



# **Northwood Hills Residents' Association (NHRA)**

## **Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults and Children Policy**

Reviewed May 2018, next review due May 2021

## **Overview**

### **Voluntary, charity, social enterprise, faith-based organisations and private sectors**

Voluntary, charity, social enterprise (VCSE) and private sector organisations and agencies play an important role in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults through the services they deliver.

Some of these will work with particular communities, with different races and faith communities and delivering in health, adult social care, housing, prisons and probation services. They may, as part of their work provide a wide range of activities for children and have an important role in safeguarding children and supporting families and communities.

Like other organisations and agencies who work with children, they should have appropriate arrangements in place to safeguard and protect children from harm. Many of these organisations and agencies as well as many schools, children's centres, early years and childcare organisations, will be subject to charity law and regulated either by the Charity Commission or other "principal" regulators. Charity trustees are responsible for ensuring that those benefiting from, or working with, their charity, are not harmed in any way through contact with it. The Charity Commission for England and Wales provides guidance on charity compliance which should be followed.

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# **1. Introduction**

## **Mission Statement**

- To assist residents to preserve the environment of Northwood Hills and campaign on local issues such as planning & development, anti-social behaviour and healthcare.
- To promote a sense of community and belonging, organising and providing information on events and other activities with the provision of details via social media, the website and magazine.
- To act as a conduit for residents into organisations that represent them (eg councillors, police, surgeries, schools) and to have good relations with them so that useful dialogue/advice can take place/be given.

The Association shall be non-political and non-sectarian.

The Association carries out its business with regard to Equal Opportunities. Membership shall be open to all residents and occupants of premises over the age of 18 years of age in Northwood Hills Ward, and anyone outside the Ward who wishes to join, irrespective of the persons:

Race, colour, ethnic or national origin.

Being male or female, married or unmarried or because of other responsibilities.

Disability, age, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs.

# **2. Understanding**

NHRA treats everyone fairly and works to eliminate discrimination through promoting equality of access and opportunity for everyone regardless of age, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation or disability.

We will ensure that our members, non-members, Committee and groups that we interface with, are treated in ways that meet their needs, and that they have equal access to our services or activities wherever possible. We promote their inclusion and will challenge discrimination against them.

# **3. Definitions of 'children' and 'vulnerable adults'**

The 'Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018' document defines a child as being anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living alone, is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital, is in prison or in a young offenders' institution is irrelevant – they are still defined as children under the Children Act 1989.

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who is or may be in need of community care services because of:

- a physical disability
- a physical or mental illness
- a learning difficulty
- a reduced physical or mental capacity due to older age
- a dependency on alcohol, illegal drugs or medication

A vulnerable adult may also be somebody who is or maybe unable to take care of themselves, or unable to safeguard themselves against significant harm or exploitation. Whether or not a person is vulnerable in these cases will depend upon surrounding circumstances, environment and each case must be judged on its own merits.

We have particular responsibility to vulnerable adults and are required where necessary to work with different specialist agencies to safeguard them from abuse. We will work with these different agencies where appropriate.

#### **4. Definition of abuse**

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. Friends, strangers, family members and professional staff can all be guilty of abuse. Abuse can include physical, mental, sexual, financial, discriminatory abuse and neglect.

#### **5. Responding to suspected or alleged abuse or neglect**

If we suspect abuse or have received a report of abuse we will:

not investigate suspected abuse or neglect but will report all such reported incidents to the appropriate authorities e.g. The Police and or Social Services.

Safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is a complex area which must be dealt with by the appropriate agencies and authorities. They will investigate any concerns over the abuse or neglect of a child or a vulnerable adult in the first instance and record any discussions and actions carried out following suspected or alleged abuse or neglect accurately, thoroughly and promptly.

We will fully co-operate with any agencies involved with cases of alleged abuse or neglect.

If a member of the Association witnesses or suspects abuse or neglect as well as reporting it to our Safeguarding Officer/Chairman, they should also report it to the appropriate authorities.

#### **6. How are we involved in the prevention of abuse?**

NHRA plays an important role in building and maintaining partnerships with a number of groups and we will work with them as appropriate to safeguard children and vulnerable adults.

## **7. Reporting Abuse**

NHRA believes it is important that committee members and others are not frightened or do not feel intimidated reporting any cases of abuse and should be confident of confidentiality when reporting to our Safeguarding Officer/Chairman.

## **8. Training and conduct**

Our Committee are all volunteers. We will take into account the need to promote the health and safety of our volunteers and safeguard them from abuse.

All our volunteers at events who have regular contact with vulnerable adults and/or children will, where appropriate be trained, and we will employ the services of a qualified trainer.

A number of the Committee have been subject to enhanced Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) / Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) checks in the normal course of their working life.

The guidance we have received is that we are not required to make any of the above checks on our Committee Members or Stewards, as it is a school's, Scouts and other other alike outside bodies, responsibility to carry out their own Risk Assessment before attending NHRA events; and provide their own chaperones if appropriate.

Where appropriate, people will be trained in the implications and processes involved with the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children, and will be trained in how to identify signs of abuse and neglect.

If a Committee member or Steward is suspected of abuse or neglect, appropriate action taken will be taken immediately.

In order to protect themselves from allegations of abuse, or situations that could be misunderstood, Committee members and stewards will maintain strong professional boundaries.

If a committee member or steward suspects that any other committee member or steward is involved in abuse or neglect, they should report this directly to The Chairman and/or the nominated Safeguarding Officer.

We will always treat any sensitive or personal information given to us as confidential in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 (GDPR) and will only pass this information onto third parties such as statutory organisations, if:

- We are required by law to do so - either for the prevention or detection of crime or the apprehension or prosecution of offenders
- There is an information sharing protocol, contract or confidentiality agreement in place
- The person who gave us the information is happy for us to share the information.

However in some cases we will not need consent to share information if where doing so would:

- place a child at increased risk of significant harm
- place an adult at increased risk of serious harm
- prejudice the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime, or lead to unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm or serious harm

## **9. Public relations - photos and film**

Any publications or communications we produce, that contain photos or videos of children or vulnerable adults, will not contain personal information about them that could identify their whereabouts. Children and vulnerable adults will never be portrayed in a demeaning or tasteless way.

Only approved photographs and video footage will be published by NHRA.

Before we use an image of a child or vulnerable adult we will get written permission from the Head teacher on behalf of the pupils. Large group shots do not require consent, however any parent, guardian or carer will be given the opportunity to withdraw their child from being photographed or recorded at any time.

We will carefully monitor images uploaded to our Facebook page and take actions as appropriate to quickly remove inappropriate images and where necessary report to the appropriate authorities.

## **10. Glossary of terms**

- **Discrimination:** Unfair treatment of one person or group, usually because of prejudice about race, ethnicity, age, religion, or gender.
- **Learning Disability:** A condition that either prevents or significantly hinders somebody from learning basic skills or information at the same rate as most people of the same age.
- **Mental capacity:** The ability to understand the general meaning of a contract or a document and the ability to make a decision and to provide consent.
- **Safeguarding Officer:-** The contact details of our nominated Safeguarding Officer will be published on the NHRA website.