

Safeguarding Adults At Risk Policy

Date of Policy: April 2025

Due for Review: April 2026

Director Responsible for Safeguarding: Martin Ankers

Wace Chester Community Interest Company- hereafter called 'the company'- is committed to implementing any action needed for adults at risk.

The directors recognise that they have a duty of care and are committed to reviewing the policy and all its associated procedures annually.

This document contains both the policy and the set of procedures to be used to achieve the aims set out in the policy.

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Policy Statements

This policy applies to all directors, staff, volunteers and anyone representing the company.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To protect any adults at risk who receive the company's services or have contact with the company or its representatives;
- To provide directors, staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding adults at risk. This includes ensuring that everyone knows what to do if a concern arises.

The phrase 'adult at risk' (previously 'vulnerable adult') is taken to mean:

"Any adult aged 18 or over who due to disability, mental function, age, illness or traumatic circumstances may not be able to take care or protect themselves against the risk of significant harm, abuse, bullying, harassment, mistreatment or exploitation."

We recognise that:

- The company has a duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicion of abuse.
- The company should promote best practice and implement any necessary procedures that can prevent harm and abuse occurring.
- Anyone who experiences abuse should be supported appropriately.

We will seek to keep adults at risk safe by:

- Working to stop abuse or neglect wherever possible.
- Ensuring that all directors, staff, volunteers and anyone who represents the company has a copy of the policy and is familiar with the procedures.
- Ensuring that any users of the company's services are aware of the complaints procedure.
- Providing effective management for volunteers through supervision, support, resourcing and training.
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- Sharing concerns with agencies who need to know.

The company also has a safeguarding policy and procedures for children and young people.

Procedures

Part A - Preventing Abuse.

The company has a duty of care to all those with whom it comes into contact. We will maintain confidentiality at all times, except in circumstances where to do so would place the individual or another individual at a risk of harm.

The company will make sure that all volunteers for such activities will be recruited in accordance with the principles laid out in the procedures Part B. All directors, paid staff and volunteers will work within a code of conduct. We will have a clear supervision structure, and a director will be appointed each year as the lead for safeguarding.

All of the directors will be made aware of all the procedures in this document, and both this document and all the relevant contact details will be given to the appropriate staff or volunteers. The directors will make sure that proper documentation is kept.

This policy is only part of our commitment to reducing the risk of abuse and to ensuring that everyone with whom the company has contact is treated with respect. Other policies include:

- Safeguarding Children and Young People
- Equal Opportunities
- Health and Safety
- Data Protection

and these policies will be made available to everyone.

The company holds the position that no-one should enter into a sexual relationship with anyone with whom they hold a position of trust.

Part B – Recruitment Procedures

For anyone representing the company (including volunteers) where they are in a position of trust, or where they have contact with adults who may be at risk, the company will follow a process the same as that for safeguarding children & young people, namely:

- Be given a written job description by their supervisor.
- Complete and sign an application form / declaration that states that there is no reason why they should not be working with adults at risk.
- Have a face-to-face interview. The person(s) conducting the interview must not be closely related to the candidate, and the directors must approve of the interviewer. This interview will ensure that the candidate is aware of their role and what is expected of them (including safeguarding measures). The interview will also ensure that the candidate is aware of the support that they will receive in their role.
- Give references if requested to do so, and these will be taken up before the appointment.
- Allow the company to submit a check using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if needed.

After these steps have been taken, and if there are no reasons not to appoint the candidate, then the directors will approve the candidate and inform them that they have been appointed. The candidate's name will be added to the list of approved workers for the company. Appointments will be made subject to a designated probationary period.

- Paid workers (staff) may need additional checks.
- A DBS check will be deemed valid for a period of 5 years, after which the company will process another check.
- Each worker must attend a training session about the company's safeguarding procedures at least once every 3 years.
- Each worker will be made aware of the provisions of this policy (and will be given a copy of this policy), including the worker being made aware of how to report any concerns.

Any worker (staff, volunteers etc.) will be approved subject to them following a code of conduct, and permission may be withdrawn at any point. Relevant authorities will be informed if needed.

Part C - Reporting Abuse and Concerns

If an adult makes a disclosure that they are being abused, or they make an allegation against someone, the person being told:

- Should stay calm and listen carefully.
- Should assure the person making the disclosure or allegation that they have done the right thing in telling someone.
- Must not investigate, act alone or ask any leading questions.
- Should explain to the person making the disclosure or allegation that someone else needs to be told if anyone is at risk of harm, in order to help them.
- Must not promise to keep secret what they have been told.
- Should make a written record of the conversation (with as much detail as possible) and then sign and date this written record. This written record must be kept securely stored and not stored in a place where anyone else can read it.
- Must not discuss the situation with anyone else except those who need to know, such as the lead director for safeguarding.

Any disclosures, allegations or concerns must be reported.

If there is no immediate threat of harm, then:

- The lead director for safeguarding must be informed, and the written record as detailed above must be given to them. The written record will be kept securely and passed on to authorities if needed.
- If the lead director is not available, another director should be informed.
- If the allegation is against a director, then that director will not be informed – the allegation should be passed on to one of the other directors.
- The director will then decide if the case warrants a referral to the statutory authorities. If this is the case, the company will do everything necessary to comply with the statutory authorities.
- The director may also need to inform the company's insurers.

If the disclosure involves an immediate threat of harm or if the disclosure suggests that a criminal offence has been committed, the police will be contacted as a matter of urgency.

Information will be made readily available (including on the website) about how to contact the police or social services, so that allegations (for example, against the director responsible for safeguarding) can be made directly to them.

Flintshire County Council (www.flintshire.gov.uk)

During office hours, contact social services on 03000 858858

Out of hours, contact the police on 101 or 999 (non-emergency and emergency numbers)

Action on Elder Abuse Support Line 0808 808 8141

Age Connects North East Wales 08450 549969

Cheshire West and Cheshire (www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

During office hours, 0300 123 7034 (or email

accesswest@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

Out of hours, contact the emergency duty team on 01244 977277

Also, see information at:

<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/health-and-social-care/adult-social-care/lsab/local-safeguarding-adults-board.aspx>

Appendix A – Definitions

‘Adult as risk’ can be defined as:

“Any adult aged 18 or over who due to disability, mental function, age, illness or traumatic circumstances may not be able to take care or protect themselves against the risk of significant harm, abuse, bullying, harassment, mistreatment or exploitation.”

“Individuals aged over 18 who:

- have needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and;
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.”

Some circumstances may cause some adults to be at risk, including:

- Disability (learning, sensory or physical)
- Old age and frailty
- Mental health problems
- Dementia or confusion
- Illness
- Addiction or dependence on alcohol, drugs or medication
- Bereavement
- Past trauma or abuse
- English not being first language

Abuse includes (but is not limited to) these types:

- Physical (the inflicting of pain, physical injury or suffering)
- Emotional (the use of threats, fear or power; creating emotional distress)
- Sexual (any non-consenting act or behaviour)
- Neglect (care needs not being met)
- Financial (inappropriate use of money, theft, embezzlement, fraud)
- Spiritual (misuse of religious practice or positions)

- Discriminatory (inappropriate treatment on grounds of age, gender, religion, cultural background, sexuality or disability)
- Institutional (mistreatment by an institution, for example through poor practice)
- Domestic (between adults in a relationship)
- Cyber (online bullying, use of technology to harass)
- Self-harm (intentional damage to a person's own body)
- Slavery (the practice of treating people as property)
- Trafficking (people being bought and sold)

Abuse may be carried out deliberately or unknowingly. Abuse may be a single act or repeated acts.