BIRCH Network Adult Safeguarding Policy

Last updated	November 2026
Review Date	November 2027

Introduction

BIRCH Network is committed to Safeguarding Adults in line with national legislation and relevant national and local guidelines.

We will safeguard adults by ensuring that our activities are delivered in a way which keeps all adults safe.

BIRCH Network is committed to creating a culture of zero-tolerance of harm to adults which necessitates: the recognition of adults who may be at risk and the circumstances which may increase risk; knowing how adult abuse, exploitation or neglect manifests itself; and being willing to report safeguarding concerns.

This extends to recognising and reporting harm experienced anywhere, including within our activities, within other organised community or voluntary activities, in the community, in the person's own home and in any community setting.

BIRCH Network is committed to best safeguarding practice and to uphold the rights of all adults to live a life free from harm from abuse, exploitation and neglect.

Policy Statement

BIRCH Network believes everyone has the right to live free from abuse or neglect regardless of age, ability or disability, sex, race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital or gender status.

BIRCH Network is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment and an open, listening culture where people feel able to share concerns without fear of retribution.

BIRCH Network acknowledges that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and is committed to prevent abuse and neglect through safeguarding the welfare of all adults involved.

BIRCH Network recognises that health, well-being, ability, disability and need for care and support can affect a person's resilience. We recognise that some people experience barriers, for example, to communication in raising concerns or seeking help. We recognise that these factors can vary at different points in people's lives.

BIRCH Network recognises that there is a legal framework within which charities need to work to safeguard adults who have needs for care and support and for protecting those who are unable to take action to protect themselves and will act in accordance with the relevant safeguarding adult legislation and with local statutory safeguarding procedures.

Actions taken by BIRCH Network will be consistent with the principles of adult safeguarding ensuring that any action taken is prompt, proportionate and that it includes and respects the voice of the adult concerned.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Joy Robinson. They have lead responsibility and management oversight and accountability for adult protection and, with the deputy DSL will be responsible for coordinating all safeguarding and adult protection activity.

The deputy DSL, Helen Hibberd will support the DSL within the role and deputise when the DSL is not available.

Contact details:

Safeguarding Lead: Joy Robinson
Tel: 07816587522
Email: joy@BIRCHnetwork.org

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Helen Hibberd
Tel: 07834805276
Email: helen@BIRCHnetwork.org

Trustee Safeguarding Lead: Andrew Jolly
Tel: 07580274638
Email: a.jolly.1@bham.ac.uk

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the commitment of BIRCH Network to safeguarding adults and to ensure that everyone involved in BIRCH Network is aware of:

- The legislation, policy and procedures for safeguarding adults.
- Their role and responsibility for safeguarding adults.
- What to do or who to speak to if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of an adult within the organisation.

Scope

This safeguarding adult policy and associated procedures apply to all individuals involved in BIRCH Network including trustees, volunteers and partner agencies and to all concerns about the safety of adults whilst taking part in our organisation, its activities and in the wider community.

We expect our partner organisations to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice as set out in this Safeguarding Adults Policy and associated procedures.

Commitments

In order to implement this policy BIRCH Network will ensure that:

- Everyone involved with BIRCH Network is aware of the safeguarding adult procedures and knows what to do and who to contact if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of an adult.

- Any concern that an adult is not safe is taken seriously, responded to promptly, and followed up in line with BIRCH Network Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures.

- The well-being of those at risk of harm will be put first and the adult actively supported to communicate their views and the outcomes they want to achieve.

- Any actions taken will respect the rights and dignity of all those involved and be proportionate to the risk of harm.

- Confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored in line with our Data Protection Policy and Procedures

- BIRCH Network will cooperate with the Police and the relevant Local Authorities in taking action to safeguard an adult.

- All Board members, staff, officials and volunteers understand their role and responsibility for safeguarding adults and have completed and are up to date with safeguarding adult training and learning opportunities appropriate for their role.

- BIRCH Network uses safe recruitment practices and continually assesses the suitability of volunteers and staff to prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals in this organisation.

- BIRCH Network shares information about anyone found to be a risk to other individuals with the appropriate bodies. For example: Disclosure and Barring Service, Services, Police, Local Authority/Social Services.

- When planning activities and events BIRCH Network includes an assessment of, and risk to, the safety of all adults from abuse and neglect and designates a person who will be in attendance as a safeguarding lead for that event.

- Actions taken under this policy are reviewed by the project staff and trustees on an annual basis.

Implementation

BIRCH Network is committed to developing and maintaining its capability to implement this policy and procedures.
In order to do so the following will be in place:

- A clear line of accountability within the organisation for the safety and welfare of all adults.
- Safeguarding adult procedures that deal effectively with any concerns of abuse or neglect, including those caused through poor practice.
- Arrangements to work effectively with other relevant organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of adults, including arrangements for sharing information.
- Codes of conduct for trustees, Staff, Volunteers and other relevant individuals that specify zero tolerance of abuse in any form.
- Risk assessments that specifically include safeguarding of adult

Key Points

- There is a **legal duty on Local Authorities** to provide support to 'adults at risk'.
- **Adults at risk** are defined in legislation.
- The safeguarding legislation applies **to all forms of abuse** that harm a person's well-being.
- The law provides a framework for good practice in safeguarding that makes the overall **well-being** of the adult at risk a priority of any intervention.

Safeguarding Adults Legislation

Safeguarding Adults in all home nations is compliant with United Nations directives on the rights of disabled people and commitments to the rights of older people. It is covered by:

- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulations 2018

The practices and procedures within this policy are based on the relevant legislation and government guidance.

- England - The Care Act 2014
  Care and Support Statutory Guidance (especially chapter 14) 2014

Many other pieces of UK and home nation legislation also affect adult safeguarding.
These include legislation about different forms of abuse and those that govern information sharing. For example, legislation dealing with:

- Murder/attempted murder
- Physical Assault
- Sexual Offences
- Domestic Abuse/Coercive control
- Forced Marriage
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Theft and Fraud
- Modern slavery and Human exploitation
- Hate crime
- Harassment
- Listing and Barring of those unsuitable to work with adults with care and support needs

Definition of an Adult at Risk

The Safeguarding Adults legislation creates specific responsibilities on Local Authorities, Health, and the Police to provide additional protection from abuse and neglect to Adults at Risk.

When a Local Authority has reason to believe there is an adult at risk, they have a responsibility to find out more about the situation and decide what actions need to be taken to support the adult. In Scotland and Wales, the Local Authority can gain access to an adult to find out if they are at risk of harm for example, if that access is being blocked by another person.

An Adult at risk is:

England (Care Act 2014)
An **adult at risk** is an individual aged 18 years and over who: ● has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) AND; ● is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect, AND;

- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

Abuse and Neglect

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons. It can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it. Any or all of the following types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence, omission or ignorance.

There are different types and patterns of abuse and neglect and different circumstances in which they may take place:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional/Psychological/Mental
- Neglect and acts of Omission
- Financial or material abuse
- Discriminatory
- Organisational / Institutional
- Self-neglect
- Domestic Abuse (including coercive control)
- Modern slavery

Abuse can take place in any relationship and there are many contexts in which abuse might take place; e.g. Institutional abuse, Domestic Abuse, Forced Marriage, Human Trafficking, Modern Slavery, Sexual Exploitation, County Lines, Radicalisation, Hate Crime, Mate Crime, Cyber bullying, Scams.

Abuse or neglect could be carried out by:

- A spouse, partner or family member
- Neighbours or residents
- Friends, acquaintances or strangers
- People who deliberately exploit adults they perceive as vulnerable
- Paid staff, professionals or volunteers providing care and support

Often the perpetrator is known to the adult and may be in a position of trust and/or power.

Recording and Information Sharing

All charities must comply with the Data Protection Act (DPA) and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Sharing information, with the right people, is central to good practice in safeguarding adults. However, information sharing must only ever be with those with a 'need to know'.
This does **NOT** automatically include the persons spouse, partner, adult, child, unpaid or paid carer. Information should only be shared with family and friends and/or carers with the consent of the adult or if the adult does not have capacity to make that decision and family/ friends/ carers need to know in order to help keep the person safe.

The purpose of Data Protection legislation is not to prevent information sharing but to ensure personal information is only shared appropriately. Data protection legislation allows information sharing within an organisation. For example:

- Anyone who has a concern about harm can make a report to an appropriate person within the same organisation
- Case management meetings can take place to agree to co-ordinate actions by the organisation

There are also many situations in which it is perfectly legal to share information about adult safeguarding concerns outside the organisation. Importantly personal information can be shared with the consent of the adult concerned. However, the adult may not always want information to be shared. This may be because they fear repercussions from the person causing harm or are scared that they will lose control of their situation to statutory bodies or because they feel stupid or embarrassed. Their wishes should be respected unless there are over-riding reasons for sharing information.

The circumstances when we need to share information without the adult's consent include those where:

- it is not safe to contact the adult to gain their consent – i.e. it might put them or the person making contact at further risk.
- you believe they or someone else is at risk, including children.
- you believe the adult is being coerced or is under duress.
- it is necessary to contact the police to prevent a crime, or to report that a serious crime has been committed.
- the adult does not have mental capacity to consent to information being shared about them.
- the person causing harm has care and support needs.
- the concerns are about an adult at risk living in Wales or Northern Ireland (where there is a duty to report to the Local Authority).

When information is shared without the consent of the adult this must be explained to them, when it is safe to do so, and any further actions should still fully include them.

If you are in doubt as to whether to share information seek advice e.g. seek legal advice and/or contact the Local Authority and explain the situation without giving personal details about the person at risk or the person causing harm.

Any decision to share or not to share information with an external person or organisation must be recorded together with the reasons to share or not share information.

Multi-Agency Working

Safeguarding adults' legislation gives the lead role for adult safeguarding to the Local Authority. However, it is recognised that safeguarding can involve a wide range of organisations.

BIRCH Network may need to cooperate with the Local Authority and the Police including to:

- Provide more information about the concern you have raised.
- Provide a safe venue for the adult to meet with other professionals e.g. Police/Social Workers/Advocates.
- Attend safeguarding meetings.
- Coordinate internal investigations (e.g. complaints, disciplinary) with investigations by the police or other agencies.
- Share information about the outcomes of internal investigations.
- Provide a safe environment for the adult to continue their sporting activity/ their role in the organisation.

Responding to an allegation about a member of staff

See also Birmingham Safeguarding Adult Board Procedures on Allegations against Staff and Volunteers.

This procedure should be used in any case in which it is alleged that a member of staff, member of the Steering Group, Trustee, volunteer or visiting professional has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child/young person or may have harmed an adult;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to an adult; or
- Behaved in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with adults.

Although it is an uncomfortable thought, it needs to be acknowledged that there is the potential for staff and volunteers in Birmingham Community Hosting Network to abuse adults.

All staff and volunteers working within our organisation must report any potential safeguarding concerns about an individual's behaviour towards adults immediately.

- Allegations or concerns about staff, volunteers and visitors must be reported direct to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will liaise with Birmingham City Council's Designated Officer (LADO) Team in adult's social care who will decide on any action required.

- If the concern relates to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, it must be reported to the Birmingham City Council's LADO team and they will decide on any action required.

- If the safeguarding concern relates to the proprietor of the building then the concern must be made directly to the Birmingham City Council's LADO team who will decide on any action required.

The Key Procedures: Initiating safeguarding and adult protection

Reporting concerns - What we do when we are concerned about an adult

If volunteers have any safeguarding concerns about any service users, they should in the first instance, discuss these concerns with their project lead - unless there is an immediate threat or risk to life, then they should follow the **Immediate Action to Ensure Safety** guidelines below. If they are not able to contact a project lead, then they should contact one of the Designated safeguarding leads. See APPENDIX 2 on **Dealing with a disclosure of abuse.** Project staff will then assess the situation and use the flow chart below to decide how to respond.

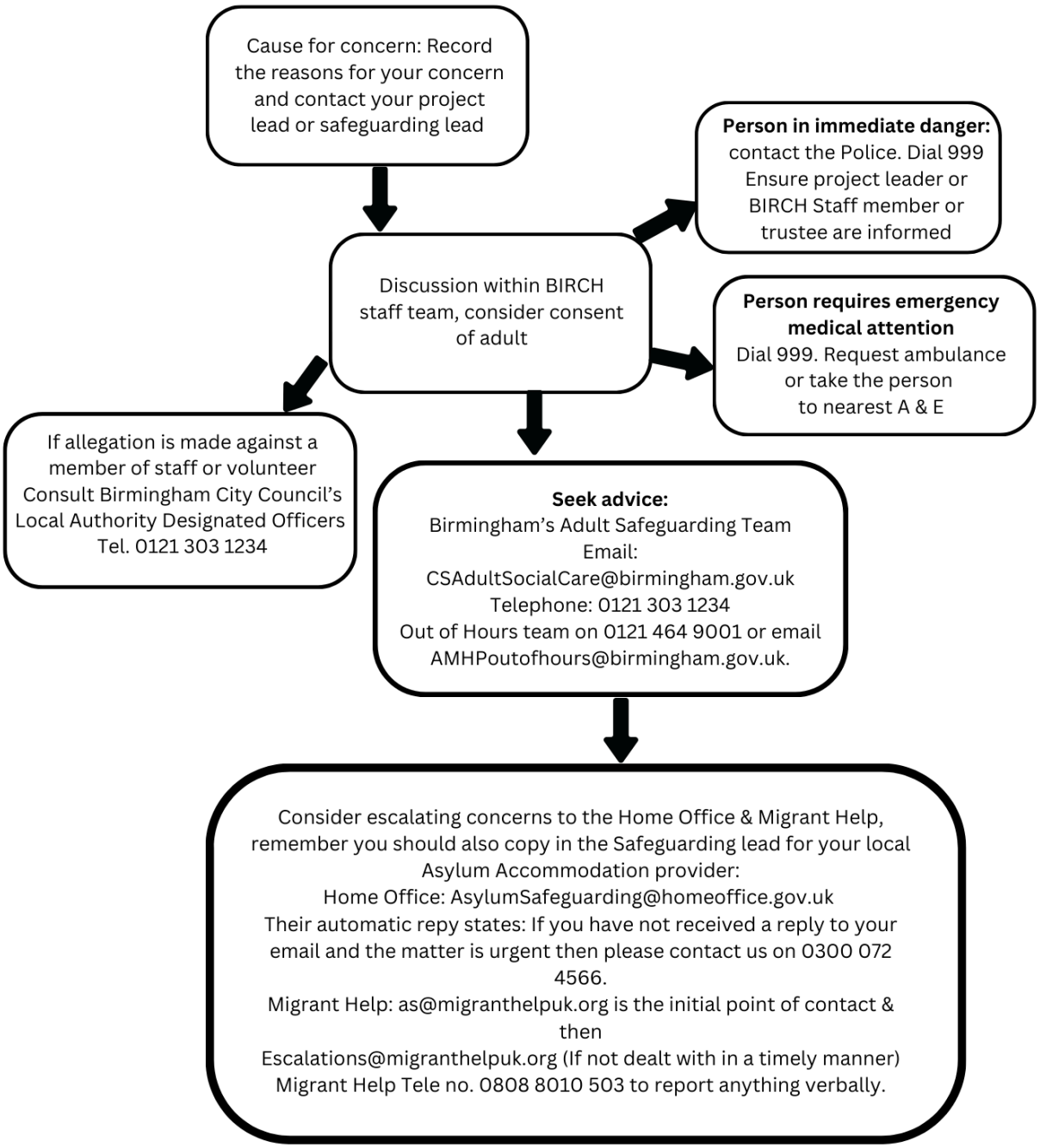
In the case of an emergency, volunteers should alert project leads or safeguarding staff as soon as is practically possible.

If staff have safeguarding concerns, they must also assess if they need to take **Immediate Action to Ensure Safety** and if this is not necessary, can decide to discuss the safeguarding concern with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or take responsibility for actioning and appropriate follow on or referrals. They will keep records of these decisions, any actions taken and outcome, via case records and in our database. Any referrals which include the risk to public or any reputational risk to the charity (see Serious Incidents Policy) need to discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Leads and brought to the attention of the trustees for review. These incidents could include:

- Serious harm to the people the charity helps or other people who come into contact with the charity through its work.
- A charity not following the law, which significantly damages its reputation and public trust in charities generally.

If a serious incident is reported to the trustees, the Serious Incidents Policies and Procedures must be followed.

Reporting concerns - What we do when we are concerned about an adult



Immediate Action to Ensure Safety

Immediate action may be necessary at any stage in involvement with adults

In all cases it is vital to take whatever action is needed to safeguard the adult

- If an adult is in immediate danger the police should be contacted in the first instance. Dial 999; as they alone have the power to remove a child immediately if protection is necessary, via Police Protection Order.
- If emergency medical attention is required, this can be secured by calling an ambulance (dial 999) or taking the adult to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department.
- Adult Social Care Services 0121 303 1234 should be contacted in all cases of immediate concern for an adult

Consulting about your concern

- The purpose of consultation is to discuss your concerns in relation to an adult and decide what action is necessary.

- You may become concerned about an adult who has not spoken to you, because of your observations of, or information about that adult

- It is good practice to ask a adult why they are upset or how a cut or bruise was caused; or respond to a adult wanting to talk to you. This practice can help clarify vague concerns and result in appropriate action.

- If you are concerned about a adult you must share your concerns. Initially you should talk to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy DSL in Birmingham Community Hosting Network. If one of those people is implicated in the concerns, you should discuss your concerns directly with Birmingham City Council's LADO team (see Responding to Allegations Made Against Staff or Volunteers below and Appendix 3).

You can consult externally with Adult Social Care Services in the following circumstances:

1. when you remain unsure after internal consultation as to whether child protection concerns exist
2. when there is disagreement as to whether child protection concerns exist
3. when you are unable to consult promptly or at all with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy DSL for child protection
4. when the concerns relate to any member of the organising committee.

Consultation is not the same as making a referral, **providing no identifying information is given on the persons involved**.

Consultation should enable a decision to be made as to whether a referral to Adult Social Care Services or the Police should progress.

Making a referral

A referral involves giving adult social care or the Police information about concerns relating to an individual or family in order that enquiries can be undertaken by the appropriate agency followed by any necessary action.

In certain cases, the level of concern will lead straight to a referral without external consultation being necessary.

If your concern is about abuse or risk of abuse from a family member or someone known to the adult, you should make a telephone referral to Birmingham City Council's Children's Advice Support Service (CASS), Telephone: 0121 303 1888.

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Information required

Be prepared to give as much of the following information as possible (in emergency situations some of this information may not be available). Unavailability of some information should not stop you making a referral:

- Your name, telephone number, position and request the same of the person to whom you are speaking (if Police, request their badge number).
- Full name and address, telephone number of family, date of birth of child and siblings.
- Gender, ethnicity, first language, any special needs.
- Names, dates of birth and relationship of household members and any significant others.
- The names of professionals' known to be involved with the child/family eg: GP, Health Visitor, School.
- The nature of the concern; and foundation for them.
- An opinion on whether the child may need urgent action to make them safe.
- Your view of what appears to be the needs of the child and family.
- Whether the consent of a parent with parental responsibility has been given to the referral being made.

Action to be taken following a safeguarding referral

- Ensure that you keep an accurate record of your concern(s) made at the time
- Put your concerns in writing to Adult Social Care Services following the referral (within 24 hours).
- Accurately record the action agreed or that no further action is to be taken and the reasons for this decision.

Confidentiality

The organisation should ensure that any records made in relation to a referral should be kept confidentially and in a secure place.

If in doubt, consult.

Multi-agency work

We work in partnership with other agencies to promote the best interests of the children and young people we support. Partnership working is a priority in all decisions and actions that affect our client group. Birmingham Community Hosting Network will, where necessary, liaise with these agencies and make requests for support from children's social care. These requests will be made by the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a paid member of staff to theAdult Social Care Services

We will co-operate with any child protection enquiries conducted by children's social care: Birmingham Community Hosting Network will ensure representation at appropriate inter-agency meetings such as integrated support plan meetings initial and review child protection conferences, and core group meetings.

We will provide a report as required for these meetings. If Birmingham Community Hosting Network is unable to attend, a written report will be sent toAdult Social Care Services

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Different forms of abuse and the signs

Evidence of any one indicator from the following lists should not be taken on its own as proof that abuse is occurring. However, it should alert practitioners to make further assessments and to consider other associated factors. The lists of possible indicators and examples of behaviour are not exhaustive and people may be subject to a number of abuse types at the same time.

Types of physical abuse

- Assault, hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, hair-pulling, biting, pushing
- Rough handling
- Scalding and burning
- Physical punishments
- Inappropriate or unlawful use of restraint
- Making someone purposefully uncomfortable (e.g. opening a window and removing blankets)
- Involuntary isolation or confinement
- Misuse of medication (e.g. over-sedation)
- Forcible feeding or withholding food
- Unauthorised restraint, restricting movement (e.g. tying someone to a chair)

Types of domestic violence or abuse

Domestic violence or abuse can be characterised by any of the indicators of abuse outlined in this briefing relating to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional.

Types of sexual abuse

Rape, attempted rape or sexual assault
Inappropriate touch anywhere
Non- consensual masturbation of either or both persons
Non- consensual sexual penetration or attempted penetration of the vagina, anus or mouth
Any sexual activity that the person lacks the capacity to consent to
Inappropriate looking, sexual teasing or innuendo or sexual harassment
Sexual photography or forced use of pornography or witnessing of sexual acts
Indecent exposure

Types of psychological or emotional abuse

- Enforced social isolation – preventing someone accessing services, educational and social opportunities and seeing friends
- Removing mobility or communication aids or intentionally leaving someone unattended when they need assistance
- Preventing someone from meeting their religious and cultural needs
- Preventing the expression of choice and opinion
- Failure to respect privacy

- Preventing stimulation, meaningful occupation or activities
- Intimidation, coercion, harassment, use of threats, humiliation, bullying, swearing or verbal abuse
- Addressing a person in a patronising or infantilising way
- Threats of harm or abandonment
- Cyber bullying

Types of financial or material abuse

- Theft of money or possessions
- Fraud, scamming
- Preventing a person from accessing their own money, benefits or assets
- Employees taking a loan from a person using the service
- Undue pressure, duress, threat or undue influence put on the person in connection with loans, wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions
- Arranging less care than is needed to save money to maximise inheritance
- Denying assistance to manage/monitor financial affairs
- Denying assistance to access benefits
- Misuse of personal allowance in a care home
- Misuse of benefits or direct payments in a family home
- Someone moving into a person's home and living rent free without agreement or under duress
- False representation, using another person's bank account, cards or documents
- Exploitation of a person's money or assets, e.g. unauthorised use of a car
- Misuse of a power of attorney, deputy, appointeeship or other legal authority
- Rogue trading – e.g. unnecessary or overpriced property repairs and failure to carry out agreed repairs or poor workmanship

Types of modern slavery

- Human trafficking
- Forced labour
- Domestic servitude
- Sexual exploitation, such as escort work, prostitution and pornography
- Debt bondage – being forced to work to pay off debts that realistically they never will be able to

Types of discriminatory abuse

- Unequal treatment based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation (known as 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010)
- Verbal abuse, derogatory remarks or inappropriate use of language related to a protected characteristic
- Denying access to communication aids, not allowing access to an interpreter, signer or lip-reader
- Harassment or deliberate exclusion on the grounds of a protected characteristic
- Denying basic rights to healthcare, education, employment and criminal justice relating to a protected characteristic
- Substandard service provision relating to a protected characteristic

Types of organisational or institutional abuse

- Discouraging visits or the involvement of relatives or friends
- Run-down or overcrowded establishment
- Authoritarian management or rigid regimes

- Lack of leadership and supervision
- Insufficient staff or high turnover resulting in poor quality care
- Abusive and disrespectful attitudes towards people using the service
- Inappropriate use of restraints
- Lack of respect for dignity and privacy
- Failure to manage residents with abusive behaviour
- Not providing adequate food and drink, or assistance with eating
- Not offering choice or promoting independence
- Misuse of medication
- Failure to provide care with dentures, spectacles or hearing aids
- Not taking account of individuals' cultural, religious or ethnic needs
- Failure to respond to abuse appropriately
- Interference with personal correspondence or communication
- Failure to respond to complaints

Types of neglect and acts of omission

- Failure to provide or allow access to food, shelter, clothing, heating, stimulation and activity, personal or medical care
- Providing care in a way that the person dislikes
- Failure to administer medication as prescribed
- Refusal of access to visitors
- Not taking account of individuals' cultural, religious or ethnic needs
- Not taking account of educational, social and recreational needs
- Ignoring or isolating the person
- Preventing the person from making their own decisions
- Preventing access to glasses, hearing aids, dentures, etc.
- Failure to ensure privacy and dignity
- Signs and indicators

Types of self-neglect

- Lack of self-care to an extent that it threatens personal health and safety
- Neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings
- Inability to avoid self-harm
- Failure to seek help or access services to meet health and social care needs
- Inability or unwillingness to manage one's personal affairs

APPENDIX 2

Dealing with a disclosure of abuse

Staff and volunteers at Birmingham Community Hosting Network need to be alert to the potential abuse of adults both within their families/care systems and also from other sources including abuse by members of the organisation.

Staff and volunteers at Birmingham Community Hosting Network should know how to recognise and act upon indicators of abuse or potential abuse involving adults. There is an expected responsibility for all members of the organisation to respond to any suspected or actual abuse of an adult in accordance with these procedures.

- *When an adult tells me about abuse s/he has suffered, what must I remember?*

1. Stay calm.
2. Do not communicate shock, anger or embarrassment.
3. Reassure the person. Tell her/him you are pleased that s/he is speaking to you.
4. Never enter into a pact of secrecy with the person. Assure her/him that you will try to help but let the person know that you will have to tell other people in order to do this. State who this will be and why.
5. Tell the person that it is not her/his fault.
6. Encourage the person to talk but do not ask "leading questions" or press for information.
7. Listen and remember.
8. Check that you have understood correctly what the adult is trying to tell you.
9. Praise the adult for telling you. Communicate that s/he has a right to be safe and protected.
10. It is inappropriate to make any comments about the alleged offender.
11. Be aware that the adult may retract what s/he has told you. It is essential to record all you have heard.
12. At the end of the conversation, tell the adult again who you are going to tell and why that person or those people need to know.
13. As soon as you can afterwards, make a detailed record of the conversation using the child or young person's own language. Include any questions you may have asked. Do not add any opinions or interpretations.
14. If the disclosure relates to a physical injury do not photograph the injury. Instead, record in writing as much detail as possible.

NB It is not staff and volunteer's role to seek disclosures. Their role is to observe that something may be wrong, ask about it, listen, be available and try to make time to talk.

- *Immediately afterwards*
    - You must not deal with this yourself. Clear indications or disclosure of abuse must be reported to Adults social care without delay, by a member of staff or the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Listening to and supporting anyone who has been abused can be traumatic for the adults involved. Support for you will be available from your Designated Safeguarding Lead or staff member.

APPENDIX 3

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND ADULTS SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

Birmingham Community Hosting (BIRCH) Network

The following statement was agreed by the organisation and updated September 2025

1. This organisation is committed to the safeguarding of children and adults with care and support needs and ensuring their well-being.
2. We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent harm or abuse to children and adults with care and support needs in all their recognised forms.
3. We recognise the personal dignity and rights of adults and children and will ensure all our policies and procedures will reflect this.
4. We believe all people should enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of the organisation.
5. We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of those who will work with children and adults with care and support needs.
6. We believe every child and adult should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that all those we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are experiencing significant harm.

We are committed to:

1. Following statutory denominational and specialist guidelines in relation to safeguarding children and adults and will ensure that as an organisation all workers will work within the agreed procedure of our safeguarding policy.
2. Implementing the requirements of all relevant legislation including, but not limited to; Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005, Equality Act 2010 and referring concerns about adults with care and support needs to the local authority under the Care Act 2014. (Please amend this list for appropriate legislation in N. Ireland and Scotland)
3. Supporting, resourcing and training those who undertake this work.
4. Ensuring that we are keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.
5. Ensuring that everyone agrees to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by this organisation.
6. Supporting all in the organisation affected by abuse.

We recognise:

1. Children's Social Services has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child. Adult Social Care has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about an adult with care and support needs.
2. Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
3. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

We will review this statement and our policy annually.

If you have any concerns for a child or adult, then speak to one of the following who have been approved as safeguarding co-ordinators for this organisation.

Safeguarding Lead: Joy Robinson Tel: 07816587522 Email: joy@birchnetwork.org

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Helen Hibberd Tel:07376600423 Email: helen@birchnetwork.org

A copy of this organisation's policy can be seen www.birchnetwork.org/policies