



West Heath Community Association

Safeguarding Policy

West Heath Community Association is a registered charity (no: 1124993)
and has limited liability being a company limited by guarantee
registered in England & Wales (no: 06570815)

Date of last review:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Change</i>
<i>January 2026</i>	<i>Document Created</i>
<i>April 2026</i>	<i>Approved by Board</i>

This policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis annually. West Heath Community Association will amend this policy, following consultations with the Community Centre Manager where appropriate, unless external guidance or legislation changes.

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Safeguarding Policy

Policy Purpose

WHCA activities include working with vulnerable people. The purpose of this policy is to protect children and vulnerable adults and provide stakeholders and our community with overarching principles that guide our approach. People and groups / organisations who book rooms or halls are responsible for their own safeguarding policies and procedures and are not covered by this.

WHCA safeguarding policy applies to all individuals involved in working, volunteering or attending events or activities organised and run by us.

Principles

The guidance given in the policy and procedures is based on the following principles:

- Nobody who is involved with our centre or charity should ever experience abuse, harm, neglect or exploitation.
- We all have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all our beneficiaries, staff and volunteers, to keep them safe and to operate in a way that protects them.
- We all have a collective responsibility for creating a culture in which our people not only feel safe but also feel able to speak up if they have any concerns.

Policy Applicability

This policy applies to anyone working or volunteering on our behalf. Any partners working with us should meet the minimum standard set out below.

- Other UK regulators, if applicable such as Ofsted or CQC
- Other authorities. Such as the DfES or NHS

Safeguarding should also be accurately reflected in other relevant policies and procedures.

Types of Abuse

Abuse can take many forms, such as physical, psychological or emotional, financial, sexual or institutional abuse, including neglect and exploitation.

Examples of signs of abuse (not exhaustive)

- **Physical Abuse Signs** - Unexplained bruises, cuts, or fractures, unusual burns, flinching at touch, fear of physical contact, untreated injuries or medical problems.
- **Emotional/Psychological Abuse Signs** - Withdrawal, anxiety, low self-esteem, lack of confidence, aggressive, demanding, or attention-seeking behaviour, sudden changes in personality or mood, fear, submissiveness, or being overly eager to please.
- **Neglect Signs** - poor hygiene, dirty/ill-fitting clothes, bad smell, dental issues.
- **Financial Abuse Signs** - theft of money or possessions, fraud, scams, or being pressured into financial arrangements, limited or no access to personal money.
- **Control & Coercion** - Isolation from friends, family, or support service, discussion around someone damaging property or threats to do so.
- **Self-neglect** – this covers a wide range of behaviour: neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

- **Modern Slavery** – encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude.
- **Domestic Abuse and coercive control** – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse. It also includes so called 'honour' based violence.
- **Discriminatory Abuse** – discrimination is a type of abuse which centres on a difference or perceived difference particularly with respect to race, gender or disability or any of the protected characteristics of the Equality Act.
- **Organisational Abuse** – including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice because of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.
- **Cyber Bullying** – an example would be online forums with the intention of harming, damaging, humiliating or isolating another person.

Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

If you are concerned someone is in immediate danger, contact the police on 999 straight away. Where you suspect that a crime is being committed, you must involve the police.

If you have concerns and or you are told about possible or alleged abuse, poor practice or wider welfare issues you must report this to a member of staff or a Trustee. * *Trustees are mindful of their reporting obligations to the Charity Commission in respect of Serious Incident Reporting and Government guidance on handling safeguarding concerns.* If possible, make a note of what the person has said using his or her own words as soon as practicable. These notes will need to be given to the staff member at WHCA when you report your concern.

Any discussions around safeguarding concerns must remain confidential.

Review

Trustees – This policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees. Trustees are aware of and will comply with the Charity Commission guidance on safeguarding and protecting people and the 10 actions trustee boards need to take to ensure good safeguarding governance.

A lead trustee/committee will be given responsibility for the oversight of all aspects of safety, including whistleblowing and H&SW. This will include:

- Creating a culture of respect, in which everyone feels safe and able to speak up.
- An annual review of safety, with recommendations to the Board.
- Receiving regular reports, to ensure this and related policies are being applied consistently.
- Providing oversight of any lapses in safeguarding.
- And ensuring that any issues are properly investigated and dealt with quickly, fairly and sensitively, and any reporting to the Police/statutory authorities is carried out.
- Leading the organisation in way that makes everyone feels safe and able to speak up.
- Ensuring safeguarding risk assessments are carried out and appropriate action taken to minimise these risks, as part of our risk management processes.

- Ensuring that all relevant checks are carried out in recruiting staff and volunteers.
- Planning programmes/activities to consider potential safeguarding risks, to ensure these are adequately mitigated.
- Ensuring that all appointments that require DBS clearance and safeguarding training are identified, including the level of DBS and any training required.
- Ensuring that a central register is maintained and subject to regular monitoring to ensure that DBS clearances and training are kept up to date.
- Ensuring that safeguarding requirements (e.g. DBS) and responsibilities are reflected in job descriptions, appraisal objectives and personal development plans, as appropriate.
- Listening and engaging, beneficiaries, staff, volunteers and others and involving them as appropriate.
- Responding to any concerns sensitively and acting quickly to address these.
- Ensuring that personal data is stored and managed in a safe way that is compliant with data protection regulations, including valid consent to use any imagery or video.
- Making staff, volunteers and others aware of:
 - Our safeguarding procedures and their specific safeguarding responsibilities on induction, with regular updates/reminders, as necessary.
 - The signs of potential abuse and how to report these.

Everyone should be aware of our procedures and undertake any necessary training, be aware of the risks and signs to watch out for and, if concerned, report these immediately.

Safeguarding And Fundraising

We will ensure that:

- We comply with the [Code of Fundraising Practice](#), including [fundraising that involves children](#).
- Staff and volunteers are made aware of the Institute of Fundraising guidance on [keeping fundraising safe](#) and the NCVO Guidance on [vulnerable people and fundraising](#).
- Our fundraising material is accessible, clear and ethical, including not placing any undue pressure on individuals to donate.
- We do not either solicit nor accept donations from anyone whom we know or think may not be competent to make their own decisions.
- We are sensitive to any specific needs that a donor may have.

Charity Commission - Online Safeguarding Procedures

We will identify and manage online risks by ensuring:

- Volunteers, staff and trustees understand how to keep themselves safe online. You could use high privacy settings and password access to meetings to support this
- The online services you provide are suitable for your users. For example, use age restrictions and offer password protection to help keep people safe
- The services we use and/or provide are safe and in line with our code of conduct.
- Protect people's personal data and follow [GDPR legislation](#).
- We have permission to display any images on our website or social media accounts, including consent from an individual, parent, etc.
- We clearly explain how users can report online concerns. Concerns may be reported using this policy, or direct to a social media provider using their reporting process.

Appendix 2 Legislation and Government Initiatives

Sexual Offences Act 2003

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/42/contents>

The Sexual Offences Act introduced a number of new offences concerning vulnerable adults and children. www.opsi.gov.uk

Mental Capacity Act 2005

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/9/introduction>

Its general principle is that everybody has capacity unless it is proved otherwise, that they should be supported to make their own decisions, that anything done for or on behalf of people without capacity must be in their best interests and there should be least restrictive intervention. www.dca.gov.uk

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents>

Introduced the new Vetting and Barring Scheme and the role of the Independent Safeguarding Authority. The Act places a statutory duty on all those working with vulnerable groups to register and undergo an advanced vetting process with criminal sanctions for non-compliance. www.opsi.gov.uk

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dh-mental-capacity-act-2005-deprivation-of-liberty-safeguards>

Introduced into the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and came into force in April 2009. Designed to provide appropriate safeguards for vulnerable people who have a mental disorder and lack the capacity to consent to the arrangements made for their care or treatment, and who may be deprived of their liberty in their best interests in order to protect them from harm.

Disclosure & Barring Service 2013

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service/about>

Criminal record checks: guidance for employers - How employers or organisations can request criminal records checks on potential employees from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service

The Care Act 2014 – statutory guidance

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/introduction/enacted>

The Care Act introduces new responsibilities for local authorities. It also has major implications for adult care and support providers, people who use services, carers and advocates. It replaces No Secrets and puts adult safeguarding on a statutory footing.

Making Safeguarding Personal Guide 2014

<http://www.local.gov.uk/documents/10180/5852661/Making+Safeguarding+Personal+-+Guide+2014/4213d016-2732-40d4-bbc0-d0d8639ef0df>