

BEXHILL MARITIME

Registered Charity No. 1203659

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

Introduction

Bexhill Maritime is committed to supporting the rights of adults at risk to be protected from abuse and to making sure all staff and volunteers work together and act promptly when dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse.

We think that:

SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS – Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone. We will work together to prevent abuse. If we have concerns that someone is being abused, our loyalty to the vulnerable person comes before anything else – our group, other service users, our colleagues and the person's friends and family.

DOING NOTHING IS NOT AN OPTION – If we know or suspect that a vulnerable adult is being abused, we will do something about it and ensure our work is properly recorded. We will work within the boundaries of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Procedures.

Definitions –

The definition of a vulnerable adult is a person over the age of 18 years who:

Is or may be in need of / eligible for Community Care Services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness

AND is unable to take care of him / herself

OR is unable to protect him / herself from significant harm or exploitation

A vulnerable person may fall into any one of the following groups: older and frail people; people with a mental health need, a learning difficulty, a physical impairment, a sensory impairment; people who are substance or alcohol dependent; or family carers, providing assistance to, another vulnerable adult.

The definition of 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:

Physical: for example, hitting, slapping, burning, pushing, restraining or giving the wrong medication. Psychological and emotional: for example, shouting, swearing, frightening, blaming, ignoring or humiliating a person, threats of harm or abandonment, intimidation, verbal abuse.

Financial: including the illegal or unauthorised use of a person's property, money, pension book or other valuables, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance.

Sexual: such as forcing a person to take part in any sexual activity without his or her informed consent – this can occur in any relationship.

Discriminatory: including racist or sexist remarks or comments based on a person's disability, age or illness, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment. This also includes stopping someone from being involved in religious or cultural activity, services or support networks;

Institutional: the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to vulnerable people. This includes a failure to ensure the necessary safeguards are in place to protect vulnerable adults and maintain good standards of care in accordance with individual needs, including training of staff, supervision and management, record keeping and liaising with other providers of care.

Neglect and acts of omission: including ignoring medical or physical care needs. These can be deliberate or unintentional, amounting to abuse by a carer or self-neglect by the vulnerable person: for example, where a person is deprived of food, heat, clothing, comfort or essential medication, or failing to provide access to appropriate health or social care services.

How Might We Notice Abuse?

Concerns about or evidence of abuse can come to us through:

1. A direct disclosure by the vulnerable adult.
2. A complaint or expression of concern by another member of staff, a volunteer, another service user, a carer, a member of the public or relative.
3. An observation of the behaviour of the vulnerable adult by the volunteer, member of staff or carer.

Our Commitment:

To support vulnerable adults who are experiencing, or at risk from, abuse, Bexhill Maritime is committed to:

- Identifying the abuse of vulnerable adults where it is occurring.

- Responding effectively to any circumstances giving grounds for concern, or where formal complaints or expressions of anxiety are expressed.
- Ensuring the active participation of individuals, families, groups and communities wherever possible and appropriate.
- Raising awareness of the extent of abuse on vulnerable adults and its impact on them.
- Promoting and supporting work designed to reduce abuse and the fear of abuse as experienced by vulnerable adults.
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating how our policies, procedures and practices for protecting vulnerable adults are working.
- Making sure our policies, procedures and practices stay up to date with good practice and the law in relation to safeguarding vulnerable adults.

Prevention and Confidentiality

Trustees, Managers and Project Coordinators will have DBS checks undertaken as they may potentially work alone with vulnerable adults, including our own volunteers.

All staff and volunteers will be asked to read Bexhill Maritime's Safeguarding Policy.

Bexhill Maritime will work with vulnerable adults in a way that meets all the aspects of confidentiality in our different policies, but where abuse to a vulnerable person is alleged, suspected, reported or concerns are raised, the Safeguarding Adults Procedure must be followed. The confidentiality of the vulnerable person will be respected wherever possible, and their consent obtained to share information. The vulnerable person should be made aware that staff cannot ignore issues around abuse and that steps will be taken to deal with them in as sensitive a manner as possible. The welfare of the individual is paramount.

Safeguarding Procedure

If you think abuse has or may have occurred. Act immediately.

Make sure the person is safe. Inform the Project Coordinator or a Trustee immediately if possible. Contact the police if it is thought a crime has just been committed. Record details of the allegation.

It is the responsibility of the person first becoming aware of a situation where there may be a vulnerable adult subject to, or at risk of, abuse to:

Make Safe

Deal with the immediate needs of the person. This may mean taking reasonable steps to ensure the adult is in no immediate danger and seeking medical treatment if required as a matter of urgency.

Do NOT discuss the allegation of abuse with the alleged perpetrator.

Do NOT disturb or destroy articles that could be used in evidence.

Inform

Inform the Project Coordinator or a Trustee immediately if possible. Contact the police if it is thought a crime has just been committed.

Follow your local processes to report any incidents to your:

- Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)
- local safeguarding partners

You must do this within 5 working days of becoming aware of the incident.

Record

Record details of the allegation as soon as possible somewhere that can be kept secure.

Include:

a. The allegation or concerns, including the date and time of the incident, what the vulnerable adult said about the abuse and how it occurred or what has been reported to you.

b. The appearance and behaviour of the victim.

c. Any injuries observed.

Implementation and Quality Assurance

Implementation is immediate and this Policy shall stay in force until any alterations are formally agreed by Directors. This Policy will be reviewed annually by the Trustees, sooner if legislation, best practice or other circumstances indicate this is necessary.

All aspects of this Policy shall be open to review at any time.

Policy adopted July, 2023

Updated:

First review date: July, 2025