

Brecon U3A Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

1.0

Purpose:

To protect adults at risk who attend events organised and delivered by Brecon U3A

To provide Brecon U3A with overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding our members.

1.2

Policy

Statement

Brecon U3A is committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of members at risk. It recognises that it has a responsibility, to protect the welfare of members who may be in vulnerable situations and to ensure that such members are protected from harm.

Brecon U3A has no statutory remit or role to investigate abuse of adults at risk but acknowledges a responsibility to pass on to the appropriate statutory agency concerns in relation to the safety or welfare of an individual so that these concerns can be assessed.

1.3 Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up in accordance with legislation which applies equally to both adults and children such as the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, the Human Rights Act 1998, the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. In addition legislation for specific circumstances including the Sexual Offences Act 2007 (sexual exploitation) also applies equally.

Definitions

The legal definition of an adult at risk (Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014) is as follows:

Who is an adult at risk?

An adult who:

- a) Is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect
- b) Has needs for care and support (whether or not those needs are being met)
- c) And as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against abuse or neglect.

Definitions of the different types of abuse and neglect are found in appendix one.

3.0 Principles

Brecon U3A recognises that:

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The protection of an adult at risk should be everyone's paramount concern

All adults at risk, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, political opinion, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

Some adults are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.

Working in partnership with adults at risk is essential in promoting their welfare.

Brecon U3A will seek to keep members safe by:

Valuing them, listening to and respecting them.

Supporting them in making their own decisions about how they wish to proceed in the event of abuse, and to know their wishes will only be over-ridden if it is considered necessary for their own safety or the safety of others.

Adopting protection practices through procedures and a code of conduct for members.

All incidents of alleged poor practice, misconduct or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

4.0 Procedure

4.1

Where there are concerns about the safety or welfare of an adult at risk this policy and this procedure will be followed and information will be shared with the relevant agencies.

4.2 Brecon U3A will take all possible steps to ensure that members with whom it works are kept safe through:

A clear procedure for the raising of concerns about a member at risk (section 6)

Procedures to structure the management of an allegation of abuse against members (section 7)

Access to training and support for volunteers to ensure they are aware of and understand the importance of implementing this policy and related procedure (Appendix 2)

Identified personnel holding the lead role (SIG leader and Committee members) and designated safeguarding responsibilities within Brecon U3A (Appendix 2)

Clear expectations of all members and volunteers for sharing information about adults at risk.

5.0 Information Sharing

Brecon U3A has clear expectations of all members for sharing information about members at risk.

Brecon U3A recognises the importance of sharing information to protect a member and normally any disclosure of confidential information to any other person may only be undertaken with the expressed permission of the person.

Where it is necessary to protect the welfare of a member from serious harm, in exceptional cases information may be shared without permission. The member will be kept informed, unless to do so would put the welfare and safety of the individual at further risk of harm.

In recognition of its commitment to pass on concerns, Brecon U3A will maintain current information on, and work within, the requirements of the local procedures followed by statutory and voluntary agencies (Wales Interim Policy and Procedures for the protection of vulnerable adults) Concerns should be reported to Powys Social Service duty officer via 01597 827666 (office hours) 0845 054 4847 (out of hours) or via the Police on 101.

6.0 Procedure when there are concerns

If anyone within Brecon U3A has concerns about the welfare of a member they must raise those concerns and inform the SIG leader/committee member without delay. The leader/committee member will seek advice from the designated safeguarding person. If a member is at risk of immediate harm, the designated Safeguarding committee member should inform Social Care or the police without delay using the numbers above.

The information regarding the concerns and the action taken will be recorded and passed to the relevant agencies, using appropriate procedures.

If a member is alleged to have put the welfare or safety of another member at risk, the Safeguarding organiser will inform the appropriate agency and co-operate fully with the authority in the manner in which the matter is dealt with.

Notify and liaise with the Chair and Designated Safeguarding member for Brecon U3A (Appendix 2) and social services around any allegations of harm or inappropriate behaviour made against members.

7.0 Allegations against members

It is important that any concerns for the welfare of a member arising from abuse or harassment by another should be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Organiser, or, if they are implicated in the concerns, the Chair of Brecon U3A. These individuals are responsible for liaising with the Police and Social Care about the allegations in these circumstances.

The Safeguarding member, if not the subject of the concerns, is primarily responsible for taking all reasonable steps necessary to secure the safety of any member who may be at risk, by, for example, removing the person who is the subject of the allegation from any situation involving other members. S/he will be supported by the safeguarding team and by the Designated Senior Manager within Social Services as appropriate.

The Chair and/or Designated Safeguarding member are responsible for liaising with the police and Social Services about allegations. Where there are allegations of abuse or concerns about poor practice of members there may be two strands of investigation as follows:

1. Adult protection investigation (externally led)
2. Criminal investigation (externally led by the Police Authority)

It may be that a member is asked to cease their membership pending the outcome of the investigation. Brecon U3A values differences and will ensure that members will

be supported and appropriate measures will be taken to protect them from harm. This policy will be reviewed regularly in line with relevant legislative changes.

Designated Safeguarding Members
Names

Contact details

Date policy adopted:
Signature of Chair:

Date policy reviewed:

Appendix One

Physical Abuse

For adults, physical abuse is defined in the ‘Wales Interim Policy and Procedures 2013’ as ‘the unnecessary infliction of any physical pain, suffering or injury by a person who has responsibility, charge, care or custody of, or who stands in a position of or expectation of trust to, a vulnerable person.’ Physical abuse may also be perpetrated by one vulnerable adult upon another. It can include misuse of medication, undue restraint, inappropriate sanctions and other body impairment, such as dehydration, malnutrition, poor hygiene or sleep deprivation.

Emotional Abuse

For adults, emotional or psychological abuse is the infliction of mental suffering by a person in a position or expectation of trust upon an adult at risk. Emotional/psychological abuse can also be inflicted by an adult at risk on another individual. Emotional and psychological abuse includes bullying, which is typically deliberate, hurtful behaviour repeated over time, which can include physical abuse but often is verbal (name calling and threats). It can undermine self-confidence, may cause the victim to become more isolated and sometimes leads to self-harm.

Another example of psychological abuse is when an adult at risk is incited, induced or exploited to commit a crime or abuse. Examples of this include inciting to steal, to perform acts of violence and commit sexual crimes.

Sexual abuse

Adult sexual abuse refers to the direct or indirect involvement of an adult in sexual activity to which they are unwilling or unable to give informed consent, or which they do not fully comprehend, or which violates the social taboos of family roles, such as incest. Sexual abuse may also be perpetrated by an adult at risk upon another individual.

Any sexual activity that is not freely consenting is criminal. Where there is an abuse of trust, sexual activity may appear to be with consent, but is unacceptable because of the differences in power and influence between the people involved.

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Neglect

Neglect is a form of abuse in which the perpetrator is responsible for providing care for someone who is unable to care for him or herself, but fails to provide adequate care to meet their needs. Neglect can be deliberate or can occur as a result of not understanding what a persons needs are.

Neglect in an adult can include failure to access medical care or other services, negligence in the face of risk-taking, failure to give prescribed medication, poor nutrition or lack of heating and failure to maintain skin integrity. Under the Mental Capacity Act 2005, wilful neglect is classified as a criminal offence for individuals who do not have mental capacity. Self neglect is not classified as neglect of an adult at risk if the person is considered to have mental capacity and has knowingly behaved in this way.

Financial Abuse

Financial abuse can be defined as the illegal or unauthorised theft or use of a person's property, money or valuables. Adults at risk may be subjected to this form of abuse.

Some examples of financial abuse may involve a relative or carer:

Spending an adult at risk's money on themselves.

Refusing to let a person decide what to spend their money on.

Telling a person they should give them money, perhaps by telling a hard luck story or by making the person feel obliged to or that they are a burden.

Moving into another person's home uninvited, or pressurising the person to sign their property over to them or to change their will.

Domestic Abuse

It is defined as any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or 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 sexuality.

Domestic abuse can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse: psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional.

Appendix 2

Ongoing support for members

Brecon U3A will ensure that all members can access support and are clear about their role and responsibilities, through:

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the implementation of the Brecon U3A safeguarding code of conduct for members.

Identifying members to hold the Designated Safeguarding responsibilities within Brecon U3A.

Procedures to structure the management of any allegations of abuse against members.

3.

Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities within Brecon U3A

The committee retain ultimate responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of members.

They should agree:

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the member with responsibility for undertaking the SafeguardingLead role for safeguarding issues raised by members and for referring on concerns for the safety of members at risk.

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the person or persons who will undertake responsibilities as described in the Designated Safeguarding Person role below

A Designated Safeguarding Person's role is to:

- (a) provide a confidential sounding board if required for the SIG leader and to consider the most appropriate course of action to take where there is a safeguarding concern.
- (b) support the SIG leader/chair to use local procedures appropriately (e.g. for referral, for escalation or dispute resolution)
- (c) Follow up concerns and safeguarding issues referred to the relevant agencies
- (d) Liaise with the Chair of the Committee about safeguarding concerns, including where there are allegations against members; in accordance with local protection policies and procedures.
- (e) Advise on appropriate training provision and dissemination of information for committee members.