



Forest Upcycling Project

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policies and Procedures

If you require this policy in another format, please contact Chelsea Durham on 01594 368240

Contents

Introduction.....

SECTION 1: VULNERABLE ADULTS SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

SECTION 2: RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF STAFF

SECTION 3: WHAT IS ABUSE OF VULNERABLE ADULTS?

SECTION 4: CONCERNS AND DISCLOSURES

SECTION 5: PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RECORDING

SECTION 6: CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

SECTION 7: GUIDELINES FOR SHARING INFORMATION

VULNERABLE ADULTS SAFEGUARDING POLICY & PROCEDURES

Introduction

Safeguarding vulnerable adults is a matter of priority for the Forest Upcycling Project.

Vulnerable adults are our customers, employees and volunteers.

This policy and procedures document sets out the charity's policy with regard to adult safeguarding and what is expected from staff.

The abuse of vulnerable adults— physically, emotionally, financially and sexually – is a sad fact of life. Adults may be abused regardless of their age, gender, religious belief, racial origin, culture or disability. They are usually (but not always) abused by people they know and trust.

Everybody has a responsibility for the safety of vulnerable adults and in accordance with relevant legislation, the Forest Upcycling Project, as an organisation which has contact with vulnerable adults across its services, has both a moral and legal obligation to ensure proper procedures are in place for their safeguarding. The purpose of this policy and procedures is to help protect the vulnerable adults we come into contact with and to ensure that staff are aware of issues that can cause them harm and how to respond to concerns relating to the possibility of a vulnerable adult suffering harm.

This policy & procedures can be accessed at: www.forestupcyclingproject.com under 'About Us'.

SECTION 1: VULNERABLE ADULTS SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

1.0 The scope of this policy

This Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy is intended to cover all functions and services of the Forest Upcycling Project where there is the potential for direct or indirect contact with vulnerable adults.

All staff and volunteers who carry out work for the Forest Upcycling Project, should be committed to practices which protect vulnerable adults from harm.

1.1 What is a vulnerable adult?

A vulnerable adult is any person aged 18 or over who is, or may be, unable to take care of him or herself against significant harm or exploitation. This may be because he or she has a mental health problem, a disability, a sensory impairment, is old or frail, or has some form of illness. Because of his or her vulnerability, the individual may be in receipt of a care service in his or her own home, in the community or be resident in a residential care home, nursing home or other institutional setting.

1.2 Values and principles underpinning this policy

Fulfilment – all vulnerable adults will be invited to engage in activities and offered services that enable them to fulfil their ability and potential.

Independence – all vulnerable adults will have as much control as possible over their lives whilst being safeguarded against unreasonable risks.



Privacy – all vulnerable adults will be free from unnecessary intrusion into their affairs; and there will be a balance between the individual's own safety and the safety of others.
Safety – all vulnerable adults will feel safe, and live without fear of violence, neglect or abuse in any form.

Support – all vulnerable adults will be supported to report any form of abuse.

1.3 Management roles and responsibilities

The Project Manager has ultimate responsibility for ensuring compliance with this policy. Day to day responsibility for implementation is delegated through the management structure to the Deputy and on-site managers. Any safeguarding incidents are reported to Trustees, with serious incidents being reported immediately to the chair of Trustees.

1.4 Staff roles and responsibilities

Staff members have a duty to adhere to the Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and to notify their manager on any matters regarding safeguarding vulnerable adults.

Staff are also responsible for ensuring that they undertake the relevant training identified for their post.

1.5 Training

The Charity will provide suitable training in vulnerable adult safeguarding to staff working or coming into substantial contact with vulnerable adults.

This training will be updated on a regular basis and recorded fully.

SECTION 2: RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF STAFF

2.0 The Charity will operate established recruitment and selection procedures for positions where there is significant contact with vulnerable adults.

2.1 The Management Team will invoke any disciplinary or other referral/disqualification policies as required in the context of the operation of this policy.

2.2 The Management Team will take all reasonable steps to ensure that in its recruitment and selection of staff it will pay due regard to ensuring that:

- There is a clear job description for staff and person specification outlining key skills and abilities required.
- There is an open recruitment process.
- There is an application form that covers past work.
- There is a declaration form requesting information on previous convictions and investigations, if any.
- There is an interview process suitable to the role and task.
- Written references are sought (and followed up when necessary).
- Policies regarding external reporting (and the waiving of confidentiality) in respect of relevant "disclosures and relevant apparently well founded "concerns", which are made to staff, regardless of whether such disclosures or concerns relate to the alleged misbehaviour of a staff member, or of another person.

SECTION 3: WHAT IS ABUSE OF VULNERABLE ADULTS?

3.0 What constitutes abuse?

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.

Many incidents of abuse are criminal acts. The abuse of vulnerable adults is defined as: 'The physical, psychological, emotional, financial or sexual maltreatment or neglect of a vulnerable adult by another person'. It may be a single act or repeated over a period of time and may take one form or multiple forms. The lack of appropriate action can also be a form of abuse.

It can occur in a relationship where there is an expectation of trust and can be perpetrated by a person or persons, in breach of that trust, who have influence over the life of a dependant, whether they be formal or informal carers, staff, family members or others. It can also occur outside such a relationship. Abuse can be either deliberate or the result of ignorance, or caused by a lack of training, knowledge or understanding. Often if a person is being abused in one way, they are also being abused in other ways.

Abuse can take many forms including the following:

Physical abuse



Hitting, slapping, pushing, burning, giving a person medicine that may harm them, restraining or disciplining a person in an inappropriate way.

Possible signs - fractures, bruising, burns, pain, marks, not wanting to be touched.

Psychological abuse

This includes emotional abuse, verbal abuse, humiliation, bullying and the use of threats.

Possible signs - being withdrawn, too eager to do everything they are asked, showing compulsive behaviour, not being able to do things they used to, not being able to concentrate or focus.

Financial or material abuse

Misusing or stealing the person's property, possessions or benefits, cheating them, using them for financial gain, putting pressure on them about wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions.

Possible signs - having unusual difficulty with finances, not having enough money, being too protective of money and things they own, not paying bills, not having normal home comforts.

3.1 Where might abuse occur?

Abuse can happen anywhere:

- In the person's own home.
- At a carer's home.
- Within day care, residential care, nursing care or other institutional settings.
- At work or in educational settings.
- In rented accommodation or commercial premises.
- In public places.

3.2 Who can abuse?

An abuser can be anyone who has contact with the vulnerable person - it could be a partner, spouse, child, relative, friend, informal carer, a healthcare, social care or other worker, a peer or, less commonly, a stranger.

Domestic/familial abuse - The abuse of a vulnerable adult by a family member such as a partner, son, daughter, sibling.

Professional abuse - The misuse of power and abuse of trust by professionals, the failure of professionals to act on suspected abuse/crimes, poor care practice or neglect in services, resource shortfalls or service pressures that lead to service failure and culpability as a result of poor management systems.

Possible signs of professional abuse include:

- Entering into inappropriate relationships with a vulnerable adult.
- Failure to refer disclosure of abuse.
- Poor, ill-informed or outmoded care practice/s.
- Failure to support a vulnerable adult to access health care/treatment.
- Denying a vulnerable adult access to professional support and services such as advocacy.
- Inappropriate responses to challenging behaviours.
- Failure to whistle blow on issues when internal procedures to highlight issues are exhausted.

Peer abuse - The abuse of one vulnerable adult by another vulnerable adult within a care setting. This can occur in group or communal settings, such as day care centres, clubs, residential care homes, nursing homes or other institutional settings.

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.

SECTION 4: CONCERNS AND DISCLOSURES

4.0 How to deal with a concern



When there are concerns or where a disclosure or allegation is made people often feel anxious about passing on the information to anyone else. Concerned individuals may ask themselves, 'What if I'm wrong?' and this may hold them back from taking action. It is important for staff to know that they are neither responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred or not; nor are they responsible for conducting any investigations (this is the role of the appropriate authorities).

However, they do need to pass on any concerns they have through the Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding reporting procedures. It is crucial that staff members do not attempt to deal with the situation alone.

4.1 How can you be alerted to signs of abuse or neglect?

There are a variety of ways that you could be alerted that a vulnerable adult is suffering harm:

- A vulnerable adult may tell you.
- Someone else may tell you of their concerns or something that causes you concern.
- A vulnerable adult may show some signs of physical injury for which there does not appear to be a satisfactory or credible explanation.
- A vulnerable adult's demeanour/behaviour may lead you to suspect abuse or neglect.
- The behaviour of a person close to the vulnerable adult makes you feel uncomfortable (this may include another staff member, peer or family member).
- Through general good neighbourliness and social guardianship.

Being alert to potential abuse plays a major role in ensuring that vulnerable adults are safeguarded, and it is important that all concerns about possible abuse are reported.

4.2 What if a vulnerable adult discloses abuse?

In cases where a vulnerable adult discloses abuse to a staff member they should react appropriately, according to the following guidelines:

Do

- Stay calm.
- Listen and hear.
- Express concern and sympathy about what has happened.
- Reassure the person – tell the person that s/he did the right thing in telling you.
- Let the person know that the information will be taken seriously and give information about what will happen next.
- If urgent medical/police help is required, call the emergency services.
- Ensure the safety of the person.
- Record in writing using the Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding procedure.

Staff should not begin to investigate alleged or suspected abuse by asking questions that relate to the detail, or circumstances of the alleged abuse, beyond initial listening, expressing concern and checking out.

4.3 How to react and what to do

There is not one simple set of rules to follow in responding to these situations, but in general: It is important that staff are aware that the first person who has concerns or encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred, (this is the role of the appropriate authorities).

However, staff, contractors and others do have a duty of care to report any suspicions they may have with regard to the abuse of a vulnerable adult to allow appropriate action to be taken. Help may be found on the guidance sheet at the end of this document.

SECTION 5: PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RECORDING

5.0 Reporting and recording

The Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy and Procedures is published on the Forest Upcycling Project website under the heading 'About Us'.

Basic response procedure/action



All concerns, disclosures, allegations and suspicions should be recorded on the paper in as much detail as possible and passed on to a Manager immediately. Where a staff member reports their concerns or a disclosure to a line manager, the line manager should advise them to report to their Manager immediately. We recommend that 'if in doubt, report it'. There may be emergency situations where it is appropriate to contact social services / seek medical attention immediately. Whatever the circumstances of the concern, disclosure, allegation or suspicion, it is vital that the staff member records the details and reports to their Manager (or deputy) without delay. Not every report results in a full investigation. Individual reports are accumulated to build a picture about a particular situation. It may be that a report by a charity employee may provide the necessary or decisive final piece of information.

5.1 Concerns about a vulnerable adult - responding to allegations or concerns about a member of staff, a contractor or other third-party person:

The following procedures should be followed in each situation:

- Take the allegation or concern seriously. Always refer if you have a concern, do not investigate yourself, or do nothing.
- If it is an emergency contact social services / medical assistance immediately.
- Write a full account as soon as possible, giving all the details that you are aware of and pass on to your manager in an envelope, marking it as confidential.

The Manager will forward the report to social services, and /or the police if necessary.

5.2 Response to a vulnerable adult making an allegation of abuse

The following points are a guide to help you respond appropriately:

- Listen carefully to what the person is telling you.
- Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is very likely that what they are telling you will need to be shared with others.
- Ask questions for clarification only - never ask leading questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Reassure the person that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information they have given you will be shared.
- Refer on to your Manager immediately.

SECTION 6: CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

6.0 Charity staff, contractors and others will encounter vulnerable adults in a range of situations and in a range of locations including the warehouse, office, home and within housing estates and in other accommodation settings.

The Code of Behaviour also applies to the workplace where members of staff may be vulnerable or in the case of work placement / job experience where appropriate or when volunteering on behalf of the Charity.

6.1 It is not practical within this policy to provide definitive guidance that will cover all situations, however the principles set out below should be applied in all situations.

- Staff should not spend excessive amounts of time alone with vulnerable adults away from others.
- Staff should not take a vulnerable adult to his/her own home.
- Staff should not take a vulnerable adult alone on car journey, unless this forms part of the organisation's core activities.

If it is unavoidable or necessary, these kinds of behaviours should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of a manager and where an appropriate record is maintained.

6.2 Unacceptable behaviours are those that should always be avoided in the interests of the safety of vulnerable adults and staff.

For example a staff member should never:

- Abuse, neglect, or harm / place at risk of harm vulnerable adults whether by omission or commission.



- Engage in rough physical games with vulnerable adults, including horseplay.
- Engage in sexually provocative games with vulnerable adults e.g. spin the bottle, strip poker.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to or about a vulnerable adult.
- Form inappropriate relationships with vulnerable adults.
- Gossip about personal details of vulnerable adults and their families.
- Make/accept loans or gifts of money from vulnerable adults.

6.3 Staff who breach the above standards of behaviour may face disciplinary procedures.

SECTION 7: GUIDELINES FOR SHARING INFORMATION

7.0 Confidentiality and information sharing. Information must only be shared with the Safeguarding Officer for Forest Upcycling Project (Matthew Jones) or the deputy (Nadine Jones). If they are unavailable contact should be made to the Local Police 999 or 101 (if there is no immediate danger) or Social Services 01452 426565 (Gloucestershire), 01291 635666 (Chepstow).

7.1 Confidentiality must be maintained for all concerned.

7.2 Information will be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only.

7.3 Recorded information will be stored in a secure place in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

7.4 If enquiries arise from the public or any branch of the media, staff must not make any comments regarding the situation and all queries are referred to the Manager.

7.5 Freedom of Information requests regarding safeguarding reports will be dealt with by the Manager on a case-by-case basis; however it is likely that such requests will be refused due to the extremely confidential nature of the information sought.

7.6 Complaints procedures and grievance procedures apply as normal.

If you have any Safe Guarding enquiries please contact
Matthew Jones, Project Manager 07810 524404



Record of a Safeguarding Incident/Declaration

Someone is telling you something that you recognise as a Safeguarding Issue, or you have witnessed a Safeguarding incident, contact your manager and complete this form immediately

Name of person completing this record: _____

Name of person involved in the incident: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

- DO NOT PROMISE TO KEEP A SECRET FOR ANYONE DISCLOSING INFORMATION TO YOU
- DO NOT ASK QUESTIONS – SIMPLY RECORD WHAT THEY HAVE SAID
- DO CONTACT YOUR MANAGER IMMEDIATELY
- DO RECORD AS ACCURATELY AS POSSIBLE EVERYTHING THAT YOU HAVE WITNESSED, OR HAS BEEN SAID TO YOU ON THIS SHEET.

Record of the incident:

In as much detail as possible record here what you have witnessed or what has been said/disclosed to you:

-

Continue on the back if necessary.

Action taken: Please specify who you have reported this incident to or any other action taken:

If for any reason you are not able to contact a manager and the incident is dangerous for those involved please contact the police on 999 or call social service on 01452 426565/ 01291 635666 if the incident is not urgent.