

Charity Number: 1156427

Somerford ARC Community Centre

Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy

Created: April 2023



General Statement of Policy

This policy aims to ensure that all vulnerable adults attending Somerford ARC Community Centre are safeguarded and supported, particularly those at risk of harm or abuse. It outlines procedures for recognising, reporting, and responding to potential harm or abuse, underscoring the Centre's commitment to maintaining a safe, caring environment for all vulnerable adults.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. An adult at risk (aged 18 years and over), as defined in the Care Act 2014, is a person who:
 - Has care and support needs (whether or not the local authority is meeting those needs).
 - Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect.
 - As a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from the risk or experience of abuse or neglect.
- 1.1. Somerford ARC Community Centre acknowledges that safeguarding adults at risk is the primary responsibility of all trustees, employees, and volunteers involved in its activities. Protecting the safety and well-being of adults at risk is crucial to creating a secure and supportive environment.
- 1.2. As a community organisation, we are not a registered care facility and therefore cannot provide personal care or direct physical assistance. Adults at risk who require support for mobility, personal care, or restroom use must be accompanied by a carer. This ensures their safety aligns with safeguarding standards outlined in the Care Act 2014.
- 1.3. The Centre is committed to providing an inclusive environment that upholds the safety, respect and dignity of all adults at risk. We believe safeguarding is a shared responsibility and encourage open communication to ensure a collaborative approach to supporting their well-being.

2. Legal Framework

- 2.1. This policy has been drawn up based on law and guidance on relevant legislation and guidance to safeguard adults at risk, including:
 - Mental Capacity ACT 2005.
 - Care Act 2014.
 - Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.
 - UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data protection Act 2018
 - Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- 2.2. Somerford ARC Community Centre recognises and aligns its safeguarding practices with the principles outlined in "No Secrets (Department of Health, 2000) while adhering to the more current legal framework provided by the Care Act 2014.

3. Understanding Abuse

- 3.1. Abuse as defined by the Care Act 2014 is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.

3.2. Abuse May consist of a single incident or multiple instances over time. It can be physical, verbal or psychological and may involve neglect, omissions, or coercion into financial or sexual activities to which the individual has not consented or cannot consent.

3.3. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm or exploitations.

3.4. The Care Act 2014 identifies the following as the main forms of abuse:

Term	Definition
Neglect and acts of omission	Failure to meet basic needs such as food, clothing, or care.
Physical Abuse	Intentional infliction of physical harm, including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions.
Emotional or Psychological abuse	threats of harm or abandonment, humiliation, intimidation, controlling behaviour, coercion, verbal abuse, and withdrawal from supportive networks.
Financial or material abuse	Theft, fraud, exploitation, or misuse of property, possessions or benefits.
Discriminatory abuse	Harassment of slurs based on race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, or religion.
Sexual Abuse	Rape, sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented, cannot consent or was pressured into consenting.
Organisational abuse	Mistreatment or neglect occurring within an institution or care setting due to rigid routines, poor practices, or systemic failings.
Domestic abuse	Controlling, coercive, or threatening behaviour by a partner or family member, regardless of gender or sexual orientation.
Self-neglect	Neglect of personal hygiene, health or surrounding, putting oneself at risk.
Financial vulnerability and exploitation	when someone takes advantage of another person's vulnerability for financial gain.

5. Signs of Abuse

5.1. Recognising the signs of abuse is crucial in safeguarding adults at risk. Signs may vary depending on the type of abuse, the individual's circumstances, and the context of the situation. Trustees, employees, and volunteers should be alert to the following indicators:

- Unexplained injuries or frequent visits to medical professionals.
- Changes in behaviour, such as withdrawal, aggression, or fearfulness.
- Reluctance to talk openly or evasiveness when discussing injuries or personal circumstances.
- Poor hygiene, malnutrition, or dehydration without a medical explanation.
- Social isolation or a sudden lack of engagement with usual activities.
- Signs of financial hardship despite adequate income, such as unpaid bills or lack of essentials.
- Changes in physical appearance or condition

5.2. It is essential to consider the individual's overall circumstances when observing these signs, as the presence of one or more indicators does not necessarily confirm abuse. However, all concerns should be taken seriously and reported promptly to the Designated Safeguarding lead for vulnerable adults following the Centre's safeguarding procedures.

6. Responsibilities

6.1. Trustees hold the overall responsibility for promoting a safe and supportive environment at Somerford ARC Community Centre. The trustees key responsibilities include:

- Ensuring the organisation has a comprehensive safeguarding policy that is regularly reviewed for effectiveness.
- Overseeing the implementation and compliance of safeguarding procedures across the organisation.
- Ensuring that adequate training is provided to all employees and volunteers on safeguarding matters.
- Recording and investigating safeguarding concerns in accordance with the centres disciplinary procedures.

6.2. The office manager is tasked with ensuring safeguarding is integrated into the centres daily operations. Their responsibilities include:

- Implementing and maintaining safeguarding policies, procedures and practices across all activities.
- To complete thorough risk assessments and share their findings with the trustees and group coordinators. Risk assessments to be reviewed annually or following any changes.
- Supporting the safeguarding lead, employees and volunteers with necessary training materials and guidance.
- Monitoring safeguarding practices and taking corrective actions when required.
- Organising employee and volunteer training courses to ensure they are knowledgeable and up to date on safeguarding matters.
- Ensuring that any safeguarding concerns or incidents are recorded and reported by safeguarding leads using the Safeguarding disclosure form **APPENDIX 1**.
- Referring any internal safeguarding concerns to the trustees to facilitate a full investigation, adhering to relevant disciplinary procedures where necessary.

6.3. Employees and volunteers are essential in maintaining a safe environment for all adults at risk. Their responsibilities include:

- Familiarising themselves with and adhering to the organisations safeguarding policy.
- Being alert to signs of abuse or neglect and promptly reporting any concerns to the designated safeguarding lead.
- Contributing to maintaining a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for all adults at risk.
- Engaging in safeguarding training and staying informed of the best practices.

6.4. The safeguarding lead and volunteer coordinator plays a central role in effective implementation of safeguarding practices. Their duties include:

- Overseeing the centres safeguarding policy and ensuring consistent implementation.
- Being the first point of contact for any safeguarding concerns or disclosures.
- Advising and supporting employees and volunteers on safeguarding matters.
- Ensuring that any safeguarding concerns or incidents are recorded using the Safeguarding disclosure forms and submitted to the office manager **APPENDIX 1**.
- Coordinating and delivering biannual refresher toolbox talks to maintain awareness and adherence to safeguarding protocols.

6.5. Hirers, including external groups or individuals who use the Centre's facilities, are fully responsible for the safety and well-being of any adults at risk under their care while at the Centre. Their responsibilities include:

- Implementing appropriate safeguarding procedures when working with adults at risk.
- Familiarising themselves with the organisations safeguarding policy and ensuring they comply with it during their time at the Centre.
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers working with adults at risk have valid DBS certificates, and providing a copy of these certificates to Somerford ARC Community Centre.

7. **Safeguarding adults at risk Procedure**

- 7.1. All allegations or suspicions of abuse must be treated seriously. Abuse is never acceptable, and certain types of abuse are criminal offenses that require immediate reporting to the police.
- 7.2. If you have any concern for welfare, immediately contact the Somerford ARC Community Centre vulnerable adult safeguarding lead within 24hours of the concern being raised, to ensure a timely response.
- 7.3. When responding to a safeguarding concern, the safeguarding lead must ensure the following guidelines are followed:

DO

- Ensure the individual is safe.
- Assess whether emergency services need to be contacted.
- Listen attentively and remain calm.
- Reassure the individual that disclosing the information was the right decision and they are not to blame.
- Explain that you must take steps to ensure the safety of the child or young person involved.
- Be careful not to suggest or prompt answers, only ask questions when necessary.
- Inform the individual about the next steps and who else will be involved.
- Allow the individual to share their story fully.
- Ensure you understand the facts clearly and establish what has been disclosed.
- Record all information immediately and ensure the report is comprehensive and accurate.

DON'T

- Promise Confidentiality.
- Confront the alleged abuser.

- Express your personal opinions or feelings.
- Investigate or interview beyond what is necessary to gather basic facts.
- “Quiz” the individual or pressure them for more details.
- Destroy or disturb any potential evidence.
- Ask leading questions or make assumptions.
- Make any promises you cannot keep.
- Ignore the allegation or minimise its importance.
- Add personal interpretations to the notes- stick strictly to what was disclosed.
- Panic or act impulsively.

7.4. If abuse is suspected, our organisation will make a referral to the appropriate authorities:

- Adult Social Care 01202 123654
- In an emergency call 999

7.5. If the individual is in immediate danger or in need of urgent medical attention:

- If you are with the individual remain with them and contact Emergency Services immediately.
- If the individual is elsewhere contact Emergency Services and clearly explain the situation.
- If medical attention is required, call an ambulance and notify the first aider on duty. Only qualified first aiders should administer medical treatment unless instructed otherwise by an emergency services operator.
- If appropriate the safeguarding lead will contact the Local Authority or the individual's next of kin. Emergency services, health services, or children's services may need to be involved to make a decision.
- Always prioritise the welfare of the young person.

7.6. If a disclose is made regarding the safety and wellbeing of an adult at risk and the individual requests that the information be kept secret, it is important to explain sensitively that the information will need to be shared with appropriate agencies for their protection and safety and the matter will be disclosed only to those who need to know.

7.7. Where possible, consent must be obtained from the individual making the disclosure before sharing information with third parties. In some circumstances obtaining consent may be neither possible or advisable as the safety and welfare of the child or young person must take priority.

7.8. Safeguarding leads must make their position clear regarding their role and must assure the individual that they will keep them informed of any action to be taken and the reasons behind these actions. The feelings and wishes of the individual should be considered as much as possible.

8. Writing a Report

- 8.1. All disclosures must be documented using the Somerford ARC Community Centre Safeguarding Disclosure form **APPENDIX 1**.
- 8.2. When recording a disclosure, the person writing the report must:

- Accurately record the information using the safeguarding disclosure form, detailing exactly what the individual has shared.
- Only include facts as disclosed, do not insert personal opinions or interpretations.
- Use the individuals exact words and phrases.
- Ensure the date, time, location is recorded.
- Note any circumstances surrounding the disclosure, including any concerning behaviours or actions observed.
- Record who was present during the disclosure.
- Sign and date the report, printing your name under your signature.

8.3. The report must be written within 24hours of the disclosure, ensuring timely documentation.

9. Investigation

9.1. It is not the roles of Somerford ARC Community Centre to determine if an individual is at risk or experiencing abuse. If there is a concern that an individual is at risk of abuse, or if actual abuse or severe neglect is suspected, it is our duty to take the appropriate steps to protect that individual.

9.2. In cases where a safeguarding concern involves an employee, trustee, or volunteer of Somerford ARC Community Centre, the trustees will undertake an internal investigation. This will be conducted in line with the organisation's disciplinary procedures, ensuring fairness, confidentiality, and adherence to safeguarding standards to establish the facts and determine whether any actions or steps need to be taken to protect the individual, as well as to address any potential misconduct or procedural breaches by the individual involved.

9.3. During the investigation, the trustee board may:

- Temporarily suspend the individual from their role to ensure the integrity of the investigation and to prioritise the safety of adults at risk.
- Seek guidance or collaboration from external agencies, such as local authorities or law enforcement, if required.
- Communicate transparently with all parties involved, providing updates while maintaining confidentiality where necessary.

9.4. The trustees are responsible for ensuring that the investigation and outcomes are fully documented and that any necessary actions are implemented promptly.

9.5. Any concerns or incidents involving an employee, trustee, or volunteer that indicate potential criminal behaviour or serious misconduct will be referred to the appropriate authorities immediately, in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

9.6. All investigations are handled with sensitivity to ensure the dignity and privacy of the individual making the disclosure is maintained.

9.7. Somerford ARC Community Centre always prioritises the safety of vulnerable adults at risk, especially in instances where the investigation may involve sensitive personal data or situations.

10. Confidentiality

- 10.1. All trustees, employees, and volunteers of Somerford ARC Community Centre have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of adults at risk with other professionals when necessary.
- 10.2. Clear boundaries of confidentiality will be communicated to all employees, trustees, and volunteers to ensure they understand when information must be shared to safeguard the individual.
- 10.3. All Trustees, employees, and volunteers are to act in accordance to the Somerford ARC Community Centre confidentiality policy.
- 10.4. All safeguarding concerns and reports must be stored securely on an encrypted system in accordance with data protection principles, and retained for as long as necessary to comply with legal and safeguarding requirements.
- 10.5. Information may need to be shared with external agencies, such as police, social services, or other safeguarding bodies, for the protection of the child. In these cases, consent will be obtained (depending on their age and understanding) for sharing their personal information with third parties, unless it is not feasible or advisable due to safety concerns.

11. Photography and use of images

- 11.1. Photography and video recording are sometimes used at Somerford ARC Community Centre for promotional purposes, training, or documenting events. However, it is important to respect the privacy of all individuals, particularly adults at risk. Our organisation takes the following steps to ensure the protection of all individuals using our facilities:
 - Before any photograph or video is taken, consent will be obtained from the adult (if appropriate or their carer).
 - No photographs will be posted or shared on social media platforms without prior written consent.
 - If images are to be shared with external agencies (e.g., media, partner organizations), further consent will be obtained.
 - Consent will be recorded in writing using the Somerford ARC Community Centre “consent to hold information form”. and held on file. **APPENDIX 2**
 - Individuals have the right to withdraw consent at any time.
 - Images will never include personal identifying information without consent.
- 11.2. All photographs are stored securely in a password-protected system and used only for the intended purpose.

12. Fire Safety

- 12.1. Our organisation ensures procedures are put in place for people with disabilities and vulnerabilities and this is considered in the fire risk assessment of Somerford ARC Community Centre in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Equality Act 2010.
- 12.2. Where necessary designated competent persons will ensure those with a disability or vulnerability completes a personal evacuation assessment form to determine if a full personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) is necessary.
- 12.3. To ensure a safe evacuation seated maximum capacity of our hall has been set at 48.
- 12.4. Tables are mapped out to allow walkways and fire escape routes of a minimum of 750mm and 900mm to allow for wheelchairs and walking frames.

13. Training

- 13.1. All Trustees, employees, and volunteers of Somerford ARC Community Centre must read and fully understand the contents of this Policy and ensure they are familiar with its procedures.
- 13.2. Any new volunteers receive a full induction, including their role within safeguarding, and are provided with a volunteer handbook, further ensuring understanding of their role.
- 13.3. All Trustees, employees, and volunteers working with adults at risk in our centre will be required to complete the following training.
 - Safeguarding vulnerable adults (Advanced) Level 2 training course.
 - Participate in six monthly toolbox talks to refresh their knowledge and understanding of safeguarding procedures.
- 13.4. All training records will be maintained and monitored to ensure compliance.

Roles	Appointed person	Certificate expiry
Safeguarding lead adults	Christine Hopkins	08-02-2025

Associated Policies
Confidentiality Policy
Data protection Policy
Fire safety Policy

Created by	
Print Name	Lauren Biggs
Role	Office Manager
Date	20-06-2022

Review History	Reviewed by	Validated by
20-06-2022	Lauren Biggs	unvalidated
21-02-2023	Lauren Biggs	Unvalidated
13-05-2025	Lauren Biggs	

Next review date	13-05-2027
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APPENDIX 1

Safeguarding Disclosure Form

Date of disclosure

Details of the person making the disclosure

Full Name

Address

Postcode

Mobile number

Landline

Email

Person of concern

Name

Date of birth

Is the person you are concerned about under 18?

Yes

No

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

Yes

No

If yes what did they say? (please state the exact words used. Do not include opinions or interpretations)

Nature of concern

Physical abuse

Sexual abuse

Neglect

Psychological abuse

Financial or material abuse

Discrimination

Other

(please specify)

Immediate risk

Do you believe the person is in immediate danger?

Yes

No

if yes, contact emergency services (999) and record the incident number below:

Safeguarding concern involving ARC personnel

Does your concern involve any trustee, employee, or volunteer of Somerford ARC Community Centre?

Yes
No

If yes, please provide details (e.g. name and role):

This information ensures a fair, confidential investigation in accordance with safeguarding policies).

Incident Details

Date of incident	
Time of incident	

Record what happened using factual information. Include, who, what, where, and how. (if recording a verbal disclosure, use the persons exact words. Do not interpret or add opinion).

A decorative header for a document. It features a light blue vertical bar on the left with the text 'DRAFT' in blue. To the right of the bar are three overlapping, rounded rectangular shapes in light yellow, pink, and light blue. The background is white with five horizontal black lines for a header area.

Use additional paper if necessary. All extra pages must be signed and dated at the bottom.

Additional information

Use additional paper if necessary. All extra pages must be signed and dated at the bottom.

Witnesses

Where there any witnesses

Yes
No

If yes, please provide details below:

Name	
Contact details	

Name	
Contact details	

Name	
Contact details	

Declaration

I confirm the information provided is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of person making the disclosure:

Print name:

Date:

Office use only

Name	
Role	

Were external services notified (e.g., social services, Police)?

Yes
No

If yes, provide details of the service contacted and any outcomes or reference numbers?

Internal review process

Time	
Date	

Safeguarding concern Submitted to Trustees

Time	
Date	

Acknowledged by the Trustees

Time	
Date	

Investigation

Was an internal investigation necessary?

Yes
No

If yes, what action was taken? (include key steps and people involved, and refer to policies where relevant)

Outcome communicated to the reporting party

Time	
Date	

Investigation closed

Signed	
Date	

APPENDIX 2

Consent to hold information

Under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018 you have a right to privacy and confidentiality. This means your information will be handled securely, and you have control over how it is collected, stored and shared.

As an organisation we only collect and store information relevant to the purpose for which it is needed. You have the right to control the personal information we hold about you and must give explicit consent for it to be used.

Information we hold

We only store the following details:

- Your telephone number, if we need to contact you in the event of a cancellation of services.
- Your emergency contact details, in case you become unwell or injured.
- Your address, only if you require transport to be arranged, which will be shared with a third-party provider- SEDCAT, who provides transportation.

Your information will not be shared with any third-party organisations without your consent, except in circumstances involving serious safeguarding concerns or risks to your health and safety. If such a situation arises, we will inform you accordingly.

You have the right to access, amend, or withdraw your consent regarding the storage and sharing of your information at any time by contacting our office manager.

Data Retention and Accuracy

Your information will be reviewed annually, to ensure it is accurate and up-to-date. We will securely retain your data for no longer than two years after your involvement with our organisation has ended. This is to meet your legal obligations and to make it easier for you to reconnect with us in the future, should you choose to do so. After this period, your information will be securely destroyed.

All personal data is stored in accordance with the Somerford ARC Community Centre Confidentiality Policy and Data Protection Policy. Access to your information is strictly limited to authorised trustees and employees to ensure security and compliance with privacy standards.

In the event of any data breach involving your personal information, we will notify you immediately and take all necessary steps to mitigate any potential risks.

Organisational Details

This is an agreement between yourselves and Somerford ARC Community Centre:

Registered Charity No. 1156427

Authorised Persons: Chair: Paul Hilliard, Office Manager: Lauren Biggs

Address: 20 Southey Road, Christchurch, BH23 3EH

Telephone No. 01202 470770

Person completing this form

Name	
Telephone number	
Emergency contact name	
Emergency contact number	

If you are completing this form on behalf of someone else:

Name	
Your relationship to them	

Allergies

Do you have any food allergies?

Yes
No

If yes, please specify

Consent

To meet the requirements of the Data Protection ACT 1998, we need your permission to keep and use photos, where you are the main subject.

Somerford ARC uses images for the promotion of our community centre and our projects in printed material such as leaflets, brochures and reports. Sometimes allowing certain carefully selected and related organisations, to use some of this material to promote our work in the community.

We also use still/moving images to promote our centre and projects for online publications on our website and social media pages of Somerford ARC Community Centre.

If you **do not** wish your photographs and moving images to be used, please tick here

If you **do** consent, please continue below:

How I consent my photographs and moving images to be used:

Somerford ARC Community Centres internal and external presentations

Somerford ARC Community Centres website

Somerford ARCs social media pages, content may be shared by others

National, regional, local papers and news sites

Birthday consent

Do you consent to us recording your birth date for the purposes of announcing your birthday at lunch club or ADaPt Cafe **only**

Yes No

Only if you consent, please enter your day and month of birth below:

Day	
Month	

Declaration

The information you provide on this form will only be used to contact you in relation to our organisational communications or services. It will not be shared with any other organisation without your permission and will not be stored for longer than two years after your involvement with us ends.

Signature:

Print name:

Date:

Data protection: The information you provide on this form will only be used to contact you in relation to our organisational communications or services. It will not be shared with any other organisation without your permission and will not be stored for longer than two years after your involvement with us ends.

