

The Cranleigh And District U3A

Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement

The Charity Commission states that protecting people and safeguarding responsibilities should be a governance priority for all charities, which must take reasonable steps to protect from harm people who come into contact with the charity. The purpose of this Policy and Procedure is to provide the Management Committee ('the Committee') of The Cranleigh And District U3A ('Cranleigh U3A'), its Group Leaders, and Members with guidance to address issues where there are safeguarding concerns.

Cranleigh U3A recognises that abuse can take place in any setting, public or private, including U3A activities. A list of Key Definitions provided by the Third Age Trust ('The Trust') is given on Page 3 (below). Cranleigh U3A has a duty of care to its members, but neither it, nor the Committee, holds any statutory authority.

Cranleigh U3A will seek to ensure that the Committee, Group Leaders, and Members are aware of this Policy and that Cranleigh U3A will, in all its activities, seek to value, listen to and respect members who may be vulnerable and ensure that all members feel welcome, respected, and safe from abuse.

Cranleigh U3A will do all it reasonably can to help members who may be vulnerable to remain active contributors within Cranleigh U3A and if they are, or become, unable to participate independently, encourage them to bring a designated companion/carer with them. (For insurance reasons, in such circumstances the companion/carer should be a formally designated companion/carer and not simply another member who has offered to help).

Cranleigh U3A will monitor the implementation of this Policy and Procedure at least annually through the Committee.

Procedure

Anyone wishing to express a safeguarding concern under this Policy should, in the first instance, contact a member of the Committee. They should be reassured that their concern will be taken seriously, and the matter will be treated confidentially, but their concerns may be shared with appropriate authorities. Save in the case of emergency, where the safety of the adult(s) are at risk, no member of the Committee will act in isolation when dealing with a safeguarding concern.

Safeguarding concerns will be referred to the principal officers of the Committee (Chair, Secretary, Treasurer) who will gather as much information as possible to assist with the decision as to the next steps. A risk assessment will be developed taking into account:

- risk to the individual member
- risk to other members within Cranleigh U3A
- reputational risk for Cranleigh U3A and the U3A movement as a whole.

The risk assessment will be recorded as soon as possible after the concern comes to the attention of the Committee. Where the principal officers deem that the risk is high and immediate action needs to be taken, they will contact the relevant local authorities and where applicable, The Trust for advice and support.

Where the risk is not deemed to be high but support is needed, the U3A Trust will be contacted to discuss the concerns and seek additional assistance in developing the risk assessment. Assistance will always be sought before moving to exclude any member from Cranleigh U3A on the basis of a safeguarding risk assessment.

Once the risk assessment is completed, the principal officers will decide the most appropriate course of action. This could include excluding members from certain groups e.g. groups held in people's homes, requesting that a member attends the Cranleigh U3A with a carer, or excluding a member from a Group run by a particular Group Leader.

Cranleigh U3A will make every effort to respect the confidentiality of any information that is disclosed under this Policy and Procedure. Information will be recorded and stored securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Any records will remain confidential to the Committee unless a decision has been taken to share the record with the relevant statutory bodies.

April 2022

Key Definitions

Adult at Risk

is any person, who is over 18 years of age and who has need for care and support, is experiencing, or is at risk of abuse or neglect, and as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or risk of it.

Abuse

is the “violation of a person’s human and civil rights by any other person(s). It may be a single or repeated act(s), physical, verbal, psychological, sexual, institutional, discriminatory or financial, an act of neglect or failure to act”

Types of abuse

Physical abuse – including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate physical sanctions.

Domestic violence – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so-called “honour” based violence.

Sexual abuse – including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

Psychological abuse – including emotional abuse, threat of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

Financial or material abuse – including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult’s financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Modern slavery – encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. 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.

Discriminatory abuse – including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

Organisational abuse – including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one’s own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

Neglect and acts of omission – including ignoring medical, emotional, or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

Self-neglect – this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

Recommended Agencies

The Local Authority, Social Services, GP Surgery, Police, etc.

Action of Elder Abuse (AEA) <https://www.elderabuse.org.uk/> is a confidential support and advice for older people who have been abused or people who know an older person who may be suffering abuse. Available weekdays 9am – 5pm on Freephone 08088088141.