



ADULT SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Aims

This policy has been drawn up in recognition that there is an ever-present risk of abuse happening to vulnerable adults. It is our duty to prevent abuse and to take effective action when abuse is suspected or disclosed. Abuse is unacceptable in all circumstances.

This policy sets out the steps that *The Living Room* has taken to safeguard guests who are at risk of abuse and neglect and the responsibilities of all volunteers in cases of suspected abuse or neglect.

The *Living Room* is governed by the Diocese of Norwich 'Safe Haven' policy for the protection of vulnerable adults (also known as 'adults at risk'). This document supplements and does not replace this.

Good Practice Statement

The best defence against abuse is the strength of values incorporated in *The Living Room* culture. *The Living Room* team believe that all guests are entitled to be treated with dignity, courtesy and respect regardless of their age, race, gender or ability.

Safety is embedded within good sound practice and the growing ability of guests to protect themselves, make their views known and be listened to.

Definitions (adapted from Norfolk Safeguarding Adults Board 'Speak up' leaflet' and Diocese of Norwich 'SafeHaven' policy)

Who are adults at risk?

Adults at risk are people who need more help than others to stay safe. They are people who might need help to live their lives. This includes:

- People with disabilities
- Older people

- People with mental health problems
- People who are ill for a long time
- People who are misusing drugs or alcohol

What is adult abuse?

Adult abuse is when someone hurts an adult at risk. There are many different types of abuse, such as:

- **Physical** - e.g. ill-treatment such as hitting, slapping, pushing, whether or not it causes physical injury; racially or religiously motivated attacks; a requirement for someone to work in an unsafe environment.
- **Emotional or psychological** - e.g. use of threats or fear; misuse of power in a relationship, bullying, harassment, lack of privacy or choice, deprivation of social contact or deliberate isolation, making someone feel worthless, verbal abuse, humiliation, blaming, coercion.
- **Sexual** - any sexual act carried out without the informed consent of the other – both contact and non-contact. No one should enter a sexual relationship with a person for whom they have pastoral responsibility or occupy a position of trust. Non-contact abuse includes sexual remarks and suggestions, introduction to indecent material, indecent exposure. Contact abuse may include rape, indecent assault, being forced to touch another person, sexual intercourse or being pressured to consenting to sexual acts.
- **Spiritual** – e.g. forcing religious ideas onto people, inappropriate use of religious belief or practice, intrusive healing or deliverance ministries.
- **Financial or legal** - wilful extortion or manipulation of vulnerable adult's legal or civil rights. Misappropriation of moneys or goods, misuse of finance or property, exploitation of a person's resources, misuse of a position of authority to persuade a person to make gifts or legacies or change a will.
- **Neglect** - any neglectful pattern of behaviour which seriously impairs another person. Can include failure to intervene, not giving personal care, deliberately withholding visual or hearing aids or food or drink, restricting access to medical services, denying contact with family etc.
- **Discrimination** - This is when people treat others badly or unfairly because they are different.

- **Institutional abuse** – This is when paid staff in a hospital or care home do not care properly or respect people’s rights.
- **Domestic abuse** – This is threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between adults who are, or have been, in a relationship, or between family members.
- **Self-neglect** – This is when people don’t look after themselves and this puts them at risk.
- **Modern slavery** – This is when people are forced to work or are bought or sold as if they were a piece of property.

Prevention and Risk Management

Prevention

The Living Room employs various strategies to control the risk of abuse and target the causes and opportunities for abuse and neglect. These include:

- Communication and training with *The Living Room* team about the nature of abuse and *The Living Room* Safeguarding Policy.
- Embedding the principles of safeguarding into management expectations and thereby volunteer practice.
- Risk assessment for every guest before they stay at *The Living Room* (see Referral and Risk Assessment Policy)

Targeted Prevention

Prevention strategies are specifically targeted at volunteers working with adults at risk. The Targeted Prevention Strategies include:

- Volunteer Recruitment – *The Living Room* will carry out Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks on all volunteers in regulated activity. The DBS results will then be risk-assessed by the Bishop's Adviser for Safeguarding before volunteers are approved. See Safer Recruitment Guidance for Church of England document.
- See Policy Statement for Recruitment of Ex-offenders.
- Volunteers should not be on their own with a visitor to *The Living Room*
- Policies and Procedures Volunteers are expected to follow – *The Living Room* reinforces expectations of volunteers through rules for conduct and practice and in particular:
 1. Violence, abuse and challenging behaviour policy

2. Dealing with emergencies and incidents reporting policy
3. Confidentiality policy
4. Equal opportunities policy
5. Boundaries and Conflict of interest policy
6. Police protocol
7. Drug and alcohol policy
- Volunteer support and information – All volunteers will receive support from their co-ordinator. Training will be offered and information on policy and procedures will be available to all.

Recruitment Of Ex-Offenders

- *The Living Room* has a legal obligation to protect vulnerable adults from people who have committed serious offences, and as such meets the requirements in respect of exempted questions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- DBS checks will include details of caution, reprimands or final warnings, as well as convictions, including "spent" convictions and where the post is subject to Enhanced Disclosure, other relevant non-conviction information, such as police enquiries and pending prosecutions will be included.
- Criminal records will be taken into account for recruitment purposes only when the conviction is relevant.
- When considering whether to accept a person as a volunteer or employee who has a criminal record, the following factors will be considered:
 - the potential candidate's suitability for the role
 - the relevance of the offence
 - the level of risk they pose (to the organisation and those that come into contact with it)
 - the setting in which the volunteering activity will take place.
- It might be necessary to seek further information from the candidate including the following:
 - whether or not the conviction is relevant to the volunteering opportunity
 - the nature and seriousness of the offence

- the circumstances surrounding the offence and the explanation offered by the applicant
 - how old the applicant was when the offence was committed
 - the length of time since the offence occurred
 - whether the behaviour that constituted the offence is still a cause for concern
 - whether the context behind that behaviour is still a cause for concern
 - whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour
 - whether the applicant's circumstances have changed
 - the applicant's attitude to the offence. Is it one of remorse? Does the applicant take responsibility for it and recognise the harm they caused?
 - whether the offence has since been decriminalised.
- *The Living Room* is committed to compliance with the Disclosure and Barring Service Code of Practice for Registered Persons and other recipients of Disclosure information. This Document can be viewed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice>
 - *The Living Room* will follow the Confidentiality Policy with respect to information about criminal offences.
 - If you are in any doubt about your declaration, you should seek further advice e.g. from the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Alerting

Any volunteer may be alerted to the possibility of abuse. Alerting could mean that an act of abuse is witnessed, a person is saying that abuse has occurred, or suspicions are raised.

- All Volunteers are responsible for reporting concerns, disclosures or possible indications of abuse following the procedure below.
- Information about abuse must never be withheld intentionally as failure to disclose may have an influence on the future safety of an individual.
- Disclosures and concerns should not be treated as confidential.

Those working or volunteering at *The Living Room* must never promise to keep secrets for a guest and must never be alone with a guest. Anything heard or seen which causes concern should in the first instance be reported to the Shift leader, who in liaison with the Management Committee will consider referring information on to the most appropriate agency.

If there is a suspicion or allegation of mistreatment of a vulnerable adult:

- Listen carefully to what is being said without asking leading questions or making personal comment.
- Make detailed notes on the conversation, sign and date it.
- Inform the Named Person (Rosemary Bishop, 01493 780784) who must report the discussion to the Bishop's Adviser for Safeguarding (Sue Brice, 07958377079); she will advise and contact other agencies as appropriate.
- If the vulnerable adult is in immediate danger, Social Services or the Police should be contacted before the Bishop's Adviser.

Norfolk Social Services / MASH: **0344 800 8020**

Norfolk Police **0845 4564567**

- **IN AN EMERGENCY ALWAYS CALL 999**

Under no circumstances should anyone involved in *The Living Room* take it upon themselves to investigate the situation. If an allegation has been made, it must not be discussed with the person who is being accused.

Victims and Survivors of Abuse

- It is important to respond without delay to every complaint made, that any adult, child or young person may have been harmed, cooperating with the police and local authority in any investigation.
- Victims of abuse should be signposted to organisations which can help and support them.
- *The Living Room* will seek to protect survivors of abuse from the possibility of further harm and abuse whilst they are visitors with us.