Safeguarding Policy

Committee Approved: July 2026

Next review date: August 2029

Purpose

This policy and procedure is written to enable the committee to address issues where there are safeguarding concerns. Safeguarding includes incidents between members, concerns regarding abuse or neglect that a u3a member may be experiencing outside of the u3a, health related issues or previous or pending criminal convictions.

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the commitment of Carmarthen u3a to safeguarding their members and to ensure that everyone involved in Carmarthen u3a is aware of:

- The legislation, policy and procedures for safeguarding adults.
- Their role and responsibility for safeguarding adults.
- What to do or who to speak to if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of an adult within Carmarthen u3a.

Scope

This safeguarding policy and procedure apply to all individuals involved in Carmarthen u3a, including the committee, group leaders and members, and to all concerns about the safety and wellbeing of members taking part in u3a activities and in the wider community.

Safeguarding Commitments

In order to implement this policy, Carmarthen u3a will ensure that all members will be aware of the safeguarding procedures and know who to contact if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of an adult.

Carmarthen u3a committee has a duty of care to its members, and is committed to upholding this safeguarding policy in order to protect its members.

Key Definitions

Adult at risk

Any person aged 18+ who has need for care and support, is experiencing, or is at risk of abuse or neglect, and as a result of those needs is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect, or risk of it.

Abuse

Abuse is the “violation of a person’s human and civil rights by any other person(s). It may be a single or repeated act(s), physical, verbal, psychological, sexual, institutional, discriminatory, or financial, an act of neglect or failure to act”.

Types of abuse

- 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, coercion 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 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.

There are four stages of action regarding safeguarding – the "four Rs"; RECOGNISING, RESPONDING; RECORDING; REPORTING.

Recognising :

What are the signs and indicators of abuse and neglect?

Abuse may be inflicted by anyone that the member meets. There are many signs and indicators that may suggest abuse or neglect including:

- Unexplained bruises or injuries – or lack of medical attention for an injury
- Non attendance at interest groups without reason and no response to reminders from group leaders or other members.
- Significant loss or gain of weight and/or an unkempt appearance.
- 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 vulnerable member • Threats of physical harm and bullying, or intentional striking of another member. Additionally, a member may report they are being abused – i.e., a disclosure.

If you observe or attention is drawn to something (such as the above) then you will need to pass the information on to someone who can make a decision about how best to proceed (see below). You may also be told directly about something that has been happening (a disclosure).

Responding:

How do you deal with a disclosed safeguarding concern?

If someone discloses a safeguarding concern to you:

Do:

- Stay calm and try not to show shock or disbelief.
- Listen carefully to what they are saying.
- Be sympathetic ("I'm sorry that this has happened to you").
- Be aware of the possibility that medical evidence might be needed.
- Tell the person that:
  - o They did the right thing to tell you.
  - o You are treating the information seriously. It was not their fault.
  - o You are going to inform the appropriate person.
  - o You will take steps to protect and support them.

Do not:

- Press the person for more details if they are not comfortable sharing.
- Ask "leading" questions (e.g. 'Did so and so do …X, Y or Z?')
- Stop someone who is freely recalling significant events (Don't say 'hold on, we'll come back to that later'; they may not tell you or anybody else again).
- Promise to keep secrets; you have a duty of care to raise safeguarding concerns.
- Make promises you cannot keep such as "this will never happen to you again".
- Contact the alleged abuser unless they are also a u3a member and it is necessary to do so to safeguard other members.
- Be judgemental.
- Pass on the information other than to those with a legitimate 'need-to-know' under your safeguarding policy and procedure.

Recording:

How should you record a safeguarding concern?

- Note what people said, using their own words and phrases.
- Describe the circumstances in which the disclosure came about.
- Note the setting and anyone else who was there at the time of the disclosure.
- Separate factual information from your own and others' opinions.
- Use pen or biro with black ink so that the report can be photocopied if needed.
- Be aware that your report may be required later as part of a legal action or disciplinary procedure.

You should not take notes as you go in front of the person concerned, but write down as soon as possible everything that has been revealed or seen.

Reporting:

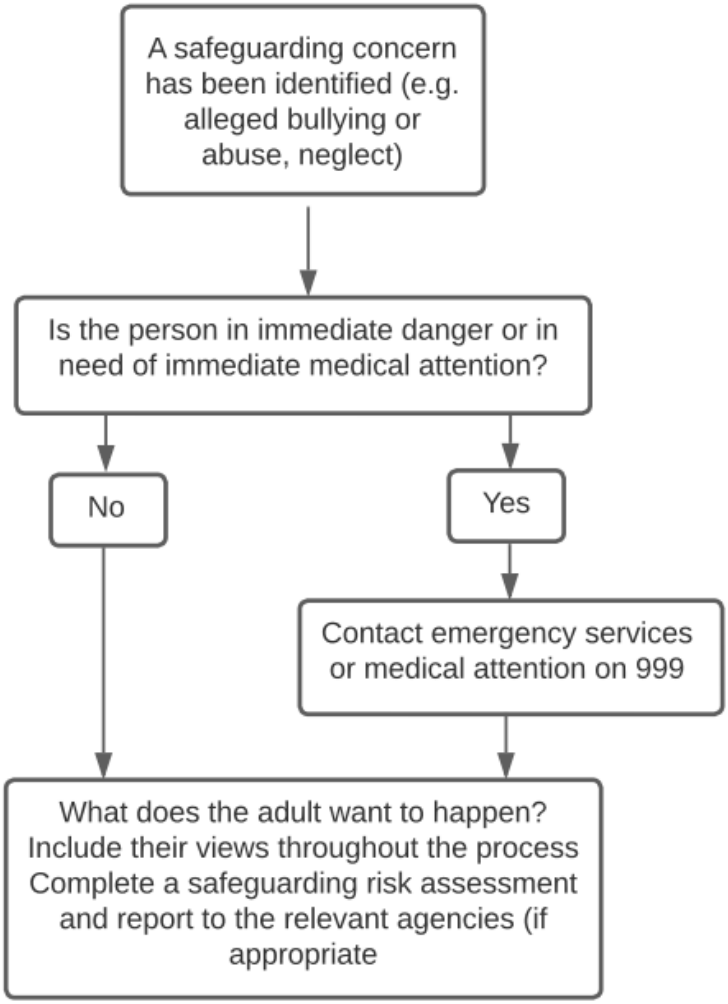
IF THERE IS AN IMMIMENT DANGER TO LIFE OR SAFETY OF A PERSON THEN DIAL 999 and explain the situation.

Where the danger is not immediate then, for directly u3a activity and business, inform the Designated Person/Persons (DP) for the organization. This will usually be one or more members of the Committee with training to assess and refer on concerns to the relevant authority (often the local Social Services). All details recorded should be passed on, but no-one else should be informed about what has been shared. The DP will then consult with the local authority safeguarding team. For Carmarthen the telephone is 0300 333 2222. This can be used if there is an incident outside the activity of the U3A, and also by the designated Carmarthen U3A person(s).

If an individual is told something about another by a third person, that person should be directed to tell the DP or a Committee member AND NO-ONE ELSE.

Where there are concerns for a member's wellbeing or safety, Carmarthen u3a committee will complete a safeguarding risk assessment, seek advice and support from the Trust where necessary, and will contact the relevant statutory authorities as needed. It is not appropriate for Carmarthen u3a to take the lead role in any Safeguarding Enquiry (under Section 42 of the Care Act 2014 (England and Wales)).

Carmarthen u3a recognises that there are various forms of abuse which can be perpetrated by volunteers, members, relatives, friends, and neighbours. Carmarthen u3a will not condone nor tolerate any form of abuse or neglect and believes that all people should be able and, where necessary, enabled to live in an environment which is safe and free from harm. Carmarthen u3a will put the well-being of those at risk of harm first, and they will be actively supported to communicate their views and the outcomes they want to achieve. Those views and wishes will be respected and supported unless there are overriding reasons not to. Any actions taken will respect the rights and dignity of all those involved and be proportionate to the risk of harm.


A safeguarding concern has been identified (e.g. alleged bullying or abuse, neglect)
Is the person in immediate danger or in need of immediate medical attention?
No
Yes
Contact emergency services or medical attention on 999
What does the adult want to happen?
Include their views throughout the process
Complete a safeguarding risk assessment and report to the relevant agencies (if appropriate