

HEREFORDSHIRE RESILIENCE FORUM

Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures

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1. Policy Statement

Herefordshire Resilience Forum is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare, dignity, independence and rights of all adults who engage with our organisation, particularly those who may be at increased risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation or harm.

The Forum is an independent, community-led initiative focused on preparedness, resilience, education, wellbeing and mutual support.

Our activities may include educational events, practical workshops, community wellbeing initiatives, social activities, volunteering, sharing resources and assisting individuals during adverse circumstances such as severe weather, flooding, power outages or periods of social isolation.

We recognise that some individuals engaging with the Forum may require additional support because of age, disability, illness, social circumstances or other factors.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

We are committed to ensuring that all volunteers, organisers, coordinators and individuals acting on behalf of the Forum understand their safeguarding responsibilities and are appropriately trained, supported and, where required, subject to suitable recruitment and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

We will not tolerate abuse, neglect, exploitation, discrimination, harassment or inappropriate behaviour in connection with Forum activities.

Any safeguarding concern will be taken seriously, responded to promptly and referred to the appropriate statutory authorities where necessary.

2. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Protect adults from abuse, neglect, exploitation and avoidable harm.

- Establish clear safeguarding responsibilities for all volunteers and organisers.
- Ensure safe recruitment, appropriate DBS checks and safeguarding training.
- Provide procedures for recognising, reporting and responding to safeguarding concerns.
- Establish safe working practices for organised community-support activities.
- Promote dignity, informed consent, independence and individual choice.
- Ensure appropriate record-keeping, confidentiality and information sharing.
- Provide arrangements for managing allegations against volunteers or representatives.
- Promote a culture of openness, accountability and continuous improvement.

This policy applies to all individuals acting on behalf of Herefordshire Resilience Forum, including its management, coordinators, volunteers, event organisers and anyone authorised to undertake activities in its name.

It applies to activities conducted in person, online, by telephone and through other communication channels.

The Forum will also expect external organisations delivering activities on its behalf to demonstrate appropriate safeguarding arrangements.

3. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy has been developed with reference to relevant legislation and guidance applicable in England, including:

- Care Act 2014.
- Care and Support Statutory Guidance.
- Mental Capacity Act 2005.
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.
- Equality Act 2010.
- Human Rights Act 1998.
- Data Protection Act 2018.
- UK General Data Protection Regulation.
- Relevant Disclosure and Barring Service guidance.
- Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board policies and procedures.

The Forum will have regard to the six principles of adult safeguarding:

Empowerment: Supporting individuals to make informed decisions and exercise choice.

Prevention: Taking appropriate action to reduce the risk of harm before it occurs.

Proportionality: Ensuring responses are appropriate to the circumstances and level of risk.

Protection: Supporting individuals who are experiencing, or are at risk of, abuse or neglect.

Partnership: Working appropriately with individuals, communities and relevant organisations.

Accountability: Maintaining clear responsibilities, transparent decision-making and appropriate records.

4. Adults at Risk

For the purposes of this policy, an adult is any person aged 18 years or over.

Under Section 42 of the Care Act 2014, the local authority's safeguarding enquiry duty applies where there is reasonable cause to suspect that an adult:

1. Has needs for care and support, whether or not those needs are being met by the local authority.
2. Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect.
3. Is unable to protect themselves from that abuse or neglect, or the risk of it, because of their care and support needs.

The Forum recognises that vulnerability is not determined by age, disability or illness alone. An individual's circumstances, environment, relationships and ability to protect themselves must also be considered.

Safeguarding concerns may arise even where the statutory Section 42 threshold is not clearly met. Such concerns must still be considered and acted upon appropriately.

5. Recognising Abuse and Neglect

All volunteers and organisers must be able to recognise possible indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Types of abuse include:

Physical Abuse: Assault, inappropriate restraint, physical punishment or other acts causing physical harm.

Domestic Abuse: Physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, financial or controlling and coercive behaviour within domestic or intimate relationships.

Sexual Abuse: Sexual activity, contact or behaviour without valid consent, including exploitation, harassment and coercion.

Psychological or Emotional Abuse: Threats, intimidation, humiliation, bullying, isolation, coercion or controlling behaviour.

Financial or Material Abuse: Theft, fraud, misuse of money or property, financial exploitation or inappropriate pressure concerning financial decisions.

Neglect and Acts of Omission: Failure to meet essential needs, including access to food, medication, heating, hygiene or appropriate care.

Discriminatory Abuse: Abuse or harassment based on disability, race, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation or other protected characteristics.

Organisational Abuse: Harm arising from inappropriate practices, poor standards, neglect or abuse within an organisation or service.

Modern Slavery: Forced labour, human trafficking, domestic servitude or other forms of exploitation.

Self-Neglect: Circumstances where an individual is unable or unwilling to adequately maintain their personal hygiene, health, safety or living environment, including serious hoarding concerns.

Abuse may be deliberate or arise through omission, inappropriate practices or a failure to recognise risks.

Volunteers are not expected to investigate suspected abuse. Their responsibility is to recognise concerns, respond appropriately, record relevant information and report concerns without unnecessary delay.

6. Safeguarding Responsibilities

6.1 Forum Management

The individuals responsible for managing Herefordshire Resilience Forum will:

- Promote a safeguarding culture throughout the organisation.
- Ensure this policy is implemented and regularly reviewed.
- Appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and an appropriate deputy.
- Ensure safeguarding training is completed and recorded.
- Establish recruitment, screening and volunteer supervision arrangements.
- Ensure relevant activities are appropriately risk assessed.
- Provide adequate resources for safeguarding arrangements.
- Maintain appropriate insurance and organisational procedures.
- Ensure serious concerns are referred to external agencies where appropriate.
- Review incidents and identify opportunities for improvement.

6.2 Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Forum will appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead responsible for coordinating safeguarding arrangements.

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Harry Wright

Contact Details: info@herefordprepared.co.uk

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: TBC

Contact Details: TBC

The DSL will:

- Act as the principal contact for safeguarding concerns.
- Provide advice and guidance to volunteers and organisers.
- Review and appropriately escalate reported concerns.
- Liaise with Herefordshire Council Adult Safeguarding Services and other relevant agencies.
- Maintain confidential safeguarding records.
- Ensure safeguarding concerns are followed up appropriately.
- Coordinate safeguarding training and awareness.
- Support the management of allegations against volunteers.
- Monitor safeguarding risks and recommend improvements.

The DSL and deputy must receive suitable additional training relevant to their responsibilities.

Where a concern involves the DSL, the matter must be reported to the deputy or another designated senior person independent of the allegation.

The DSL's availability must not become a barrier to urgent reporting. Anyone may contact the police or adult safeguarding services directly where necessary.

6.3 Volunteers and Organisers

All volunteers and organisers must:

- Complete required safeguarding induction and training.
- Read and comply with this policy and the Volunteer Code of Conduct.
- Act respectfully and professionally.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries.
- Recognise and report safeguarding concerns.
- Respect confidentiality and personal information.
- Work within their training, competence and authorised responsibilities.
- Follow risk assessments and safe working procedures.
- Report incidents, accidents, near misses and inappropriate behaviour.
- Never use their position to exploit, intimidate or take advantage of another person.

7. Safer Recruitment and DBS Checks

Herefordshire Resilience Forum is committed to recruiting suitable individuals who can safely undertake volunteering and community-support responsibilities.

Volunteer recruitment procedures will be proportionate to the risks and responsibilities of each role.

These may include:

- Completion of a volunteer application.
- Identity verification.
- Discussion of relevant skills, experience and suitability.
- References where appropriate.
- An interview or suitability discussion.
- Assessment of the proposed role and its associated safeguarding risks.
- DBS checks at the appropriate level where the role is legally eligible and the Forum requires a check.
- Completion of mandatory safeguarding induction and relevant role-specific training.
- Formal authorisation before undertaking designated duties.

7.1 DBS Checks

DBS checks will be undertaken where required by the Forum's recruitment and safeguarding procedures and where the proposed role is legally eligible for the relevant level of check.

The appropriate level of DBS check will be determined by the actual responsibilities of the volunteer.

Roles involving regulated activity with adults will be identified and assessed in accordance with DBS legislation and guidance.

Activities involving personal care, certain forms of healthcare, financial assistance or shopping undertaken for adults unable to perform those tasks because of age, illness or disability may constitute regulated activity.

Where a role involves regulated activity with adults, the Forum will require an Enhanced DBS check with an Adults' Barred List check, where legally eligible, before authorising the individual to undertake that activity.

Other roles may require a Basic, Standard or Enhanced DBS check where legally permitted and justified by the circumstances.

The Forum will not request a higher level of DBS check than the law permits.

A DBS certificate alone does not establish suitability. Screening will be considered alongside references, training, conduct, experience and the assessed risks of the role.

7.2 Restrictions Pending Recruitment Checks

Volunteers must not undertake duties requiring completed screening, training or authorisation until the relevant requirements have been satisfied.

No person will be knowingly permitted to undertake regulated activity with adults where they are barred from that activity.

The Forum will maintain an appropriate confidential record of recruitment decisions and the completion of relevant checks.

8. Mandatory Safeguarding Training

All volunteers, organisers and coordinators must receive appropriate adult safeguarding training before undertaking authorised Forum activities.

The training programme will be proportionate to each individual's responsibilities.

8.1 Initial Training

As a minimum, induction training will cover:

- Introduction to adult safeguarding.
- Relevant legal principles and responsibilities.
- Recognising different forms of abuse and neglect.
- Identifying indicators of potential harm.
- Responding to disclosures and concerns.
- Reporting and escalation procedures.
- Maintaining confidentiality.
- Professional boundaries and appropriate conduct.
- Consent, dignity and personal autonomy.
- Safe working practices.
- Whistleblowing and allegations against volunteers.

Volunteers undertaking activities involving direct contact with potentially vulnerable adults will receive additional role-specific instruction.

8.2 Refresher Training

The Forum will provide periodic safeguarding updates and refresher training.

Safeguarding awareness will be reinforced at least annually, with formal refresher training normally completed every two years or sooner where risks, guidance or responsibilities change.

Additional training may be required following incidents, policy changes or identified learning needs.

8.3 Enhanced Training

The DSL, deputy and individuals responsible for managing volunteers or responding to complex safeguarding concerns will undertake further training appropriate to their roles.

Where relevant, this may include safeguarding leadership, mental capacity, information sharing, managing allegations and referral procedures.

8.4 Training Records

The Forum will maintain a training register recording:

- Volunteer name.
- Training completed.
- Training provider.
- Date of completion.
- Renewal or review date.
- Additional role-specific requirements.

Volunteers who have not completed required training will not be authorised to undertake activities for which that training is necessary.

9. Safeguarding During Community Support Activities

The Forum recognises that organised community assistance may create additional risks, particularly where volunteers visit private homes, deliver supplies or assist individuals experiencing illness, disability or isolation.

All such activities must be appropriately organised, authorised and risk assessed.

9.1 Home Visits and Welfare Checks

Where home visits or welfare checks form part of an approved activity:

- The visit must be arranged through an authorised Forum coordinator.
- The individual must agree to the visit, unless another lawful arrangement applies.
- Volunteers must be identifiable and understand the purpose of the visit.
- A record must be maintained of the authorised activity.
- Volunteers must follow agreed check-in and check-out arrangements.
- Lone working must be specifically risk assessed.
- Two-person visits should be considered where risks justify them.
- Volunteers must respect privacy, personal boundaries and the individual's home.
- Volunteers must not undertake unapproved additional tasks.
- Any safeguarding concern must be reported promptly.

Volunteers must never enter a property without lawful permission or place themselves or another person at unnecessary risk.

9.2 Food and Essential Supply Deliveries

Where volunteers assist with obtaining or delivering essential supplies:

- Requests should be coordinated through an authorised process.
- The nature of the assistance must be agreed beforehand.
- Any financial arrangements must comply with approved procedures.
- Volunteers must maintain appropriate records and receipts where necessary.
- Personal bank cards, PINs and financial information must not be requested or retained.
- Volunteers must not seek financial benefit or personal rewards.
- Any concerns about exploitation or misuse of money must be reported.

Where assistance involves shopping for an adult who cannot undertake it because of age, illness or disability, the Forum must assess whether the activity constitutes regulated activity requiring appropriate DBS screening.

9.3 Prescription Collections

Where prescription collection is offered as an authorised activity:

- The individual or their appropriate representative must agree to the collection.
- Volunteers must follow the pharmacy's identification and collection requirements.
- Medicines must be transported securely and delivered directly to the intended recipient or authorised representative.
- Collection and handover arrangements must be appropriately recorded.
- Volunteers must not open medication packaging unnecessarily.
- Volunteers must not administer, alter, select or advise on medication.
- Medication requiring particular handling or controlled arrangements must be referred to an appropriate professional or service.

Prescription collection does not authorise the Forum to provide clinical care or medicines management.

9.4 Severe Weather, Flooding and Practical Assistance

Volunteers supporting community initiatives during adverse weather must follow appropriate risk assessments and instructions.

Activities must remain within the individual's competence and the Forum's authorised scope.

Volunteers must not:

- Enter floodwater or other dangerous environments.
- Undertake hazardous rescue operations.
- Drive in conditions beyond their capabilities.
- Undertake unsafe lifting or moving of individuals.
- Perform specialist tasks without appropriate training or authorisation.
- Put themselves or others at unreasonable risk.

The Forum will not deploy volunteers to conduct emergency rescue operations or substitute for statutory emergency services.

Where a situation exceeds the capabilities of the Forum, appropriate emergency or professional services must be contacted.

9.5 Financial and Personal Boundaries

Volunteers must not:

- Borrow money from individuals receiving support.
- Request or accept significant gifts.
- Access bank accounts or financial records without an authorised lawful arrangement.
- Seek access to wills, property or other personal assets.
- Exploit volunteering relationships for personal or financial benefit.
- Establish inappropriate relationships with individuals they support.

Any potential conflict of interest must be declared.

10. Consent, Capacity and Individual Choice

The Forum recognises that adults have the right to make their own decisions and to exercise control over their lives.

Volunteers must respect an individual's dignity, independence, wishes and preferences.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 establishes a presumption that adults have capacity unless established otherwise.

An adult must not be treated as lacking capacity simply because they make a decision that others consider unwise.

Where concerns arise about an individual's ability to make a specific decision, volunteers must seek guidance from the DSL and, where necessary, an appropriate professional.

Volunteers must not independently make formal capacity determinations or assume decision-making authority over another adult.

Where an adult with capacity declines assistance or does not wish to pursue a safeguarding concern, their wishes should ordinarily be respected.

However, safeguarding information may still require disclosure where justified by law, including circumstances involving significant risk, coercion, risk to other people or serious criminal conduct.

Decisions about reporting against an individual's expressed wishes must be proportionate, documented and escalated appropriately.

11. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

Any volunteer or organiser who witnesses abuse, suspects abuse, receives a disclosure or becomes concerned about an individual's safety must take appropriate action.

11.1 Immediate Danger

Where an individual is in immediate danger, seriously injured or requires urgent emergency assistance:

Call 999 immediately.

Volunteers must take reasonable steps to protect themselves and others without entering an unsafe situation.

The DSL must be informed as soon as reasonably practicable, but contacting the DSL must not delay emergency assistance.

11.2 Non-Emergency Safeguarding Concerns

Where a safeguarding concern does not involve immediate danger:

1. Ensure the individual's immediate safety as far as reasonably possible.
2. Listen carefully and remain calm.
3. Take the concern seriously.
4. Avoid making assumptions or judgments.
5. Do not promise absolute confidentiality.
6. Do not investigate or question the individual unnecessarily.
7. Record relevant information accurately.
8. Report the concern to the DSL without unnecessary delay.
9. Where appropriate, support referral to Herefordshire Council Adult Safeguarding Services or another relevant authority.

Concerns must be reported as soon as practicable and normally on the same day they become known.

Where the risk requires prompt external action, volunteers must contact the relevant agency directly rather than waiting for internal authorisation.

11.3 Responding to a Disclosure

When someone discloses possible abuse or neglect, volunteers should:

- Listen without interrupting unnecessarily.
- Reassure the person that they have been heard and taken seriously.
- Avoid expressing disbelief or making judgments.
- Avoid leading questions.
- Explain that information may need to be shared to protect them or others.
- Ask what immediate help or outcome they would like.
- Record the individual's words as accurately as possible.
- Report the matter through the safeguarding procedure.

Volunteers must not confront the alleged perpetrator or conduct their own investigation.

12. Safeguarding Referrals and External Reporting

The DSL will consider whether a concern requires referral to Herefordshire Council, the police or another relevant organisation.

Referrals must be based on the nature of the concern, the risks involved, the person's wishes and relevant legal obligations.

The DSL will not withhold a referral simply because an individual does not clearly meet every element of the Care Act Section 42 criteria.

The local authority is responsible for determining whether a statutory safeguarding enquiry is required.

Where possible and appropriate, the adult will be involved in discussions about safeguarding referrals and the outcomes they wish to achieve.

The Forum will cooperate with relevant statutory investigations and provide information lawfully requested or otherwise permitted to be shared.

Herefordshire Adult Safeguarding Contacts

Herefordshire Council – Adult Safeguarding

Telephone: 01432 260101
Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm

Email: safeguarding@herefordshire.gov.uk

Emergency Duty Team – Out of Hours

Telephone: 0330 123 9309

Emergency Services

Telephone: 999

West Mercia Police – Non-Emergency

Telephone: 101

Where concerns involve potential crimes, the police should be contacted as appropriate.

The Forum will follow relevant procedures published by Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board.

13. Safeguarding Records and Confidentiality

All safeguarding concerns must be documented promptly, accurately and objectively.

A safeguarding record should include:

- Date and time of the concern.
- Name and contact details of the person reporting it.
- Details of the individual affected, where known.
- Factual description of the concern.
- Relevant observations or disclosures.
- The individual's own words where appropriate.
- Immediate actions taken.
- Individuals or agencies contacted.
- Advice received and decisions made.
- Follow-up actions and outcomes.

Records must distinguish observed facts from opinions or information received from others.

Safeguarding records will be:

- Stored securely.
- Accessible only to authorised individuals.
- Managed in accordance with applicable data protection law.
- Shared only where lawful, necessary and proportionate.
- Retained in accordance with an approved retention schedule.

Safeguarding information must not be posted in public Facebook groups, informal community discussions or other uncontrolled communication channels.

The Forum will not disclose personal information about individuals receiving support to volunteers or third parties unless there is an appropriate basis for doing so.

14. Allegations Against Volunteers or Representatives

Any allegation that a volunteer, organiser, coordinator or other representative has abused, harmed, exploited or behaved inappropriately towards an adult will be treated seriously.

The Forum will:

1. Consider any immediate safety measures.
2. Ensure the concern is reported to a suitable person independent of the allegation.
3. Consider whether the individual should be temporarily removed from relevant duties while the matter is assessed.
4. Seek advice from adult safeguarding services or the police where appropriate.
5. Preserve relevant records and evidence.
6. Avoid action that could compromise a statutory investigation.
7. Conduct any appropriate internal process fairly and proportionately.
8. Consider whether external regulatory or DBS referrals are required.

Where an individual has been removed from regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not left, and the relevant legal harm conditions are met, the Forum will fulfil any applicable duty to refer the matter to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Resignation or withdrawal from volunteering will not automatically prevent the Forum from completing an appropriate safeguarding process or making a required referral.

15. Whistleblowing and Raising Concerns

The Forum encourages volunteers and participants to raise concerns about unsafe practices, misconduct, safeguarding failures or inappropriate behaviour.

Individuals should ordinarily report concerns to the DSL or Forum management.

Where the concern involves those individuals, or the individual reasonably believes the matter will not be addressed appropriately, they may contact the relevant external safeguarding authority or police directly.

No individual will be subjected to retaliation or unfair treatment for raising a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith.

All concerns will be considered seriously, sensitively and proportionately.

16. Online Safety and Social Media

The Forum operates through online communication channels, including its website and community social media presence.

All online activities must be conducted respectfully and safely.

Volunteers and administrators must:

- Maintain professional boundaries in online interactions.
- Avoid requesting unnecessary personal or sensitive information.
- Direct private safeguarding concerns to appropriate confidential channels.
- Avoid publishing identifying information about individuals receiving assistance.
- Report threatening, exploitative, abusive or inappropriate conduct.
- Follow the Forum's moderation and information-handling arrangements.
- Avoid using private conversations to arrange unauthorised community-support activities in the Forum's name.

Public requests for assistance should not include unnecessary details about disability, illness, medication, financial difficulties or other sensitive circumstances.

Where a safeguarding concern arises online, the administrator or volunteer must preserve relevant information where lawful and report the matter appropriately.

17. Safeguarding at Educational Events and Community Activities

The Forum aims to organise educational sessions, outdoor activities, social gatherings, community walks and practical workshops.

Appropriate safeguarding measures will be considered during event planning.

These will include, where relevant:

- Event-specific risk assessments.
- Suitable venue selection.
- Accessibility and reasonable adjustments.
- Appropriate volunteer and organiser responsibilities.
- Emergency arrangements.
- Safe participant registration and contact arrangements.
- Appropriate supervision and oversight.
- Clear conduct expectations.
- Arrangements for responding to concerns or incidents.

Activities involving physical exercise, outdoor environments, equipment or practical demonstrations must be appropriately assessed and conducted by suitable individuals.

Volunteers must not undertake activities requiring qualifications or competence they do not possess.

18. Lone Working and Volunteer Safety

The Forum recognises that the safety and wellbeing of volunteers are essential to safe community support.

Lone working must be avoided where practicable or assessed before authorisation.

Where lone working is permitted, appropriate arrangements may include:

- A recorded activity plan.
- Clear location and contact arrangements.
- Check-in and check-out procedures.
- Emergency contact information.
- Agreed boundaries and responsibilities.
- Clear instructions for withdrawing from unsafe situations.

Volunteers have the right to decline or withdraw from an activity where they reasonably believe it is unsafe.

No volunteer will be expected to place themselves in danger to complete a community-support task.

19. Equality, Dignity and Inclusion

Herefordshire Resilience Forum is committed to treating everyone with dignity and respect.

Safeguarding decisions and support arrangements must be free from unlawful discrimination, harassment and prejudice.

The Forum will aim to make information, activities and volunteering opportunities accessible and inclusive.

Where reasonably practicable, adjustments will be considered to support individuals with disabilities, communication difficulties or other accessibility requirements.

All individuals must be treated as people with their own wishes, strengths, experiences and rights, rather than being defined by their circumstances or support needs.

20. Safeguarding Children and Young People

This policy principally addresses safeguarding adults aged 18 and over.

Where Forum activities involve children or young people, appropriate additional safeguarding arrangements must be established.

The Forum will develop and implement a separate Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy before undertaking activities requiring such arrangements.

Any concern involving a person under 18 must be reported through the relevant children's safeguarding procedures, with immediate danger reported to emergency services.

21. Monitoring, Governance and Review

The Forum will monitor the effectiveness of its safeguarding arrangements through:

- Reviewing reported incidents and concerns.
- Monitoring volunteer recruitment and training.
- Checking compliance with screening requirements.
- Reviewing activity risk assessments.
- Considering feedback from volunteers and community members.
- Monitoring relevant legislative and procedural changes.
- Identifying improvements following incidents or near misses.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually, and earlier where necessary following:

- A serious safeguarding incident.
- Changes in legislation or statutory guidance.
- Changes to local safeguarding procedures.
- Significant changes to the Forum's activities.
- Identification of safeguarding weaknesses or new risks.

Revisions will be approved by Forum management and communicated to relevant individuals.

22. Implementation and Volunteer Acknowledgement

Before authorisation to undertake activities, volunteers must confirm that they:

- Have received and read this safeguarding policy.
- Understand their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Know how to recognise and report safeguarding concerns.
- Have completed required safeguarding training.
- Understand the limits of their role.
- Agree to comply with the Volunteer Code of Conduct.
- Understand that breaches of safeguarding requirements may result in removal from volunteering activities.

The Forum will maintain appropriate records of volunteer acknowledgements, training and authorisation.

Appendix A – Safeguarding Reporting Procedure

Step 1 – Identify the Concern

A volunteer witnesses, suspects or receives information about possible abuse, neglect, exploitation or harm.

Step 2 – Assess Immediate Safety

If someone is in immediate danger or requires emergency assistance, call 999.

Step 3 – Listen and Record

Take the concern seriously. Do not investigate or make promises of absolute confidentiality. Record the relevant facts.

Step 4 – Report Internally

Notify the DSL or deputy without unnecessary delay, normally on the same day.

Step 5 – Refer Externally Where Appropriate

Contact Herefordshire Council Adult Safeguarding Services, the police or another appropriate agency where required.

Urgent referrals must not be delayed while awaiting internal review.

Step 6 – Record Decisions

Document relevant information, actions, decisions, referrals and advice received.

Step 7 – Review and Follow Up

The DSL will monitor the outcome, consider any ongoing risk and ensure appropriate follow-up.

Appendix B – Volunteer Safeguarding Code of Conduct

All volunteers agree to:

1. Treat everyone with dignity, courtesy and respect.
2. Promote independence and individual choice.
3. Maintain appropriate personal and professional boundaries.
4. Respect privacy and confidentiality.
5. Follow authorised procedures and risk assessments.

6. Report safeguarding concerns promptly.
7. Never exploit or take advantage of a position of trust.
8. Never request inappropriate gifts, financial benefits or personal favours.
9. Never undertake unauthorised personal care, clinical activities or financial arrangements.
10. Never enter unsafe environments or exceed their training or competence.
11. Avoid inappropriate personal or online relationships arising from their volunteer role.
12. Cooperate with legitimate safeguarding enquiries.
13. Complete all mandatory training and appropriate recruitment checks.
14. Report concerns about unsafe organisational practices.
15. Act in a manner that maintains public confidence in the Forum.

Breaches may result in suspension or removal from volunteering activities and referral to external authorities where appropriate.

Appendix C – Safeguarding Concern Record

Confidential – Restricted Access

Date and Time of Report:

[Insert]

Person Reporting:

[Insert]

Role / Contact Details:

[Insert]

Individual Concerned:

[Insert]

Date and Time of Incident or Concern:

[Insert]

Location:

[Insert]

Nature of Concern:

[Insert factual account]

Direct Disclosure or Observations:

[Record actual words where possible]

Immediate Risk Identified:

[Insert]

Immediate Actions Taken:

[Insert]

Adult's Views, Wishes and Consent:

[Insert where known]

Reported to DSL:

[Name, date and time]

External Agencies Contacted:

[Insert]

Advice Received / Decisions Made:

[Insert]

Further Action Required:

[Insert]

Follow-Up and Outcome:

[Insert]

Record Completed By:

[Name and date]