

Amersham United Charities – Safeguarding Policy

1. Purpose

This Safeguarding Policy has been written for Amersham United Charities to provide guidance and procedures for trustees and the Clerk who may come across concerns regarding the safeguarding and protection of residents within the context of their work for the Charity, and to comply with the Charity's Governance Code.

2. Introduction

The Department of Health in its 'No Secrets' 2000 report suggests the following as the main types of abuse:

- **Physical abuse** - including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions.
- **Sexual abuse** - including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, could not consent or was pressured into consenting.
- **Psychological abuse** - including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.
- **Financial or material abuse** - including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- **Neglect and acts of omission** - including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- **Discriminatory abuse** - including race, sex, culture, religion, politics, that is based on a person's disability, age or sexuality and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment and hate crime.
- **Domestic abuse** - Home Office Definition 2004 - 'Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are, or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.'

All forms and types of abuse are unlawful. Perpetrators face prosecution by the Courts in the United Kingdom.

Any allegation of abuse needs to be handled sympathetically and sensitively whilst ensuring that no commitment or agreement, particularly about maintaining confidentiality, is given at the outset. At this stage it is important to take any action necessary so that the complainant is not in direct contact with the alleged abuser and that sensitivity is used when handling the situation.

3. The Policy

The Trustees and the Clerk of the Charity acknowledge that all residents, contractors, volunteers and visitors have the right to a safe and secure environment and respect for their dignity, privacy, independence and individuality.

This Safeguarding Policy has been developed to protect those who live, work and visit the Charity, and to ensure any concerns about physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect, or any other form of abuse, will be dealt with quickly and effectively. As such, all trustees and the Clerk will complete an appropriate Safeguarding Course.

Any resident who feels that he or she is being abused in any manner should immediately contact the nominated Designated Person. The Charity will then accept the responsibility of implementing its policy and procedures, in conjunction with other agencies, to resolve matters. The Designated Person will undertake an initial investigation to establish the facts.

Howard Hughes, a trustee, is appointed by the Board as the Designated Person having responsibility for any safeguarding issues, and can be contacted through the Clerk. If unavailable, the Deputy Designated Person should be informed immediately of any safeguarding issue that has arisen.

4. Procedure to be followed if abuse is suspected

Depending upon the circumstances of the individual case:

- ensure the individual is safe
- if necessary seek medical assistance
- ascertain the basic facts including
 - date, time and place of alleged abuse
 - name of complainant
 - where different, name of person who has allegedly been abused
 - nature of alleged abuse
 - description of any injuries observed
 - account of the incident which has been given
- inform the trustees
- if a complainant requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that they are sensitively advised that this is not possible and that cases of alleged abuse will always be referred to the appropriate agencies.

The designated person will gather information and arrange a meeting between the Clerk and the Chair to establish the facts. A full written record of the meeting will be made.

After considering all the above facts the Designated Person will decide whether the incident should be reported to the Local Authority Safeguarding Department. If the police or other emergency services were called, the incident must be reported to the Local Authority.

Any serious incidents of this nature which are reported to the Local Authority must also be notified to the Charity Commission.

The Designated Person will maintain regular contact with the complainant to offer support and reassurance as necessary.

5. Review:

The Board will review the contents of, and compliance with, this Safeguarding Policy on an annual basis.

6. Approval:

This Safeguarding Policy has been approved by the Board of Amersham United Charities.

4 January 2019