

Chapelton Community association

The Chapelton Community Association (CCA) established in 2022 by residents of Chapelton. CCA aims to promote community spirit through environmental, wellbeing and recreational activities.

Background and principles

Safeguarding adults means protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. An adult at risk is any person who is aged 18 years or over and at risk of abuse or neglect because of their needs for care and or support. Volunteers and trustees of the CCA may in the course of CCA business come into contact with vulnerable adults. While the CCA is not set up to intentionally interact with vulnerable adults, it is important for volunteers and trustees to be able to recognise when an adult may be vulnerable and act in a supportive way and know who and how to report concerns to.

The CCA is committed to the six principles set out in The Care Act (2014) which underpin the safeguarding of adults:

Empowerment

People are supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.

"I am asked what I want as the outcomes from the safeguarding process, and this directly inform what happens."

Prevention

It is better to take action before harm occurs.

"I receive clear and simple information about what abuse is. I know how to recognise the signs, and I know what I can do to seek help."

Proportionality

The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.

"I am sure that the professionals will work in my interest, and they will only get involved as much as is necessary."

Protection

Support and representation for those in greatest need.

“I get help and support to report abuse and neglect. I get help so that I am able to take part in the safeguarding process to the extent to which I want.”

Partnership

Services offer local solutions through working closely with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.

“I know that staff treat any personal and sensitive information in confidence, only sharing what is helpful and necessary. I am confident that professionals will work together and with me to get the best result for me.”

Accountability

Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

“I understand the role of everyone involved in my life and so do they.”

Legislation in Scotland

The Care Act 2014 came into force on 1 April 2015. The act introduces new duties and responsibilities on local authority adult social services as the lead agencies in protecting adults at risk. This gives public services and government clear responsibility to make sure that people in the most vulnerable situations are safe from abuse or neglect.

The CCA supports the principles in the acts and believes that safeguarding is everyone's business. We know how important it is for organisations to work together and create shared strategies to protect people.

We're committed to taking action quickly, effectively and professionally when abuse takes place.

What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding is a term we use to describe how we protect adults and children from abuse or neglect. It is an important shared priority of many public services, and a key responsibility of local authorities.

Safeguarding is about protecting certain people who may be in vulnerable circumstances. These people may be at risk of abuse or neglect due to the actions (or lack of action) of another person. In these cases, it is vital that public services work together to identify people at risk and put steps in place to help prevent abuse or neglect

The terms we use

Adults at risk who are covered by CCA's safeguarding policy will be referred to in this policy as 'clients.

The term 'adult at risk' is used in this policy to replace 'vulnerable adult'. This is because the term 'vulnerable adult' may wrongly imply that some of the fault for the abuse lies with the victim of abuse. We use 'adult at risk' as an exact replacement for 'vulnerable adult' as that phrase is used throughout existing government guidance.

When we refer to 'staff' throughout this policy, this means CCA trustees and volunteers.

Our safeguarding duty

The CCA has a duty to be aware that any adult coming to a club/event may be at risk, and that we have a duty to report to the appropriate authority any concerns.

Our areas of responsibility

This policy relates to all forms of abuse. These are described in a later section.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 is a legal framework which protects people who may lack capacity to make decisions for themselves. It also sets out how decisions should be made on their behalf. The act covers all sorts of decisions, from life-changing events to everyday matters. The act says that:

"... a person lacks capacity in relation to a matter if at the material time he is unable to make a decision for himself in relation to the matter because of an impairment of, or disturbance in the functioning of the mind or brain."

The presumption is that adults have mental capacity to make informed choices about their safety and how they live their lives. Mental capacity and a person's ability to give informed consent are at the heart of decisions and actions taken by the CCA under this safeguarding policy. Every time we become involved on a safeguarding issue, we need to take into account

the ability of adults to make informed choices about the way they want to live and the risks they want to take.

This includes how able they are:

- to understand what is likely to result from or affect their situation
- to take action themselves to prevent abuse
- to take part as fully as they can in making decisions about getting other parties involved.

What is abuse?

Abuse and neglect take many forms . Abuse can lead to a violation of someone's human and civil rights by another person or persons. Abuse can be physical, financial, verbal or psychological. It can be the result of an act or a failure to act.

It can happen when an adult at risk is persuaded into a financial or sexual exchange they have not consented to or can't consent to. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm or exploitation.

Some types of abuse are illegal, and in these cases adults who lack capacity are protected by law the same as everyone else. If the CCA suspects that a crime against a client has been committed, we refer the matter to the police. Sometimes, an urgent referral is made for the safety of the adult at risk and/or to preserve evidence.

Abuse is a misuse of power and control that one person has over another. Where someone is dependent on another, there is the possibility of abuse or neglect unless enough safeguards are put in place.

Abuse can fall into the following categories:

Physical

This includes assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, giving the wrong (or no) medication, restraining someone or only letting them do certain things at certain times.

Domestic

This includes psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse. It also covers so-called 'honour' based violence.

Sexual

This includes rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, taking sexual photographs, making someone look at pornography

or watch sexual acts, sexual assault or sexual acts the adult didn't consent to or was pressured into consenting.

Psychological

This includes emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, depriving someone of contact with someone else, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, putting pressure on someone to do something, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or support networks.

Financial or material

This includes theft, fraud, internet scamming, putting pressure on someone about their financial arrangements (including wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions) or the misuse or stealing of property, possessions or benefits.

Modern slavery

This covers slavery (including domestic slavery), human trafficking and forced labour. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever they can to pressurise, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse and inhumane treatment.

Discriminatory

This includes types of harassment or insults because of someone's race, gender or gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

Organisational

This includes neglect and poor care in an institution or care setting such as a hospital or care home, or if an organisation provides care in someone's home. The abuse can be a one-off incident or repeated, on-going ill treatment. The abuse can be through neglect or poor professional practice, which might be because of structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

Neglect and acts of omission

This includes ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, or not giving someone what they need to help them live, such as medication, enough nutrition and heating.

Self-neglect

This covers a wide range of behaviour which shows that someone isn't caring for their own personal hygiene, health or surroundings. It includes behaviour such as hoarding.

Abuse can take many forms. It might not fit comfortably into any of these categories, or it might fit into more than one. Abuse can be carried out by one adult at risk towards another. This is still abuse and should be dealt with. The adult at risk who abuses may also be neglecting him/herself which could also be reason for a safeguarding referral.

Who might be an abuser?

Adults at risk can be abused by a wide range of people – anyone, in fact, who has contact with them. This includes family members, professional staff, paid care workers, other adults at risk, volunteers, other service users, neighbours, friends and associates, people who deliberately take advantage of vulnerable people, strangers and people who see an opportunity to abuse.

Abuse is always wrong, but it's especially worrying when carried out by someone in a position of power or authority over someone, who uses that power to harm an adult at risk.

Spotting signs of financial abuse

- A change in living conditions.
- Selling possessions.
- Being unable to pay bills, or an unexplained lack of money.
- Money being taken out of an account without a reason.
- Financial documents being lost without a reason.
- Someone being cut off from family, friends or their social network.
- The carer having more money to spend on things like clothes, travel or accommodation.
- Sudden changes to a bank account or how someone uses it.
- New, recent authorised signers on a client or donor's account card.
- Money being taken without permission from the adult at risk's ATM card.
- Changes in how the ATM card is being used (such as more frequently or from different locations).
- Sudden or unexpected changes to someone's will or other financial documents.

This list shows some of the signs (there can be others) that abuse might be taking place. If something on this list happens, it doesn't automatically mean someone is being abused – it just means the situation should be scrutinised.

Other forms of abuse

There are some things which might increase the risk of someone being abused .

- Records of the client being abused before, or records of suspected abuse.
- Other members of the client's family being abused.
- Family tensions and conflicts.

Factors which have been shown to increase the chance of abuse include:

- a client or donor being over 75 and female
- organic brain injury (lower mental function due to illness)
- cognitive impairment (someone having trouble with memory, thinking skills or making decisions)
- physical, mental or emotional dysfunction, especially depression, recently losing a partner, not having friends or a social network, living alone, or not having contact with their children.

Being aware of forced marriage

Forced marriage happens across all cultures. It's when someone is pressured into an arranged marriage or forced to marry someone they haven't freely chosen. It can also happen if someone lacks the mental capacity to make their own choices.

Signs of forced marriage might be:

- someone having a brother or sister who has been forced to marry
- parents talking about marriage
- hearing talk of weddings or parties
- talk of family members coming to live with the family, or family trips overseas
- wedding photos, clothes, gifts, Mehdi henna
- unreasonable restrictions being placed on someone at home
- how much the person's family deals with professionals who might help with organising a wedding or a visa, before a trip overseas.

CCA's role in safeguarding adults at risk

If a member of CCA staff suspects there is a safeguarding issue they should inform Aberdeenshire social services, or if the abuse is a crime, the police. Local Authority Adult Social services take the lead in co-ordinating the multi-agency approach to safeguard adults at risk

Examples of action that may be criminal include physical assault, psychological assault, sexual assault and rape, theft, fraud or other forms of financial exploitation, and certain forms of discrimination on the grounds of race or gender.

Training

All CCA trustees will read this policy to make them aware of the different forms of abuse, risk of abuse and CCAs responsibility to report concerns.

Reviewing this policy

This policy will be reviewed and revised whenever there's a change in national policy or the law.

The Vice-Chair is responsible for making this happen.