



# Safeguarding Policy

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### 1. Safeguarding Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Letchworth Garden Shed (LGS) to develop and implement arrangements for safeguarding to prevent and reduce harm to children and adults at risk whom we may encounter through our activities.

It should be noted that direct engagement with children or vulnerable adults is not our core activity. However LGS staff and volunteers engage with the local community and at times this may include children and adults at risk; we have a duty of care to ensure that people we are in contact with are kept safe from any kind of harm.

This policy aims to:

- Define what we mean by Safeguarding.
- Promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and adults at risk
- Demonstrate how we as an organisation will manage risks to keep children and adults at risk safe including our recruitment procedure.
- Demonstrate the steps LGS will take to inform all relevant staff and volunteers who come in contact with children and vulnerable adults of our Safeguarding procedures; and
- Outline our protocols for reporting any incidents or suspicions regarding harm to children or adults at risk

### 2. The Legislation

#### Safeguarding Children Legislation

In England, child safeguarding legislation is covered by three main acts:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Children and Social Work Act 2017

Together, these provide the framework for child protection and safeguarding. The practices and procedures within this policy are based on the relevant legislation and government guidance.

### **Children Act 1989**

The Children Act 1989 provides the legislative framework for child protection in England. Key principles established by the Act include:

- the paramount nature of the child's welfare
- the expectations and requirements around duties of care to children.

### **Children Act 2004**

This is strengthened by the Children Act 2004, which encourages partnerships between agencies and creates more accountability, by:

- placing a duty on local authorities to appoint children's services members who are ultimately accountable for the delivery of services
- placing a duty on local authorities and their partners to co-operate in safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children and young people.

### **Children and Social Work Act 2017**

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 amends both the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004 and received Royal Assent on 27 April 2017.

### **Safeguarding Adults Legislation**

Safeguarding Adults in all home nations is compliant with United Nations directives on the rights of disabled people and commitments to the rights of older people. It is covered by:

- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulations 2018

The practices and procedures within this policy are based on the relevant legislation and government guidance.

- The Care Act 2014

The Safeguarding Adults legislation creates specific responsibilities on Local Authorities, Health, and the Police to provide additional protection from abuse and neglect to Adults at Risk.

When a Local Authority has reason to believe there is an adult at risk, they have a responsibility to find out more about the situation and decide what actions need to be taken to support the adult.

The actions that need to be taken might be by the Local Authority (usually social services) and/or by other agencies, for example the Police and Health. A community organisation like LGS may need to take action as part of safeguarding an adult, for example, to use the disciplinary procedures in relation to a member of staff or member who has been reported to be harming a participant. The Local Authority role includes having multi-agency procedures which coordinate the actions taken by different organisations.

### 3. Definitions

**Safeguarding:** This a term we use to describe how we protect adults and children from abuse or neglect

**Child:** in accordance with the Children Act 2004, a child is defined as anyone under the age of 18 years old. The use of the term Child in this document refers to people under the age of 18 years old.

**Adult at Risk/Vulnerable Adult:**

According to the Care Act 2014 (applicable in England):

An adult at risk is an individual aged 18 years and over who:

- has 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.

**Communication:** Communication is a two-way process that involves an individual making known (intentionally or unintentionally) their feelings, ideas, requests and experiences. It includes, but is not limited to, formal languages (e.g. English, Welsh and British Sign Language) and informal paralinguistic communications. It can include idiosyncratic usage that can be understood by only a few people involved with that individual.

**Abuse:** is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons. It can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it. Any or all of the following types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence, omission or ignorance. Often the perpetrator of abuse is known to the adult and may be in a position of trust and power.

Abuse can take many forms and LGS is committed to training its applicable staff and volunteers to recognise the manifestation of different kinds of abuse to children and adults at risk.

### 4. The key principles underpinning this policy are:

- The child's and/or vulnerable adult's welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration in any situation;
- All children and adults at risk have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual identity;
- All allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to efficiently and appropriately;
- All humans have the right to communication - to enable them to receive information, to ask questions, to make choices, and to make decisions. Communication with a child or vulnerable adult with a disability should take into account their particular communication style and needs.
- The LGS is committed to ensuring that all staff are carefully recruited, appropriately trained and adequately supported and supervised.

### 5. Application of this Policy

This policy is for relevant LGS staff, contractors and volunteers who come into contact with children or vulnerable adults.

It will apply in all aspects of our work and will be used in the following ways:

- a. In our Risk Assessment Process
- b. In our screening procedure
- c. In our procedures for dealing with any reported suspicions or allegation

## 6. Policy Review and Dissemination

This Policy will be communicated to all relevant LGS staff and volunteers including directors. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Angela Bell, a director and chair of the board.

This policy will be reviewed annually by LGS's directors. If any changes are made, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will communicate these clearly to all LGS team members.

This policy will be available on our website <https://letchworthgardenshed.com/> as well as on request if a hard copy is required.

## 7. Procedures for Safeguarding in the LGS

LGS is committed to putting in place and maintaining safeguards and measures to reduce the likelihood of abuse taking place or going unreported with our activities. All of those accessing LGS's activities and services along with the LGS staff and volunteers have a right to be treated with respect and care within the scope of our organisation.

This Policy should be read in the context of other LGS policy documents including:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Equal Rights and Diversity Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Disciplinary action, grievances and appeals procedure
- Volunteer Handbook

### a) All relevant LGS staff, contractors and volunteers should be able to recognise signs of abuse

The Care Act 2014 lists ten specific categories of abuse and neglect. These are; neglect, self-neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, financial and material abuse, organisational abuse, discriminatory abuse, modern slavery and domestic abuse.

LGS is committed to ensuring that those relevant staff, trustees and volunteers undertake training to gain a basic awareness of signs and symptoms of abuse.

The types of abuse that we expect our team to recognise include:

- **Neglect and acts of omission:** including withholding the necessities of life such as medication, food or warmth, ignoring medical or physical care needs
- **Self neglect:** Self-neglect differs from other forms of abuse because it does not involve a perpetrator. However, it is identified as a specific category of abuse and neglect in the Care Act 2014. It is when a person is unable, or unwilling, to care for their own essential needs and covers a wide range of behaviour including neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings, refusing care and support, and severe hoarding behaviour.
- **Physical abuse:** including hitting, slapping, punching, burning, misuse of medication, inappropriate restraint
- **Sexual abuse:** including rape, indecent assault, inappropriate touching, exposure to pornographic material
- **Psychological or emotional abuse:** including belittling, name calling, threats of harm, intimidation or isolation
- **Financial or material abuse:** including stealing, selling assets, fraud, misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits

- **Organisational abuse:** Neglect or poor professional practice or incidents due to the structure, policies, processes, or practices within an organisation, resulting in ongoing neglect or poor care. Organisational abuse is 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. **Discriminatory abuse:** including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment
- **Institutional or organizational abuse:** including regimented routines and cultures and unsafe practices
- **Modern Slavery:** Holding a person(s) in position of slavery, forced servitude, compulsory labour, or facilitating their travel with intention of exploiting them. Modern slavery exists in the UK and destroys lives. Men, women and children - UK nationals and those from abroad - are exploited in the sex industry, through forced labour, domestic servitude in the home and forced criminal activity. These types of crime are often called human trafficking. 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.

There are many signs and indicators that may suggest someone is experiencing abuse or neglect. There may be other explanations too, but LGS will not ignore any of these signs if they are apparent.

An adult may confide (disclose) to a trustee, volunteer, or other member of LGS that they are experiencing abuse, inside or outside the activities of the group. Or someone else may notice signs in a particular individual. The signs we will look out for include:

- Unexplained bruises or injuries
- Belongings or money going missing from the person
- The person no longer attending or enjoying LGS activities or responding to contact from other members of the group
- A change in confidence or behaviour of a person e.g. if they are withdrawn and quiet around a particular person or people, when usually they are outgoing and confident.
- A change in appearance of the person e.g. losing or gaining weight, deterioration in personal hygiene or way of dressing.
- Someone else (e.g. a parent, carer or family member) always speaking for the person and not allowing them to make their own choices
- The person showing fear of, or not wanting to be around, a particular individual or group of people

Training to recognise issues and respond appropriately will be refreshed at least once every three years. The Safeguarding Lead is accountable for organising this training.

#### b) LGS Vetting & Checking Procedures

LGS ensures suitability of volunteers and staff by asking applicants to complete application forms, undertake trial sessions and an informal interview with LGS staff/Lead volunteers.

Any staff or volunteers in a position which involves working with children or vulnerable adults without their parents or carers present will be required to undertake a DBS check. Until such time as their Disclosure certificate has been received, the member of staff will not be left unsupervised with children and vulnerable adults. The activities that may involve working with children or vulnerable adults are limited and include the following:

- Schools carbon footprint project,
- Young volunteers as part of the DoE award,
- Specific How to workshops delivered to under 18s

Should a positive Disclosure be received, a risk assessment will be carried out by the Chair of Trustees and a board member to assess the information contained within the Disclosure certificate.

If a relevant new member of staff or a volunteer has had an enhanced DBS check in the past three years and paid to have a regular registration of the certificate, LGS will use the online checking system to ensure this certificate is valid and appropriate for our needs.

Given the nature of LGS's activities as at the date of this document, it is not standard procedure for all staff and volunteers to undertake a DBS check. This will be reviewed in the event of any changes in LGSs Activities.

### c) Designated Safeguarding Lead for LGS

The Designated Lead for Safeguarding in LGS is Angela Bell. Angela Bell should be contacted via phone on 07766 988090 and via email on [letchworthgardenshed@gmail.com](mailto:letchworthgardenshed@gmail.com).

In her absence, volunteer Charlie Hayter will perform this role. Charlie can be connected on 07841 842271 or on her work email [charlie@letchworth.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:charlie@letchworth.foodbank.org.uk).

The roles and responsibilities of designated Safeguarding Lead are:

- To update and disseminate relevant literature and updates
- Organise training for relevant new recruits and at least every three years for existing relevant staff/volunteers
- To ensure that all concerns are acted upon, clearly recorded and a referral made to the appropriate child or adult safeguarding body within the appropriate local authority
- To follow up any referrals made and ensure that any issues have been addressed
- To reinforce the need for confidentiality at all times when handling a Safeguarding issue, the only time it will be appropriate to share information is when it is considered beneficial to the person at risk e.g. to the appropriate Safeguarding team.
- Act in an advisory capacity for LGS staff and volunteers.
- If appropriate, staff or volunteers will be given support and afforded protection if necessary under the 'Public Interest Disclosure Act' (1998) they will be dealt with in a fair and equitable manner and they will be kept informed of any action that has been taken and its outcome.

### d) Responding to people who have experienced or are experiencing abuse

LGS recognises its duty of care to act on reports or suspicions of abuse or neglect.

**How to respond if you receive an allegation:**

- Reassure the person concerned
- Listen to what they are saying
- Record and date what you have been told/witnessed as soon as possible
- Remain calm and do not show shock or disbelief
- Tell them that the information will be treated seriously
- Don't start to investigate or ask detailed or probing questions
- Don't promise to keep it a secret

**If you witness abuse or abuse has just taken place the priorities will be :**

- To call an ambulance if required
- To call the police if a crime has been committed
- To preserve evidence
- To keep yourself, staff, volunteers and all LGS service users safe
- To inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead person for LGS
- To record and date what happened

The Designated Lead Safeguarding Officer will:

- Take all allegations or reported incidents seriously
- Deal with any incidents as quickly as possible

- Have the option to contact North Herts safeguarding team via the relevant number below.
- Ensure that all written reports or documentation relating to the incident are stored safely in a password protected file.

The alleged victim and other appropriate people as deemed necessary will be kept informed of proceedings. Hertfordshire County Council should be contacted by the Designated Safeguarding Lead or by any LGS Team member if the Safeguarding Lead or a Director is not contactable in an emergency:

Hertfordshire County Council are responsible for all concerns regarding the welfare of children. If you have a concern about a child or a family, please contact them on 0300 123 4043 to discuss any safeguarding concern. In the event of an emergency, always ring the police on 999.

Concerns about adults should be reported to Hertfordshire County Council Adult Social Services, call 0300 123 4042 day or night. If someone is in immediate danger call 999.

#### **b) Managing allegations made against a member of LGS staff or volunteer**

LGS will ensure that any allegation made against any staff or volunteers will be dealt with swiftly and appropriately. The allegation will be managed in line with the LGS disciplinary processes. Where a member of staff/volunteer is thought to have committed a criminal offence the police will be informed. If a crime has been witnessed the police should be contacted immediately.

The safety of the individual(s) concerned is paramount. A risk assessment must be undertaken immediately to assess the level of risk to all service users posed by the alleged perpetrator. This will include whether it is safe for them to continue in their role or any other role within LGS whilst the investigation is underway.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should liaise with the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) at Hertfordshire Social care to seek advice and discuss the best course of action. They will ensure that any steps taken by LGS is co-ordinated with any other enquiries taking place as part of the ongoing management of the allegation.

#### **c) Recording and Managing Confidential Information**

LGS is committed to maintaining confidentiality wherever possible and information around Safeguarding incidents should be shared only with those who need to know. For further information please see LGS's Privacy Policy.

All allegations/concerns should be recorded by the person raising the concern using an 'Incident Report Form', the Designated Safeguarding Lead will support any team members with this and will store the records in a secure location (see Privacy Policy). The access to this file will be restricted to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

## **7. Appendices:**

Code of Behaviour  
Incident Report Form



## Code of Behaviour

These are some guidelines about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. They are not intended to be exhaustive, but rather to provide guidance for staff and volunteers.

Staff and volunteers should never:

- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- Allow anyone at a LGS activity to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive statements about or to a child or adult at risk
- Give any child or adult at risk any medication.

Staff should not meet children or adults at risk outside organised activities, unless this is with the knowledge and consent of the parents or carers.

## Incident Report Form

### Part One: To Be Filled out by the Person Reporting the Incident

<b>Your Name:</b>
<b>Date of report:</b>
<b>Name of Person/people you have a safeguarding concern about:</b>
<b>Date and place of safeguarding incident:</b>

### What Happened?

<b>1. Are you reporting your concerns, or the concerns raised by someone else?</b> <b>If someone else who?</b>
<b>2. Please describe your safeguarding concern.</b> <b>Provide as much detail as possible e.g. injuries seen, comments made, the names of people involved etc</b>
<b>3. Please list any witnesses to this incident</b>
<b>4. What actions were taken at the time of the incident?</b>

**5. Have you taken any further actions since the incident took place? If yes, please specifically list what they are e.g. phone call to the local Safeguarding Team.**

### Part Two (To be filled out by the Designated Safeguarding Lead)

<b>Name:</b>
<b>Date:</b>

<b>Does this incident require immediate reporting to the local Authority Safeguarding Team?</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>
<b>Please describe the steps and actions to be taken:</b>	

**Follow up notes (with dates):**

**Supporting resources:**

- Safeguarding Adults  
<https://www.anncrafttrust.org/resources/safeguarding-adults-policy-procedures-template/s/>
- Safeguarding Children: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection>