

The Chatty Café Scheme



Safeguarding Policy

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Introduction

The Chatty Café Scheme makes a positive contribution to a strong and safe community and recognises the right of every individual to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. This policy seeks to ensure that The Chatty Café Scheme undertakes its responsibilities with regards to protection of vulnerable adults and will respond to concerns appropriately. This policy establishes a framework to support paid and unpaid staff in their practices and clarifies the organisation's expectations.

Safeguarding Statement

Everyone at The Chatty Café Scheme including volunteers, staff and Board members understand that at times the people who are referred to us from social prescribers, and the people who engage with our service at the Chatter & Natter tables, might need protecting from harm, abuse, exploitation or neglect. We believe that our organisation has a responsibility for safeguarding the people we work with and each other as a team.

We want to be proactive and responsive towards safeguarding concerns and therefore work closely with volunteers, staff and board members to ensure mandatory Safeguarding training is completed thus creating a collaborative and standardised approach to recognising, recording and reporting concerns relating to abuse or neglect.

Reporting

The Chatty Café Scheme offers two volunteering roles; Chatty Telephone Volunteer and Chatty Table Volunteer. Due to the nature of the roles, how concerns are to be reported is different for each role.

Appendix 2 explains how to report a safeguarding concern depending on whether you are a Chatty Telephone Volunteer or Chatty Table Volunteer.

It is important to note that The Local Authority has the lead role in relation to adult safeguarding. The Care Act 2014 states that each Local Authority has a duty to safeguard adults in that area (whether or not ordinarily resident there) if there is reasonable cause to suspect abuse or neglect.

Everyone at The Chatty Café Scheme including volunteers, staff and Board members can act as 'alerters' and notify The Chatty Café Scheme's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – see below) if they suspect abuse and neglect. The Chatty Café's DSL will then notify the relevant Local Authority's Adult Safeguarding Team who will assess the concern to determine if a safeguarding enquiry is needed. It is not the responsibility of The Chatty Café Scheme to lead on the investigation of the safeguarding concern, this is the duty of the relevant Local Authority.

How to Respond to a Concern

What you should do if someone discloses abuse to you:

- React calmly – do not show shock or disbelief
- Reassure the person that they were right to share the information
- Keep questions to an absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.

- Do not start to investigate by asking probing or leading questions
- Ensure you follow the steps outlined in Appendix 2, depending on the type of volunteering role you are carrying out (Chatty Telephone or Chatty Table Volunteer).

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Name: Jenny Bimpson

Email: jenny@thechattycafescheme.co.uk

Tel: 07465 966597

Please remember you do not need to investigate or solve the concern yourself. If a beneficiary, member of the public, volunteer, family member, carer or venue member of staff raises a concern, please follow the steps outlined in Appendix 2 and contact the Chatty Café Scheme's DSL (see above). Our trained staff will then follow our safeguarding procedure and take the necessary steps to ensure the person in question is protected from harm and feels safe.

The Six Safeguarding Principles

The Care Act 2014 sets out the following principles that should underpin the safeguarding of adults.

1. **Empowerment** - People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent
2. **Prevention** - It is better to take action before harm occurs
3. **Proportionality** - The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented
4. **Protection** - Support and representation for those in greatest need.
5. **Partnership** - Local solutions through services working with their communities
6. **Accountability** - Accountable and transparent in delivering safeguarding

The **Aims** of Safeguarding Adults is to:

- Prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs
- Stop abuse or neglect wherever possible
- Safeguard adults in a way that makes safeguarding personal* and supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live
- Promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults concerned
- Raise awareness so that communities as a whole, alongside professionals, play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect
- Provide information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or well-being of an adult

*Making Safeguarding Personal means a case should be person-led and outcome-focused. The individual should be involved in identifying how best to respond to their safeguarding situation by giving them more choice and control as well as improving quality of life, wellbeing and safety.

Definition of an Adult at Risk

Anyone aged 18 years or over who 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 themselves, unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

This may include a person who:

- Is elderly and frail
- Has a mental illness including dementia
- Has a physical or sensory disability
- Has a learning disability
- Has a severe physical illness
- Has a history of substance misuse
- Is homeless

Definitions of Abuse and Neglect

There are many types and forms of abuse and neglect. The following link includes statutory guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance#safeguarding-1>

Please refer to Appendix 3 for a more detailed description for the different types of abuse listed below:

- Physical abuse
- Domestic violence
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Modern slavery
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Self-neglect

Most cases of abuse and neglect are by a person(s) that the victim knows, often in a position of power and trust. Anyone can perpetrate abuse or neglect, including:

- Spouses/partners
- Extended family members
- Neighbours
- Friends
- Acquaintances
- Local residents
- People who deliberately exploit adults they perceive as vulnerable to abuse
- Paid staff such as, cleaners, gardeners, contractors, volunteers including Carer's
- Strangers

Training and Support for Volunteers and Staff

The Chatty Café Scheme will promote awareness of Adult Safeguarding concerns, to its Directors, Staff, Volunteers, broader membership and services users. Staff and Volunteers, all receive a mandatory module of Adult Safeguarding training appropriate to their role.

All telephone volunteers and table volunteers must watch safeguarding refresher training every 12 months.

For all Chatty Café Scheme staff who are working or volunteering with adults at risk, we require them as a minimum to have awareness training that enables them to:

- Understand what safeguarding is and their role in Safeguarding Adults
- Recognise an adult who may be at risk from, harm; abuse; exploitation; or neglect
- Understand the procedures for reporting a safeguarding concern
- Understand dignity and respect when working with individuals
- Have knowledge of policy, procedures and legislation that supports safeguarding adults

Management & Support of Paid Staff & Volunteers

The Chatty Café Scheme has the following in place for managing its staff and volunteers:

- All staff and volunteers are provided with a job description (paid staff) or a role profile (volunteers) outlining their main responsibilities. This includes a requirement to comply with the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and Code of Conduct
- All paid staff and volunteers receive an onboarding induction
- All paid staff are given supervision by their line manager
- All volunteers are offered support with a volunteer supervisor or Volunteer Manager and contact details to contact The Chatty Café Scheme's DSL
- All paid staff and volunteers attend regular ongoing safeguarding training appropriate to their role

All of the organisation's policies and procedures are accessible via the following website:
www.chattycafescheme.co.uk

We recognise that involvement in situations where there is risk or actual harm can be stressful for staff and volunteers.

The mechanisms in place to support staff include:

- A debrief with the DSL after a report of concern or incident so that they can reflect on the issues they have dealt with.

The Board of Directors recognise their duty to oversee this Safeguarding Policy and engage with the DSL in identifying best practice on safeguarding. The DSL has the responsibility to ensure:

- The policy is accessible
- The policy is implemented
- The policy is monitored and reviewed
- Sufficient resources (time and money) are allocated to ensure that the policy can be effectively implemented
- Promote safeguarding within the organisation, have oversight and provide support.
- Keep up to date with local arrangements for safeguarding and DBS/PVG checks.
- Develop and maintain effective links with relevant agencies.

To check this policy is implemented, the Board of Directors will be updated at each Board meeting on the number of current volunteers and how many (if relevant) have watched the Safeguarding refresher training video, which they are required to watch every twelve months. The Board will be advised of any exceptions to the rule and the reasons why.

Allegations Management

The Chatty Café Scheme recognises its duty to report concerns or allegations against its staff (paid or unpaid) within the organisation or by a professional from another organisation.

The process for raising and dealing with allegations is explained in The Chatty Café Scheme's *Grievance Policy and Procedures*.

Storing Information

Information will be gathered, recorded and stored in accordance with The Chatty Café Scheme's Data Protection and Retention Policy. All staff must be aware that they have a professional duty to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard vulnerable adults. The public interest in safeguarding vulnerable adults may override confidentiality interests. However, information will be shared on a need-to-know basis only.

Useful Resources

- Support for Adults Family Lives: www.familylives.org.uk Crime Stoppers: www.crimestoppers-uk.org Victim Support: www.victimsupport.org.uk
- The Samaritans: www.samaritans.org
- MIND: www.mind.org.uk
- NAPAC (National Association for People Abused in Childhood): www.napac.org.uk
- Action Fraud: www.actionfraud.police.uk Support for Learning Disabilities
- Respond: www.respond.org.uk Mencap: www.mencap.org.uk
- Domestic Abuse Refuge: www.refuge.org.uk
- Women's Aid: www.womensaid.org.uk
- Sateda (local charity addressing domestic abuse): www.sateda.org
- Men's Advice Line: www.mensadvice.org.uk
- Mankind: www.mankindcounselling.org.uk
- Honour-based Violence & Forced Marriage Unit: www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage
- Online Safety UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk
- Net Aware: www.net-aware.org.uk
- Get Safe Online: www.getsafeonline.org
- Radicalisation and Hate Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit: www.gov.uk/report-terrorism True Vision: www.report-it.org.uk

This policy will be reviewed by the Senior Management Team and agreed by The Chatty Café Scheme Directors each (1) year and when there are changes in legislation.

APPENDIX 1 – Legislation Governing this Policy

The principal pieces of legislation used to inform this policy are:

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Care Standards Act 2000
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- The Police Act – CRB 1997
- Mental Health Act 1983
- NHS and Community Care Act 1990
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- The Care Act 2014
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- The SD8: Office of the Public Guardian Safeguarding Policy (.gov.uk).
- Human Rights Act (1998)
- The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007

APPENDIX 2 – Process for Volunteers to Report Concerns

Chatty Telephone Volunteer

What to do if a beneficiary receiving a weekly call says they are being subjected to abuse?

1. Listen and remain calm. Don't press them for more information or ask leading questions. Don't be judgemental or jump to conclusions.
2. Communicate any safeguarding concerns with The Chatty Café Scheme's DSL.
3. Depending on the severity of the concern, The Chatty Café Scheme's DSL will pass the concern onto the beneficiary's Link Worker, to seek other services the beneficiary could be referred into for specialist support. If necessary, The Chatty Café Scheme's DSL may notify the beneficiary's Local Authority's Adult Safeguarding Team for them to consider the best course of action to support the beneficiary.
4. If needed, Volunteer to contact The Chatty Café Scheme's DSL to de-brief. Listening to someone who is suffering can be difficult for a volunteer and we encourage volunteers to contact The Chatty Café Scheme's DSL to debrief, should this be required.

Any urgent/highly serious concerns that require immediate attention, Chatty Café Scheme Volunteer to advise beneficiary to call 999 and to seek urgent help.

Below are examples of types of safeguarding concerns:

EXAMPLE 1

The Chatty Café Scheme volunteer speaks to Mary, age 93, each week on the phone. Mary advises the volunteer that she has carers who come into her home each week. Mary notices money from her purse goes missing and believes one of the carers is stealing from her. This should be reported to the Chatty Café Scheme's DSL.

EXAMPLE 2

The Chatty Café Scheme volunteer speaks to Nigel, age 55, each week on the phone. Shortly after answering the phone, Nigel tells the volunteer that he feels incredibly low and has taken a high number of pills. The volunteer should encourage him to phone 999. The volunteer should report the matter to The Chatty Café Scheme's DSL.

Chatty Table Volunteer

What to do if a participant sitting at a Chatter & Natter table says they are being subjected to abuse?

1. Listen and remain calm - The person may need reassurance; you should always keep this at the forefront of your mind. Do not question the person for more information; stay non-judgemental and hide any emotions of shock or disbelief.
2. If the person or someone else's life is in danger or life - threatening, advise them to contact the relevant emergency services by calling 999. If the adult needs medical assistance but it is not an emergency, they should contact their GP for advice or NHS 111 for urgent medical help if it is not life threatening.
3. It is not the role of a Chatty Table Volunteer to contact any support services on their behalf. We therefore ask volunteers to NOT ask for the participants name and number but instead refer the person to the list of services noted on the back of your Volunteers Name Lanyard, which should be worn at all times whilst volunteering at the Chatter & Natter table.
4. Support - Listening to someone who is suffering can be difficult for a volunteer and we encourage volunteers to contact The Chatty Café Scheme's DSL to debrief, should this be required.

Below are examples of types of safeguarding concerns:

EXAMPLE 1

Lee, age 71, is a frequent participant at the Chatter & Natter table. He is friendly and seems to enjoy visiting the table for a bit of interaction. Lee speaks to the Chatty Café scheme volunteer each week. At one of the sessions, Lee seems down and explains that his neighbour is aggressive and recently physically attacked Lee. This is a criminal matter and the Chatty Café Scheme volunteer could suggest Lee reports this matter to the police.

EXAMPLE 2

Mary, age 60, joins her local Chatter & Natter table. Mary seems distressed and explains that she suffers from chronic mental health problems and is feeling suicidal. The Chatty Café volunteers could suggest Mary contacts a crisis support group such as the Samaritans, and could suggest going to A&E if Mary needs to seek immediate help.

APPENDIX 3 - Definitions of Abuse and Neglect

Types and Signs of Abuse

It has been estimated that roughly two-thirds of those harming a vulnerable adult are family members, most often the victim's adult child or spouse. Research has shown that in most instances the abuser is financially dependent on the vulnerable adult's resources and have problems related to alcohol and drugs.

Stay alert to the different types of abuse.

The word abuse covers many different ways someone may harm a vulnerable adult.

Physical abuse is intentional bodily injury. Some examples include slapping, pinching, choking, kicking, shoving, or inappropriately using drugs or physical restraints.

Sexual abuse is nonconsensual sexual contact (any unwanted sexual contact). Examples include unwanted touching, rape, sodomy, coerced nudity, sexual explicit photographing.

Mental mistreatment or emotional abuse is deliberately causing mental or emotional pain. Examples include intimidation, coercion, ridiculing, harassment, treating an adult like a child, isolating an adult from family, friends, or regular activity, use of silence to control behavior, and yelling or swearing which results in mental distress.

Exploitation occurs when a vulnerable adult or his/her resources or income are illegally or improperly used for another person's profit or gain. Examples include illegally withdrawing money out of another person's account, forging checks, or stealing things out of the vulnerable adult's house.

Neglect occurs when a person, either through his/her action or inaction, deprives a vulnerable adult of the care necessary to maintain the vulnerable adult's physical or mental health. Examples include not providing basic items such as food, water, clothing, a safe place to live, medicine, or health care.

Self-neglect occurs when a vulnerable adult fails to provide adequately for themselves and jeopardizes his/her well-being. Examples include a vulnerable adult living in hazardous, unsafe, or unsanitary living conditions or not having enough food or water.

Abandonment occurs when a vulnerable adult is left without the ability to obtain necessary food, clothing, shelter or health care. Examples include deserting a vulnerable adult in a public place or leaving a vulnerable adult at home without the means of getting basic life necessities.

Financial abuse involves a perpetrator using or misusing money which limits and controls the person's current and future actions and their freedom of choice. It can include using credit cards without permission, putting contractual obligations in the person's name, and gambling with their assets. It can include coercive behaviour in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance and financial transactions.

Organisational or institutional abuse is the mistreatment of people typically in their workplace, such as a residential home or within a person's own home, brought about by poor or inadequate care or support.

Domestic violence is violent or aggressive behaviour within the home, typically involving the violent abuse of a spouse or partner.

Psychological abuse involves the regular and deliberate use of a range of words and non-physical actions used with the purpose to manipulate, hurt, weaken or frighten a person mentally and emotionally.

Modern slavery is the severe exploitation of other people for personal or commercial gain, it may include human trafficking, forced labour and inhumane treatment.

Approved by The Board of Directors at the meeting on 16/09/2024. To be reviewed again in September 2025 by the Board.