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www.ILC.org.uk

SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

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1. Purpose

The ILC is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults engaged in the breadth of its activities. The purpose of this policy is to outline the duty and responsibility of staff, volunteers and trustees working on behalf of Bath and Wiltshire Independent Living Trust (ILC) in relation to the protection of vulnerable adults from abuse.

A separate policy for safeguarding children and young people is available in the policy folder.

2. Aims

All adults have the right to be safe from harm and should be able to live free from fear of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

The key objectives of this policy are:

- To explain the responsibilities ILC staff, volunteers and trustees have in respect of vulnerable adult protection.
 - To provide staff with an overview of vulnerable adult protection and understand their responsibilities to protect vulnerable adults from abuse
 - To provide a clear procedure that will be implemented where vulnerable adult protection issues arise.
- Within this policy staff, volunteers and trustees will collectively be known as “workers”.
Throughout this the vulnerable adults right to protection from harm shall always be the overriding priority.

3. Definitions

The Care Act 2014 defines a vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs),
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
- as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it

Full definition of Care Act 2014 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/section/42/enacted>



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Where it is believed that a vulnerable adult is suffering from or is at risk of significant harm, we will follow the procedures set out in this policy. These procedures make it clear that the welfare of the vulnerable adult is of paramount importance. All workers must follow the procedure in section 4.

The most common types of abuse are:

Physical abuse - Actual or likely physical injury to a vulnerable adult; the use of force to cause pain and injury. Also included is the misuse of medication or forcing someone to stay somewhere against their will.

Sexual abuse - Rape and/or sexual assault or sexual acts that the vulnerable adult has not or could not consent to or was pressurised or manipulated into. May include non-contact activities.

Neglect - The persistent or severe neglect of a vulnerable adult, such as the failure to meet their basic needs, or protect them from harm.

Psychological abuse - Emotional abuse including threats; enforced isolation; blaming/controlling behaviour or verbal insults. All abuse involves some emotional ill-treatment.

Financial or material abuse - This is when a vulnerable adult is exploited for financial or material gain. Often valuables will go missing or there may be a change in financial circumstances that cannot be explained.

Discriminatory abuse - includes that based on a person's ethnic origin, religion, language, age, sexuality, gender, disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

Institutional abuse - This is poor professional practice, including neglect, and can take the form of isolated incidents right through to ill treatment or gross misconduct.

Historical Abuse - There may be occasions when a vulnerable adult will disclose abuse that occurred in the past. This information needs to be treated in exactly the same way as disclosure or suspicion of current abuse.



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Radicalisation and extremism - Staff and volunteers concerned about signs of potential radicalisation and/or extremism in someone they are working with should discuss their concerns promptly with their manager. Accurate factual records should be kept of their concerns.

Appropriate concerns should be reported to the Wiltshire Prevent Team:
prevent@wiltshire.pnn.police.uk, terrorism hotline 0800 789321.

This is not an exhaustive list. The worker is not responsible for diagnosing abuse. However, they have a responsibility to be aware and alert to signs of abuse or neglect. Not all concerns about vulnerable adults relate to abuse, there may well be other explanations.

4. Procedure

It is important that vulnerable adults are protected from abuse. All complaints, allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously.

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 or where there is a risk to a vulnerable adult if preventative measures are not taken.

Promises of confidentiality should not be given as this may conflict with the need to ensure the safety and welfare of the individual.

A full record shall be made as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and any other relevant information. This should include information in relation to the date, the time, the place where the alleged abuse happened, the worker's name and the names of others present, the name of the complainant and, where different, the name of the adult who has allegedly been abused, the nature of the alleged abuse, a description of any injuries observed, the account which has been given of the allegation.

If the worker believes that a vulnerable adult is in immediate danger or requires medical attention, they must contact the emergency services by dialing 999.

If there is not a clear disclosure, but a worker has grounds for concern, this should be discussed with Christine Bott, Senior Occupational Therapist as soon as possible.



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When abuse is disclosed or suspected, a worker should not ask investigative questions. If appropriate, the worker should reassure the person that you are treating the information seriously and inform them that you must alert the appropriate authorities. Do not promise to keep the information secret, or make promises that cannot be kept.

Be aware that if this person is the possible abuser, informing them of your responsibilities to report the abuse may cause them to retract their statement and hide evidence.

In the event of an incident or disclosure:

DO

- Make sure the individual is safe
- Assess whether emergency services are required and if needed call them
- Listen
- Offer support and reassurance
- Ascertain and establish the basic facts
- Make careful notes and obtain agreement on them
- Ensure notation of dates, time and persons present are correct and agreed
- Take all necessary precautions to preserve forensic evidence
- Follow correct procedure
- Explain areas of confidentiality; immediately speak to your manager for support and guidance
- Explain the procedure to the individual making the allegation
- Remember the need for ongoing support

DON'T

- Confront the alleged abuser
- Be judgmental or voice your own opinion
- Be dismissive of the concern
- Investigate or interview beyond that which is necessary to establish the basic facts
- Disturb or destroy possible forensic evidence
- Consult with persons not directly involved with the situation



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- Ask leading questions
- Assume Information
- Make promises
- Ignore the allegation
- Elaborate in your notes
- Panic

If abuse is disclosed, the worker must take the following action:

- If appropriate, inform the service user (or whoever has disclosed) immediately that the information cannot be kept confidential and will have to be passed on to appropriate agencies. If possible/appropriate, encourage them to do so themselves, with support if wanted.
- Inform Christine Bott, Senior Occupational Therapist, about the disclosure as soon as possible.
- Christine Bott, Senior Occupational Therapist, will ask the worker to pass on the information to the appropriate agency or do it themselves (see section 10)
- Christine Bott, Senior Occupational Therapist, and the worker will discuss who will inform the service user about what will happen next, so that they can be reassured about what to expect. If the service user is the suspected abuser, the alerting manager will take immediate advice from Wiltshire Council Adult Social Care (0300 456 0111) about continuing contact.

In the event that Christine Bott, Senior Occupational Therapist is not available, the worker should contact the appropriate agency themselves immediately and within the same working day as the disclosure. The information that will be needed includes: why the worker is concerned, the details of the vulnerable adult, if anyone lives with them, if they are getting help from any organisation, and who may be carrying out the abuse. The worker should as soon as possible inform Christine Bott, Senior Occupational Therapist, of their action.

Brief factual information about disclosures or events that are causing concern must be recorded as soon as possible. These must be confidential to workers and the appropriate outside agency involved. Christine Bott, Senior Occupational Therapist, should be informed of the action.



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The referral to the appropriate agency must be followed up in writing to them within 2 working days, detailing the referral time and summarising the information passed on to them. At all times the name of the social worker responsible for taking the referral and their contact details, should be clearly noted.

5. When a staff member is involved

ILC has the same obligation to report suspected or disclosed abuse when it relates to workers as it does with any other person. Please refer to the Disciplinary Policies. At first a safeguarding referral should be made following steps given in this policy.

5.1 DBS

Workers at ILC do not undertake work considered a “regulated activity”. However, all staff will be DBS-checked according to the Recruitment policy.

6. Confidentiality

Vulnerable adult protection raises issues of confidentiality which should be clearly understood by all.

Staff, volunteers and trustees have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of vulnerable adults with other professionals, particularly investigative agencies and adult social services. Clear boundaries of confidentiality will be communicated to all.

If an adult confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the adult sensitively that he or she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies. Within that context, the adult should, however, be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it.

Staff should assure the adult that they will keep them informed of any action to be taken and why. The adult's involvement in the process of sharing information should be fully considered and their wishes and feelings taken into account.



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7. Role of designated vulnerable adult protection officer

The role of the designated officer is to oversee all instances involving adult protection that arise within ILC. They will respond to all vulnerable adult protection concerns and enquiries. The designated Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer for ILC is the Occupational Therapist, Christine Bott. Should you have any suspicions or concerns relating to Adult Protection within ILC workers should discuss with her.

8. Training

All staff will receive adult safeguarding training appropriate to their role and responsibilities. This training will be provided as part of induction for new staff and refreshed at appropriate intervals thereafter.

Reading and understanding this policy forms part of the organisation's safeguarding training. Staff are expected to familiarise themselves with the policy, understand their responsibilities and know how to raise and report a safeguarding concern.

The level and frequency of training will be determined by the individual's role and responsibilities and will be reviewed as part of the organisation's safeguarding arrangements.

9. Complaints procedure

The ILC has a complaints procedure available to service users, staff, volunteers and trustees.

10. References, internet links and further sources of information

This policy needs to be read in conjunction with other ILC policies including:

- Bullying, Harassment, Whistleblowing & Grievance
- Complaints

Wiltshire Council Safeguarding information:

- <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/children-young-people-out-of-hours-safeguarding>
- <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/section/42/enacted>



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- <https://adults.wiltshire.gov.uk/Information/safeguarding>
 - <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/report-concern-about-child>
 - <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/tell-us-about-adult-being-abused-or-neglected>

BANES Council Safeguarding information:

- <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/report-concern-about-child>
- <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/tell-us-about-adult-being-abused-or-neglected>

Implementation, monitoring and review of this policy

11.1 This policy will take effect from 30th June 2026. The board of Trustees has overall responsibility for implementing and monitoring this policy, which will be reviewed on a regular basis following its implementation and may be changed from time to time.

11.2 This policy was last reviewed in June 2026 and will be reviewed annually.

11.3 Any queries or comments about this policy should be addressed to the Trustees.

11.4 Signed by Christine Bott, Senior Occupational Therapist, and designated Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer/Safeguarding Lead on behalf of the Board of Trustees.