

SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1 Introduction – What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding means acting in a way to protect the rights of adults and children to live in safety, free of abuse and neglect. Neglect includes self-neglect.

Abuse can happen face to face as well as electronically and via social media. It can take place in peoples' homes and within families and institutions, including care homes, care agencies, statutory and voluntary organisations and hospitals.

Types of abuse include:-

- **Physical abuse** e.g. assault, hitting, slapping, pushing.
- **Domestic violence** e.g. psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional.
- **Sexual abuse** – including inappropriate looking or touching, indecent exposure and sexual harassment.
- **Psychological abuse** e.g., threats of harm, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation.
- **Financial or material abuse** e.g., theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercive control in an adult's financial affairs/arrangements, including with wills, property, inheritance or finances, or the misuse/misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- **Modern slavery** encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude.
- **Discriminatory abuse** including harassment, slurs, or similar treatment because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.
- **Organisational abuse** – including neglect in relation to 'formal/paid for' care provided at home. This may be a one-off incident or on-going ill-treatment, through neglect or poor professional practice.
- **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, withholding of medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- **Self-neglect** – this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

The signs and indicators of abuse and neglect might included:-

- Unexplained bruises or injuries – or lack of medical attention for an injury
- Unexpected absence from their normal interest groups without reason and no response to reminders from group leaders or other members.
- A change in the behaviour or confidence of a member, where they become quiet and withdrawn, or lash out in anger.
- A member showing fear of a particular group or individual.
- A member who sends unwanted sexually explicit text messages to a member
- Threats/actual physical harm and also bullying
- A member disclosing that they are being abused.
- A member expressing concern that they no long have control over their finances.

The following policy and procedures enable Monmouth u3a to respond to safeguarding concerns affecting their members either within or outside of u3a. They are in line with those issued by the Third Age Trust (TAT) 23rd May 2023.

2 Policy Statement

Monmouth u3a's approach to safeguarding will include:

- Health concerns physical or mental that place members or others at risk
- Sexual advances
- Bullying, aggression or violent behaviour
- Harassment
- Discrimination
- Financial and institutional abuse

Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone either within, or acting on behalf of, Monmouth u3a - **doing nothing is not an option!**

Monmouth u3a has a responsibility to ensure its committee members and group leaders understand their safeguarding responsibilities.

Monmouth u3a will make every effort to respect the confidentiality of any information that is disclosed under this policy and procedure. Due to the seriousness of allegations confidentiality is not absolute and information may need to be shared with relevant authorities on a 'need-to know' basis only. This is to prevent:

- Danger to a person's life
- Danger to a person's health
- Danger to others
- Danger to the community

and/or to facilitate the investigation of a serious crime.

Information will be recorded and stored securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

The Monmouth u3a committee has a duty of care to its members but does not hold any statutory authority. It is not appropriate for Monmouth u3a to take the lead role in any Safeguarding Enquiry under Section 42 of the Care Act 2014.

Where there are serious concerns regarding abuse or neglect, Monmouth u3a's Safeguarding Team will seek advice and support from TAT, and will contact the relevant statutory authorities as needed.

As far as possible, the wishes of the adult at risk will be respected as to whether to refer any concerns to Monmouthshire Councils Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit Manager: **01633644598** as a Safeguarding Enquiry under Section 42 of the Care Act 2014, it may be necessary to override their wishes. It will be the responsibility of the Councils Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Manager to notify any other statutory bodies.

3. Principles

In following the Reporting Procedures (see section 4), Monmouth u3a will strive to uphold the general principles which those involved in incidents are entitled to:

- Privacy
- Lead an independent life and to be enabled to do so
- Choose how they live their lives.
- The protection of the law
- Have their human and civil rights upheld regardless of ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religious or cultural background.

In carrying out its duties Monmouth u3a will also follow the specific principles enshrined within the Care Act 2014:

- **Principle 1 – Empowerment** – whereby the approach is focused on the individual making their own decision and gaining informed consent, where possible.
- **Principle 2 – Prevention** – seeking to take steps to prevent issues from arising or escalating.
- **Principle 3 – Proportionality** – responding in a proportionate way to the issue/s being presented.
- **Principle 4 – Protection** – seeking to keep the membership safe and protection for those deemed to be at risk.
- **Principle 5 – Partnership** – reporting incidents to the relevant statutory bodies and liaising with the Trust.
- **Principle 6 – Accountability** – accurate recording of incidents. Reporting incidents, as required, to the Trust and relevant regulatory authorities.

4. Reporting Procedures

Members are advised to read: [“Guidelines for Responding to Disclosures of Abuse”](#).

These guidelines apply if any member is subject to abuse from another u3a member, or non-member, irrespective of where the abuse takes place.

Members should not keep any safeguarding concerns to themselves. In the first instance they should contact the Safeguarding Team via the [Safeguarding page](#) on the website. The [“Safeguarding Disclosure Reporting Form”](#) should be completed at the same time, or as soon as possible. It should be passed to a Member of the Safeguarding Team or failing this to any Committee member.

It is not the responsibility of any one member of Monmouth u3a to decide whether abuse has taken place, consequently all cases of suspected or alleged abuse must be discussed with the Chair of Monmouth u3a promptly.

In the very serious case where the safety of a vulnerable person is of **immediate** concern, their safety should be secured as the first priority. This may need to involve the police, ambulance services and/or Monmouthshire Councils Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit Manager: **01633644598**.

NO u3a member should put themselves in a dangerous or frightening situation.

Having received a report the Chair will advise the Well Being Officer and other nominated Safeguarding Team members, and contact TAT to discuss the concerns, seek additional assistance in developing the risk assessment, and agree a plan of action. The plan of action will depend on the nature of the allegation and the identified risk, and will include any immediate action to keep people safe.

Monmouth u3a will monitor the implementation of this policy and procedure annually through its committee.

This policy was adopted on:

Date	17.7.2023
Signed	
Name printed	DANIEL JONES
Chair of Monmouth u3a	
Policy review date	July 2024