

# **Leeds Christian Community Trust**

## **Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy**



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### **Introduction**

The aim of this policy is to ensure the safety of vulnerable adults by outlining clear procedures, and by ensuring that all staff and volunteers of Leeds Christian Community Trust (LCCT) are clear about their responsibilities.

All Trustees, staff, Management/Steering groups, project leaders/workers, and volunteers are required to abide by this policy and to follow its guidance whenever their work brings them into contact with vulnerable adults. It is the responsibility of all Trustees, staff, Management/Steering groups, project leaders/workers and volunteers to familiarise themselves with this policy and procedure.

Staff, volunteers and clients will be able to access this policy on our website, it will also be available at our office.

Those projects within LCCT that have regular contact with vulnerable adults should develop their own policies to reflect and to cover their work. It is the responsibility of the Management/Steering Group and project leader(s) to ensure that a project has an adequate Vulnerable Adults Procedure that abides by this policy but reflects project specific procedures and working practices. A Project's Safeguarding Procedures and working practices lead by the Management/Steering Group, Project leaders and staff must not contradict this policy and projects are expected to check their policy/procedure against this one.

To help projects develop their own procedures and working practices a set of template guidelines is available from the LCCT Charity Administrator.

A copy of the project's procedures should be copied to the LCCT Charity Administrator who will keep copies on file.

## Scope

This policy covers all interactions with people defined as vulnerable adults.

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who is, or may be, in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is, or may be, unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

Such a definition may include: adults with physical, sensory and mental impairments; adults with learning disabilities; people with a mental illness; people with dementia or other memory impairments; people who misuse substances or alcohol; people who are homeless and unpaid carers (family and friends who provide personal assistance and care to adults on an unpaid basis).

## Legal Framework

LCCT recognises the need to provide a safe and caring environment for vulnerable adults. It also acknowledges that vulnerable adults can be the victims of physical, sexual, emotional, material, financial, psychological and discriminatory abuse, and neglect. LCCT has therefore adopted the procedures set out in this document as well as the LCCT Equality and Diversity policy that all projects should follow.

LCCT also undertakes to follow the principles found within the Abuse of Trust guidance issued by the Home Office, Sexual Offences Act 2003, updated with all changes known to be in force on or before 18 February 2020, and it is therefore unacceptable for those in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop for as long as the relationship of trust continues.

## Code of conduct

All Trustees, staff, Management/Steering groups, project leaders/workers, and volunteers are required to adhere to the LCCT code of conduct when engaged in activities involving vulnerable adults.

The code is designed to minimise situations where abuse may occur by stipulating that:

- Workers avoid situations where they are alone and unobserved with individuals.
- All activity, as far as possible, is publicly observed or conducted in a group setting;
- Inappropriate touching of any form is never permitted;
- The use of inappropriate language never goes unchallenged;
- Appropriate action will be taken in response to all safeguarding concerns.
- A "whistle-blowing" policy will be adhered to. This will ensure that staff who make bona fide complaints about colleagues' behaviour will not be punished, even if the concerns prove unfounded.

## Safeguarding Co-ordinator

Each project that works with vulnerable adults should have a designated Safeguarding Co-ordinator. This person has the responsibility of promoting the Safeguarding policies within the project and ensuring that all of the Management/Steering Group, relevant staff, project leaders/workers and volunteers are DBS checked and regularly trained in Vulnerable Adult protection issues and procedures and refresher courses, where appropriate. All Management/Steering Group, staff, project leaders/workers, volunteers and service users should know who this person is and their contact details. DBS checks should be done every three years.

In addition, the LCCT Charity Administrator will act as Safeguarding Officer for LCCT as a whole. This role is meant to be complementary to and not a replacement of the role of a Project's Safeguarding coordinator. The role of the LCCT Safeguarding Officer is to ensure good practice is put in place across the Trust as above through liaising with Project Safeguarding coordinators and assisting less experienced projects.

## Recruitment

LCCT will ensure that those Management/Steering Group members, staff, project leaders/workers and volunteers who work with vulnerable adults as part of their job description will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check whether they currently hold an enhanced DBS check or not. This is to ensure that they do not have convictions that would mean they would be unsuitable for the work. The update service can be used if the individual is registered and it is for exactly the same level or type of work. The same level of scrutiny will apply to volunteers assisting in regulated activities who have responsibility for vulnerable adults.

Any individual taking up employment or volunteering with LCCT who is in contact with vulnerable adults or has access to information about vulnerable adults must agree to a standard DBS check and references being obtained prior to recruitment. This will be made clear on any application form for employment. It will also be stated as part of any interview process and will be a condition before any offer of employment can be confirmed.

Please refer to LCCT Recruitment policy.

## Responsibilities

The LCCT Safeguarding Officer and the LCCT Manager, Catherine Beaumont, will act as recruiters for the Trust.

Again, the role of the LCCT Safeguarding Officer is not to duplicate the role of individual Project recruiters. The LCCT Safeguarding Officer is responsible for ensuring correct checks are made on Project Leaders and assist projects in making proper checks and ensuring good practice in the Recruitment procedure. In addition, a named member of the trustees, Theo Sheridan-Watts, Safeguarding Trustee, will act as an advisor who has

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permission to view any relevant recruitment information (such as police checks) should the need arise.

Project leaders and Management/Steering Groups will be responsible for recruitment in their project and must ensure that all relevant checks are made in line with the guidance below.

## **Volunteers**

Volunteers working with vulnerable adults will need to have an appropriate DBS check performed on them (under the definition of regulated activity) depending on the nature of the contact).

## **Secure Storage**

All recruitment information will be dealt with in a confidential manner and stored securely in line with the LCCT Data Protection Policy including General Data Protection Regulation.

## **Training**

All Management/ Steering Groups, staff, project leaders/workers and volunteers whose role involves contact with vulnerable adults will be trained, supported and supervised in accordance with the principles set out in the government guidelines. All projects that involve working with vulnerable adults must have their own local induction and procedures which will detail the training, support, supervision and practice of workers and volunteers within those projects. Staff are expected to engage with the training on induction and update every two years.

## **Management and Supervision of Staff/Volunteers**

All staff have an opportunity to discuss with their line manager or Trustee any safeguarding matter giving them concern and this is best done through regular supervision. Safeguarding should be a standard item on the supervision agenda. The supervision arrangements are in place for staff from the commencement of employment and reviewed as required.

## **Suspicion of abuse**

All LCCT Trustees, Management/Steering Groups, staff, project leaders/workers, volunteers, and have a duty to identify and report any concerns and/or abuse against vulnerable adults. Abuse can take place in any setting, public or private, can be perpetrated by anyone, and can include physical; financial; material; sexual; psychological; discriminatory; emotional abuse and neglect.

Abuse can take many forms and the circumstances of the individual should always be considered. It may consist of a single act or repeated acts. The following are examples of issues that would be considered as a safeguarding concern:

**Physical abuse** – includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, unlawful or inappropriate restraint, neglect, abandonment.

**Domestic abuse** – is “an incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse...by someone who is or has been an intimate partner or family member regardless of gender or sexuality” (Home Office, 2013). Domestic violence and abuse may also include psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; as well as so called ‘honour’ based violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

**Sexual abuse** - includes involvement in any sexual activity against his/her will, exposure to pornography, voyeurism and exhibitionism.

**Emotional/psychological abuse** – includes threats, intimidation, humiliation, controlling, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying.

**Financial and material abuse** – includes theft of money, fraud, exerting improper pressure to sign over money from pensions or savings, misuse of benefits.

**Modern slavery** – includes human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude.

**Neglect or acts of omission** – for example ignoring care needs.

**Discriminatory abuse** - includes any form of abuse based on discrimination because of a person's race, gender age, disability, sexual orientation

**Institutional abuse** or poor practice throughout an organisation

**Personal exploitation** – involves denying an individual his/her rights or forcing him/her to perform tasks that are against his/her will

**Violation of rights** – includes preventing an individual speaking his/her thoughts and opinions.

**Self-neglect** – covers a wide range of behaviours, such as neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings. This includes hoarding.

### Safeguarding procedures

If a person discloses abuse to you directly, use the following principles to respond to them:

- Assure them you are taking the concerns seriously
- Do not be judgmental or jump to conclusions
- Listen carefully to what they are saying to you, stay calm, get as clear a picture as you can, use open ended questions.
- Do not start to investigate or ask probing questions.
- Explain you have a duty to tell your Safeguarding Coordinator or the LCCT Safeguarding Officer.

Your responsibilities are:

- Take action to keep the person safe if it is possible.
- If urgent police or medical assistance is required call 999.
- Inform your safeguarding coordinator or the LCCT Safeguarding Officer

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- Clearly record what you have witnessed or been told, your responses and any action taken.

If the allegation or suspicion of abuse is discovered by a volunteer then they should inform a member of staff as soon as possible. The member of staff will then inform the Safeguarding Coordinator.

A member of staff discovering an allegation or suspicion of abuse will, similarly, report it to the Safeguarding Coordinator.

The member of staff should make a written record of the allegation or suspicion of abuse (see appendix 1) and discuss the situation with the Safeguarding Coordinator. The Safeguarding Coordinator should carry out a risk assessment regarding contacting the local Social Services Team.

If a volunteer/staff member has been told about the allegation of abuse in confidence, they should attempt to gain the consent of the individual to make a referral to another agency. However, the gaining of consent is not essential in order for information to be passed on. Consideration needs to be given to:

1. The scale of the abuse
2. The risk of harm to others
3. The capacity of the individual to understand the issues of abuse and consent
4. Whether or not a member of staff is involved
5. Whether or not it is necessary to prevent serious harm or distress or a life threatening situation
6. The risk of repeated incidents for the person
7. The risk of repeated incidents for others
8. The person's individual circumstances
9. The length of time it has been occurring
10. The impact of any incident

If there is any doubt about whether or not to report an issue to Social Services then it should be reported according to the local authority safeguarding procedure. The Safeguarding Adults Board advice line can also provide guidance on this: 0113 224 3511.

If you remain unsure whether to raise a safeguarding concern, you can:

- Contact your project Safeguarding Coordinator or LCCT Safeguarding Officer for advice.
- Seek advice from Adult Social Care, 0113 222 4401.
- Refer to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adult Policy and Procedures at [www.safeguardingadults.org.uk](http://www.safeguardingadults.org.uk) for further information and guidance.

If consulting with your Safeguarding coordinator will lead to an undue delay and thereby leave a person in a position of risk, you should raise a safeguarding concern yourself.

To raise a safeguarding concern contact:

- **Adult Social Care Contact Centre: 0113 222 4401 (during office hours).**  
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LEEDS, LS6 3HN  
Tel: 0113 3508622                      email: [info@lcct.org.uk](mailto:info@lcct.org.uk)                      [www.lcct.org.uk](http://www.lcct.org.uk)  
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- Emergency Duty Team: 0113 240 9536 (if urgent and outside of office hours).

Then complete the Safeguarding Adults: Supporting Information form; sometimes called the SA1 Form. This can be found on [www.leedssafeguardingadults.org.uk](http://www.leedssafeguardingadults.org.uk)

Other people you may need to inform:

- Children's services, if children are at risk of harm.
- The Charity Commission, if a crime has been committed by a member of staff.

### **Considering whether to report a concern to the police**

If a crime has been or may have been committed, seek the person's consent to report the matter immediately to the police. This will be in addition to raising a safeguarding concern with the local authority.

If the person has mental capacity in relation to the decision and does not want a report made, this should be respected unless there are justifiable reasons to act contrary to their wishes, such as:

- The person is subject to coercion or undue influence, to the extent that they are unable to give consent, or
- there is an overriding public interest, such as where there is a risk to other people
- it is in the person's vital interests (to prevent serious harm or distress or in life-threatening situations)

There should be clear reasons for overriding the wishes of a person with the mental capacity to decide for themselves. A judgement will be needed that takes into account the particular circumstances.

If the person does not have mental capacity in relation to this decision, a 'best interests' decision will need to be made in line with the Mental Capacity Act.

### **Documentation**

All actions and decisions must be fully recorded in a clear and accurate manner. A safeguarding incident report form can be found in the Project Handbook or obtained from the LCCT Safeguarding Officer. Record any reasons for your decisions and any advice given to you.

Records should include:

- The nature of the safeguarding concern/allegation.
- The wishes and desired outcomes of the adult at risk.
- The support provided to the adult.
- The decision of the organisation to raise a concern or not.

### **Allegations against staff members**

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Any allegation against a staff member must be reported immediately to the LCCT Safeguarding Officer, or the LCCT Trustee with responsibility for safeguarding.

## Useful Contacts

### If you have a concern about a Vulnerable Adult

- LCCT Safeguarding Officer: Janice Brown  
Email: [info@lcct.org.uk](mailto:info@lcct.org.uk) Tel: 0113 3508622
- Trustee Safeguarding advisor: Theo Sheridan-Watts  
Email: [theo.sheridan-watts@wellspringstogether.org.uk](mailto:theo.sheridan-watts@wellspringstogether.org.uk) Tel: 0113 3508622/  
Emergency Contact No: 07557023789
- Leeds Adult Social Care Contact Centre (Mon-Fri 8am-6pm, excluding bank holidays): 0113 222 4401.
- Emergency Duty Team: 0113 240 9536/07712 106 378 (for urgent concerns, outside of the Contact Centre hours)
- Leeds Safeguarding Support Unit Advice Line: 0113 224 3511.
- British Sign Language: [www.leeds.gov.uk/accessibility](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/accessibility)
- If **urgent action** is needed because you suspect an immediate risk of harm call the police on 999
- If you need to report a crime, but the person is not in imminent danger contact: 101.

### General

- The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)  
[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service)
- Thirtyone:eight (formerly known as CCPAS) [thirtyoneeight.org](http://thirtyoneeight.org) 03 03 003 11 11
- Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board [www.leedssafeguardingadults.org.uk](http://www.leedssafeguardingadults.org.uk)

This policy will be reviewed annually and signed by the Chair of Trustees, it will then be made available to staff and volunteers.

**Date of last review:** 22/04/2021

**Date of next review:** April 2022

## Appendix

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### Safeguarding incident report form

The person who receives the allegation or has the concern, should complete this incident report form and ensure it is signed and dated.

Name:	
Address:	
Telephone:	
Briefly describe what happened (include times and dates):	
The wishes and desired outcomes of the adult at risk.	
The support provided to the adult.	
Names and contacts of witnesses:	
Name of person completing form:	
Date:	
Name of Manager or Safeguarding Coordinator responsible for investigation:	
Date:	
Action taken:	

