



Martham Parish Council

Safeguarding Adults Policy

in association with

Norfolk Safeguarding Adults Board

Clerk: Mr P Dawson
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Vulnerable Adults Policy

Martham Parish Council is committed to ensuring that vulnerable people who use our facilities and services are not abused and that working practices minimise the risk of such abuse. This policy should be operated in association with the Council's Disciplinary Procedure.

This policy is operated in association with the Norfolk Safeguarding Adults Board, herein after called the 'Board', which is an executive body established by the Norfolk County Council to oversee and ensure the consistent development and implementation of the multi-agency policy and associated procedures.

This multi-agency policy sets out Norfolk's multi-disciplinary and multi-agency framework in accordance with the *"No Secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse"*. This policy also builds on the Government's respect for human rights and results from its firm intention to close a significant gap in the delivery of those rights for vulnerable adults alongside the coming into force of the Human Rights Act 1998.

Definition

Vulnerable adults are people who are over 18 years of age and are getting or may need help and services to live in the community. Vulnerable adults may be unable to take care of themselves and unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation by other people.

Who is a Vulnerable Adult?

Vulnerable adults are people over the age of eighteen who, because of disability, age or illness are unable to protect themselves from harm or from being exploited.

What is Abuse?

There are a number of ways in which a vulnerable adult may be mistreated, harmed or distressed. Some ways are clearly abuse and others are less obvious.

Physical Abuse

Including hitting, slapping over or misuse of medication, undue restraint or inappropriate sanctions.

Sexual Abuse

Including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not or could not consent and/or was put under pressure to consent

Psychological Abuse

Including threats of harm or being abandoned, humiliation, verbal or racial abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or support.

Financial or Material Abuse

Including theft fraud, pressure around wills, property or inheritance misuse or dishonestly taking benefits.

Neglect

Including failure to access medical care or services, not caring about risks, not giving prescribed medication, poor nutrition or lack of heating

Racially Motivated Abuse

Can take any of the above form

Stranger Abuse

A vulnerable adult may be abused by someone who they do not know, such as a stranger, a member of the public or a person who deliberately targets vulnerable people in order to exploit them.

Abuse can take place in any setting, public or private, and can be perpetuated by anyone.

Volunteers and staff have a duty to identify abuse and report it.

Support to volunteers and staff

The volunteers and staff reporting of incidents of suspected or potential abuse may find that the victim and/or the other responsible adult concerned are upset or angry. The Coordinator of the Board will support you. Volunteers and staff themselves may also be the subject of an allegation of abuse. Martham Parish Council will ensure that the Board is given all necessary assistance pursuing any investigation. Suspension and/or discipline may be implemented.

Suspect of abuse by volunteers and staff

Where a volunteer or member of staff is suspected of abuse the following action should be taken:

- The Board's appointed person should interview the volunteer or member of staff with a witness present.
- The Board's appointed person should make arrangements for interviewing the suspected victim. This should be done with the Parish Council volunteer or member of staff and a supporter for the victim present.
- The purpose of the meeting is not to investigate but to establish whether there are grounds for the allegation.
- The Boards policy procedure should then be followed.

Duty of Confidentiality

Information held by an agency is subject to the legal "duty of confidence" and should not normally be disclosed without the consent of the persons who have provided the information or are the subject of the information. However, the public interest in maintaining confidentiality can be overridden by the public interest to protect vulnerable persons.

Disclosure without consent must therefore be necessary and justifiable in each case and the information disclosed must be the minimum necessary to achieve the aim. If in doubt, legal advice should be sought before disclosure is made, but due regard must be made to the fact that this may cause unnecessary delay which could have additional implications regarding why immediate action wasn't taken and a dangerous delay was caused. Where an agency discloses information without consent, it is responsible for ensuring that such action complies with the Data Protection Act 1998, Human Rights Act 1998 and any other legislation or guidance which is applicable to individual agencies. It should also be noted that the Duty of Confidence exists beyond death.

It is the responsibility of each agency to ensure that in taking action under this Protocol it is complying with the law. Nothing within this Protocol shall be construed as requiring any agency to breach legislation or guidance.

The reason for disclosing information without consent must be recorded on the case file.

Martham Parish Council abides by the guidance given by the Safeguarding Adults Board concerning:-

- Relevant legislation.
- Advocates for people who lack the mental capacity to make some important decisions.
- Information sharing.
- The National Framework of Standards for good practice and outcomes in Safeguarding Adults/Adult Protection.
- Professional Reporting ("*Whistleblowing*").
- Making a commitment to training.

Contact information

Allegation of the alleged abuse which occurred when the person is over 18 years old falls under the Protection of Vulnerable Adults and needs to be reported to the:

Team Manager
Safeguarding Adults
c/o Jan Cant
Business Support Officer
Safeguarding Adults Team
Adult Social Care,
Northfield Road,
North Walsham
Norfolk NR28 0AS
Tele: 01692 500550