experience placed within the Charity, some event volunteers and because there may be children in the household of some families that are supported.

If a member of staff or volunteer has any concerns that a child is suffering abuse or is at risk of suffering abuse, they should report this to their line manager or named person within one working day. If there is an immediate risk of harm the staff member or volunteer should ring 999.

The responsible manager receiving any such concern, should discuss it with a senior manager and, if appropriate, make a referral to the Wiltshire / Southampton / Swindon Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). A record of the concern, and action taken or not taken, will be recorded on the Safeguarding Log.

Age UK Wiltshire protects volunteers under the age of 18 by ensuring that:

- they are not in one-to-one situations with clients, carers or members of the public;
- they do not undertake any regulated activity;
- they have a named member of staff or senior adult volunteer who provides supervision and a point of contact.

5. Reporting and Responding to a Concern

- 5.1. It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to ensure that any concerns arising from situations they observe, allegations (reports from third parties), or disclosures (reports from someone about themselves) relating to potential abuse, are reported to their line manager or named person within one working day, even if they are unsure whether the concern is justified. Appendix 1 gives more guidance.

If the line manager or named person is not available, then a report should be made to any of the Senior Leadership Team. If it is outside normal working hours and there is an immediate and urgent risk to personal safety, it should be reported to the Wiltshire Council Emergency Duty Service: 0300 456 0100; Swindon Borough Council's Emergency Duty Service: 01793 436699; or Southampton City Council out of hours service: 0300 555 1373.

Appendix 2 gives more information about reporting a safeguarding concern.

- 5.2. When a concern has been reported, the line manager or named person will discuss the matter with the person raising the concern before consulting with a member of the Senior Management team in order to decide on what action should be taken, and who the responsible manager will be. The responsible manager (usually the Designated Safeguarding Lead) will ensure that the safeguarding concern is appropriately actioned and recorded. Where appropriate, Wiltshire Council / Swindon Borough Council / Southampton City Council's guidance will be followed and the matter will be reported to the relevant safeguarding team or other statutory bodies e.g. the police, for their consideration and action. If it is believed that someone is in immediate danger, the police will be called straight away.
- 5.3. The **consent** of the adult deemed to be at risk will normally be sought, before information is shared, in line with the principles outlined above. In some cases, it may not be practical or safe to seek such consent, or the adult may lack capacity in relation to this issue. In these cases, a referral, or at least a discussion, may take place without active consent and this will be clearly noted on the case file, along with the rationale.
- 5.4. In some circumstances, an adult with **capacity** may refuse consent but a referral should still be made because it is deemed *either* that the risk of physical harm is so serious that the withholding of their consent isn't reasonable, *or* because another adult or child is at risk, *or* where there is an overriding public interest. An example of the latter would be an allegation of abuse made against a staff member of an agency providing personal care where the potential risk to other adults would outweigh the lack of consent. The reasons for a referral without consent will be recorded carefully on the Charitylog case file, along with the rationale. Age UK Wiltshire will seek the advice of the local Safeguarding Team where there is doubt or concern about consent or capacity issues.
- 5.5. If the concern raised is regarding **children**, or if the concern is such, such as domestic abuse, that it will impact on any children at the same address, the matter will be discussed with WC / SCC / SBC - see section 5 above. Again, if it is felt there is immediate danger, the police should be contacted.
- 5.6. If a member of staff or a volunteer believes that their line manager or named person is involved in, or **colluding** with, any potential abuse, they should raise their concern with a senior manager, or a Trustee. Staff and volunteers raising genuine concerns about colleagues or managers within Age UK Wiltshire will be supported and their

job/role will be unaffected by such action. The Whistleblowing Policy gives more detail.

5.7. Where the concern is one of **potential discrimination or the undermining of choice** within Age UK Wiltshire's services, it should be reported to the Chief Executive Officer or a member of the Senior Management Team. An investigation of the facts will then follow to decide if any action is required.

5.8. If it is felt that the matter has not been dealt with appropriately, it should be raised with the Chair or Vice Chair of Trustees for investigation, or if still not dealt with appropriately, with Wiltshire Council / Swindon Borough Council / Southampton City Council for their investigation. The procedure undertaken by the Trustees would be that as laid out in the Complaints Policy.

6. Recruitment and Selection of Staff and Volunteers

As part of its commitment to Safeguarding Adults, Age UK Wiltshire follows Safer Recruitment processes when recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers. These are set out in the Safer Recruitment Policy.

6.1 Inductions and Training

New staff and volunteers receive an induction when they join Age UK Wiltshire. This includes attendance at relevant in-house training and updates and for Managers, where appropriate for the role, attendance at local authority safeguarding training at the appropriate level. The importance of following the AUKW's Safeguarding Procedures are emphasised, and it is made clear that breaches are treated seriously. Updates and changes are communicated through supervision, team meetings and in-house newsletters.

6.2 Supervision and Support

Staff providing services directly to clients will receive regular, recorded, one to one sessions, and an annual appraisal so that they receive adequate support and coaching, and opportunities to develop their good practice. Additionally, informal opportunities to seek advice or exchange information with the line manager or named person, or a senior manager, are provided throughout the week. All volunteers working with clients have a named person with whom they liaise about their role, and one to one or group support are offered as appropriate

6.3 Record keeping

All Age UK Wiltshire activity relating to clients is recorded on the Charitylog database. Consent to keep the record and general consent to share is sought and recorded at the first assessment. The record allows the sharing of relevant information across

services and the taking of a holistic approach in providing support as the client's circumstances change. Where ongoing services are accessed, regular reviews with the client ensure that records are kept up to date; and that a positive contribution in multi-agency discussions can be made, as appropriate.

6.4 **Monitoring**

A full, anonymised, report of numbers and type of safeguarding incidents and their resolution is provided by the Operations Manager to the Board of Trustees each quarter, and an update given at each meeting (six per year).

- The Safeguarding Log is reviewed at least monthly by the Operations Manager.
- The Safeguarding Log includes cases where there has been a concern for someone's welfare but not reportable as a safeguarding issue, including details about action taken and support provided.
- DBS checks and renewals are monitored and managed by the Operations Manager.

- Do not make judgements
 - Do not contact the alleged abuser
 - Do not share this information with anyone other than your line manager or named person
 - As soon as you can, write down an account of your conversation, try to use the words / phrases that the person used. Sign and date your record.
- 5) Take the opportunity to have a debrief with your line manager or named person; it can be profoundly upsetting to hear someone disclose abuse, and it is not something you can discuss with other people, apart from your manager or named person. Please do not share any details with anyone else, including people outside of the organisation.

If the person is injured or you judge that they are at immediate risk of serious harm – ring 999

Appendix 2

Reporting a safeguarding concern

Appendix 1 deals with recognising and responding to potential abuse. This section is about recording and reporting. **Please follow these steps unless there is an immediate and urgent risk of harm, in which case you must ring the police.** You would then record, and report as set out below.

1. Recording your concern

- 1.1. As soon as you can, write down your concerns as a file note. If someone has made a disclosure to you, you should try to record their own words as well as you can. Do not add in your own interpretation of the situation – your notes should be as factual as possible. These notes will form the basis of the discussion you have when you report your concerns in.

Remember it is **not** the role of Age UK Wiltshire staff or volunteers to undertake any sort of investigation or to confront or question the alleged perpetrator if known. This role is only appropriate for social workers from the Safeguarding Adults team and/or the police.

2. Reporting your concern

- 2.1. You must report your concern within one working day to your line manager or named person by phone or in person. Please do not rely on text, email or voice messages.
- 2.2. If your line manager or named person is not available, speak to any senior manager. Be persistent; explain that you have a safeguarding concern.

If it is the weekend or evening and you do not feel you can wait for the next working day to report your concerns, for example if you judge there is a significant risk to the client if you wait; then you should ring the Wiltshire Council Emergency Duty Service: 0300 456 0100; Swindon Borough Council's Emergency Duty Service: 01793 436699; or Southampton City Council out of hours service: 0300 555 1373.

3. If you raise an urgent safeguarding alert with the social care helpdesk you will be asked for certain key information such as:
- Name, address, gender of the person about whom you have concerns
 - Their date of birth
 - Their contact information – telephone or mobile numbers
 - Whether anyone else lives in the house, and whether they may also be at risk
 - What has prompted your concerns
 - Your name, role, contact information

If you do not have some of this information, such as the client's date of birth, do not be put off making the call if you believe it cannot safely wait until the next working day. If you make an emergency call to the police, they are likely to ask for very similar information.

Please remember we would only take this action without a client's consent if we had immediate concerns about their welfare.

What happens next: how safeguarding concerns are dealt with

Your line manager or named person will make sure they understand the information you have provided and in consultation with a senior manager will decide on a course of action, which they will explain to you.

Appendix 3

**Responding and Acting on Safeguarding Concerns:
Guidance for Managers****1. Line Manager or named person's discussion with the person who has raised the concern**

- 1.1. Responding to another member of staff or volunteer's safeguarding concern is a priority; you must ensure you speak to them that day or arrange for another manager to do so if you can't.
- 1.2. Listen carefully, reassure them that they are right to share their concern with you.
- 1.3. Check that they have made a written record already of what they observed or were told.
- 1.4. Check whether they explained to the client about what steps they were going to take next (e.g. did they explain they were going to share their concerns with their manager).
- 1.5. Ask whether in their view the client has capacity to consent to a referral if necessary
- 1.6. Reassure them that they have now passed the concern on and that they don't need to do anything further.
- 1.7. Remind the alerter of the importance of confidentiality – information shared within the organisation is 'need to know' only: talk through who this will include.
- 1.8. Check that they are ok and tell them you will let them know what you are going to do next – if you need time to reflect /consult say you will get back to them.

2. Identifying the 'responsible manager'

- 2.1. Inform the CEO or any senior Manager if s/he is not available of the concern that has been raised and agree who will be responsible for actioning it (the 'responsible manager'). This may be the line manager or named person to whom the concern was reported, or it may be a more senior manager depending on circumstances and complexity.
- 2.2. The CEO **must** be informed immediately if the concern relates to actual serious harm to a client and / or if an allegation of abusive behaviour has been made about a member of our staff, a volunteer, another client or someone from another agency.
- 2.3. The responsible manager will check Charitylog record to see if any other pertinent information.
- 2.4. If you think, based on your knowledge of the client and their situation that this is *not* a safeguarding issue, but is perhaps an indication of deteriorating health or increased need for care: make a note on Charitylog in the normal way and liaise appropriately with client, family, GP, etc. (assuming consent is in place). You should still make a note on the Safeguarding Incident Log as it came in as a Safeguarding Concern, but also note it as case closed.

3. Next Steps

- 3.1. In most cases we would want to talk to the client, to let them know that a concern has been raised and to explore the situation and their preferences about how this is dealt with.
- 3.2. If a client with capacity refuses consent for Age UK Wiltshire to make a safeguarding referral, that is their right and we would not normally override that. There are important exceptions – see the Policy. Where you remain concerned for their wellbeing but consent is refused you should discuss how to proceed with a senior manager.
- 3.3. Where consent is withheld the client may still agree to more support and/or to more contact. Check that they know how to contact us or another agency if they wish to.
- 3.4. If for some reason it is not practical or safe to seek the client's consent; but the responsible manager thinks the concern should be referred: check the client's Charitylog record for general consent to share information and then the Safeguarding Team to discuss options.
- 3.5. You may wish to seek further information or clarification from family members or carers, but this will not always be appropriate or desirable.
- 3.6. Sometimes the correct course of action is to do nothing but to note the concern and monitor the situation. You should note this decision and check it with a manager if you are at all uncertain.
- 3.7. Go back to the person who raised the concern and tell them what action has been taken. There is no need to share great detail.

Remember: it is better to seek advice or a discussion, including from the Safeguarding team, than to fret or stay concerned without taking appropriate action.