

Safeguarding Adults with Care and Support Needs Policy

Background

After a review of existing safeguarding policy and procedure in 2015, the decision has been taken to separate the safeguarding procedures for children and adult with care and support needs. There are small but important differences in the management of protecting each group from harm that need stating clearly.

Introduction

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust engages with people from a wide range of backgrounds and circumstances. This policy will be implemented according to the attached protocols and the standards therein.

This policy only applies to adults who have, or develop, care and support needs. It does not apply to all adults.

Definition of adult with care and support needs (previously known as a vulnerable adult)

An adult (aged 18 or over) with care and support needs is someone who may need extra help to manage their lives independently, whether they are receiving help from local authority or not, because of –

- A learning or physical disability
- Mental health needs
- Alcohol or substance misuse
- Sensory needs
- Cognitive needs
- Short or long-term illness
- Being a carer themselves

Care and support is defined as a mix of practical, emotional and financial support for adults who need extra help to manage their lives independently.

How is adult safeguarding defined?

The Social Care for Excellence Institute states *'In the context of the legislation, specific adult safeguarding duties apply to any adult who:*

- *has care and support needs and*
- *is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect and*
- *is unable to protect themselves because of their care and support needs'*

Policy statement

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust believes all adults have a right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Our safeguarding policy and procedure aims to protect this right.

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust is committed to taking all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of everyone involved in its activities, regardless of their age, ability, gender, sexual preference, health status, socio-economic, marital status, ethnic or cultural background.

As part of this commitment it recognises that some adults are particularly vulnerable to accident or abuse, and that within these sectors, there are individuals who are additionally at risk through other factors, such as belonging to a minority group.

The purpose of this policy is:

- to protect adults with care and support needs who volunteer with The Trust or attend Trust events as well as those contacted through the course of The Trust's work.
- to protect staff members, who are also an adult with care and support needs.
- to provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding adults with care and support needs.
- to protect adults with care and support needs and Wildlife Trust staff by having a clear framework, robust procedures and transparent reporting

Legal framework:

This policy is based upon the following:

Primary Legislation - Care Act (2014). This sets out a legal framework for how local authorities and other agencies should work together to protect adults with care and support needs at risk of abuse or neglect.

Secondary Legislation – Mental Capacity Act (2015) – a statutory framework for those who lack the capacity to make decisions for themselves.

Regional Policy – Adult Safeguarding: Multi-agency policy & procedures for the protection of adults with care & support needs in the West Midlands. This is available to download from Worcestershire County Council's Adult Safeguarding Board website. The policy "*sets out the approach taken to adult safeguarding in the West Midlands. The Procedures then explain how agencies and individuals should work together to put the West Midlands Adult Safeguarding Policy into practice*".

Practical application of our policy and procedures

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust recognises that:

Some of our volunteers are adults who have care and support needs and require a greater level of understanding and support. We want to ensure that no one is discriminated against and that, where we can, we will offer a volunteer position and ensure that the volunteer is properly supported and their needs are met. Where we cannot offer a position we will explain and if possible signpost to a more suitable organisation.

We take the safety of all our volunteers seriously and aim to ensure that anyone volunteering with us is safe and supported.

We will work in partnership with adults who have care and support needs, and if applicable, their carers and other agencies, to ensure their welfare.

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust actively seeks to:

- create a safe and welcoming environment, where adults with care and support needs can develop their skills and confidence
- review the way we work to incorporate best practice.

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust will seek to keep adults with care and support needs safe by:

- providing clear procedures for staff and volunteers including a code of conduct
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- recruiting staff, contractors and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- responding swiftly and appropriately to all complaints and concerns about poor practice or suspected or actual adult abuse.
- working with other agencies within the framework of Worcestershire County Council's Adult Safeguarding Board Policy and Procedures (e.g. when passing on concerns or disclosures)
- keeping up to date with national developments relating to preventing abuse and welfare of adults.

Day to day use of policy and procedures

- Staff and volunteers will receive training to gain a basic awareness of what adult safeguarding is and who it applies to. This information will be disseminated in appropriate formats for each group of staff and volunteers based on their expected contact with adults with care and support needs. e.g. A staff member in the reserve team will receive online training including signs of abuse whereas a local group committee member will just receive basic awareness training from the Trust's Designated Safeguarding Officer.
- Staff and volunteers will receive training to understand when disclosure procedures may apply to an adult with care and support needs.
- Staff will use the policies and procedures to recruit volunteers with care and support needs to their teams safely.
- policy and procedures will apply if colleagues are concerned a staff member who also has care and support needs is coming to harm or at risk of harm. They will additionally be supported by the staff handbook and individual plans as agreed with line managers