
Suffolk Poetry Society

Safeguarding adults, young people and children at risk of harm policy

February 2024

The Chair of Suffolk Poetry Society takes lead responsibility for safeguarding for the Society and can be contacted by phone on 01473 922574 or email chair@suffolkpoetrysociety.org. If the chair is away the phone number automatically links to the deputy lead trustee.

1. Purpose of this policy:

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of adults, young people and children at risk of harm or neglect.

This policy defines how Suffolk Poetry Society operates to safeguard adults at risk, young people and children in danger of harm or neglect.

We have a duty of care and are committed to the protection and safety of everyone who comes into contact with it including; adults at risk, young people and children involved as visitors and as participants in all of our activities both at venues and in Zoom sessions. We also have a duty to safeguard and support our Trustees and volunteers.

2. 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

Persons affected

- All members, this includes Trustees and all volunteers
- All visitors and guests

Children and young people are defined as those persons aged under 18 years old.

This policy will apply to all members, Trustees, volunteers and contractors and will be used to support work and contact where children are present.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in *Working Together 2018* as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health and development

- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

3. Safeguarding policy

Suffolk Poetry Society has a zero tolerance approach to abuse. Suffolk Poetry Society 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 also recognises its responsibilities for the safety and care of children under the Children Act 1989 and 2004 and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

It is committed to promoting wellbeing, harm prevention and 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 vulnerable from abuse. Suffolk Poetry Society 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 reporting and 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 of 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.

Suffolk Poetry Society is committed to following the six key adult principles of safeguarding adults, making safeguarding personal, and capacity, consent and decision making. (Appendix 1 for details)

Suffolk Poetry Society is committed to the following principles:

- The welfare of the adult at risk, the young person or the child is paramount.
- All adults, young people and children at risk have the right to protection from abuse.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective every member of Suffolk Poetry Society should play their full part.
- 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 Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership must be shared within Suffolk Poetry Society.
- Staff, contractors and volunteers must be clear on appropriate behaviour and responses. See Appendix 1 for code of conduct.
- Clear reporting procedures are suitably referenced in codes of conduct and Trustees meetings where a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting welfare will be addressed.
- All Trustees are aware of the policy and procedures for the protection of adults at risk , young people and children through appropriate safeguarding discussions, training, supervision and support for Trustees and for creating an environment where members feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in meeting safeguarding concerns.
- All Trustees are given an induction, which includes familiarisation with safeguarding responsibilities and procedures to be followed if anyone has any concerns.

- All Trustees have regular reviews of policies and their own practice to ensure that adults at risk, young people and children at risk, are identified and families informed of concerns.
- A clear line of accountability for the provision of safe services exists with a designated Trustee responsible to flag up Safeguarding issues.
- The Chairperson to take leadership responsibility for Suffolk Poetry Society's safeguarding arrangements.
- Clear policies in line with those from the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership for dealing with allegations against people who threaten adults at risk or who work with children. Such policies should make a clear distinction between an allegation, a concern about the quality of care or practice or a complaint.
- An allegation may relate to a person who lives with an adult or who works with children who has behaved in a way that has harmed, or will harm physically or mentally or who has possibly committed a criminal offence against an adult, young person or a child, or behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

Suffolk Poetry Society will ensure that Trustees and members understand:

- Core legal safeguarding requirements and their responsibility to keep adults at risk, young people and children safe.
- That all members who come into contact with adults at risk, young people and children are alert to their needs and any risks of harm that individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children and adults at risk;
- The requirement to share appropriate information in a timely way and can discuss any concerns about an individual with Trustees and local authority children's and adults social care
- The issues of capacity, consent and decision making in relation to safeguarding adults.
(See Appendix 1)

4. Revision history

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

December 2022 Policy rewritten in line with advice from Suffolk Community Action Network guide policy. Updated with contact details February 2024.

Appendix 1

Key six key principles that underpin safeguarding adults work*

- **Empowerment** – People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and 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

*From Suffolk County Council Safeguarding Adults Policy and Operational Guidance 2015-17

Making Safeguarding Personal

Making Safeguarding Personal is a shift in culture and practice in response to what we now know about what makes safeguarding more or less effective from the perspective of the person being safeguarded. It is about seeing people as experts in their own lives and working alongside them in a way that is consistent with their rights and capacity and that prevents abuse occurring wherever possible.

Safeguarding should be person-led and outcome focused, engaging the adult at risk in a conversation about how best to respond to their safeguarding situation in a way that enhances involvement, choice and control as well as improving quality of life, wellbeing and safety. In most cases this can only happen by making sure people get the care and support that they need. It is also important that the people who care for them also get this support and recognition. Most importantly it is about listening and providing the options that permit individuals to help themselves.

It is also important that all safeguarding partners take a broad community approach to establishing safeguarding arrangements. It is vital that all organisations recognise that Safeguarding Adults arrangements are there to protect individuals, bearing in mind different preferences, histories, circumstances and lifestyles.

In order to evidence that the Safeguarding process is personalised, it is necessary to collect information about the extent to which this shift has a positive impact on people's lives.

Whilst every effort must be made to work with adults experiencing abuse within the present legal framework there will be some occasions on which adults at risk will choose to remain in dangerous situations. It may be that even after careful scrutiny of the legal framework, Trustees will conclude that they have no power to gain access to a particular adult at risk. Trustees may find that they have no power to remove the adult from a situation of risk, investigate the adult's financial affairs, or intervene positively because the adult refuses all help or wants to terminate contact with the Society or any suggested professionals.

It may not always be possible to provide satisfactory solutions. At the age of 18, people are legally entitled to adult status regardless of any disability or impairment they may have. It is, therefore, essential that wherever possible it is the adult at risk who will decide on the chosen course of action, taking into account the impact of the adult at risk's mental capacity where relevant. However, the people and organisations caring for, or assisting them, must do everything they can to identify and prevent abuse happening wherever possible and evidence their efforts.

In these extremely difficult circumstances, Trustees will be expected to continue to exercise as much vigilance as possible.

The designated Safeguarding Trustee will give full support to the Committee over problems when handling cases of adults remaining in high-risk situations, provided that:

- It is evident from case records that Safeguarding Adults procedures have been properly followed;
- Every effort has been made, on a multi-agency basis, to intervene positively to protect the adult at risk;
- Legal advice has been obtained and acted upon

And ultimately that the adult at risk has been fully consulted and involved as far as practicable in every decision relating to their situation.

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.

For full guidance refer to the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership guidance on their website

suffolksp.org.uk