

## Safeguarding Policy

### 1. Children

#### ***Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility:***

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare whereby specific children who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm are protected. As adults and volunteers, all the Society's Trustees and members have a responsibility to safeguard children and promote their welfare. Whilst it is very rare that children under the age of 18 years are involved in the activities the Society promotes, the safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who may attend must always be a priority and where necessary the Society's Trustees will work with relevant statutory and voluntary agencies to see that they are protected from suffering significant harm and to help bring to justice the perpetrators of crimes against children.

The Society will:

- ✓ be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect;
- ✓ be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children;
- ✓ share and help to analyse information so that an assessment can be made of the child's needs and circumstances;
- ✓ contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the child's welfare;
- ✓ take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for the child against specific plans; and
- ✓ work co-operatively with parents unless this is inconsistent with ensuring the child's safety.

#### ***Who abuses children?***

Potentially anyone, adult or child, can be the abuser. Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

#### ***Definitions of abuse and neglect:***

##### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

##### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Bullying that happens online, using social networks, games and mobile phones, is often called cyberbullying. A child can feel like there is no escape because it can happen wherever they are, at any time of day or night. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

## **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (eg: rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts.

They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

## **Online abuse**

With the ever-growing use of the internet, mobile telephones and online gaming (e.g. Xbox/ PlayStation), there has been a corresponding rise in the use of the internet and other electronic communication to target, groom and abuse children. Adults may target chat rooms, social networking sites, messaging services, mobile phones, online gaming sites and the internet generally. Children are particularly vulnerable to abuse by adults who pretend to be children of similar ages when online and who try to obtain images or engineer meetings.

## **Electronic images**

The downloading, keeping or distributing of indecent images of children are all classified as sexual offences. Such offences are sometimes referred to as non-contact sexual offences. However, it must be remembered that children will have been abused in the making of the images. The texting of sexual messages and photographs (sometimes referred to as 'sexting' can be particularly problematic and abusive amongst children and young people.

## **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## ***Promoting Awareness:***

The Trustees will be made aware of this policy as part of their initial induction process and there will be regular briefings and updates. Whilst the Society does not arrange meetings or activities involving children under 18 years of age, anyone leading or responsible for a meeting will be made aware of this policy since the activity may be based in a venue where children engaged in other activities might be present.

The Trustees are not in a position to promote any appropriate training courses in safeguarding but should ideally show that they have undergone such training within their ecclesiastical or secular work.

## ***Reviewing the Policy and Procedures:***

This policy and procedure will be reviewed every year, this will include checking the accuracy of Trustees' personal and contact details, and any updates required by a change in local or national policy.

### **Procedures**

What to do if you have concerns about a child

You may have concerns about a child because of something you have seen or heard, or a child may choose to disclose something to you. If a child discloses information to you:

- ✓ you should not promise confidentiality, you have a duty to share this information and refer to Children's Social Care Services.
- ✓ you should listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief.
- ✓ you should accept what is said.
- ✓ you should reassure the child, but only as far as is honest, don't make promises you may not be able to keep eg: *'Everything will be alright now'*, *'You'll never have to see that person again'*.

- ✓ you should reassure and alleviate guilt, if the child refers to it. For example, you could say, 'You're not to blame'.
- ✓ you should not interrogate the child; it is not your responsibility to investigate.
- ✓ you should not ask leading questions (eg: Did he touch your private parts?), ask open questions such as 'Anything else to tell me?'
- ✓ you should not ask the child to repeat the information for another member of staff.
- ✓ you should explain what you have to do next and who you have to talk to.
- ✓ you should take notes if possible or write up your conversation as soon as possible afterwards.
- ✓ you should record the date, time, place any non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child (do not paraphrase).
- ✓ you should record statements and observable things rather than interpretations or assumptions.

Whatever the nature of your concerns, discuss them with another of the Trustees unless that is inappropriate. See the diagram on the next page for the process to follow.

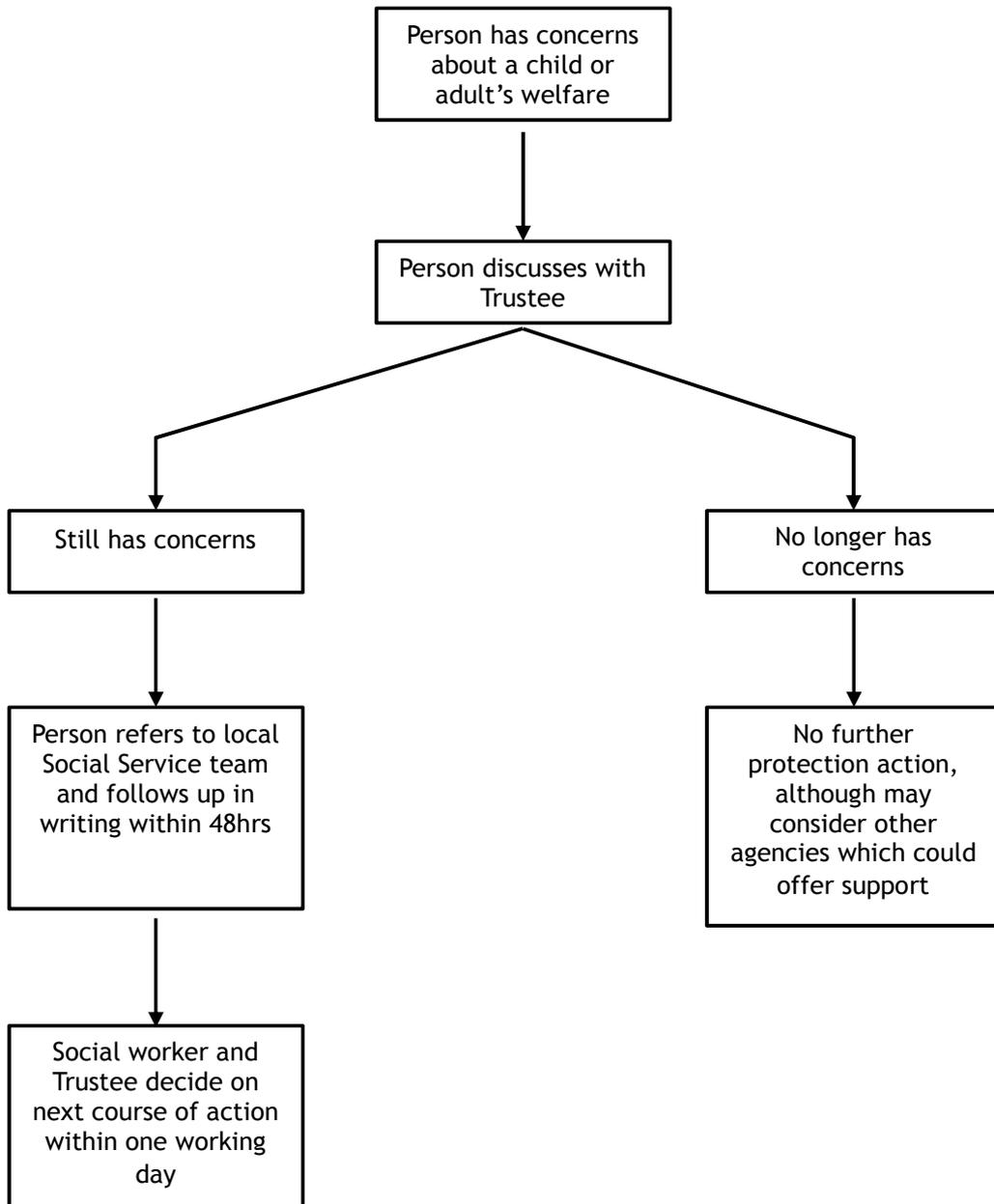
If you still have concerns, you or the Trustees should refer the matter to the Local Authority social services department)

### ***What information will you need when making a referral?***

You will be asked to provide as much information as possible. Such as the child's full name, date of birth, address, school, GP, languages spoken, any disabilities the child may have, details of the parents. Do not be concerned if you do not have all these details, you should still make the call.

You should follow up the verbal referral in writing, within 48 hours.

## Process Chart where there are Concerns about a Child or Adult's Welfare



## ***Allegations involving a Trustee or Volunteer working on behalf of the Society:***

The Society does not promote any activities specifically for children under 18 years of age. However, there may still be occasions when there is an allegation against a Trustee or member of the Society.

All allegations of abuse of children must be taken seriously. All reports of allegations must be shared with an appropriate Trustee immediately, and no later than the next day.

The following procedure should be applied in all situations where it is alleged that a Trustee or member of the Society has:

- ✓ behaved in a way which has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- ✓ possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- ✓ behaved towards a child or children in a way which indicates that he/she is unsuitable to interact with children.

The allegations may relate to the persons behaviour at or during an activity organised by the Society, at home or in another setting.

The Trustee with whom the allegation has been shared will discuss the matter with the person reporting it to determine what steps should be taken and where necessary obtain further details of the allegation and the circumstances in which it was made. The discussion should also consider whether there is evidence/information that establishes that the allegation is false or unfounded, whether a referral to the Local Authority is required and/or whether disciplinary action is appropriate.

Some allegations will be so serious as to require immediate referral to the Local Authority, but common sense and judgement must be applied in reaching a decision about what action to take.

If the allegation is not patently false and there is cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the Trustee will immediately refer the matter to the Local Authority's Supporting Families Division and ask for a Strategy Discussion or meeting to be convened straight away.

Some allegations may be less serious and at first sight might not seem to warrant consideration of a police investigation or enquiries by the Local Authority Supporting Families Division. However, it is important to ensure that even apparently less serious allegations are followed up and examined objectively by someone independent of the Society. Consequently the Co-Moderators or the Society or, if that is not appropriate, one of the Officers should be informed of all allegations that come to the Trustee's attention and appear to come within the scope of this procedure so that he or she can consult Police and Local Authority as appropriate.

Where such allegations are made, consideration must be given to the following three strands:

- 1) the police investigation of a possible criminal offence;
- 2) enquiries and assessment by Children's Social Care Services as to whether the child is need of protection or in need of services;
- 3) consideration by the Society of any disciplinary action in respect of the individual.

<b>Date of Change:</b>	<b>Changed By:</b>	<b>Comments:</b>
4th August 2020	Committee	Addition of definitions: online abuse & electronic images

## 2. Vulnerable Adults

### ***Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility:***

Safeguarding vulnerable adults is a part of the wider role of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific vulnerable adults who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm. As adults and as volunteers, everyone has a responsibility to safeguard vulnerable adults and promote their welfare.

For our Society safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults - and in particular protecting them from significant harm - will focus mainly but not exclusively on our Annual Meetings and International Conferences. Should a concern be raised there may arise occasions when effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise may be required.

For those vulnerable adults who are suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm, joint working is essential, to safeguard and promote their welfare and - where necessary - to help bring to justice the perpetrators of crimes against them. So all our members, and particularly our Trustees, should:

- ✓ be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect;
- ✓ be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to vulnerable adults;
- ✓ share and help to analyse information so that an assessment can be made of the individual's needs and circumstances;
- ✓ contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the individual's welfare;
- ✓ take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for the individual against specific plans; and
- ✓ work co-operatively with parents and/or other carers unless this is inconsistent with ensuring the individual's safety.

### ***The Society***

- takes seriously the welfare of everyone involved in its activities knowing that among them may be vulnerable adults. Our aim is to ensure that everyone is welcomed into a safe, caring environment with a happy and friendly atmosphere.
- recognises that it is the responsibility of each of our Trustees and members to prevent the neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse of vulnerable adults and to report any abuse discovered or suspected.
- recognises its responsibility to implement, maintain and regularly review procedures, which are designed to prevent abuse and to be alert to such abuse.
- is committed to maintaining good links with the statutory authorities.

### ***Who abuses adults?***

Potentially anyone, adult or child, can be the abuser of an adult. Abuse will sometimes be deliberate, but it may also be an unintended consequence of ignorance or lack of awareness. Alternatively, it may arise from frustration or lack of support. The list can include:

- Relatives of the vulnerable person including husband, wife, partner, son or daughter. It will sometimes include a relative who is a main carer.
- Neighbours.
- Paid carers.
- Workers in places of worship.

- People who are themselves vulnerable and/or are users of a care service.
- Confidence tricksters who prey on people in their own homes or elsewhere.
- Relatives who are main carers - carers can experience considerable stress, exhaustion and frustration without respite or support which can lead to unintended poor care or abuse.
- Relatives who are the main carers may also be subject to abuse by those for whom they are caring. This abuse is often endured for long periods and goes unreported.
- Institutions - all people living in institutions are more likely to have a degree of vulnerability. The Care Quality Commission in England has responsibility for inspecting and regulating the quality of care in institutions such as residential care homes, domiciliary care services and hospitals. In addition, the Local Government Ombudsman deals with complaints that relate to adult social care. HM Inspectorate of Prisons in England inspects prisons.

### ***Definitions of adult abuse***

- Physical abuse including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, 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 pressurised 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, possessions or benefits.
- Neglect or 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, based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.
- Domestic abuse that is usually a systematic, repeated and escalating pattern of behaviour, by which the abuser seeks to control, limit and humiliate, often behind closed doors.
- Organisational abuse including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home. This may range from one-off incidents to ongoing ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.
- Modern slavery including human trafficking; forced labour and domestic servitude; and traffickers and slave masters using whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.
- Online abuse whereby vulnerable people may be targeted through mobile telephones, online gaming, chat rooms, social networking sites, messaging services, and the internet generally.

### ***Procedures***

For reasons of consistency and practicality, the charity's procedures for safeguarding vulnerable adults will be the same as those for safeguarding children and young people (set out in section 1 of this Policy) except where the law, or the specific circumstances of an individual's need require otherwise.

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## Change Record

Date of Change:	Changed By:	Comments:
4th August 2020	Committee	Updating of definitions of adult abuse