

Barnet Borough Sight Impaired (BBSI) Safeguarding Policy & Procedures

INTRODUCTION

Barnet Borough Sight Impaired (BBSI) is a membership-based charity for visually impaired and blind adults in the Borough of Barnet and surrounding area. Some of our members are also physically disabled and many are elderly.

As such, this is a group of individuals deemed to be Adults at Risk under the Care Act 2014 and therefore in need of protection against potential harm and abuse.

The Care Act 2014 states that adult safeguarding duties apply to *any* adult who:

- has care and support needs, and
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse and neglect, and
- is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect, because of those needs.

The charity is run by volunteers (visually impaired members and sighted non-member helpers) who assist at our monthly social meetings, group outings to places of interest, and occasional visits to restaurants. Contact with members is mostly within a group setting but sometimes (although to a very limited extent) also on a one-to-one basis - for instance, when a volunteer drives a member from their home to a meeting.

Our membership is not aimed at children, but children and young adults may occasionally accompany a relative to meetings or outings. A group of local school children also gives an annual carol concert to the charity. In both cases, the children and young adults are always in a safe group environment.

OUR POLICY

We take our duty of care to our members, volunteers, speakers and visitors very seriously and are fully committed to their wellbeing and welfare.

The purpose of this policy is:

- (i) To protect our members and everyone who participates in and/or contributes to our activities (members, volunteers, interns, committee members, trustees, visitors, contractors and other representatives commissioned by us, such as consultants, speakers and photographers) from potential abuse/harm. This includes children and young people present at meetings and outings.
- (ii) To inform our members and all other relevant individuals (volunteers, service providers etc) about the principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and how they can raise any concerns they may have.

We take up references from volunteers and provide them with comprehensive safeguarding training to further their knowledge and understanding of adults with a care or support need, together with guidance on protecting children and young adults.

Abusive behaviour of any kind will not be tolerated and action will be taken to investigate (with referral if necessary to the appropriate statutory agencies) and/or to remove and dismiss the individual concerned from any further contact with our members and organisation.

We regularly review our safeguarding policy and monitor guidance from Government, the Charity Commission and Barnet Safeguarding Adults Board.

SIX PRINCIPLES OF ADULT SAFEGUARDING

We are fully committed to the six principles of the safeguarding process which underpin the Care Act 2014.

- **Principle 1: Empowerment**

We always ask members what outcomes they want from the safeguarding process and ensure they give their informed consent

- **Principle 2: Prevention**

We ensure that our members and volunteers have information about what abuse is, how to recognise the signs and what they can do to seek help. We provide awareness training for members and volunteers, undertake safe recruitment training and organisational risk assessments when planning our activities.

- **Principle 3: Proportionality**

We take a proportionate and least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented. We always work in our members' best interest as they see them and we will only get involved as much as they want or need us to.

- **Principle 4: Providing support, protection and representation for those in greatest need**

We ensure that our members and volunteers are given help and support to report abuse and to take part in the safeguarding process to the extent to which they want to or are able to.

- **Principle 5: Partnerships – Local solutions**

Local community services can help us in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse. We ensure that we always treat any personal and sensitive information in confidence, only sharing what is helpful and necessary.

- **Principle 6: Accountability – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding**

We ensure that everyone understands (i) what safeguarding is and (ii) their role in the safeguarding process.

The Act also defines ten categories of abuse:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Psychological/Emotional/Mental
- Financial and material
- Neglect and act of omission
- Discriminatory
- Organisational
- Modern Day Slavery
- Domestic Violence
- Self Neglect – including hoarding

Also relevant but not included in the Care Act:

- Forced marriage
- FGM
- Radicalisation
- Cyber-bullying
- Mate/hate crime

[Click here for Examples of Types of Abuse](#)

SAFEGUARDING RESPONSIBILITY

The Committee (trustees) are responsible for implementing this policy; the designated Safeguarding Lead & Compliance Officer is responsible for managing compliance on the committee's behalf.

The Safeguarding Lead & Compliance Officer (SLCO) will be the first point of contact for raising concerns and complaints.

The designated SLCO currently is Mr Nigel Vandyk who can be contacted on Tel 020 8349 4705 | Mob: 07976 655709 and by email at barnetbsi@yahoo.co.uk

POLICY REVIEW

The designated SLCO, in consultation with the trustees, will review this policy and associated procedures annually and/or on the introduction of any new legislation (whichever is sooner).

BBSI ADULT SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

If you suspect or witness instances of abuse please follow the procedures below to report your concerns to us.

1. RESPONDING TO A CONCERN

- Always call 999 for police/emergency services if someone is at immediate risk of harm/in need of urgent medical care
- Get brief details about the concern/incident and ask the person concerned what they would like you to do about it – be careful not to ask probing or leading questions, and do not attempt to conduct an investigation
- Seek consent from the person concerned to take action and to report the concern. Ask yourself whether they may not have the capacity to make decisions about their own and other people's safety and wellbeing. **If, for this or another reason, you decide to act against their wishes or without their consent, you must record your decision and the reasons for this.**

2. REPORTING YOUR CONCERN

- Contact the designated Safeguarding Lead & Compliance Officer (or, if unavailable or implicated, contact other members of the Committee) to give a verbal report of your potential safeguarding concerns or to inform them of the emergency action you have taken where someone was at immediate risk of harm.

3. RECORDING YOUR CONCERN

- After you have given your verbal report we will ask you to submit a written report of all the details of the incident/concern.
- Reports about safeguarding concerns must remain confidential at all times (and kept safe from the alleged abuser); you will be given specific security instructions when submitting your report.

4. REFERRING A CONCERN

The designated Safeguarding Lead & Compliance Officer will review your report with the BBSI Committee and decide on any action required, i.e. they will make a decision on whether this can be handled internally or whether the matter needs to be referred to an outside agency.

When making a decision about whether or not to refer, the designated Safeguarding Lead & Compliance Officer and the BBSI committee will take into account:

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

The above will determine whether this is a matter that can safely be handled internally or whether the concern needs to be referred to any/all of the following.

- the police if a crime has been committed and/or
- Barnet Social Care Direct
- relevant regulatory bodies
- family/relatives as appropriate

The designated Safeguarding Lead & Compliance Officer will keep a record of the reasons for referring the concern, or reasons for not referring, and will also keep the person who raised the concern informed of progress and the outcome.

If you are not happy with the response of the Safeguarding Lead & Compliance Officer, you may take the matter up with the Chairperson of BBSI or another member of the Committee who will review the decisions of the Safeguarding Lead & Compliance Officer.

Examples of Types of Abuse

Physical abuse

- Including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions

Sexual abuse

- Rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing, or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting

Psychological abuse

- Including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks

Financial or Material abuse

- Including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits

Neglect and acts of omission

- Including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating

Discriminatory abuse

- Including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment: because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion

Organisational abuse

- Including 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. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation