

# Draft Safeguarding Policy for Houndwood Community Group

Houndwood Community Group abides by the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable people and is committed to safeguarding practice that reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice requirements.

- We recognise the safety and welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take
- All people, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, has an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues

## **Purpose:**

Houndwood Community Group will:

- Protect children and young people who attend Houndwood Community Group events from harm.
- Protect adults at risk per definition below
- Provide volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Houndwood Community Group, including committee members and volunteers. Failure to comply with the policy and related procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in exclusion from the organisation and its events.

## **Definitions:**

**The Children Act 1989 definition of a child is:** anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday, even if they are living independently.

## **Adult at Risk:**

- An adult who has needs for care and support or is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect.
- Or as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

**Child and Adult Abuse:** Children and adults may be vulnerable to neglect and abuse or exploitation from within their family and from individuals they come across in their daily lives. There are 4 main categories of abuse, which are: sexual, physical, emotional abuse, and neglect. It is important to be aware of more specific types of abuse that fall within these categories, they are:

- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Child sexual exploitation
- Child Criminal exploitation
- Child trafficking
- Domestic abuse
- Female genital mutilation
- Grooming
- Historical abuse
- Online abuse

**Safeguarding children:** Safeguarding children is defined as

- protecting children from maltreatment.
- preventing impairment of children's health or development.
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

### **Legal Framework:**

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children and vulnerable adults in England. We have taken guidance from the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and the NSPCC's safeguarding resources for community and voluntary groups.

Houndwood Community Group is expected to have in place arrangements that reflect the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people as well as vulnerable adults.

### **Training and Awareness:**

Houndwood Community Group will assess safeguarding risk at all events as part of its risk assessments. Volunteers will be briefed on all risks including safeguarding as part of the pre-event briefing. All external people linked to the organisation or events we hold will also be briefed using as part of this process (e.g, suppliers and stallholders at the Summer fete).

For all those who are working or volunteering with children and vulnerable adults, this requires them as a minimum to have awareness training that enables them to:

- Understand what safeguarding is and their role in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.
- Recognise a person potentially in need of safeguarding and take action.
- Understand how to report a safeguarding concern.
- Understand the importance of dignity and respect when working with vulnerable people.
- Have knowledge of Houndwood Community Group's Safeguarding Policy.

### **Confidentiality and Information Sharing:**

Houndwood Community Group expects all volunteers and committee members to maintain confidentiality. Information will only be shared in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Data Protection.

However, information should be shared with the Local Authority if a child is deemed to be at risk of harm or **contact the police if they are in immediate danger, or a crime has been committed.**

### **Whistle Blowing:**

It is important that people within Houndwood Community Group have the confidence to come forward to speak or act if they are unhappy with anything. Whistle blowing occurs when a person raises a concern about dangerous or illegal activity, or any wrong-doing within their organisation. This includes concerns about another employee or volunteer. There is also a requirement by Houndwood Community Group to protect whistle-blowers.

**Important Contacts:**

**Peter Goater** (Chair Houndwood Community Group) 07434 603 517

**Heather Shearer** (Secretary Houndwood Community Group) 07918 760 789

**Police**

Emergency – 999

Non-emergency – 101

To report concerns about a child, a young person under the age of 18, or a vulnerable adult:

**Somerset County Council on 0300 123 2224.**

**NSPCC Helpline**

0808 800 5000