

DULWICH ALMSHOUSE CHARITY

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. Policy Statement

Dulwich Almshouse Charity (DAC) is committed to protecting the welfare of beneficiaries, staff and others who directly or indirectly engage with the charity's services and/or activities. It aims to take all necessary steps to stop abuse happening, whether that abuse is perpetrated by staff, trustees, volunteers, family members, members of the public or other service users.

This policy outlines the charity's approach to safeguarding across its full a range of activities and those who engage with them. This includes almshouse residents, employees, and grantee partners.

As a housing provider for older people, DAC has a very specific set of responsibilities for safeguarding adults. As such, this policy and the associated procedures includes significantly more detail on the safeguarding of vulnerable adults.

2. Purpose and Scope of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for all staff and trustees within DAC. The scope of the policy is broad and covers:

- Almshouses
- Grantees and partners
- Employees

This policy aims to ensure that staff, volunteers and trustees are aware of what "safeguarding" means and to understand the actions that should be taken if they have cause to suspect a person engaging with the charity (directly, or indirectly) is at risk of abuse or neglect.

In respect of the almshouses, this policy should be used in conjunction with the Adults at Risk Safeguarding Procedure to prevent and reduce the risk of abuse to all adults who may be at risk. The principles and procedures covering grant applicants and partners, and employees and volunteers, are included as part of this policy.

The charity is not directly responsible for safeguarding the beneficiaries of its partner organisations but recognises the important role it can play in contributing to the enhancement of safeguarding. As such, we will be rigorous and diligent in our grant-making and play a supportive role with to develop or improve our partners' approach to safeguarding as necessary.

Martyn Craddock is the Acting Designated Safeguarding Lead for the charity and as such has lead responsibility for responding to concerns until such time as alternative arrangements have been made

3. Commitments

The charity is committed to promoting the welfare of adults at risk and recognises that everyone has the right to protection from abuse regardless of age, gender, marriage or civil partnership, racial heritage, disability, sexual orientation and identity, religious belief and gender re-assignment.

The charity is committed to ensuring that people with care and support needs who live in our almshouses live free from abuse, harm and neglect and that working practices minimise the risk of such abuse.

The charity also recognises the responsibility it has towards our own staff, volunteers and trustees and will put appropriate mechanisms in place to make sure that a safe environment is created for them. It is committed to ensuring all staff including those with designated responsibilities, have received appropriate levels of up-to-date safeguarding training.

4. Legislation, associated guidance and policies

For DAC to meet its statutory responsibilities, the following legislation, associated guidance and policies are of significance (N.B. This is not an exhaustive list).

- Care Act 2014
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Modern Slavery Act 2015 and Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking: National Referral Mechanism
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- London Multi-Agency Adult Safeguarding Policy & Procedures
- Charity Commission guidance on Safeguarding and Reporting of Serious Incidents
- Local Adult Safeguarding Board policies in LB Southwark
- Association of Charitable Foundations guidance
- National Almshouse Association guidance
- Disclosure and barring Service guidance
- Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulations and DAC Policy

5. Key terms and definitions

Safeguarding means protecting a persons' right to live in safety, free from abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that their wellbeing is promoted. This includes having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action, as appropriate.

Examples of abuse and neglect include, but are not limited to: physical, sexual, psychological or emotional, financial or material, discriminatory, and organisational abuse; neglect (including acts of omission); self-neglect; radicalisation and enforced gang membership. Other examples of abuse many include domestic violence; sexual offences; stalking; female genital mutilation (FGM); crimes said to be committed in the name of 'honour'; forced marriage; prostitution; and human trafficking for sexual exploitation.

6. Policy Principles

All allegations, concerns or suspicions of abuse or neglect are taken seriously and responded to within the steps laid out in the corresponding procedure.

All staff have a responsibility to ensure they are informed, trained and understand their duty to operate within this policy and procedure. All staff, trustees and volunteers have a shared responsibility to take appropriate steps to protect adults at risk.

All DAC employees have a duty to act upon and report actual, suspected or allegations of abuse. We will develop and foster a culture of openness, dialogue and trust in our approach to safeguarding; ensuring that staff, partners and residents feel comfortable and able to report concerns and issues to us and to relevant authorities.

We will record and refer all concerns, suspicions or allegations of abuse or neglect to the lead agencies or team responsible for carrying out safeguarding assessments and enquiries, specifically the Local Authority in line with section 42 of the Care Act 2014. We will do this only with consent from the adult at risk, unless they lack capacity or there is an overriding public interest consideration.

We will work in partnership with lead agencies and relevant partners, to respond to suspicions or incidents of abuse or make safeguarding enquiries in accordance with statutory procedures.

We will report any incidents of abuse that we suspect are a criminal offence to the Police. We will treat any disclosures of actual historical abuse in the same way as an allegation, disclosure or suspicion of current abuse.

We will share information for the purposes of safeguarding and will comply with the statutory duty to provide information where requested. We will adhere to principles for sharing information.

We will handle data in accordance with the Data Protection Act, General Data Protection Regulation and the DAC Data Protection Policy.

We will involve adults at risk of abuse in any safeguarding decisions. However, where someone is judged as not having capacity to make an informed decision about their own wellbeing, these will be made in their best interest on their behalf. This decision will be made in accordance with the requirements of the Mental Capacity Act 2005, and in liaison with the necessary statutory services and agencies, involving carers and family members as appropriate.

We will provide employees with role appropriate training so that they understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and are enabled to identify and report the signs of abuse in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

We will meet our responsibilities in the safe recruitment, selection and vetting of employees by using the Disclosure and Barring Service and undertake any other pre-employment screening checks as appropriate.

We will provide support and supervision for employees, creating a safe environment in which they feel able to report safeguarding issues, including where they have concerns about the behaviour of another DAC in line with our Whistleblowing Policy.

We will address any allegations or suspected abuse by DAC employees through formal statutory investigative procedures and our own internal disciplinary procedures.

We recognise the emotional impact on staff of recognising and reporting safeguarding concerns. Employee support will be available through line managers.

7. Policy Commitments – Almshouses

A detailed 'Adults at Risk' Safeguarding Policy and Procedure applies to DAC's almshouse residents and is attached to this document. This follows definitions laid down in The Care Act 2014 and follows that safeguarding duties will apply to an adult (someone over the age of 18) who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the Local Authority is meeting any of those needs);
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk, or experience, of abuse or neglect.

DAC will apply the Department of Health's six key safeguarding principles when working with Adults at Risk of abuse: empowerment, protection, prevention, proportionality, partnership and accountability.

8. Policy Commitments - Employees and Volunteers

The charity’s approach to safeguarding the welfare of employees and volunteers is underpinned by the suite of human resource, and health and safety policies and procedures, including Health and Safety,

To safeguard the welfare of almshouse residents, Enhanced DBS checks will be carried out on all staff (carrying out a regulated activity) working with older residents prior to their appointment. Trustees are required to undertake a DBS check.

We need to get from the Auditors the reason why they felt we needed this check...

9. Policy Commitments – Community Investment and Grant-making

While DAC is not responsible for safeguarding the beneficiaries of those organisations that receive grants or other benefits from DAC in its role as grant maker it recognises that it can play an important role in contributing to the enhancement of safeguarding by those organisations. It seeks to do so by being rigorous and diligent in connection with grant applications. This is achieved by DAC being satisfied that adequate safeguarding policies are in place in the recipient organisations. before making a grant

10. Monitoring, continuous improvement and dissemination

This policy will be reviewed every two years – unless legislation, business or sector developments require otherwise – to ensure that it continues to meet the stated objectives and take account of good practice developments.

Almshouse residents will be informed each time this policy is reviewed and copies will be made available to them at their almshouses and on the website.

We need to give our current residents this information....

Policy Approved by Board: 26 September 2019

Chair’s Signature: *Catrin Waugh*

Next Scheduled Review: November 2022