

# The Community Farm

## ADULTS AT RISK SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

December 2024

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### Key Acronyms and Definitions

- **DSL:** Designated Safeguarding Lead
- **Team Members:** Staff, Volunteers and Management Committee
- **LADO:** Local Authority Designated Officer

## **Policy Statement**

The Community Farm is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all adults at risk who use our services. We believe safeguarding is everyone's business. Safeguarding is a specific activity that is undertaken to protect specific children and adults at risk who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm.

This document sets out The Community Farm's overall approach to protecting adults at risk from abuse. It is supported by detailed procedures which describe how this policy is to be carried out by all team members to include staff, volunteers, and Management Committee Members. This policy will be reviewed annually.

Everyone who The Community Farm works with will be informed of our policy statement as part of an explanation of the limits of confidentiality. Confidentiality in this respect refers to the requirement not to share anything without the subject's consent to anyone outside of The Community Farm. It is vital that information is shared with relevant individuals within the organisation so that the safest decisions are made.

A copy of this Policy and Procedure is made available as appropriate and is also available on The Community Farm's website.

## **What is safeguarding?**

Safeguarding is defined as protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Adult safeguarding is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time ensuring the adult's wellbeing is promoted including having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. Professionals and other staff should not advocate 'safety' measures that do not take account of individual wellbeing.

## **The aims of adult safeguarding:**

The aims are to:

- Stop abuse or neglect wherever possible
- Prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs
- Safeguard adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live
- Promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults concerned
- Raise public awareness so that communities, alongside professionals, play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect
- Provide information and support in accessible ways to help adults understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or wellbeing of an adult
- Address the causes of abuse

## **Adult safeguarding duties:**

An 'Adult at risk' (previously known as 'Vulnerable Adult') who requires safeguarding is someone aged over 18 who:

- has needs for care and support (whether the local authority is meeting any of 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 either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect. (The Care Act 2014 <sup>1</sup> )

## **Examples of potential 'Care and Support' needs include (but are not limited to):**

- People with learning, physical sensory and communication disabilities
- People with mental health needs
- People with drug or alcohol dependencies
- People with certain types of physical illness
- People with dementia
- People who are frail due to age or other factors
- People who are homeless

## **What is abuse?**

The Care Act 2014 recognises 10 categories of abuse that may be experienced by adults:

- Physical abuse
- Domestic abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological / emotional abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Modern slavery

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance>

- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational or institutional abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Self-neglect

See Appendix 1 *What is abuse?* for detailed information on abuse types and indicators.

## **The Community Farm actions**

The Community Farm will:

1. Ensure that all Team Members have a Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) checks relevant to the work they undertake and are precluded from involvement in the organisation as appropriate.
2. Provide clear and detailed procedures on decision-making, accountability and recording of adult safeguarding situations.
3. Provide thorough and effective training to Team Members on adult safeguarding policies and procedures. All new Team Members will familiarise themselves with The Community Farm's safeguarding policies and procedures. All staff will be required to review the safeguarding policies and procedures annually, to be monitored as part of the bi-annual review process.
4. Appoint a member of staff to be the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Management Committee Member to be the Safeguarding Advisor.
5. Provide regular and consistent supervision and support to Team Members, focusing on the safety and welfare of everyone visiting The Community Farm.
6. Ensure that the organisation can learn from specific adult at risk safeguarding situations and review policy and procedures as a result.
7. Maintain a current knowledge of adults at risk safeguarding procedures nationally and within the Bath and North East Somerset area.
8. Review this policy and procedure at least once a year and always following a serious incident.

Team Members will not make referrals to external agencies in respect of suspected abuse of an adult without prior discussion and agreement of the line manager or the DSL. In an emergency situation the emergency services should be called immediately and the appropriate Manager or DSL informed as soon as possible.

All discussions about specific safeguarding situations need to be recorded by the Team Member, regardless of the eventual action taken.

## **Role description for Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Managing Director**

### **Responsible for:**

- Being the main contact within The Community Farm in relation to child and adult safeguarding.
- Availability for The Community Farm Team Members, in the absence of their line manager, to discuss safeguarding concerns.
- Being named contact for Child and Adult Safeguarding Services.
- Ensuring notes are maintained and updated.
- Discussing safeguarding with Safeguarding Advisors from safeguarding teams in local authorities.
- Oversight of The Community Farm's safeguarding training and induction programme.
- Ensuring that policies and procedures relating to safeguarding are up-to-date and reflect best practice and current guidelines.
- Ensuring that the Senior Team are informed of formal safeguarding referrals.
- Reporting safeguarding referrals and serious safeguarding incidents to The Community Farm's Management Committee, Funders and Partners as appropriate.
- Ensure that appropriate procedures are followed when it is identified that a Team Member is not applying this policy to a satisfactory standard and that any related current risks are safeguarded accordingly.

### **Not responsible for:**

- Making all necessary safeguarding referrals.

### **Arrangements during absence:**

Planned absence: Team Members are informed as to which Manager/ Safeguarding Champion is the named DSL during the absence period.

Short-term unplanned absence: The role of Designated Safeguarding Lead is held by the Assistant Managing Director in the absence of the DSL.

## **Safeguarding procedures**

This document sets out what action will be taken if it is suspected that an adult at risk is at risk of harm, through abuse or neglect.

### **General procedure**

The DSL for The Community Farm is the Managing Director.

No Team Member will be expected to make a decision regarding the safeguarding of adults alone. No Team Member should make a referral regarding an adult who may be at risk or break confidentiality without the agreement of their Team Leader/Manager.

Confidentiality in this respect refers to the requirement not to share anything about anyone without their consent to anyone outside of The Community Farm. It is vital that information is shared within the organisation so that the safest decisions are made.

Maintaining confidentiality is a vital part of the ethos of the organisation and generally, this can be assured. However, if a Team Member has reason to believe that an adult may be at risk of harm, the responsibility to safeguard that adult overrides the right to confidentiality. Team Members **MUST** break confidentiality if necessary, in these circumstances.

If confidentiality cannot be maintained, the information will only be shared with relevant people.

Generally, The Community Farm works on the basis of consent and attempts to work with people to seek external support themselves. In many situations consent to take action to safeguard an adult can be sought from the person concerned and will be given, but consent must not be sought if it may place someone at greater risk.

If a safeguarding concern is raised the team member should consult the activity leader or their line manager. DSL will be informed at the earliest opportunity. If they are not available the Assistant Managing Director will be consulted.

### **Breaching confidentiality**

Unless it is an emergency, confidentiality will only be breached by a member of staff when authorised by the DSL (or Assistant Managing Director in the absence of DSL) This decision will be made in conjunction with the DSL if possible, within the required timescale.

## Consulting the LADO

If The Community Farm hear about a safeguarding concern that involves an adult who works with children or adults at risk the designated Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be consulted as soon as practically possible.

## Referral procedure

Safeguarding referrals can only be made where The Community Farm has sufficient information about the person concerned (one or more of the following: name, address, contact details, date of birth, parent/carer's name). The following procedures should be adhered to:

- A Team Member may be given direct information about an adult with care and support needs who is currently at risk of significant harm, or they may be given information which leads them to a professional judgement that an adult is being harmed or is at risk of harm.
- The Team Member with immediate concerns about safeguarding should consult with their line manager immediately. If their line manager is unavailable, they should consult the DSL. If possible, a discussion with the person who made the disclosure will then take place. If the person making a disclosure is an adult they will be strongly encouraged to contact Adult Social Care themselves (with support from The Community Farm). If this is not completed within the agreed timeframe, The Community Farm will contact Adult Social Care. All discussions and subsequent decisions will be recorded at the earliest possible opportunity, and within 24 hours. Where the adult is not at immediate risk the line manager/DSL will be consulted at the earliest possible opportunity (not more than 24 hours) and the procedures will be followed as above.
- **If there is consent** from the person concerned to make a referral, then this can be made immediately by telephone by the Team Member or Manager and followed up in writing within 24 hours. Where a disclosure has been made to a volunteer the referral will be made by the activity leader. Contact details for referrals to the relevant services are listed in Appendix 2 Making a Safeguarding Referral
- **If there is no consent** from the person concerned, the DSL will decide whether to break confidentiality and make a referral. The Team Member will either be present at the discussion meeting, or they will be informed of decisions within 24 hours. Details will be recorded and a referral made as above.

## Outcomes

The DSL will inform the Team Member of the outcome of the referral, and this will be communicated to the person concerned if they are still in contact.



Situations where no referral is possible may still leave Team Members with uncomfortable feelings and these ideally should be discussed in person with their line manager or DSL and/or at supervision meetings.

## **Whistleblowing**

Whistleblowing is the reporting of suspected wrongdoing or dangers in relation to our activities. This includes bribery, fraud or other criminal activity, miscarriages of justice, health and safety risks, damage to the environment and any breach of legal or professional obligations to the people who use our service, employees, or the wider community.

The Community Farm aims to encourage and enable our staff and volunteers to raise their concerns and to do so without fear of victimisation or discrimination and will respond to all such concerns. Where a raised concern specifically relates to the safety of an adult at risk, the terms of this safeguarding policy and procedures will be applied.

## **Allegations made against The Community Farm Team Members**

If an allegation of abuse is made against a Team Member, the referral procedures above will be followed to safeguard the adult at risk.

If the information regarding risk to an adult relates to abuse by a member of The Community Farm the DSL should immediately be informed in the first instance, or if the allegation concerns the DSL the Team Member should speak directly to the Chair of the Management Committee. The Team Member should not discuss the allegations with other Team Members. The DSL will ensure that the person reporting the allegation has appropriate practical and emotional support in place, signposting externally where appropriate.

The DSL will immediately consult the appropriate Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and follow actions as agreed.

The DSL and the Chair of the Management Committee will immediately inform the individual concerned that they are suspended from duties pending investigation. This is not an assumption of guilt but serves to allow the appropriate investigation to take place and protects the Team Member from further allegations.

The scope of the investigation will be determined by the nature of the concern and all investigations will be thorough and impartial.

## **Record keeping**

Details of the initial safeguarding raised must be recorded by the Team Member that identified the concern. All subsequent discussions, actions and decisions must be updated by the Team Member involved in that particular action. All records will be recorded at the earliest opportunity, and within 24 hours.

All records must be:

1. Accurate, to include
  - The date/time of the disclosure.
  - The date/time of the initial report.
  - The name/contact details and role of the person to whom the concern was initially reported
  - The names, and where relevant and legal, the contact details of all parties involved including witnesses.
2. Factual, to include
  - A clear factual report of the initial concern/disclosure. This will include what has been seen, heard or said. All reports must be recorded with the date and Team Member's name.
  - A clear dated record of all further action taken.
  - If relevant, the reasons why a concern was not referred to a statutory agency.
3. Separate opinion or judgement
  - It is acceptable to have an informed opinion or judgement, but this must be clearly stated as opinion. Any interpretation or inference drawn from what was observed, said or alleged must be clearly recorded as such.
  - Records must be written mindful that people may request access to any records kept about them.

### **Record retention periods**

All records are kept in accordance with The General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (GDPR) as laid out in The Community Farm's Privacy and Data Protection Policy.

### **Staff support**

The Community Farm recognises that working with trauma can impact staff and that this can be particularly relevant when working with safeguarding concerns. The Community Farm will support staff by providing regular debriefing and, where necessary and appropriate, offering additional wellbeing support.

## Appendix 1: What is Abuse?

(This list is not exhaustive)

<p>Physical Abuse</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, hair-pulling, biting, punching</li> <li>• Rough / inappropriate handling and other forms of assault that may not leave visible signs of injury, but may cause pain or discomfort</li> <li>• Biting, deliberate burns, scalding</li> <li>• Physical punishments / beating</li> <li>• Inappropriate or unlawful use of restraint</li> <li>• Making someone purposefully uncomfortable (e.g., opening a window and removing blankets)</li> <li>• Stabbing, strangulation, poisoning and wounding (breaking the skin) and other forms of assault that cause serious injuries or death</li> <li>• Involuntary isolation or confinement</li> <li>• Withholding, inappropriately altering or administering medication or other treatments</li> <li>• Forcible feeding or withholding food</li> </ul> <p>Restricting movement (e.g., tying someone to a chair)</p>
<p>Domestic Abuse</p>	<p>The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is: “any incident of pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexual orientation.</p> <p>The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• psychological</li> <li>• physical</li> <li>• sexual</li> <li>• financial</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• emotional.</li> </ul> <p>It also includes so called 'honour'-based violence, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.</p> <p>Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.</p> <p>Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.</p>
Sexual Abuse <sup>2</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rape, sexual assault</li> <li>• Sexual harassment</li> <li>• Inappropriate looking or touching</li> <li>• Sexual teasing or innuendo</li> <li>• Sexual photography</li> <li>• Subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts</li> <li>• Indecent exposure</li> <li>• Sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting</li> <li>• Offensive or suggestive sexual language or action</li> </ul> <p>It includes vaginal, oral or anal penetration and situations where the person causing harm touches the abused person's body (e.g., breasts, buttocks, genital area), exposes their genitals (possibly encouraging the abused person to touch them) or coerces the abused person into participating in or looking at pornographic videos or images.</p> <p>Denial of a sexual life to consenting adults is also considered abusive practice.</p>

<sup>2</sup> **Sexual Offences Act 2003**

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

	<p>Any sexual relationship that develops between adults where one is in a position of trust, power or authority in relation to the other (e.g., day centre worker/social worker/residential worker/health worker) may also constitute sexual abuse.</p>
<p>Psychological/ Emotional Abuse</p>	<p>Psychological abuse is the denial of a person’s human and civil rights including choice and opinion, privacy and dignity and being able to follow one’s own spiritual and cultural beliefs or sexual orientation.</p> <p>It includes preventing the adult from using services that would otherwise support them and enhance their lives. It also includes the intentional and/or unintentional withholding of information (e.g., information not being available in different formats/languages etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of threats or fear to override a person’s wishes</li> <li>• Lack of privacy or choice</li> <li>• Denial of dignity</li> <li>• Deprivation of social contact or deliberate isolation</li> <li>• Being made to feel worthless</li> <li>• Threat(s) to withdraw care or support, or contact with friends</li> <li>• Humiliation, blaming</li> <li>• Use of coercion, control, harassment, verbal abuse</li> <li>• Treating an adult as if they were a child</li> <li>• Cyber bullying</li> <li>• Refusal to allow person to see others alone or to receive telephone calls / visits on their own</li> <li>• Removing mobility or communication aids, or intentionally leaving someone unattended when they ask for assistance</li> <li>• Preventing someone from meeting their religious or cultural needs</li> <li>• Preventing stimulation or meaningful occupation or activities</li> </ul>

<p>Financial or Material Abuse</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theft, fraud, internet scamming</li> <li>• Coercion in relation to an adult’s financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills / property / inheritance / financial transactions</li> <li>• Misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions and/or benefits</li> <li>• Deceiving or manipulating a person out of money or property</li> <li>• Withholding or misusing money, property or possessions</li> <li>• Misuse of welfare benefits by others</li> <li>• Someone moving into a person’s home and living rent-free without agreed financial arrangements</li> <li>• False representation, using another person’s bank account, cards or documents</li> <li>• Exploitation of person’s money or assets (e.g., unauthorised use of a car) Misuse of power of attorney, deputy, appointee ship or other legal authority</li> </ul>
<p>Modern Slavery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude</li> <li>• Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude, and inhumane treatment</li> <li>• A large number of active organised crime groups are involved in modern slavery, but it is also committed by individual opportunistic perpetrators</li> <li>• Someone is in slavery if they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Forced to work (through mental or physical threat)</li> <li>– Owned or controlled by an ‘employer’, usually through mental or physical abuse, or the threat of abuse</li> <li>– Dehumanised, treated as a commodity, or bought and sold as ‘property’</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Physically constrained or has restrictions on his or her freedom of movement.</li> </ul> <p>Contemporary slavery takes various forms and affects people of all ages, genders and ethnicities.</p> <p>Human trafficking involves an act of recruiting, transporting, transferring, harbouring or receiving a person through a use of force, coercion or other means, for the purpose of exploiting them.</p>
Discriminatory Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unequal treatment based on age, disability, gender identity marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation (known as protected characteristics under the <u>Equality Act 2010</u>)</li> <li>• Verbal abuse, derogatory remarks or inappropriate use of language related to a protected characteristic</li> <li>• Denying access to communication aids, not allowing access to an interpreter, signer, or lip-reader</li> <li>• Harassment or deliberate exclusion on the grounds of a protected characteristic Sub-standard service provision relating to a protected characteristic</li> </ul>
Organisational Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Run-down, over-crowded establishment</li> <li>• Authoritarian management or rigid regimes</li> <li>• Lack of leadership and supervision</li> <li>• Inadequate staff training and/or guidance</li> <li>• Insufficient staff or high turnover resulting in poor quality care</li> <li>• Abusive and disrespectful attitudes towards people using the service</li> <li>• Inappropriate use of restraints</li> <li>• Lack of respect for dignity and privacy</li> <li>• Failure to manage residents with abusive behaviour</li> <li>• Not providing adequate food and drink, or assistance with eating</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not offering choice or promoting independence</li> <li>• Misuse of medication</li> </ul>
<p>Neglect and Acts of Omission</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure to provide or allow access to food, shelter, clothing, heating, stimulation and activity, personal or medical care</li> <li>• Failure to provide care in the way the person wants</li> <li>• Failure to allow choice and preventing people from making their own decisions</li> <li>• Failure to ensure appropriate privacy and dignity</li> </ul> <p>Neglect and poor professional practice may take the form of isolated incidents or pervasive ill treatment and gross misconduct. Neglect of this type may happen within an adult's own home or within an institution. Repeated instances of poor care may be an indication of more serious problems.</p>
<p>Self-Neglect</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings</li> <li>• Includes behaviour such as hoarding</li> <li>• Inability (intentional or non-intentional) to maintain a socially and culturally accepted standard of self-care with the potential for serious consequences to the health and well-being of the individual and sometimes to their community</li> </ul> <p>A decision on whether a response is required under safeguarding will depend on the adult's ability to protect themselves by controlling their own behaviour. There may come a point when they are no longer able to do this, without external support.</p>



## Appendix 2: Making a safeguarding referral - contact details

### **Bath and North East Somerset Council**

Regular Social Work Team: 01225 394200

Out of Hours: 01454 615165