



Sapcote Good Neighbour Scheme Vulnerable Persons Policy Statement

All members of Sapcote Good Neighbours whether volunteers or committee members have a duty to SAFEGUARD vulnerable people who use the scheme and anyone with whom they may come into contact through the scheme.

They should respond to any concerns they may have regarding the physical, sexual, emotional or psychological safety of a vulnerable person or concerns relating to discriminatory or financial violation or exploitation of a vulnerable person.

This policy is in place to protect all vulnerable persons regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, religion or faith.

Principles

The welfare of the vulnerable adult or child is paramount and is the responsibility of everyone. All vulnerable adults and children, without exception, have the right to protection from abuse, whether physical, verbal, sexual, bullying, exclusion or neglect. Bullying, shouting, physical violence, sexism and racism towards anyone will not be permitted or tolerated.

Policy Statement

1. No volunteers or committee member will have unsupervised access to vulnerable adults unless they have been through the safe recruitment procedure (below)
2. All suspicions or allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and dealt with speedily and appropriately.
3. All volunteers need to be aware of this policy and vulnerable adult issues

Safe Recruitment

All volunteers must:

- Undergo a DBS security vetting and provide the committee with a copy of the result.

Reporting Incidents

The nominated Vulnerable Adult representative(s) will have responsibility for reporting concerns that arise, as a matter of urgency, to the local authority Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult lead agency. The representative may choose to have a confidential

discussion with others in order to clear up any misunderstandings, or to corroborate and support any suspicions, before reporting a concern to the lead agency. If the nominated person is unavailable, any member of the committee may act in their place.

The nominated person should:

- Know who to contact at the local authority (the first call), i.e. Leicestershire Safeguarding Boards – 0116 305 7130
- Know who to contact in Social Services for advice and referrals, i.e. Adult Social Care – 0116 305 0004 (out of hours – 0116 255 1606), but where a Social Worker is already involved, phone them direct or the Local Social Care Office – 0116 278 7111
First Response Children's Duty – 0116 305 0005
- Know about helplines and other sources of help for children and young people and vulnerable adults. Action for Elder Abuse – 0808 8088141.
(see also: irsb.org.uk/lrscblinks)
- Ensure that there is an environment in which volunteers have the opportunity to raise any child protection or vulnerable adult protection concerns

Guidelines for responding to abuse or suspicion of abuse

DO

- Do treat any allegations extremely seriously and listen to what is being said
- Do tell the person they are right to tell you.
- Do reassure them that they are not to blame.
- Do be honest about your own position, who you have to tell and why.
- Do tell the person what you are doing and when, and keep them up to date with what is happening.
- Do take further action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse – tell your nominated person immediately.
- Do write down everything said and what was done
- Do seek medical attention if necessary.
- Do inform carers, unless there is suspicion of their involvement.

DON'T

- Don't make promises you can't keep.
- Don't interrogate the person – it is not your job to carry out an investigation – this will be up to the police and social services, who have experience in this.
- Don't cast doubt on what the person has told you, don't interrupt or change the subject.
- Don't say anything that makes the person feel responsible for the abuse.
- Don't Do Nothing – make sure you tell your nominated safeguarding person immediately – they will know how to follow this up and where to go for further advice.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Vulnerable adult protection raises issues of confidentiality which must be clearly understood by all.

Volunteers have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of vulnerable adults with professionals, particularly investigative agencies and adult social services.

Clear boundaries of confidentiality will be communicated to all.

All personal information regarding a vulnerable adult will be kept confidential. All written records will be kept in a secure area for a specific time as identified in data protection guidelines. Records will only record details required in the initial contact form.

If an adult confides in a volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the volunteer tells the adult sensitively, that he or she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies.

Within that context, the adult must, however, be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it.

Where possible, consent must be obtained from the adult before sharing personal information with third parties. However, in some circumstances, obtaining consent may be neither possible nor desirable, as the safety and welfare of the vulnerable adult is the priority.

Where a disclosure has been made, the volunteer must let the adult know the position regarding their role and what action they will have to take as a result.

The volunteer must assure the adult that they will be kept informed of any action to be taken and why. The adult's involvement in the process of sharing information must be fully considered and their wishes and feelings taken into account.