



## Somerford ARC Community Centre

20 Southey Road, Christchurch, BH23 3EH  
01202 470770/ [info@somerfordarc.com](mailto:info@somerfordarc.com)

# Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedure

## General Statement of Policy

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure vulnerable adults attending Somerford ARC Community Centre receive the protection and support, they need if at risk from abuse and to provide clear directions to the Trustees, employees, and volunteers of Somerford ARC Community Centre of the procedures to be followed where vulnerable adult protection is required.

This policy is to be reviewed every two years.

### 1. Introduction

1.1. A vulnerable adult (aged 18 years and over) as referred to in the 1997 Consultation Paper "Who Decides" is a person who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of:

- Mental Health.
- Other Disability.
- Age.
- Illness.
- Who is unable to take care of himself or herself.
- Unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

### 2. Legal Framework

2.1. This Policy is written in line with the requirements of:

- Human Rights Act 1998.
- Mental Capacity ACT 2005.
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.
- Data Protection Act 1998.
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

### 3. What is Abuse?

3.1. Abuse is a violation if an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons, as stated in Department of Health's "No Secrets" Report.

3.2. Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and it may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.



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### 4. Recognizing the different types of abuse

4.1. The Department of Health “No Secrets” report identifies the following as the main forms of abuse and that any or all these types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence, or ignorance:

- **Physical abuse:** including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, and misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions.
- **Sexual abuse:** 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.
- **Psychological abuse:** 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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **Discriminatory abuse:** including racist, sexist, that based on a person’s disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs, or similar treatment.

### 5. Signs of Abuse

5.1. Physical Abuse:

- History of unexplained falls or minor injuries.
- Bruising in well-protected areas
- Finger marks.
- Burns of unusual location or type.
- Injuries found at different states of healing.
- Injury shape similar to an object.
- Injuries to head/face/scalp.
- History of moving from doctor to doctor, or between social care agencies, or reluctance to seek help.
- Accounts which vary with time or are inconsistent with physical evidence.
- Weight loss owing to malnutrition, or rapid weight gain.
- Ulcers, bed sores and being left in wet clothing.
- Drowsiness owing to too much medication, or lack of medication causing recurring crises/hospital admissions.

5.2. Sexual abuse signs:

- Disclosure or partial disclosure (use of phrases such as ‘It’s a secret’).
- Medical problems, g. genital infections, pregnancy, difficulty walking or sitting.



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- Disturbed behaviour, e.g., depression, sudden withdrawal from activities, loss of previous skills, sleeplessness or nightmares, self-injury, showing fear or aggression to one person, inappropriately seductive behaviour, loss of appetite or difficulty in keeping food down.
- Unusual circumstances, e.g. two service users found in a toilet/bathroom area, one of them distressed.

### 5.3. Psychological/emotional signs

- Isolation.
- Unkempt, unwashed, smell.
- Over meticulousness.
- Inappropriate dress.
- Withdrawnness, agitation, anxiety, not wanting to be touched.
- Change in appetite.
- Insomnia, or need for excessive sleep.
- Tearfulness.
- Unexplained paranoia, or excessive fears.
- Low self-esteem.
- Confusion.

### 5.4. Signs of neglect

- Poor physical condition.
- Clothing in poor condition.
- Inadequate diet.
- Untreated injuries or medical problems.
- Failure to be given prescribed medication.
- Poor personal hygiene.

### 5.5. Signs of financial or material vulnerability

- Unexplained or sudden inability to pay bills.
- Unexplained or sudden withdrawal of money from accounts.
- Disparity between assets and satisfactory living conditions.
- Unusual level of interest by family members and other people in the vulnerable persons assets.

### 5.6. Signs of discrimination

- Lack of respect shown to an individual.
- Signs of substandard service offered to an individual.
- Exclusion from rights afforded to others, such as health, education, criminal justice.



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### 5.7. Other signs of abuse

- Inappropriate use of restraint.
- Sensory deprivation g. spectacles or hearing aid.
- Denial of visitors or phone calls.
- Failure to ensure privacy or personal dignity.
- Lack of personal clothing or possessions.
- Controlling relationships.

## 6. Responsibilities

- 6.1. All Trustees, employees, and volunteers of Somerford ARC Community Centre are expected to promote the welfare and safety of vulnerable adults.
- 6.2. All those working with vulnerable adults are expected to be familiar with the contents of this Policy and follow the procedures in it.
- 6.3. Any hire of the hall for activities involving vulnerable adults, hirers will be asked to confirm they have a suitable vulnerable adults protection policy and relevant DBS checks before the first booking commences.
- 6.4. Contractors engaged to carry out work on the premises must not be allowed unsupervised access to vulnerable adults.
- 6.5. The supervision of all groups remains the responsibility of the hirer.

## 7. Confidentiality

- 7.1. Trustees, employees, and volunteers of Somerford ARC Community Centre have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of vulnerable adults with other professionals.
- 7.2. Clear boundaries of confidentiality will be communicated to all.
- 7.3. All Trustees, employees, and volunteers are to act in accordance to the Somerford ARC Community Centre Confidentiality Agreement.
- 7.4. All information stored regarding a vulnerable adult will be marked confidential and kept in a locked file in accordance to the Somerford ARC Community Centre Data Protection Policy.
- 7.5. If an adult confides in an employee or volunteer of Somerford ARC Community Centre and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the Trustee, employee or volunteer tells the individual sensitively that he or she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies.
- 7.6. Within that context, the vulnerable adult must, however, be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it.
- 7.7. Where possible, consent must be obtained from the adult before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances obtaining consent may be neither possible nor desirable as the safety and welfare of the vulnerable adult is the priority.
- 7.8. Where a disclosure has been made, Trustees, employees and volunteers must let the vulnerable adult know the position regarding their role and what action they will have to take as a result.



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- 7.9. Trustees, employees, and volunteers must assure the individual that they will keep them informed of any action to be taken and why. The adults' involvement in the process of sharing information must be fully considered and their wishes and feelings taken into account.

### **8. Training**

- 8.1. All Trustees, employees, and volunteers of Somerford ARC Community Centre must read and fully understand the Somerford ARCC Community Centre Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy.
- 8.2. All Trustees, employees, and volunteers working with vulnerable adults will be asked to complete:
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Level 1
  - Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults (Advanced) Level 2

### **9. The Role of Key Individual Agencies**

- 9.1. Adult Social Services:

- The Department of Health's recent 'No secrets' guidance document requires that authorities develop a local framework within which all responsible agencies work together to ensure a coherent policy for the protection of vulnerable adults at risk of abuse.
- All local authorities have a Safeguarding Adults Board, which oversees multi-agency work aimed at protecting and safeguarding vulnerable adults. It is normal practice for the board to comprise of people from partner organisations who have the ability to influence decision making and resource allocation within their organisation.

- 9.2. The Police

- The Police play a vital role in Safeguarding Adults with cases involving alleged criminal acts.
- It is the responsibility of the police to investigate allegations of crime by preserving and gathering evidence.
- Where a crime is identified, the police will be the lead agency and they will direct investigations in line with legal and other procedural protocols.

### **10. Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Procedure**

- 10.1. All allegations or suspicions are to be treated seriously. No abuse is acceptable, and some abuse is a criminal offence and must be reported to the police immediately.
- 10.2. Immediately contact the Somerford ARC Community Centre Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Lead.
- 10.3. When talking to a vulnerable adult who has told you that s/he or another vulnerable adult is being abused



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### DO

- Make sure the individual is safe.
- Assess whether emergency services need to be contacted.
- Listen.
- Remain calm.
- Reassure the individual that making the disclosure was the right thing to do and they are not to blame.
- Tell him/ her that you now have to do what you can to keep them or the adult who is the subject of the allegation is safe.
- Be careful not to be deemed as putting words into the individual's mouth, only ask questions.
- Let the individual know what you are going to do next and who else needs to be involved.
- Let the individual tell his/ her whole story.
- Make sure you are clear about the information being told you and establish the facts.
- Make a full and written report of what has been said and do not delay in passing on the information.

### DON'T

- Promise Confidentiality.
- Confront the alleged abuser.
- Voice your own opinion.
- Do not investigate or interview beyond what is necessary to establish the basics.
- Do not quiz the person.
- Destroy or disturb any evidence.
- Ask leading questions.
- Assume information.
- Make promises.
- Ignore the allegation.
- Elaborate your notes beyond what the individual has disclosed to you.
- Panic.

10.4. It is not the role of Somerford ARC to determine whether an individual is at risk or experiencing abuse. If vulnerable persons or others are considered to be at risk of abuse, where actual abuse is suspected, or there are suggestions of serious self-neglect.

10.5. Somerford ARC will make a referral to:

- Dorset County Council Safeguarding Team on 01305 221016, or evening and weekends 01202 657279.
- In an emergency 999.



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10.6. If the individual is in immediate danger or in need of emergency medical attention:

- If you are with the individual remain with them and contact Emergency Services.
- If the individual is elsewhere contact Emergency Services and explain the situation clearly to them.
- If immediate medical attention is required call an ambulance and get help from the Somerford ARC Community Centre First Aider.
- Unless following instruction by a qualified telephone operator from the emergency services those who are not first aid trained should **not** treat the injured person.
- A decision will be made or who will contact the individual's carers, Local Authority or next of kin. If you are involved with the Emergency Services, Health services or Adult Social Service, they should be part of this decision.
- Consider the welfare of the vulnerable adult your main priority.

### 11. Carers

11.1. Consideration must be taken to the rights of a carer to know (unless this would place the person or someone else in danger or would interfere with a criminal investigation).

11.2. Consider the impact of telling or not telling the carer.

### 12. Writing a Report

12.1. All disclosures must be recorded on the Somerford ARC Community Centre Safeguarding Disclosure form **APPENDIX 1**.

12.2. When recording a disclosure, it is vital the person writing the report:

- Makes an accurate written record using the Somerford ARC Community Centre Safeguarding Disclosure form, of what the individual has disclosed to you.
- Only records the exact information that was disclosed to them.
- Does not include their own opinion.
- Uses exact words and phrases spoken in their report.
- Dates and times are recorded.
- They record the circumstances in which the disclosure was made, or any concerning behaviours or actions witnessed.
- They record locations and who else was present.
- Dates and signs the report and prints their name under their signature.

### 13. What to do next

13.1. When considering a referral, the following should be considered:



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- The wishes of the vulnerable adult and his/ her right to self-determination.
  - The mental capacity of the vulnerable adult.
  - Known indicators of abuse.
  - Level of risk.
  - The seriousness of the abuse.
  - The effect of the abuse on the individual.
  - The risk to others.
  - If a criminal offence has been committed.
  - The need to others to be informed.
- 13.2. Where a vulnerable adult expresses a wish for concerns not to be pursued, then this should be respected wherever possible.
- 13.3. Decisions about whether to respect the person's wishes **must** have regard to the level of risk to the individual and others, and his/her capacity to understand the decision in question.
- 13.4. In some circumstances the vulnerable adult's wishes may be overridden in favour of considerations of safety.

### 14. Consent

- 14.1. Consent of the vulnerable adult must be obtained except:
- The vulnerable adult lacks the mental capacity to make a decision.
  - A risk assessment indicates that a referral would be in their best interests.
  - Others may be at risk.
  - A crime has been committed.

**Somerford ARC Community Centre Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Lead:** Lauren Biggs

#### Associated Policies and Procedures:

- Adult Safeguarding Procedure.
- Confidentiality Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

Reviewed

Signed:

Print Name:

Role: Chairman

Date:





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## APPENDIX 1

Somerford ARC Community Centre Safeguarding Disclosure Form

### Details of person making the disclosure

Name:			
Address:			Postcode

Contact Number:	Landline	Mobile
Email address:		

### Details of person of concern

Name:			
Address:			Postcode

Contact Number:	Landline	Mobile
Email address:		

### Disclosure

Date and time, you became aware of disclosure/ concern:	Time	Date
Location of disclosure/ concern:		

Why are you concerned?

Nature of Concern:

Physical abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Psychological abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Financial or material abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neglect	<input type="checkbox"/>	Discrimination	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please state)	_____		

	yes	no
Do you feel the person or others are in immediate danger?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

\*If yes please contact 999 immediately.

Incident Number:	
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yes	no
_____	_____



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Were there any witnesses?

 

Details of witnesses

--

yes no

Is the person you are concerned about aware of this disclosure?

 

If yes, what did they say?

**(Do Not include your own opinion. State exact words and facts)**

--

Details of concern and allegation made

**(do not include your own opinion. State exact words and facts)**

--

Additional information including action taken

**(do not include your own opinion. State exact words and facts)**

**(include steps taken to preserve any evidence)**

--

yes no

Has the Somerford ARC Community Centre Safeguarding Lead been notified?

 

When was the safeguarding lead notified?

Time

Date

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Person Completing this form

Name:	
Role:	

Signed:	
Print name:	
Role:	
Date:	

**\*PLEASE ATTACH ANY ADDITIONAL PAPERS AND ENSURE THEY ARE SIGNED BY YOURSELF AND THE PERSON MAKING THE DISCLOSURE**

**FOR COMPETITION BY THE SOMERFORD ARC COMMUNITY CENTRE SAFEGUARDING LEAD**

Name of safeguarding lead completing:		
Date and time:	Date	Time
Date you were made aware of the disclosure:		

Details of conversation including any action requested of employee or volunteer reporting the disclosure

Steps taken to manage potential risks

Has advice been sought? yes      no

    

Details of advice given and from who and their contact



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Action taken	

Signed:	
Print name:	
Role:	
Date:	