

HOPE BEYOND BORDERS

SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

Last updated	13 July 2026	Next review due	13 July 2027
Authorised by	Board of Trustees	Review frequency	Annually

IF YOU FEEL ANY ADULT IS AT RISK FROM THEMSELVES AND/OR SOMEONE ELSE, CONTACT YOUR LOCAL ADULT SAFEGUARDING TEAM (see Section 13 for details).

IF THEY ARE AT RISK OF HARM TO THE PUBLIC, CALL THE POLICE ON 101, OR 999 IF THE SITUATION IS AN EMERGENCY.

Statement

Hope Beyond Borders is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all vulnerable adults who take part in, benefit from, or are otherwise connected to our activities and services.

1. Aim

- 1.1** The purpose of this policy is to outline the duty and responsibility of staff, volunteers and Trustees working on behalf of Hope Beyond Borders in relation to Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults.
- 1.2** All adults have the right to be safe from harm and must be able to live free from fear of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- 1.3** Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.

2. Objectives

- 2.1** To explain the responsibilities Hope Beyond Borders and its staff, volunteers and Trustees have in respect of vulnerable adult protection.
- 2.2** To provide staff and volunteers with an overview of vulnerable adult protection.
- 2.3** To provide a clear procedure that will be implemented where vulnerable adult protection issues arise.

3. Context

- 3.1** For the purpose of this policy, adult means a person aged 18 years or over.
- 3.2** What do we mean by abuse?
 - 3.2.1** Abuse of a vulnerable adult may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may occur as a result of a failure to undertake action or appropriate care tasks. It may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur where a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which they have not, or cannot, consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the individual.
 - 3.2.2** Concerns about abuse may be raised and reported to the social services agency as a result of a single incident or repeated incidents of abuse. However, for some clients the issues of abuse relate to neglect and poor standards of care. They are ongoing and, if ignored, may result in a severe deterioration in both physical and mental health and even death.

3.2.3 Anyone who has concerns about poor care standards and neglect in a care setting may raise these within Hope Beyond Borders, with the regulatory body and/or with the local social services safeguarding team (see Section 13 for contact details).

3.3 Who is included under the heading 'vulnerable adult'?

3.3.1 An adult (a person aged 18 or over) who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation (Definition adapted from 'No Secrets', March 2000, Department of Health).

3.3.2 This could include people with learning disabilities, mental health problems, older people and people with a physical disability or impairment. It is important to include people whose condition and subsequent vulnerability fluctuates. It may include an individual who may be vulnerable as a consequence of their role as a carer in relation to any of the above.

3.3.3 It may also include victims of domestic abuse, hate crime, homelessness, and anti-social behaviour, as well as asylum seekers, refugees and migrants who may face additional vulnerability due to language barriers, isolation, insecure immigration status, or unfamiliarity with UK systems and services. The person's need for additional support to protect themselves may be increased when complicated by additional factors, such as physical frailty or chronic illness, sensory impairment, challenging behaviour, drug or alcohol problems, social or emotional problems, poverty or homelessness.

3.3.4 Many vulnerable adults may not realise that they are being abused. For instance, an elderly person, accepting that they are dependent on their family, may feel that they must tolerate losing control of their finances or their physical environment. They may be reluctant to assert themselves for fear of upsetting their carers or making the situation worse.

3.3.5 It is important to consider the meaning of 'significant harm'. The Law Commission, in its consultation document 'Who Decides', issued in December 1997, suggested that 'harm' must be taken to include not only ill treatment (including sexual abuse and forms of ill treatment which are not physical), but also the impairment of, or an avoidable deterioration in, physical or mental health, and the impairment of physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.

4. Legal Framework

4.1 Human Rights Act 1998, the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

4.2 Data Protection Act 2018 (and UK GDPR), Freedom of Information Act 2000, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, and the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Code of Practice.

4.3 The Mental Capacity Act 2005, covering England and Wales, provides a statutory framework for people who lack capacity to make decisions for themselves, or who have capacity and want to make preparations for a time when they may lack capacity in the future. It sets out who can take decisions, in which situations, and how they must go about this.

4.4 The Human Rights Act 1998 gives legal effect in the UK to the fundamental rights and freedoms contained in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

4.5 The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA) created a framework for whistle blowing across the private, public and voluntary sectors. The Act provides almost every individual in the workplace with protection from victimisation where they raise genuine concerns about malpractice in accordance with the Act's provisions.

5. The Role of Staff, Volunteers and Trustees

5.1 All staff, volunteers and Trustees working on behalf of Hope Beyond Borders have a duty to promote the welfare and safety of vulnerable adults.

5.2 Staff, volunteers and Trustees may receive disclosures of abuse and observe vulnerable adults who are at risk. This policy will enable staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific adult protection issues.

6. Types of Abuse

6.1 Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological; it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act; or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent.

6.2 Abuse can occur in any relationship and it may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

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

6.3.1 Physical abuse - including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions.

6.3.2 Sexual abuse - including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent, or was pressured into consenting.

6.3.3 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.

6.3.4 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.

6.3.5 Neglect and acts of omission - including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, and the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

6.3.6 Discriminatory abuse - including abuse based on race, sex, culture, religion, politics, disability, age or sexuality, and other forms of harassment, slurs, hate crime or similar treatment.

6.3.7 Institutional abuse - although not a separate category of abuse in itself, this requires specific mention to highlight that adults placed in any kind of care home or day care establishment are potentially vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, particularly where care standards and practices fall below an acceptable level.

6.3.8 Multiple forms of abuse - these may occur in an ongoing relationship or an abusive service setting to one person, or to more than one person at a time, making it important to look beyond single incidents or breaches in standards, to underlying dynamics and patterns of harm. Any or all of these types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent and targeting of vulnerable people, negligence or ignorance.

7. Domestic Abuse

7.1 Home Office definition: 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.

7.2 Women's Aid definition: domestic violence is physical, sexual, psychological or financial violence that takes place within an intimate or family-type relationship and that forms a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour. This can also include forced marriage and so-called honour crimes.

7.3 Domestic violence occurs in all sections of society, irrespective of race, culture, nationality, religion, sexuality, disability, age, class or educational level.

7.4 Both definitions therefore also include incidents where extended family members may condone or share in the pattern of abuse, e.g. forced marriage, female genital mutilation, and crimes rationalised as punishing individuals for bringing 'dishonour' to the family.

7.5 Vulnerable adults may be the victims of domestic abuse themselves, or be affected by it occurring within their household. This is likely to have a serious effect on their physical and mental wellbeing.

7.6 Where vulnerable adults are victims of domestic abuse, they may need extra support to plan their future. Violence or the threat of violence may continue after a victim has separated from the abuser, so it is important to ensure appropriate support is in place to help maintain their personal safety.

8. Children

8.1 It is essential that the needs of any children within an abusive or domestic violence situation involving a vulnerable adult are considered and acted upon. Please contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or the local social services Safeguarding Children's team.

9. Procedure in the Event of a Disclosure

9.1 It is important that vulnerable adults are protected from abuse. All complaints, allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously.

9.2 This procedure must be followed whenever an allegation of abuse is made, or when there is a suspicion that a vulnerable adult has been abused.

9.3 Promises of confidentiality must not be given, as this may conflict with the need to ensure the safety and welfare of the individual.

9.4 A full record shall be made as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and any other relevant information.

9.5 This must include information relating to the date, time and place where the alleged abuse happened, your name and the names of others present, the name of the complainant and, where different, the name of the adult who has allegedly been abused, the nature of the alleged abuse, a description of any injuries observed, and the account given of the allegation.

10. Responding to an Allegation

10.1 Any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead on that working day where possible.

10.2 The nominated member of staff or volunteer shall telephone and report the matter to the appropriate local adult social services duty team. A written record of the date and time of the report shall be made, including the name and position of the person to whom the matter is reported. The telephone report must be confirmed in writing to the relevant local authority adult social services department within 24 hours.

11. Responding Appropriately to an Allegation of Abuse

11.1 In the event of an incident or disclosure:

DO:

- Make sure the individual is safe.
- Assess whether emergency services are required and, if needed, call them.
- Listen.
- Offer support and reassurance.
- Ascertain and establish the basic facts.
- Make careful notes and obtain agreement on them.
- Ensure dates, times and persons present are correctly noted and agreed.
- Take all necessary precautions to preserve forensic evidence.
- Follow the correct procedure.
- Explain areas of confidentiality; speak to your manager immediately for support and guidance.
- Explain the procedure to the individual making the allegation.
- Remember the need for ongoing support.

DON'T:

- Confront the alleged abuser.
- Be judgmental or voice your own opinion.
- Be dismissive of the concern.
- Investigate or interview beyond what is necessary to establish the basic facts.
- Disturb or destroy possible forensic evidence.
- Consult with persons not directly involved with the situation.
- Ask leading questions.
- Assume information.
- Make promises.
- Ignore the allegation.
- Elaborate in your notes.
- Panic.

11.2 It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. This is a task for the professional adult protection agencies, following a referral from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

12. Confidentiality

12.1 Vulnerable adult protection raises issues of confidentiality which must be clearly understood by all.

12.2 Staff, volunteers and Trustees have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of vulnerable adults with other professionals, particularly investigative agencies and adult social services.

12.3 Clear boundaries of confidentiality will be communicated to all.

12.4 All personal information regarding a vulnerable adult will be kept confidential. Written records will be kept in a secure area for a specific time as identified in data protection guidelines. Records will only record details required in the initial contact form.

12.5 If an adult confides in a member of staff or volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that they are told, sensitively, that there is a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies.

12.6 Within that context, the adult must be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it.

12.7 Where possible, consent must be obtained from the adult before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances, obtaining consent may be neither possible nor desirable, as the safety and welfare of the vulnerable adult is the priority.

12.8 Where a disclosure has been made, staff must let the adult know the position regarding their role and what action they will have to take as a result, and must assure the adult that they will keep them informed of any action taken and why. The adult's involvement in the process of sharing information must be fully considered and their wishes and feelings taken into account.

12.9 This policy needs to be read in conjunction with other Hope Beyond Borders policies, including: Confidentiality; Disciplinary and Grievance; Data Protection; Recruitment and Selection; and Working with Children and Young People.

13. The Role of Key Individual Agencies

13.1 Adult Social Services

13.1.1 The Department of Health's 'No Secrets' guidance requires local authorities to develop a framework within which all responsible agencies work together to ensure a coherent policy for the protection of vulnerable adults at risk of abuse.

13.1.2 All local authorities have a Safeguarding Adults Board, which oversees multi-agency work aimed at protecting and safeguarding vulnerable adults, normally comprising representatives from partner organisations able to influence decision-making and resource allocation.

13.2 The Police

13.2.1 The Police play a vital role in safeguarding adults in cases involving alleged criminal acts. It is the responsibility of the police to investigate allegations of crime by preserving and gathering evidence. Where a crime is identified, the police will be the lead agency directing investigations in line with legal and other procedural protocols.

14. Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

14.1 The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead is to deal with all instances involving adult protection that arise within Hope Beyond Borders. They will respond to all vulnerable adult protection concerns and enquiries.

14.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Hope Beyond Borders is Nelly Tenorio.

Should you have any suspicions or concerns relating to Adult Protection, contact Nelly Tenorio: 07462 158368 - nelly.hopebeyondborders@gmail.com

15. Role of Line Manager

15.1 The role of the line manager is to support the member of staff, Trustee or volunteer involved with the incident and to ensure the correct procedures are followed.

15.2 The line manager could, if agreed with the staff member dealing with the incident, make contact with the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the first instance.

15.3 The line manager must ensure that all staff and volunteers within their team are familiar with Hope Beyond Borders' vulnerable adult protection procedures and undertake training where appropriate.

16. Training

16.1 Training will be provided, as appropriate, to ensure that staff and volunteers are aware of these procedures. Specialist training will be provided for the member of staff with vulnerable adult protection responsibilities.

17. Complaints Procedure

17.1 Hope Beyond Borders has a complaints procedure available to all staff, volunteers and Trustees.

18. Recruitment Procedure

18.1 Hope Beyond Borders operates procedures that take account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable adults, including arrangements for appropriate checks on new staff, volunteers and Trustees where applicable.

19. Trustees

This policy has been agreed and is overseen by the Board of Trustees of Hope Beyond Borders:

Name	Role
Katalina Sanchez	Trustee
Lisette Moreno	Trustee
Nelly Tenorio	Trustee / Designated Safeguarding Lead

20. Review

20.1 This policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees, or sooner if there is a change in legislation or guidance.

Approval

Agreed by Hope Beyond Borders Board of Trustees	
Signature	Date
Katalina Sanchez	13 July 2026
Trustee	Katalina sanchez

Appendix A: Initial Cause for Concern Form

This form must be discussed with your Line Manager / Safeguarding Lead or a member of the Senior Management Team within 48 hours. If out of hours, inform the on-call manager or director, who will in turn inform a member of the senior management team.

Date	
Time	
Name of individual the concern is about	
Age (if known)	
Address (if known)	
Describe your concern and action taken	
Observations to support cause for concern	
Description and location of any visible marks, bruising, etc.	
Name of alleged abuser, and relationship to the individual (if known)	
Name of person completing form	
Signature	
Name of Line Manager	
Signature / Date	
Name of Safeguarding Lead or Senior Manager	
Signature / Date	

Appendix B: Adult Safeguarding Reporting Details

In an emergency, or if you are worried that someone is in immediate danger, always call the Police on 999.

Gateshead:

Raise a safeguarding adults concern online at gatesheadsafeguarding.org.uk, or contact Adult Social Care Direct on 0191 433 7033, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

For safeguarding queries (not to report a concern), email safeguardingduty@gateshead.gov.uk. Safeguarding Adults Duty operates 9am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday.

Newcastle:

All safeguarding concerns about an adult (someone aged 18 or over) are reported to Adult Social Care at Newcastle City Council. Professionals can complete the online referral form or download the Safeguarding Adults Initial Enquiry Form via newcastlesafeguarding.org.uk.

Sunderland:

Adults Safeguarding can be contacted by telephone on 0191 561 8934 or 0191 561 8936 (8.30am to 5.15pm Monday to Thursday, 8.30am to 4.45pm Friday). Outside these hours, contact Health and Wellbeing via sunderland.gov.uk.

For all other areas, contact the relevant local authority's Adult Social Care / Safeguarding Adults team, or your Designated Safeguarding Lead, Nelly Tenorio (07462 158368 / nelly.hopebeyondborders@gmail.com), for guidance on the correct reporting route.