

BENFLEET U3A

Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement

This Policy and Procedure is written to enable the Committee to act appropriately whenever possible or where instances, or allegations of, actual abuse or neglect comes to their attention.

Benfleet U3A recognises that some people are potentially at risk of abuse and neglect. Abuse and neglect can take place in a person's own home, in the home of a carer, family member or friend, and within any form of institution e.g. hospitals, residential care or nursing home.

Where abuse or neglect is suspected Benfleet U3A will aim to respond to the situation in a way which is caring, effective and enabling. Benfleet U3A also recognises that abuse and neglect can be perpetrated by volunteers, other users of services, relatives, friends and neighbours. Benfleet U3A acknowledges that the reasons for abuse and neglect occurring may not be fully understood and vary with each incident, often dependant on risk factors

Benfleet U3A will neither condone nor tolerate any form of abuse or neglect and believes that all people should be able and, where necessary enabled, to live in an environment which is safe.

In all situations, Benfleet U3A believes that everyone is entitled to:

- privacy
- be treated with dignity and respect
- lead an independent life and to be enabled to do so
- choose how they live their lives
- the protection of the law
- have their human and civil rights upheld regardless of ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religious or cultural background.

It is not appropriate for Benfleet U3A to take the lead role in any Safeguarding Enquiry under Section 42 of the Care Act 2014, but should refer this to Advice and Volunteer Manager in National Office who will contact the appropriate local authority.

Benfleet U3A will monitor the implementation of this policy and procedure annually through its Executive Committee

Procedure

Benfleet U3A recognises that it has a responsibility to ensure that its committee and group leaders understand this policy.

Benfleet U3A will support the alleged victims and the alleged perpetrators of any abuse as well as any volunteer who becomes aware of the abuse in so far as this does not compromise any Safeguarding Enquiry or investigation into the allegation or place other adults at risk.

While Benfleet U3A will make every effort to respect the confidentiality of any information that is disclosed under this Policy and Procedure, this cannot be guaranteed. Information will be recorded and stored securely in accordance with GDPR 2018 but confidentiality is not absolute and information may have to be shared, on a 'need-to-know' basis only, to prevent:

- Danger to a person's life
- Danger to a person's health
- Danger to others
- Danger to the community

or to prevent or to facilitate the investigation of a serious crime.

This Policy, Procedure and Appendices will be reviewed every 3 years from their date of adoption. The names and details of the Executive Committee should be amended when any change of Trustee takes place.

Courses of Action

- If the committee becomes aware of possible or actual abuse or neglect, it should ensure that the safety of the adult at risk is secured as a first priority.
- Any committee member who becomes aware of possible or actual abuse should, as soon as possible, record the details of the abuse. They should advise the rest of the committee and the Advice and Volunteer Manager at National Office who will provide further guidance.
- The committee, having been advised of the possible or actual abuse, should satisfy themselves that the adult at risk is safe, and that the alleged perpetrator, if known, does not pose a threat to any other adult at risk.
- The committee, working with the Advice and Volunteer Manager at National Office will decide whether or not to refer the possible or actual abuse to the local authority and/or the Police. When a crime may have been committed, the Police must be contacted as soon as possible. If the decision is to not refer, the reasons for this must be recorded .
- As far as possible, the adult at risk's wishes will be respected as to whether or not to refer any concerns to the local authority as a Safeguarding Enquiry under Section 42 of the Care Act 2014. However, it may be necessary to override these in the best interests of other adults at risk.
- The committee then completes form SAP1 with the guidance of the Advice and Volunteering Manager.
- Completed form SAP1s will be held in a designated file for a minimum of 2 years from the date of the last completed SAP1 on the adult at risk.
- Confidentiality is adhered at all times, therefore the contents of the form will not be provided to any third parties.

The above Policy was adopted by Benfleet U3A on 2nd August 2018

Signed: *Sheila Sears* _____ **Committee role** *Chair* _____