



PENNYWELL NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

COMMUNITY & HEALTH RESOURCE PROJECT, PENNYWELL SHOPPING CENTRE,
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Adults at Risk Policy

March 2026

1. Purpose

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of adults at risk of abuse or neglect policy.

This policy defines how Pennywell Neighbourhood Centre operates to safeguard adults at risk of abuse or neglect.

We have a duty of care and are committed to the protection and safety of adults at risk involved as visitors and as participants in all of our activities both on and off site. We also want to protect and support our staff who work or come into contact with these groups.

This policy and accompanying procedures are to be read alongside our Recruitment policy and procedures and our Equality policy and procedures.

Definitions

Adult at risk of abuse or neglect

For the purposes of this policy, adult at risk refers to someone over 18 years old who, according to paragraph 42.1 of the Care Act 2014:

- has care and support needs
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
- as a result of their care and support needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

If someone has care and support needs but is not currently receiving care or support from a health or care service they may still be an adult at risk.

2. Persons affected

- All staff, paid and unpaid, this includes volunteers and sessional workers
- All trustees
- All service users
- All visitors and contractors

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All members of staff (paid and unpaid) are required to report any suspected abuse and be aware of the appropriate reporting and support procedure for safeguarding. It is important that Staff are also aware of the Government's PREVENT strategy. The aim of this is to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism in all its forms. This can also be a safeguarding issue but has different reporting mechanisms.

The Safeguarding Officer(s) will discharge their safeguarding functions in a way that ensures that adults at risk are safeguarded from harm, and promotes their welfare. They are responsible for following up any suspected reports of abuse and for informing the Police or other appropriate external bodies.

3. Safeguarding policy

Pennywell Neighbourhood Centre has a zero tolerance approach to abuse. Pennywell Neighbourhood Centre recognises that under the Care Act 2014 it has a duty for the care and protection of adults who are at risk of abuse. It is committed to promoting wellbeing, harm prevention and to responding effectively if concerns are raised. Adults will be included in swift and personalised safeguarding responses

It is also committed to inter agency collaboration on the development and implementation of procedures for the protection of adults at risk from abuse, it has a duty and responsibility for making arrangements to ensure all its functions are discharged having regard to safeguarding and promoting the adults at risk of abuse. The policy is about stopping abuse where it is happening and preventing abuse where there is a risk that it may occur.

There can be no excuses for not taking all reasonable action to protect adults at risk from abuse, exploitation, radicalisation and mistreatment. All citizens of the United Kingdom have their rights enshrined within the Human Rights Act 1998. People who are eligible to receive health and community care services may be additionally vulnerable to the violation of these rights by reason of disability, impairment, age or illness.

This policy and procedure is supported by the Pennywell Neighbourhood Centre safe recruitment processes and procedures.

This policy and operational guidance references the Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board multi agency safeguarding policy.

Pennywell Neighbourhood Centre is committed to the following:

- The welfare of the adult at risk is paramount;
- All adults at risk have the right to protection from abuse
- safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part; and
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse must be properly reported to the relevant internal and external authorities and dealt with swiftly and appropriately
- arrangements which set out clearly the processes for sharing information procedures with other professionals and with the Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board;
- Staff, contractors and volunteers must be clear on appropriate behaviour and responses. Where appropriate, failure by staff to maintain standards may be dealt with using Pennywell Neighbourhood Centre's Disciplinary Procedures
- clear whistleblowing procedures are suitably referenced in staff training and codes of conduct, and a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting welfare to be addressed;
- All staff are aware of the policy and procedures for the safeguarding and protection of adults at risk through appropriate safeguarding training, supervision and support for staff and for creating an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in meeting their safeguarding role;
- staff are given a mandatory induction, which includes familiarisation with safeguarding responsibilities and procedures to be followed if anyone has any concerns;
- all staff should have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they improve over time in their work with adults at risk of abuse and families
- a clear line of accountability for the provision of safe services exists

- a senior board level lead to take leadership responsibility for Pennywell Neighbourhood Centre's safeguarding arrangements;
- a designated lead for safeguarding at Pennywell Neighbourhood Centre.
- safe recruitment practices are in place including policies on when to obtain a DBS check;

Pennywell Neighbourhood Centre will ensure that staff understand;

- What they need to do, and what they can expect of one another, to safeguard adults at risk of abuse using this policy. The policy is available at Induction.
- Core legal requirements, making it clear what individuals and Pennywell Neighbourhood Centre should do to keep adults at risk of abuse safe. In doing so, Pennywell Neighbourhood Centre seeks to emphasise that effective safeguarding systems are those where:
- That all staff who come into contact with adults at risk of abuse and their families are alert to their needs and any risks of harm that individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose;
- The requirement to share appropriate information in a timely way and can discuss any concerns about an individual adults with colleagues and local authority adult's social care;
- The necessity to use their expert judgement to put the adult's needs at the heart of the safeguarding system so that the right solution can be found for each individual;
- The necessity to contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote a person's welfare;
- All staff working with adults at risk are afforded a position of status and authority in relation to service users. Services will be provided in an environment which lessens the imbalance of power and encourages independence and self-advocacy for service users. All working practices will minimise the risk of abuse by being sensitive to individual, gender and cultural needs
- We recognise that abuse is a symptom of social, institutional and individual discrimination. Disabling attitudes and practices allow for the belief that it is somehow acceptable to treat vulnerable people with little respect and for people not to be informed, consulted or empowered in order to exercise choice and take decisions which affect their lives. Preventing discrimination is essential to abuse prevention. We are committed to work within our organisation, the services we provide, and in partnership to promote the rights of service users.
- The importance of capacity, consent and decision making – see Appendix 1

4. Supporting Documents

This policy should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents:

- Safeguarding Adults at Risk Procedures
- Data and Record Retention Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Electronic Information and Communications Systems Policy
- Harassment Policy
- Grievance Procedure
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Induction, Training, Supervision and Support

5. Contact Details

Nominated Adult at Risk Lead Safeguarding Officer

Name: Gary Brooks
Tel No: 0191 5341477
Email: gbrookspnc@outlook.com

Deputy Adult at Risk Lead Safeguarding Officer

Name: Beverley Bulmer
Tel No: 0191 5341477
Email: receptionpnc@outlook.com

Trustee Senior Lead for Safeguarding and Child Protection

Name: Kevin Doran
Tel No: 07392869181
Email: kevin.doran@nhs.net

Safeguarding Adults Team - Sunderland City Council

0191 5618934 or 0191 5618936 (8.30am to 5:15pm Monday - Thursday, 8.30am to 4.45pm Friday);
or 0191 520 5552 – Health and Well-Being Team (outside the above hours)

In an emergency always call 999

6. Revision history

This policy and related guidance will be monitored by the Chief Executive on a regular basis for compliance and will be reviewed at least annually.

| Date approved or amended | Amendments | Signed |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| March 2022 | None, new document | <i>GP Brooks</i> |
| March 2023 | Dates changed | <i>GP Brooks</i> |
| March 2024 | Dates changed | <i>GP Brooks</i> |
| March 2025 | Dates changed | <i>GP Brooks</i> |
| March 2026 | Dates changed | <i>GP Brooks</i> |

APPENDIX 1:

CAPACITY, CONSENT AND DECISION MAKING

The consideration of capacity is crucial at all stages of Safeguarding Adults procedures. For example, determining the ability of an adult at risk to make lifestyle choices, such as choosing to remain in a situation where they risk abuse; determining whether a particular act or transaction is abusive or consensual; or determining how much an adult at risk can be involved in making decisions in a given situation.

The key development affecting this area of work is the implementation of the Mental Capacity Act 2005, which provides a statutory framework to empower and protect adults at risk who may not be able to make their own decisions. It makes it clear who can take decisions in which situations and how they should go about this. It enables people to plan ahead for a time when they may lose capacity. It applies to anyone aged 16 years and over therefore appropriate liaison needs to occur for young people aged 16 to 18 years with Children's Services where relevant as part of Safeguarding Adults work.

The whole Act is underpinned by a set of five key principles:

- **A presumption of capacity** - every adult has the right to make his or her own decisions and must be assumed to have capacity to do so unless it is proved otherwise;
- **The right for individuals to be supported to make their own decisions** - people must be given all appropriate help before anyone concludes that they cannot make their own decisions;
- That individuals must retain the right to make what might be seen as eccentric or **unwise decisions**;
- **Best interests** - anything done for or on behalf of people without capacity must be in their best interests; and
- **Least restrictive intervention** - anything done for or on behalf of people without capacity should be the least restrictive of their basic rights and freedoms.