



## Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

September 2014

### Introductions and Recommendations

This policy is based on No Secrets, the national guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse (Department of Health, 2000)

Laburnum Boat Club has obligations to strive to protect vulnerable adults who it may believe to be abused or at risk of abuse or neglect.

The policy and procedures have been designed to encourage the development of good practice in Laburnum Boat Club, to prevent the abuse of vulnerable adults and to assist staff and volunteers in acting on reported or suspected abuse.

The policy consists of:

1. Policy Statement
2. Procedures
3. Guidance for the Implementation of the Procedures
4. Further Information and Advice

### Policy Statement

1. **Laburnum Boat Club considers it the duty of staff and volunteers to protect vulnerable adults with whom they come into contact from abuse.**
2. **We continuously remind staff, volunteers, and service providers that there are positive ways of protecting vulnerable adults. They need:**
  - to feel safe and secure
  - health and happiness
  - appropriate affection
  - lots of smiles
  - praise and encouragement
  - to be able to talk to someone
  - to be listened to
  - new experiences
  - respect for their feelings
  - rewards and treats



## **Procedures**

- 1. To plan the work of the Laburnum Boat Club to minimise situations where the abuse of vulnerable adults may occur.**
- 2. To introduce a system whereby vulnerable young people may talk to an independent person or where applicable, refer vulnerable adults to specialist agencies.**
- 3. To give all staff and volunteers clear roles.**
- 4. Safeguarding is a standard item on all team meeting agendas.**
- 5. To give supervision as a means of protecting vulnerable adults.**
- 6. To ask all workers to complete an application form.**
- 7. To explore applicants experience of working or having contact with vulnerable adults before appointment.**
- 8. To confirm with other groups/organisations, who work with vulnerable adults and who wish to work with Laburnum Boat Club that they undertake to follow the Home Office code of practice “No Secrets”**
- 9. To implement and issue guidelines to all workers on how to deal with abuse and to give training on the use of the same. These guidelines and training to include the following:**
  - 9.1. A reminder of the worker’s duty, both to prevent abuse and to report any abuse discovered or suspected**
  - 9.2. Guidance on what constitutes abuse and how to recognise it**
  - 9.3. Specific instructions on who to inform if abuse is disclosed or discovered**
  - 9.4. Where identified, the name, address, and contact telephone number of the Contact Person in case it should be suspected that the abuser is someone holding a position of responsibility within Laburnum Boat Club**
  - 9.5. Some indication of what might happen if the abuse is reported**
  - 9.6. Guidance on how to support the abused child or young person**

## **Guidelines for the Implementation of the Procedures**

- 1. Plan the work of Laburnum Boat Club to minimise situations where the abuse of vulnerable adults may occur.**
- 2. Arrange that, as far as possible, a worker is not left alone with a child or young person where there is little, or no opportunity of the activity being observed by others. This may mean groups working within the same large room or working in an adjoining room with the door left open. This good practice can be of as much benefit to the adult as to the vulnerable adult.**
- 3. When meeting with a vulnerable adult individually off site, workers will take reasonable measures to ensure the safety of the vulnerable adult and themselves by informing relevant people where they are going and the time of their expected return.**
- 4. Where possible have two workers present with a group.**
- 5. If there is only one activity taking place at least two workers must be present.**
- 6. Never take a group off the premises with fewer than two adults.**
- 7. Where vulnerable adults have to be transported by car or minibus arrange, as far as possible, to have more than one adult in the vehicle.**
- 8. Give all committee members, staff, volunteers and service providers clear roles.**

- 8.1. Abuse of vulnerable adults is most easily concealed where there is confusion amongst adults about roles and responsibilities. Laburnum Boat Club's committee members, staff, volunteers, and service providers should have a job description, which include their responsibilities for the protection of vulnerable adults.
- 8.2. Volunteers and service providers should also have a clear idea of what is expected of them, as outlined in the Volunteer Contract accompanied by induction and training.

## **9. Use supervision as a means of protecting vulnerable adults.**

- 9.1. Regular opportunities should be made for workers to meet to review and plan their work, to share their experiences, to receive training and to talk about their relationships with vulnerable adults. Special attention should be paid to any situation in which a vulnerable adult is being either highly favoured or harshly treated as these could be signs of abuse.
- 9.2. When possible, leaders of groups should take opportunities to observe those for whom they are responsible as they work with vulnerable adults.

## **10. Service providers**

- 10.1. All service providers must provide details of referees along with a copy of their DBS Certificate. References will be sought in writing for all service providers. It will be made clear that the person will be working with vulnerable adults and that their views on their suitability for this work will be taken into consideration. If replies are vague or ambiguous it may be necessary for them to be followed up in person or by telephone.

## **11. All workers must complete an application form**

- 11.1. All staff and volunteers need to fully complete an application form and provide details of referees.
- 11.2. References will be sought, in writing, for all workers. It will be made clear that the person will be working with vulnerable adults and that their views on their suitability for this work will be taken into consideration. If replies are vague or ambiguous it may be necessary for them to be followed up in person or by telephone.
- 11.3. All convictions which involve vulnerable adults are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. This means that all convictions which relate to vulnerable adults, however old, must be declared. Information about other criminal convictions must also be given, as these may be relevant to the suitability of the person.
- 11.4. A determined, convicted abuser may well tell a lie. It is for this reason that a reference should be obtained. If the volunteer has moved frequently from one (voluntary) job/organisation to another it would be advisable to find out why.

## **12. Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Requirements**

- 12.1. Enhanced DBS checks should always be carried out on all who work with vulnerable adults. Since sometimes DBS checks take a long time to be processed, while the check is moving through the system the person will be allowed to work with Laburnum Boat Club but will never be left in an unsupervised situation, with no co-worker.

## **13. Explore applicant's experience of working or having contact with vulnerable adults before appointment**

- 13.1. More time talking with a worker before appointment will give the opportunity to find out about the candidate's contacts with vulnerable adults. These may be through previous work within or with Laburnum Boat Club, through family contacts, through work with a voluntary organisation or in other ways. If there is any doubt about the suitability of the staff, volunteer, or service provider, this should be explored further through searching questions.
- 13.2. Confirm with other external groups/organisations, who work with vulnerable adults and who wish to work with Laburnum Boat Club that they undertake to follow the Home Office guidance "No Secrets"
- 13.3. It is recommended that should Laburnum Boat Club acquire their own premises in the future and are contemplating hiring out the premises to other groups/organisations whose work involves vulnerable adults that the following clause be added to licenses: "The Licensee confirms that he/she is familiar with the Home Office code of practice "No Secrets", has an understanding of it and undertakes to follow the code of practice contained therein in relation to work with vulnerable adults.

## **Further Information and Advice**

No Secrets defines a vulnerable adult as:

- A person (over 18) who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability\*, age or illness
- Who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

\* Disability includes sensory impairment, physical impairment, learning difficulties etc.

### **1. Definitions and Examples of the Different Types of Abuse**

No Secrets defines abuse as: 'Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.' No Secrets recognises six categories of abuse:

#### **1.1. Physical:**

- Including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanction.

#### **1.2. Neglect and acts of omission:**

- Including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

#### **1.3. Sexual:**

- Including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting.

#### **1.4. Psychological:**

- Including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

#### **1.5. Financial or material abuse:**

- Including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

#### **1.6. Discriminatory Abuse:**

- Including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

### **2. Recording of Disclosure/Concerns**

### **3. Responsibilities of Staff and Volunteers**

- 3.1. Paid staff and volunteers have a responsibility to be aware and alert to signs that all is not well with a vulnerable person. However, they are not responsible for diagnosing, investigating or providing a therapeutic response to abuse. In addition, not all concerns relate to abuse, there may well be other explanations. It is important to keep an open mind and consider what is known about the vulnerable person and his or her circumstances. No action should be taken without discussion with a member of the management team.

### **4. Disclosure of Abuse**

- 4.1. If a vulnerable person discloses that they are being abused or any service user discloses that they are involved in abuse of a vulnerable person, action should continue as below. All action must proceed urgently and without delay.

### **5. Suspicion of Abuse**

- 5.1. There may be circumstances when a volunteer or member of staff suspects that a vulnerable adult is being abused or neglected.

- 5.2. It is vital that any anyone who suspects a vulnerable adult is being neglected or abused discusses the situation immediately with his or her line manager or another member of the management team. Action should continue as below.

## **6. Action on Disclosure of Abuse**

- 6.1. There should always be the opportunity to discuss welfare concerns with and seek advice from colleagues, managers and other agencies, but
- Never delay emergency action to protect a vulnerable adult
  - Always record in writing concerns about a vulnerable adult's welfare, whether or not further action is taken
  - Always record in writing discussions about a vulnerable adult's welfare
  - At the close of discussion, always reach clear and explicit recorded agreement about who will be taking what action, or that no further action will be taken
- 6.2. At all times action must proceed urgently.
- 6.3. A staff member or volunteer informed of abuse should remind the service user that the charity cannot guarantee confidentiality where a vulnerable person is at risk of abuse or further abuse.
- 6.4. Volunteers should consult with the staff member co-ordinating their service before taking any action.
- 6.5. Additionally, all action taken following a disclosure of abuse should be discussed in advance with a member of the management team.
- 6.6. In circumstances where a service user declines to disclose, despite some work having been done towards disclosing, it may be necessary to report the alleged abuse without the service user's agreement. In these circumstances, a service user must be notified in advance of the decision to report to social services.
- 6.7. Any staff member may report a disclosure of abuse to social services irrespective of the opinion of other staff.
- 6.8. It is important for staff and volunteers to make written records of any incidents or concerns that they have as soon as possible and if appropriate to include sketches of sites and sizes of injuries. It is also important to make a record of conversations with the vulnerable person using the same language the vulnerable person used especially names used for body parts or sexual acts.
- 6.9. Full written records must be maintained of all disclosures and actions following disclosure.

## **7. Action on Suspicion of Abuse**

- 7.1. There should always be the opportunity to discuss welfare concerns with and seek advice from colleagues, managers and other agencies, but
- Never delay emergency action to protect a vulnerable adult
  - Always record in writing concerns about a vulnerable adult's welfare, whether or not further action is taken
  - Always record in writing discussions about a vulnerable adult's welfare
  - At the close of discussion, always reach clear and explicit recorded agreement about who will be taking what action, or that no further action will be taken
- 7.2. At all times action must proceed urgently.
- 7.3. Volunteers should consult with the staff member co-ordinating their service before taking any action.
- 7.4. Additionally, all action taken following suspicion of abuse should be discussed in advance with a member of the management team.
- 7.5. In all cases of suspected abuse the manager and staff member should discuss whether issues relevant to different cultures and lifestyles have any bearing on the matter.
- 7.6. As an organisation, Laburnum Boat Club welcomes the fact that people and lifestyles are diverse and does not make judgements about the acceptability or otherwise of lifestyles. However it is important that this philosophy does not stand in the way of the organisation's responsibility to protect vulnerable people from harm.
- 7.7. Any staff member may report a suspicion of abuse to social services irrespective of the opinion of other staff.

7.8. It is important for staff and volunteers to make written records of any incidents or concerns that they have as soon as possible and if appropriate to include sketches of sites and sizes of injuries. It is also important to make a record of conversations with the vulnerable person using the same language the vulnerable person used especially names used for body parts or sexual acts.

7.9. Full written records must be maintained of all disclosures and actions following disclosure.

## **8. Making a Referral**

8.1. Social services departments have been designated as the lead agencies with responsibility for co-ordinating a response to allegations or concerns of abuse.

8.2. Each of the charity's managers has the responsibility of informing the relevant social services department of concerns over the abuse or neglect of vulnerable adults. Detailed referral arrangements may differ between localities and, therefore, managers should ensure that they have up-to-date referral information for their locality.

8.3. Managers should work within the following timescales for reporting allegations or suspicions of abuse:

- Immediate if the vulnerable person is at risk of serious physical harm, or a serious criminal act has taken place, and evidence will need to be kept safe
- Within 24 Hours if it relates to a specific incident which is, or may be still going on, or may happen again
- Within 7 Days if it is a more general concern, which does not indicate immediate harm

## **9. Support to Staff and Volunteers**

9.1. Laburnum Boat Club will support staff and volunteers in these circumstances. If the social services department need further involvement from staff or volunteers following a report of abuse, a member of the management team will discuss with the social services department the nature of their needs and how they might be met.

## **10. Allegations of Abuse Made Against a Staff Member or Volunteer**

10.1. Staff and volunteers may be subject to abuse allegations. The Charity will offer support in these circumstances, but the social services department will be assisted in their investigation and the disciplinary procedure may be implemented.

## **11. Confidentiality**

11.1. Confidentiality is central to the work of Laburnum Boat Club, and the attention of all staff and volunteers is drawn to the Confidentiality Policy.

## **12. Preventing Abuse by Staff and Volunteers**

12.1. It is important that any staff or volunteers who are likely to be working alone with vulnerable people are thoroughly vetted before being employed. At Laburnum Boat Club this means as well as references being checked there will also be a requirement for offences to be declared and a Disability and Barring Service check undertaken.

12.2. It should be noted that having a criminal record does not prevent someone from being recruited as a staff member or volunteer in all circumstances. Staff should seek the advice of their manager in cases of doubt.

12.3. It may be very hard for a worker to report a concern about a colleague to a line manager but, as with all the other difficulties people will come across, the safety and protection of a vulnerable person must be the priority in any decision that is made.

## **13. Duty to Refer**

13.1. Wherever possible, staff will deal with incidents and disclosures within Laburnum Boat Club by reporting it to the Designated Officer (Dominic Hinshelwood). In his absence, to the Deputy designated officer (Beth Ettinger). In the absence of both the Designated Officer and Deputy, the report should be to the

Coordinator of Laburnum Boat Club (Jim Armstrong) and Committee Member **Rohney Saggar**. When an incident is more serious a referral or reporting of the information will take place.

- 13.2. If staff, volunteers or service providers are uncomfortable reporting incidents to the designated person, they can contact an independent whistleblowing company, Safecall. They can be contacted on 0800 915 1571 or online on [www.safecall.co.uk/report](http://www.safecall.co.uk/report) where an anonymous report can be made detailing any concerns raised.
- 13.3. Consult with the designated child protection officer (Dominic Hinshelwood) for Laburnum Boat Club or Deputy (Beth Ettinger) or Rohney Saggar, Committee Member, in his absence.

## 14. Issues of Confidentiality

- 14.1. If a vulnerable adult requests confidentiality they must be told that this cannot be promised and it should be explained that staff have a responsibility to share information with those adults who will be able to help protect them from harm. The vulnerable adult should be reassured that only staff who need to know about it will be told. This could result in the vulnerable adult not continuing the conversation, in which case your enquiries should not be pursued but concerns recorded in writing and handed to the Designated Person.
- 14.2. Staff should take care not to discuss information given in confidence outside the appropriate professional contexts. All documentation regarding the disclosure should be treated and marked as STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL and should only be shared with others on a need to know basis.

## 15. Regulating and Vetting Visitors

- 15.1. All visitors, parents/carers to any premises at which Laburnum Boat Club are holding activities for vulnerable adults will be required to wait outside, or in the company of another staff member.
- 15.2. Arrangements for visiting vulnerable adults whilst taking part in activities being organised by Laburnum Boat Club can be agreed in advance by the Coordinator or a committee member or senior member of staff in her absence, where appropriate.
- 15.3. All staff, volunteers and service providers are responsible for ensuring that visitors are carefully monitored, in a manner appropriate to the individual circumstances. **Under no circumstances, should any visitor ever have unsupervised access to other members.** Staff are expected to challenge anyone on site if they are unsure of their identity.

## 16. Internet Use and Email Policy

- 16.1. Laburnum Boat Club has a written policy on the acceptable use of its internet and email facilities, (E Safety Policy) made clear to staff, volunteers, service providers, parents and referring authorities. All staff are aware of, and follow in practice, the policy to protect staff and vulnerable adults from harm via the world wide web.

## 17. Vulnerable Adults may Wish to Talk with an Independent Person

- 17.1. Arrange for a person to be available for a vulnerable adult to talk to if they feel that they have been abused in any way. The person should be totally independent of the activities of the vulnerable adult but should be someone to whom they could relate. It may be necessary or appropriate to ask someone from a different organisation to undertake this role. **PLEASE SPEAK TO LABURNUM BOAT CLUB'S SAFEGUARDING OFFICER (DOMINIC HINSHELWOOD) FOR DETAILS.**
- 17.2. If this is done the appointed person must be given clear, written guidelines as to what action to take to stop any abuse disclosed by a vulnerable adult, otherwise they may unwittingly permit the abuse to continue. It is strongly recommended that contacts should be by telephone rather than one-to-one.

## 18. Ways of Letting the Vulnerable Adult Know that Such a Person is Available for them to Talk to

- 18.1. Display the number of Samaritans or a similar organisation on a notice board which is regularly seen by vulnerable adults.
- 18.2. Make sure that all adults working with vulnerable adults know the name of a suitable person with whom they could put the vulnerable adult in contact, or to whom they could turn to for help.
- 18.3. Consider the need also to provide opportunities for workers to talk to independent people about any difficulties or anxieties in relation to their work.

## 19. Concerns Involving a Member of Staff

- 19.1. Any concerns that involve allegations against a member of staff, volunteer or service provider should be referred immediately to the Designated Person who will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for the relevant Borough Council, (to discuss and agree further action to be taken in respect of an allegation). Any safeguarding allegation concerning the Coordinator should be referred to the Safeguarding officer and vice versa.

## 20. Support for Staff Subject to Allegations

- 20.1. The Designated Person will inform any member of staff who is subject to an allegation about that allegation as soon as possible but (s)he will have to follow directions from Social Care and/or the police as to what can be shared and when.
- 20.2. It is recognised that any allegation of abuse will cause the member of staff anxiety and advice will be given as to possible avenues of support from, for example, the Citizen's Advice Bureau or their union, professional association or Committee Members.
- 20.3. Any member of staff subject to an allegation will be given a copy of the leaflet "A guide for staff and volunteers who work with children and are faced with an allegation of abuse".

## 21. Safe Relating with our Vulnerable Adult

- 21.1. Staff, volunteers and service providers must be aware of the potential problems associated with making physical contact with vulnerable adult, especially with vulnerable adults of the opposite sex. Contact must always be appropriate to the relationship of professional carer with a client. Some vulnerable adult may have been damaged by inappropriate contact and they may be very sensitive or unable to process contacts appropriately. Acceptable "safe hugs" can be beneficial to our vulnerable adult and should normally take place in the presence of another member of staff. As a staff team we should always be alert and ready to advise our colleagues, if anything might be seen as improper.
- 21.2. There may be times when it is appropriate for staff to spend one to one time with a vulnerable adult. Staff should always ensure that proper safeguards are in place for the protection of both themselves and the vulnerable adult e.g. making sure that other staff are aware and will check irregularly that everything is okay, and keeping doors open. Regard should always be given to the potential additional problems of caring for vulnerable adult of the opposite sex. Advice should be taken from senior staff regarding what is acceptable or unacceptable risk-taking in this area.

## 22. Relationships between Peers

- 22.1. Laburnum Boat Club needs to be concerned about the quality of relationships between males and females, noting that exclusive relationships are not appropriate on Club premises. Day to day management will depend upon the judgement of staff in changing circumstances.

## 23. Monitoring

- 23.1. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Designated Person and Management Committee, and monitored in accordance with best practice. Staff, volunteers, service providers and committee members will be asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the procedures whenever they have had occasion to put them into practice.

### Contact details:

- **Hackney Safeguarding Adults** Hackney Service Centre 1 Hillman Street London E8 1DY Tel:020 8356 5782 Fax:020 8356 5043 Email:[adultprotection@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:adultprotection@hackney.gov.uk)
- **One Support** is an organisation that supports adults, 020 7428 5569, 020 7428 4236
- **Voice UK** is a national charity supporting people with learning disabilities and other vulnerable people who have experienced crime or abuse. Its helpline for carers, parents and professionals can be reached on 0808 802 8686, Monday to Friday between 0900 to 1700 BST, e-mail [helpline@voiceuk.org.uk](mailto:helpline@voiceuk.org.uk) or text message 07797 800 642
- **The Care Quality Commission** CQC is the independent regulator of health and social care in England. The commission can be contacted by phone on 03000 616161
- **Respond** is a national charity that supports children and adults with learning disabilities who have experienced abuse or trauma. Respond provides therapeutic support as well as practical advice



and information. Its helpline is for people with learning disabilities themselves as well as family, carers and professionals supporting them and can be reached by e-mailing [admin@respond.org.uk](mailto:admin@respond.org.uk) or calling 0808 808 0700

- **Victim Support Helpline** 0845 30 30 90 [www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)
  - Social Services
  - Education Services
  - Health Services
  - Probation Services
  - Metropolitan Police

**Review:**

**Date:** September 2022

**By whom:** D Hinshelwood