



# Safeguarding Statement and Policy

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## 1. Purpose of the policy

To provide protection for children, young people or adults at risk who attend activities and events (such as campaigning and day to day running, Ilminster Share and Repair, Tree Group, Litter Picks, Green Drinks and additional events/duties) organised by Green Ilminster CIC. This includes the children of adults who use our services or volunteer within our organisation.

To provide volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach, and guidance on the procedures they should adopt if they suspect a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

This policy applies to anyone volunteering or working on behalf of Green Ilminster CIC, including directors, contractors and volunteers.

## 2. Definitions

**Adult at risk of abuse or neglect** - For the purposes of this policy, 'adult at risk' refers to someone over 18 years old who, according to paragraph 42.1 of the Care Act 2014:

- has care and support needs.
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect.
- as a result of their care and support needs, is unable to protect himself or herself against abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

If someone has care and support needs but is not currently receiving care or support from a health or care service they may still be an adult at risk

**Children and young people** are defined as those persons aged under 18 years old.



**“Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children”** is defined in Working Together 2018 as:

- protecting children from maltreatment.
- preventing impairment of children’s health and development.
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

### **3. General Statement**

There is a moral obligation and legal duty of care that we do whatever is reasonably practicable to ensure the safety and wellbeing of anyone, including children, young people and adults at risk, with whom we work.

All children, young people and adults at risk, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

Green Ilminster and its Volunteers will seek to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk by:

- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Lead with responsibility for Green Ilminster’s safeguarding arrangements;
- Providing a safe enough physical environment;
- Always keeping safety and welfare at the centre of what we do;
- Listening to participants, taking account of their views and promoting inclusion;
- Recruiting and training volunteers in safeguarding where appropriate;
- Ensuring senior GI personnel and the Designated Safeguarding Lead are DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checked. As a general rule volunteers are not expected to be DBS checked as there will be no unaccompanied children or vulnerable adults volunteering with us.
- Identifying the abuse, neglect or exploitation of children and young people and adults at risk where it is occurring and responding effectively to any concerns, formal or informal complaints or expressions of anxiety;
- Liaising with appropriate services and agencies in the event of a safeguarding issue or concern;



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- Managing confidentiality and data protection issues appropriately;
- Risk assessing activities;
- Following, monitoring and updating this safeguarding policy at regular intervals or as needed in line with updates to appropriate legislation, so our policy is in line with the law, and the procedures published by the [Local Safeguarding Partnership \(Somerset Council, NHS and Police\)](#).

## 4. Definitions of abuse

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other persons(s) or group of people. Abuse may be single or repeated acts. It can be:

### 1. Physical

For example, hitting, slapping, burning, pushing, restraining, or giving the wrong medication.

### 2. Psychological and emotional

For example, shouting, swearing, frightening, blaming, ignoring, or humiliating a person, threats of harm or abandonment, intimidation, verbal abuse or manipulating a person to take part in acts that they do not wish to.

### 3. Financial

Including the illegal or unauthorised use of a person's property, money or other valuables.

### 4. Sexual

Such as forcing a person to take part in any sexual activity without his or her informed consent. Sexual intercourse with any person below the Age of Consent (16 years of age) is illegal.

### 5. Discriminatory

Including any physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct which targets the gender, sexual orientation, race, colour, nationality, religion, disability, or age of the victim, having the purpose or effect of violating the recipient's dignity or creating an intimidating, degrading or offensive environment.



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## **6. Institutional**

The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to vulnerable people.

## **7. Neglect and acts of omission**

Including ignoring medical or physical care needs.

# **5. Procedures for safe working**

## **1. Working with children, young people (under 18) and adults at risk**

- Children or adults at risk must be accompanied by a parent, carer or legal guardian. The child or vulnerable adult will remain the responsibility of the supervising adult;
- No one under the age of 18 can volunteer for GI independently;
- Children under 18 or vulnerable adults attending activities with their school, college or with another organisation will be the responsibility of the teachers or staff of that organisation;
- Volunteers should never be left alone with a child or a vulnerable adult or work with them away from their supervising parent, guardian, teacher or carer;
- Volunteers will be required to read the safeguarding policy and procedures and confirm their awareness in writing.

## **2. Risk assessments, and health and safety**

- All activities must be preceded by a risk assessment; this will enable planning for safety to take place ensuring that the activities are safe and enjoyable;
- Any accidents or incidents will be recorded;
- There will be a first aid kit on site at all times;
- Volunteers will make themselves aware of any first aiders present during their activities.



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### 3. Photography and filming

Never take pictures or film children, young people or adults at risk without permission (to be sought from parent, guardian, school, college or other organisation) and never share any pictures or film without the consent of all identifiable people in the picture or film.

## 6. Recognising concerns or evidence of abuse

Concerns about or evidence of abuse might be raised through:

- A direct disclosure by the child, young person or vulnerable adult;
- A complaint or expression of concern by another volunteer, carer/parent/guardian, or a member of the public;
- An observation of the behaviour of the child, young person or vulnerable adult by the volunteer.

## 7. Dealing with abuse discovered, disclosed, or alleged

Action must be taken immediately in ALL cases. Do not assume someone else will act. It is the responsibility of the volunteer becoming aware of a situation to:

### 1. Respond and make safe

- Deal with the immediate needs of the child, young person or vulnerable adult. This may mean taking reasonable steps to ensure the person is in no immediate danger and seek medical treatment if required;
- Do **not** discuss the allegation of abuse with other volunteers, group members, parents/guardians or the alleged perpetrator;
- Report any suspected abuse to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Safeguarding Lead will be responsible for following up and reporting any suspected reports of abuse to the appropriate agencies (Somerset Council, Police, etc) in line with local and national requirements and Information Sharing guidance.



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- If a volunteer is involved in the allegation or concern, or they have been witnessed behaving in a way that caused or could cause harm to a child or vulnerable adult then they will be removed from the activity immediately and suspended from volunteering whilst an investigation takes place.
- The member of staff or volunteer should be treated fairly and honestly with reassurance that this removal does not imply any guilt but is to protect them as much as the person making the allegation. The relevant agencies will take responsibility for investigations;
- Do not disturb or destroy articles that could be used in evidence. Where an assault of some kind is suspected do not wash the person unless this is associated with first aid treatment necessary to prevent further harm and in this case only wash the area that needs immediate treatment;
- Respond to the person who made the disclosure by
  - Reassuring them that they have done the right thing;
  - Giving them time to talk without probing, pushing or asking leading questions;
  - Investigation is the responsibility of the relevant agencies;
  - Avoiding making promises you will be unable to keep, including that discussions are confidential;
  - Explaining to the person that you will share this information with the Safeguarding Lead and relevant agencies only.
  - Where there is a serious concern about the immediate safety of a child, young person or adult at risk, this should be reported to the Police as an emergency.

## **2. Record**

- Record what was said before it is forgotten and keep it somewhere secure. The record should include:
  - The date, time and location the disclosure was made;
  - The allegation or concerns, including the date and time of the incident and what the person said in their own words about the abuse;
  - The appearance and behaviour of the victim including any injuries observed;
  - The actions taken.



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### 3. Inform

- If there is a safeguarding concern or disclosure that demands urgent attention, please use the [following contacts](#):
  - If you are worried about a child, a young person under the age of 18, or a vulnerable adult you should contact **Somerset Council** on **0300 123 2224**, having also informed the GI Safeguarding Lead
  - If you or the person you are concerned about is in danger and immediate action is required, you should ring the **emergency services on 999** and then inform the GI Safeguarding Lead.

An example of an urgent situation might be;

- A child, young person or vulnerable adult discloses physical or sexual abuse;
- If there are signs of physical abuse e.g. injury;
- A child, young person or vulnerable adult presents as very different/scared to go home/anxious and you are aware home could be risky.
- If the disclosure is regarding child sexual exploitation or if you think a child may be at risk of sexual exploitation you should also contact Somerset Council (contact details above) and inform the GI Safeguarding Lead.
- Only contact the police if it is thought a crime has just been committed, the child, young person or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger of abuse or an assault is taking place;
- Providing the volunteer who has handled the disclosure has followed the procedures above to ensure the safety of the child, young person or vulnerable adult they should keep all information about the disclosure confidential or on a 'need to know' basis with other members of the group in order to protect the child, young person or vulnerable adult;
- Volunteers who have handled the disclosure may find this distressing and will have access to support, via the GI Safeguarding Lead.
- If you're worried about a child, even if you're unsure, you can speak to the GI Safeguarding Lead about your concerns. Whether you want to report child abuse and neglect or are not sure what to do the NCPCC helpline – 0808 800 5000 – offers advice and support and can take the next steps if a child is in danger. Telephone lines are open Monday to Friday 8am – 10pm and 9am – 6pm at the weekend. You can contact the NCPCC online 24



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hours a day, 365 days a year. Email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk). Again, if you take this course of action, please inform the GI Safeguarding Lead.

**This Safeguarding Policy should be reviewed (and updated as necessary) annually.**