

South Harford & Tuckswood Community Association

At-Risk Adults Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

1) Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of South Harford & Tuckswood Community Association's (SH&TCA) At-Risk Adults Policy is to ensure that all necessary steps are taken to protect from harm, those adults who participate in activities at Harford Community Centre.
- 1.2 This policy establishes SH&TCA's position, role and responsibilities and clarifies what is expected from everybody involved with Harford Community Centre. It is our policy that carers remain responsible for their at-risk adults' welfare throughout all activities at Harford Community Centre.
- 1.3 Every at-risk adult who attends Harford Community Centre should be able to participate in activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from abuse. This is the responsibility of all members of SH&TCA and users of Harford Community Centre.

2) Definitions

At-Risk Adults

The definition of a vulnerable, or at-risk, adult as expressed in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendment) Order 2002 is "a person aged 18 or over who has a condition of the following type:

- a substantial learning or physical disability
- a physical or mental illness or mental disorder, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs; or
- a significant reduction in physical or mental capacity."

Abuse

Abuse is the violation of an individual's human rights. It can be single or repeated acts. Abuse can include: physical, financial/material, sexual, psychological, discriminatory and emotional abuse and neglect or an omission to act. It may be something that is done to the person, or something not done when it should have been.

3) Room Hire Policy

It is important that groups using Harford Community Centre demonstrate good safeguarding practice. Therefore, hire of rooms to user groups that may work with or include children, young people and/or at-risk adults will be asked to supply an appropriate safeguarding policy and evidence of satisfactory DBS checks for key members.

4) What to do

- 4.1 The following procedure refers to abuse or suspicion of abuse of an at-risk adult which volunteers become aware of while performing their roles at Harford Community Centre.
- 4.2 Any volunteer who becomes aware that an at-risk adult is, or is at risk of, being abused should raise the matter immediately with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. You should together decide whether you feel the person is an at-risk adult and whether they are at risk of abuse/experiencing abuse. If you feel it is a case of abuse towards an at-risk adult, you should inform the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0344 800 8020.
- 4.3 If the incident needs reporting to MASH, explain to the person making the disclosure what you have to do and whom you have to tell. Ensure that they are kept informed about what will happen next, so they can be reassured about what to expect.
- 4.4 A disclosure can be reported by the person witnessing the disclosure or the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Ensure that the person subject to alleged abuse is safe and supported before proceeding with any other action. In most situations there will not be an immediate threat and the decision about protecting the vulnerable person will be taken by the MASH. Where an at-risk adult is at risk of immediate harm, action should be taken to protect them by calling the police on 999.
- 4.5 A direct call to the police on the non-urgent number 101 is appropriate if the at-risk adult wishes to talk to the police at that time, and/or there is evidence to preserve and/or the alleged perpetrator of the offence may return before you can act to protect the at-risk adult.
- 4.6 Consider whether the victim requires additional specialist support, e.g. referral to victim support.
- 4.7 Record the incident and your actions as soon as possible, and give this record to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The procedure - What you should do if an at-risk adult reports abuse to you:

If someone discloses that they are being abused, upon receiving the information you should:

- React calmly
- Reassure the at-risk adult that they were right to tell and that they are not to blame.
- Keep questions to an absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
- Reassure, but do not promise confidentiality.
- Inform the at-risk adult what you will do next.
- Make a full and written record of what has been said/heard as soon as possible and don't delay in passing on the information.
- Talk to your Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.

- The report will include the following:
 - The at-risk person's name, contact details and date of birth
 - Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
 - The nature of the allegation, including dates, times and special factors and other relevant information. Include quotes where relevant.
 - Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
 - A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also, any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes
 - Details of witnesses to the incidents

5) Support for volunteers

- 5.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be available to the volunteers reporting the incident to talk it through, and offer additional support. If the police or other agencies need further information or involvement, you will need to decide with the Chair who will talk to them and how this will happen.
- 5.2 Volunteers may be subject to allegations of abusing vulnerable people. While support will be offered by SH&TCA, the police or other agencies will be given all assistance in pursuing any investigation. Suspension from the organisation may be implemented.

6) Confidentiality

SH&TCA respects everyone's right to confidentiality. However, we believe that the welfare of at-risk adults has to take priority, and we have a duty to disclose abuse to the appropriate agency if deemed necessary.

7) Named Designated Safeguarding Lead:

For 2025-26 the following Designated Officer(s) are in post:
Paula Taylor (Committee member)

8) Contacts

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): 0344 800 8020

Police emergency number: 999

Police non-emergency number: 101

9) Review

This policy will be reviewed every year in conjunction with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Date agreed: 10th February 2025

Signature (Chair):

Signature (Secretary):