



Dunmow u3a Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement

Safeguarding is a term used to denote measures to protect the health, well-being and human rights of individuals, which allow vulnerable people to live free from abuse, harm and neglect. This Policy and Procedure is written to enable the Dunmow u3a Executive Committee (the Executive Committee) to act appropriately to address issues where there are safeguarding concerns.

The scope of this policy and the following procedure is limited to instances which are connected with activities taking place under the auspices of Dunmow u3a. The Executive Committee has a duty of care to its members but does not hold any statutory authority. Matters of concern will be reported to the relevant safeguarding authorities and charity regulatory authorities, as appropriate.

Dunmow u3a recognises that some people are potentially at risk of abuse and neglect. Where abuse or neglect is suspected, the Committee will aim to respond in a prompt, efficient and caring manner to any situation where there is a risk, or perceived risk of harm. Dunmow u3a recognises that there are various forms of abuse which can be perpetrated by volunteers, other users of services, relatives, friends and neighbours. Dunmow 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, Dunmow 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 the Executive Committee to take the lead role in any Safeguarding Enquiry under Section 42 of the Care Act 2014. The Executive Committee will refer the enquiry to the Advice and Volunteer Manager in the National Office who will contact the appropriate local authority.

Procedure

The procedure is limited to instances of abuse which occur within the context of activities undertaken under the auspices of Dunmow u3a.

1. The Executive Committee recognises that it has a responsibility to ensure that Dunmow u3a group leaders and trip organisers understand this Safeguarding policy.
2. Depending on the nature of the allegation and the identified risk, the Executive Committee will support the alleged victim(s) and the alleged perpetrator(s) 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.
3. While the Committee 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 Data Protection Act 2018. However, 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 communityor to prevent or to facilitate the investigation of a serious crime.

Reporting of Safeguarding Issues by Dunmow u3a Members

1. If any member of Dunmow u3a considers they have been subject to abuse from another u3a member or becomes aware of possible or actual abuse occurring in a u3a setting, they should record this on the Safeguarding Adult Disclosure/Suspicion Report (SSR1) form (available from the Executive Secretary) and submit to a member of the Executive Committee as soon as possible.
2. In your record of the disclosure, you should aim to:
 - note what people actually said, using their own words and phrases
 - describe the circumstances in which the disclosure came about
 - note the setting and anyone else who was there at the time of the abuse or the disclosure
 - separate factual information from your own and others' opinions and be aware that your report may be required later as part of a legal action or disciplinary procedure.

If someone discloses abuse to you:

Do:

- stay calm and try not to show shock or disbelief
- listen carefully to what they are saying
- be sympathetic (I'm sorry that this has happened to you')
- tell the person that:
 - they did the right thing to tell you
 - you are treating the information seriously. It was not their fault
 - you are going to inform the appropriate person
 - you/ will take steps to protect and support them
- record and report the disclosure in line with the Procedure.

Do Not:

- press the person for more details; this will be done at a later date
- stop someone who is freely recalling significant events (Don't say 'hold on, we'll come back to that later'; they may not tell you or anybody else again)
- do not promise to keep secrets; you cannot keep this kind of information to yourself
- make promises you cannot keep (Such as 'This will never happen to you again')
- contact the alleged abuser
- be judgemental
- pass on the information other than to those with a legitimate 'need-to-know' under this Policy and Procedure.

Courses of Action for the Executive Committee

- Once a member of the Executive Committee is in receipt of a completed SSRI form, this shall be circulated to the Executive Committee as soon as possible. The steps to take to address the concern will be discussed and agreed between the Executive Committee in the first instance. No committee member will act in isolation when dealing with a safeguarding concern.
- The committee, having been advised of the possible or actual abuse, should satisfy itself 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 under Section 42 of the Care Act 2014 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 on form SAP1.

- 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 the relevant section of the SAP1 with the guidance of the Advice and Volunteering Manager.
- Completed 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 to at all times; therefore, the contents of the form will not be provided to any third parties.

Information contained in this document should only be used for the purposes of implementing and monitoring Dunmow u3a's Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures and service monitoring. The information must not be copied, transmitted or in any way divulged without the permission of Dunmow u3a.

Policy Review Date: March 2024

Issue Date: 1 July 2021