Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

Introduction

Safeguarding is everyone's business and this policy applies to everyone involved in Pirton JoyCare (PJC), including trustees and volunteers.

PJC strives to enhance the lives of people aged sixty years or over who live in Pirton by organising activities which provide opportunities for social interaction and by providing support to those who require assistance through the Good Neighbour Scheme (GNS).

The Care Act 2014 and supporting statutory guidance describes safeguarding as protecting an adult's right to live safely, free from abuse and neglect by working with them to reduce or stop the risk, whilst respecting their wishes and feelings and ultimately promoting their wellbeing. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.

PJC, and in turn its trustees, GNS coordinators and volunteers, have a responsibility to act in a timely manner to any concern that an adult is being abused, neglected or exploited and to ensure that the situation is assessed and appropriate action taken.

PJC's Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy, which has been developed in line with government legislation, statutory guidance and best practice from Hertfordshire's Safeguarding Adults Board, sets out how PJC will safeguard adults who use its services, respond to any concerns or incidents, and report concerns to the relevant authorities.

Purpose of policy

This policy demonstrates PJC's commitment to the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and ensures all involved in PJC are aware of:

- The legislation, policy and procedures for safeguarding adults.
- Their role and responsibility for safeguarding adults.
- What to do if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of an adult receiving support from PJC.

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy and associated procedures apply to all individuals involved in PJC including trustees, GNS coordinators and volunteers, and are applicable to any concerns about the safeguarding of any person receiving support from PJC

Definition of adults at risk
The definition is set out in the Care Act 2014 and the safeguarding duty applies to a person over 18 years who:

- Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and
- 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 the risk of it.

Principles of safeguarding
There are six key principles of safeguarding:

- **Empowerment** – People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions, to feel in control of their own lives and to manage their own risk, including informed consent.
- **Prevention** – It is better to take action before harm occurs.
- **Proportionality** – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- **Protection** – Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- **Partnership** – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
- **Accountability** – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

Types and indicators of abuse and neglect
The Care Act 2014 and the Care and Support Statutory Guidance define the categories of abuse but emphasises that organisations should not limit their view on what constitutes abuse. The main forms of abuse are listed below. The list is not exhaustive but an illustration as to the behaviours that could give rise to a safeguarding concern.

Type of Abuse	Description of Abuse
Physical abuse	Including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions. Signs to look out for include unexplained or frequent injuries, particularly if they don't match the adult's lifestyle, or changes in behaviour.
Domestic violence / abuse	Including psychological, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called 'honour' based violence
Sexual abuse	Including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting, sexual exploitation. Signs can include unexplained cuts or bruises, torn, stained or bloody clothing, new or unusual sexualised behaviours.

Type of Abuse	Description of Abuse
Psychological abuse	Including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, radicalisation, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks. Signs can include substance misuse, weight changes and behaviour changes, together with a lack of trust in others and an unwillingness to talk about their needs in front of some people.
Financial or material abuse	Including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits
Modern slavery	Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude, sexual exploitation. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment
Discriminatory abuse	Including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion. Signs include verbal abuse or harassment relating to a protected characteristic, denying someone's basic rights or access to a communication aid.
Organisational abuse	Including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation
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, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating. Signs can include missed medication or appointments, untreated injuries, dehydration, malnourishment, inappropriate clothing.
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

Principles

- Ensure everyone involved with PJC is aware of its Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy and knows what to do if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of an adult.
- All trustees, GNS coordinators and volunteers understand their role and responsibility for safeguarding adults through their induction briefing or wider training if appropriate for their role.

- Any concern that an adult is at risk is taken seriously, responded to promptly and in line with the procedures set out in this policy.
- Any action taken will respect the wellbeing, rights and dignity of those involved and be proportionate to the risk of harm.
- Confidential and accurate records of any safeguarding concerns will be securely retained by PJC's Safeguarding Lead and stored in line with PJC's Data Protection Policy.
- Safe recruitment practices and assessment of the suitability of trustees, coordinators and volunteers to prevent the deployment of unsuitable individuals in providing services offered by PJC. A DBS check will be completed on all new trustees and volunteers with a review undertaken every year. References will also be requested for all new trustees, coordinators and volunteers.
- Information about an adult found to be at risk, or someone who may pose a risk to adults, will be shared with the appropriate bodies. For example police, local authority, Hertfordshire Adult Care Services.
- A risk assessment will be undertaken when any part of the procedures set out in this policy change (for example in response to Covid-19).
- Safeguarding will be reviewed with the GNS coordinators at their regular meetings and annually volunteers and trustees will be asked to confirm that they have read PJC's policy and procedures in relation to safeguarding vulnerable adults.

Responding to safeguarding concerns

A safeguarding concern is when you have a reasonable cause to suspect that an adult is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse and neglect and can't protect themselves.

A reasonable cause for concern can include:

- Seeing or hearing something that worries you.
- The explanation of what happened doesn't add up or the story keeps changing.
- A person is frequently visiting a care setting, such as Hospital
- You simple have the gut feeling that something isn't right.

If you have a safeguarding concern about an adult using PJC's services please follow the guidance below. An adult safeguarding concern may be:

- A direct or passive disclosure by the adult at risk.
- A concern raised by a volunteer.
- An observation of the behaviour of the adult at risk or the behaviour of another person(s) towards the adult at risk.

If an adult indicates they are being harmed or abused, or information is received which gives rise to concern, the person receiving the information should:

- Listen carefully to what is said and take the concerns seriously. It is important not to promise to keep secrets, to make assumptions, show that you are upset or angry or to show disbelief or dismiss their concerns.
- If someone requires immediate medical attention contact the individual's GP or call an ambulance on 999.
- If you are concerned someone is in immediate danger or a serious crime is being committed contact the police on 999.

- Reassure the person that they have done the right thing in revealing the information. Ask them what they would like to happen next. Explain that you will have to share the information with PJC's Safeguarding Lead (Julie Lister, Trustee).
- Act swiftly to report the concerns to Julie Lister, PJC's Safeguarding Lead (07577 343666 or julienicolalister@btinternet.com). If Julie is not available please contact Mandy Beswick, PJC's lead for the Good Neighbour Scheme (07796 643828 or m1beswick@live.co.uk).
- Record in writing as soon as possible the circumstances in which the concern came about and what action you took / advice you gave. The detail should be recorded on the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Report Form (Appendix A) and submitted to PJC's Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.
- Be mindful of the need to be confidential at all times. Only share detail of the concerns raised with the Safeguarding Lead or others who have a need to know to keep the person safe.

Responsibilities of Safeguarding Lead

The Safeguarding Lead for PJC is Julie Lister. Once a concern has been passed to PJC's Safeguarding Lead they will be responsible for coordinating PJC's response to the concern raised and securely retaining any safeguarding forms and corresponding information. The Safeguarding Lead will take the following actions:

- Ensure any immediate actions necessary to safeguard an adult identified as at risk have been taken, for example immediate medical treatment or referral to the police if the alleged abuse is a suspected crime.
- Ensure a Safeguarding Adults Report Form has been completed by the individual who reported the concern.
- Reassure the individual who has reported the concern. Explain what will happen next and reinforce the need for confidentiality.
- Ensure that the adult at risk has been given information about what will happen next. Ensure they have been provided with information about other organisations that can support them.
- If you believe the adult is at risk make a safeguarding adults referral to Hertfordshire Adult Care Services.
- If harm is suspected of being caused from within PJC follow the procedures set out in PJC's Volunteers Policy.
- Engage with and inform the adult at risk of the action taken.
- Ensure decisions made, action taken and outcome are clearly recorded and securely retain information with the Safeguarding Adults Report Form in line with PJC's Data Protection Policy. The Safeguarding Adults Report Form should be securely retained for six years. PJC's Safeguarding Lead is responsible for securely retaining all safeguarding report forms and corresponding information.

Useful contacts

- Police - Immediate danger to life, risk of injury or crime being committed dial 999. No immediate risk to life or property but police response is required due to the seriousness of the incident or potential loss of evidence dial 101.
- Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board - 0300 123 4042 or www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/adults
- North Hertfordshire Disability Team – 01438 843166
- If you have concerns about a child call Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership on 0300 123 4043.

Policy governance

This policy will be reviewed every two years and will be published on PJC's website.

Version	Reviewed by	Approved By	Date	Next review due
1		PJC Trustees	2008	
2	Elaine Derrick	PJC Trustees	June 2021	June 2023
3	Elaine Derrick	PJC Trustees	January 2023	January 2025
4	Alison Maple	PJC Trustees	February 2025	January 2027
5	Julie Lister	PJC Trustees	October 2026	October 2028

Appendix A – Pirton JoyCare Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Report Form

To be completed if you have concerns regarding an adult. If it is safe to do so, it is important to inform the adult about your concerns and that you have a duty to pass the information on to PJC's Safeguarding Lead Julie Lister (07577 343666 or julienicolalister@btinternet.com). If Julie is not available please contact Mandy Beswick, PJC's lead for the Good Neighbour Scheme (07796 643828 or m1beswick@live.co.uk). The Safeguarding Lead will then look at the information and plan a course of action.

Section 1 – Details of adult (you have concerns about)	
Name of adult	
Address	
Date of Birth / Age	
Contact number	
Emergency contact if known	
Consent to share information with emergency contact?	
Section 2 – Details of the person completing this form / Your details	
Name	
Contact phone number(s)	
Email address	
Your role in Joycare	
Section 3 – Details of concern	
Please explain why you are concerned. Please give details about what you have seen/been told/other that makes you believe the adult is at risk of harm or is being abused or neglected (include dates/times/evidence from records/photos etc.)	
Date/ Time	What happened

Section 5 – Details of the person thought to be causing harm (if known)	
Name	
Address	
Relationship/connection to adult	
Do they have contact with other adults at risk in another capacity? E.g. in their work/family/as a volunteer	

Section 6 - Have you discussed your concerns with the adult at risk? What are their views, What have they stated about what they want to happen and what outcomes they want?

Section 6a – Reasons for not discussing with the adult	
Discussion would put the adult or others at risk. Please explain:	
Adult appears to lack mental capacity. Please explain:	
Adult unable to communicate their views. Please explain:	

Section 7 – Risk to others
Are any other adults at risk Yes/No/Not known – delete as appropriate If yes please fill in another form answering questions 1-6

Section 8 – What action have you taken if any /agreed with the adult to reduce the risks?
Actions by club: e.g. person causing harm suspended, session times changed.

Section 9: Other agencies contacted	Who contacted/reference number/contact details/advice gained/action being taken
Police	
Ambulance	
Other – please state who and why:	

Section 10: Contact with Welfare Officer/others within the club	
Who else has been informed of this issue? – and what was the reason for information sharing	
Consultation with Safeguarding Lead Julie Lister, Trustee, PJC	Dates and times
Completed Form handed to Safeguarding Lead; Date and time	
Signed:	
Date:	

Section 11 – Sharing the concerns (**Completed by Safeguarding Lead** (Julie Lister, Trustee PJC)
Details of your contact with the adult at risk of harm. Have they consented to information being shared outside of Pirton Joycare?
Details of contact with the Local Authority Safeguarding Team where the adult at risk of harm lives – advice can be still sought without giving personal details if you do not have consent for a referral.
Details of any other agencies contacted:
Details of the outcome of this concern: