



BARROW UPON SOAR GOOD NEIGHBOUR SCHEME (BGNS)

VULNERABLE PERSONS SAFEGUARDING GUIDANCE

G001

1. Introduction

All Volunteers involved with the Barrow upon Soar Good Neighbour Scheme (hereafter referred to as BGNS) have a duty to safeguard vulnerable people who use the scheme and anyone with whom they may come into contact through the scheme.

Safeguarding is about protecting vulnerable people from any kind of abuse so if you suspect any such problems the role of a volunteer is solely to alert others to your suspicions.

This guidance is in place to protect all vulnerable persons from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, religion or faith. It is intended to support volunteers working within BGNS to understand their role and responsibilities in safeguarding adults. All volunteers are expected to follow this policy.

No volunteer should allow themselves to be left alone in a room with a child under 18 years old while on BGNS business as the insurance will not cover them if a mishap occurs. Nevertheless, if you believe there is a child at risk of, or suffering any type of abuse, or at risk from an adult with whom you are in contact, it is your duty to take things further as explained below.

We hope you never have to deal with abuse but, should the need arise; you do need to know the contents of this guidance in advance.

2. Principles

The welfare of the vulnerable adult (or child) is paramount and is the responsibility of everyone. All vulnerable adults (and children), without exception, have the right to protection from abuse. Bullying, shouting, physical violence, sexism and racism towards anyone should not be permitted or tolerated.

- No volunteers will have unsupervised access to vulnerable adults unless they have been through the safe recruitment procedure (below)
- All reported suspicions or allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and dealt with speedily and appropriately by the Safeguarding Officer or deputy.
- All volunteers need to be aware of this guidance and vulnerable adult issues

All volunteers must undergo a DBS security vetting and provide the BGNS Administration Team with a copy of the result as well as ensuring that their certificate is current in terms of the BGNS requirements.

3. What Is Safeguarding Adults?

'Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.'

Care and Support Statutory Guidance, Department of Health, updated February 2017

All adults should be able to live free from fear and harm but some may find it hard to get the help and support they need to stop abuse. An adult may be unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation for many reasons, including their mental or physical incapacity, sensory loss or physical or learning disabilities. This could be an adult who is usually able to protect themselves from harm but maybe unable to do so because of an accident, disability, frailty, addiction or illness.

a. Types of Safeguarding Adults abuse can be:

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| Physical/Bullying | An individual's body being injured or hurt or the inappropriate use of restrictive practices |
| Financial | The use of a person's funds and belongings without their permission |
| Sexual | Sexual relationships or activities that the individual does not want to be involved in or that they cannot consent to |
| Neglect | The failure to meet the basic needs of the individuals by providing food, fluids, warmth, medication, and hygiene support |
| Emotional/Psychological | It results in a person feeling worthless, unloved or uncared for |
| Institutional/Organisational | Care and support provided are focussed on the needs of the organisation rather than being person centred |
| Discriminatory | An individual or group being treated unequally because of the characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010 |

Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple and may affect one person or more. Volunteers should look beyond single incidents to identify patterns of harm. However, you should keep an open mind about what constitutes abuse or neglect as it can take many forms and the circumstances of the individual case should always be considered.

b. What are the possible signs of abuse:

Abuse and neglect can be difficult to spot. You should ask the member if you are unsure about their well-being as there may be other explanations to signs of abuse. You should be alert to the following possible signs of abuse and neglect:

- Depression, self-harm or suicide attempts
- Difficulty making friends
- Fear or anxiety
- The person looks dirty or is not dressed properly
- The person never seems to have money

- The person has an injury that is difficult to explain (such as bruises, finger marks, 'non-accidental' injury, neck, shoulders, chest and arms)
- The person has signs of a pressure ulcer
- The person is experiencing insomnia
- The person seems frightened, or frightened of physical contact
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or sexually explicit behaviour
- The person is withdrawn, changes in behaviour

c. Who abuses and neglects adults

Abuse can happen anywhere, even in somebody's own home. Most often abuse takes place by others who are in a position of trust and power. It can take place whether an adult lives alone or with others. Anyone can carry out abuse or neglect, including:

- partners
- other family members
- neighbours
- friends
- acquaintances
- local residents
- people who deliberately exploit adults they perceive as vulnerable to abuse
- paid staff or professionals
- volunteers and strangers

4. Reporting Incidents

If you are concerned that the BGNS member is at direct risk of or has been subject to [serious abuse and you think they are in immediate danger](#) (or anyone else with whom you have come into contact while acting under the Good Neighbour Scheme) you **must always report it immediately** to the Police or Adult (or Child) Social Care (emergency numbers at end of document).

If you have any other safeguarding concerns at all you must discuss them with the **Safeguarding Officer** (contact details via the Telephone Co-Ordinator 07771 625 591) who will have responsibility for reporting concerns that arise, to the local authority Vulnerable Adult (or child) lead agency.

The Safeguarding Officer will be responsible to make decisions about notifying Adult Social Services if required and consider alternative actions, where necessary. The Safeguarding Officer may also choose to have additional confidential discussions with you or others in order to clear up any misunderstandings, or to corroborate and support any suspicions, before reporting a concern to the lead agency.

a. How to respond to a member if you suspect abuse, or are being told about it

(Please Remember: it is not a volunteer's responsibility but that of the statutory agencies to follow up any suspicions or allegations)

What to do:

- Do treat any allegations extremely seriously and listen to what is being said
- Do tell the person they are right to tell you

- Do reassure them that they are not to blame
- Do be honest about your own position, who you have to tell and why
- Do tell the person what you are doing and when, and keep them up to date with what is happening
- Do take further action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse – tell your nominated person immediately
- Do write down everything said and what was done as soon as possible after the event and date and sign the account
- Do seek medical attention for the member if it appears necessary
- Do inform carers, unless there is suspicion of their involvement

What NOT to Do:

- Don't make promises you can't keep
- Don't interrogate the person – it is not your job to carry out an investigation – this will be up to the police and/or social services, which have experience in this
- Don't cast doubt on what the person has told you, don't interrupt or change the subject
- Don't say anything that makes the person feel responsible for the abuse
- Don't do nothing – make sure you tell your nominated safeguarding person immediately – they will know how to follow this up and where to go for further advice

5. Confidentiality

Vulnerable adult (or child) protection raises issues of confidentiality which must be clearly understood by all. Confidentiality is very important indeed. You may discuss this issue with the Safeguarding Officer if you have any concerns. You should make a note as soon as possible, with date and times, of any incident(s) or concerns coming to your attention. This will give you a record to which you can refer should the need arise. A factual account will be required with the key points recorded.

If requested by professionals, particularly investigative agencies and Adult Social Services, volunteers have a responsibility to share relevant information about vulnerable adults (or children).

All personal information regarding a vulnerable adult should be kept confidential. All written records must be kept in a secure area for a specific time as identified in data protection guidelines (please ask the Safeguarding team if you are concerned about this).

If a member confides in you and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that you tell them who you will have to tell and why. Even though you have to speak to someone else about the matter it is important that you assure the person that it will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it. The member's involvement in the process of sharing information must be fully considered and their wishes and feelings taken into account.

Where possible, consent must be obtained from the member before sharing personal information about them with third parties. However, in some circumstances, obtaining consent may be neither possible nor desirable, as the safety and welfare of the vulnerable adult is the priority.

Once the Safeguarding Officer has been informed of any problems they will usually pass the information on to Social Services, after that Social Services will decide if any follow up is needed.

In making a decision whether to refer or not, the Safeguarding Officer should take into account:

- the member's wishes and preferred outcome
- whether the member has mental capacity to make an informed decision about their own and others' safety
- the safety or wellbeing of children or other adults with care and support needs
- whether there is a person in a position of trust involved
- whether a crime has been committed

This should inform the decision whether to notify the concern to the following people:

- the Police if a crime has been committed
- Leicestershire Adult Safeguarding duty team – 0116 305 4933
- relevant regulatory bodies such as Care Quality Commission
- family/relatives as appropriate (after seeking advice from Adult Social Services)

The Safeguarding Officer should keep a record of the reasons for referring the concern or reasons for not referring.

Volunteer's Emergency contact numbers:

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| BGNS Telephone Co-ordinator | Mobile: 07771 625 591 |
| Police | Emergency 999 (non-emergency 101) |
| Local Social Care Office | Charnwood: 01509 266641 |
| Safeguarding (referrals) | Leicestershire: 0116 305 0004 Leicestershire Safeguarding Team Duty: 0116 305 4933 |
| Emergency Duty Team / Out of Hours | For Leicestershire and Rutland: 0116 255 1606 |
| Safeguarding Adults Board Managers | Leicestershire and Rutland: 0116 305 7130 |
| First Response Children's Duty Team (urgent for possible abuse or neglect of a child) | Leicestershire: 0116 305 0005 (24 hour phone line) |

[Help may also be available for the member from Action for Elder Abuse tel. 0808 8088141
(see also: <http://www.lrsb.org.uk/lrscblinks>)