

**Kew Neighbourhood Association (CIO 1196093)
Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.**

Edition 4.0, March 2024

1. Kew Neighbourhood Association (KNA) and safeguarding

Safeguarding is a legal requirement for all organisations working with people. It is about protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. To address Safeguarding, KNA trustees and staff, informed by the core values of responsibility, accountability and transparency, have developed policy and procedures for the charity as well as specific guidance for KNA volunteers.

These documents are available on the KNA web site, together with the Age UK Fact Sheet no.78 (December 2020) - *Safeguarding Older People from Abuse and Neglect* (referred to throughout this document as Age UK) and a recent briefing from the Social Care Institute for Excellence about the particular implications of Covid for the safeguarding of older people. This stresses that the Covid pandemic has increased the vulnerability of some older people and that **'this is a time when we must all be extra vigilant and try to pick up any early signs that something isn't right.'** <https://www.scie.org.uk/care-providers/coronavirus-covid-19/safeguarding-adults>

All volunteers, staff and trustees commit to reading and understanding these documents.

2. What is safeguarding?

'Safeguarding is aimed at people with care and support needs who may be in vulnerable circumstances and at risk of abuse or neglect.' (Government Fact Sheet 7 on Care Act 2014).

The word 'safeguarding' was first used in relation to children who were at risk of harm – violence, sexual abuse, neglect, emotional abuse – from adults responsible for their care – notably parents and residential carers. During the 1970s, scandals in some residential settings, including hospitals, for older people and adults with learning disabilities, led to greater concern about the safeguarding of 'vulnerable adults.' Since then, further scandals have resulted in far greater awareness of the dangers and threats to both children and adults. It has been increasingly recognised that although care and support needs may increase a person's vulnerability, they can be **at risk** because of the people they are in contact with. Research into the 'abuse' of older people in their own home, as well as in care settings, has shown that a small minority experience abuse of different kinds, including financial exploitation. The UK government has responded to these issues by passing a number of laws both to try to prevent and then, if prevention fails, to address these issues. Further details on pages 4-5 of Age UK.

3. What do we mean by abuse and neglect?

The abuse, or mistreatment, of adults, can occur in many different ways. While sexual and physical abuse invariably make the headlines, the more common forms of abuse for adults are emotional/psychological abuse (bullying, shouting, harassing, ignoring, coercing), neglect (failing to address basic needs of care) and financial exploitation (where someone takes advantage of another person to steal their money or belongings). The locality served by KNA is generally affluent, and financial exploitation may be a particular risk, especially for isolated older people without much social contact. Self-neglect (where someone fails seriously to look after themselves) is also included in the legislation. Further details are in Age UK (pages 6-7).

4. What is our Responsibility?

Our responsibility is to make sure that:

1. our staff, trustees and volunteers are reliable and trustworthy;
2. our staff, trustees and volunteers understand about safeguarding, and the necessity of being aware that **abuse can and does happen**, and of reporting any concerns;
3. a member of staff is our Nominated Safeguarding Person (NSP) and one of our trustees is our Nominated Safeguarding Trustee (NST).
4. we establish (and understand fully) the procedures for following up any concerns (see section 7, initial response and section 8, notifying the local authority);
5. we have, and, without fail, use careful and thorough methods of recording any concerns;
6. safeguarding is a routine agenda item at our quarterly trustee meetings even if there is nothing to report;
7. trustees and staff review all our safeguarding documents annually and revise them if necessary.

5. Recruitment of staff, trustees and volunteers (for further details, see relevant policies)

All potential staff, trustees and volunteers are interviewed, this includes a question on any past convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings as well as any pending cases. Applicants are asked if they have ever had any complaints of abuse against them. In addition, all are required to have two references and a Disclosure and Barring Check (DBS) (Age UK, page 24) before appointment. All are required to have a new DBS check after five years.

6. Understanding safeguarding

1. all staff are required to do appropriate safeguarding training;
2. all trustees are responsible for being appropriately informed, through reading or training, or both, about safeguarding and our duties of responsibility, accountability and transparency;
3. all volunteers are appropriately informed about safeguarding, and understand their responsibilities to be aware and to share any concerns with our NSP and /or NST.
4. our users understand that they should share any concerns about their safety, or anyone else's safety, with our nominated safeguarding person (NSP).

7. Initial response in the event of a concern being expressed about a KNA user

In the event of any concern being reported about one of our service users, the nominated safeguarding person (NSP) (Abi Palmer) will undertake the following procedures within 48 hours of the report being received, unless there is reason to suppose this is a criminal matter

and must be reported to the police. (We will follow the same procedure if a service user or fellow volunteer raises concerns about a volunteer). The NSP will:

1. Arrange to make contact with the person expressing the concern;
2. Assure the person that they have done the right thing in sharing this concern;
3. Listen very carefully to what is being said;
4. Complete our record form, making sure there are answers to the following questions:
 - a. What is the day and time you are making the report?
 - b. Who is reporting the concern? (e.g. Humphrey Jones, volunteer driver)
 - c. Who is the concern about? (e.g. Susan Smith, aged 85)
 - d. Who may be abusing, or mistreating, the person concerned? (e.g. her husband)
 - e. What actually is the concern? (e.g. her son is taking money from her purse).
 - f. Is it a concern in the person's own home?
 - g. Is this a 'one-off' event, or on-going? (e.g. heard horrible shouting and bullying when calling at the house last Tuesday 20 July).
 - h. What has made the person share their concern with you? (e.g. they were worried).
 - i. How serious does it seem to you from what they have said, and how they have said it? (from very serious indeed to probably not very serious).
 - j. Do they have anything further they want to say?
5. stay calm and concentrate on getting the 'facts' without probing for details, and empathise without jumping to conclusions;
6. assure the person reporting the concern that they remain anonymous, unless and until the matter has to be reported to the local authority or to the police;
7. check against our digital records whether any previous concerns have been raised about this service user;
8. inform the safeguarding trustee (Kirsty Gillan-Thomas) and talk over confidentially whether to consult the local authority.

8. Notifying the local authority

The law and guidance are clear that the role of KNA is to share their concern with the local authority, **not** to investigate. If there is any on-going concern, our duty, in law, is to contact the Richmond Council Adult Access Team (contact details at the end of this document) and then to co-operate fully with them. The NSP (Abi Palmer) will be responsible for making that contact.

"Once you notify the local authority, they have a duty to respond appropriately, taking into account the views of the person concerned. They may initiate a safeguarding enquiry, or they may provide social care services or information and advice to help resolve the issue. The local authority can require partner organisations to take action or provide further information. They may have to respond urgently, notify the police who could then become the lead agency for the case, or liaise with another responsible body such as the CQC." (Age UK, page 10)

The NSP will record details of all telephone calls, emails and conversations should be recorded with dates. All records are kept securely digitally and treated confidentially.

9. The role of the local authority.

The Age UK Fact Sheet contains full details of the local authority's duties and how these duties are to be carried out in practice. There are three specific ones which cover both any enquiry (Age UK, page 14) and the actual safeguarding process:

1. *A local authority has a **duty to 'make enquiries'** where there is **'reasonable cause' to suspect** an adult with care and support needs is being abused or neglected or is at risk of being abused or neglected and as a result of those needs is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it (Care Act 2014, section 42).*

In the (we hope, very unlikely) event of such an enquiry, KNA will co-operate fully with the local authority, and will consult with them on any on-going role of KNA with the person who is the subject of the enquiry. Throughout, we will keep detailed records as noted above (section 7).

2. *Each local authority must set up a 'Safeguarding Adults Board', which is a multi-agency body to help and protect adults in its area (Care Act 2014. section 43).*
3. *Safeguarding Adult Boards have a duty to arrange for a **Safeguarding Adults Review** where there has been a serious safeguarding incident (Care Act, section 44).*

10. Key contact details and Age UK reference

Nominated Safeguarding Person (NSP): Abi Palmer, KNA Director mail@kna.org.uk 07951 293 319

Nominated Safeguarding Trustee (NST): Kirsty Gillan-Thomas, 07513 628 038

Richmond Council Adult Access Team 020 8891 7971 (Emergency Outside Office Hours **020 8744 2442**)

Age UK Factsheet (December 2023), Safeguarding older people from abuse and neglect.
https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/factsheets/fs78_safeguarding_older_people_from_abuse_fcs.pdf

Our safeguarding documents and the above Factsheet are on the KNA web site. Abi and Kirsty are very happy to answer any questions that you may have. Please do not hesitate to contact us.

Please confirm that you have read and understood this document either by post, or by email to mail@kna.org.uk

KNA Trustees. Revised March 2024