



Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

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1. Policy statement

Headway Thames Valley recognises that while fulfilling their duties, members of staff and volunteers, will come into contact with children and adults at risk of harm.

Headway Thames Valley is committed to ensuring that it can fulfil its safeguarding responsibilities both for adults at risk, and children, who may be at risk of harm or exploitation. Headway Thames Valley also recognises that it has a duty to report incidents or suspected safeguarding concerns, to the appropriate authorities.

2. Definitions

Safeguarding: means 'protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect'.

The term is used to refer to several areas of concern relating to adults at risk of harm, including:

- i. **Child protection issues:** harm or an act likely to harm a child or young person's safety, well-being and development. Abuse can be physical, sexual, emotional or neglect. A child witnessing abuse in the home is a child protection issue.
- ii. **Exploitation** (abuse including sexual, psychological or financial)
 - Examples of sexual exploitation include rape, sexual assault, being tricked or manipulated into having sex or performing a sexual act, being trafficked into, out of, or around the UK for the purpose of sexual exploitation, being forced to take part in or watch pornography.
 - Financial includes theft, fraud, internet scamming, and coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements.
 - Psychological abuse can be defined as behaviour used to control, isolate or frighten.
- iii. **Radicalisation:** the aim of radicalisation is to inspire new recruits, embed extreme views and persuade vulnerable individuals to the legitimacy of a cause. This may be direct through a relationship, or through social media.
- iv. **Physical abuse or neglect:** includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, restraint, and misuse of medication. It can also include inappropriate sanctions.

- v. **Emotional abuse or neglect:** includes threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation, or withdrawal from services or support networks.
- vi. **Discriminatory abuse:** is abuse that centres on a difference or perceived difference, particularly with respect to race, gender, disability, or any of the protected characteristics of the Equality Act
- vii. **Organisational abuse:** includes neglect and poor care practice within an institution or care setting, such as a hospital or care home, or in relation to care provided in one's own home.
- viii. **Domestic abuse:** includes psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional abuse perpetrated by anyone within a person's family. It also includes so-called 'honour' based violence.
- ix. **Modern slavery:** encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour, and domestic servitude.
- x. **Self-neglect:** refers to neglecting to care for one's own personal hygiene, health, or surroundings.

Adult at risk of harm: as per the Care Act 2014, an adult at risk as an individual over the age of 18 who:

- Has needs for care and support (regardless of whether the local authority is meeting any of those needs).
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect.
- As a result of their care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

The law says that to make a decision we need to:

- Understand information.
- Remember it for long enough.
- Think about the information.
- Communicate our decision.

Each home nation has legislation about the circumstances in which decisions can be made on behalf of an adult who is unable to make decisions for themselves:

- England and Wales – Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Scotland – Adults with Incapacity Act 2000
- Mental Capacity (Northern Ireland) 2016

Further information available is available for each devolved nation is available [here](#)

- [England and Wales](#)
- Scotland [guide to incapacity](#) and [Mental Health Act](#)

3. Principles

Headway Thames Valley will take all safeguarding concerns seriously and will fully consider and report any concerns in a timely manner to the relevant person or authority.

Headway Thames Valley will ensure it maintains confidential records of any safeguarding concerns and any referrals made as a consequence. Any records will be kept in accordance with the Data Protection Policy and current legislation.

The statutory guidance enshrines the six principles of safeguarding:

- i. **Empowerment:** presumption of person-led decisions and informed consent.
- ii. **Prevention:** it is better to act before harm occurs.
- iii. **Proportionality:** proportionate and least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- iv. **Protection:** support and representation for those in greatest need.
- v. **Partnerships:** local solutions through services working with their communities.
- vi. **Accountability:** accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

4. Scope and limitations

This policy applies to safeguarding concerns regarding any individual you may have contact with whilst carrying out your duties as an employee/ volunteer of Headway Thames Valley. Headway Thames Valley recognises that anyone, including colleagues and volunteers, can experience harm or abuse, which can be reported.

5. Responsibilities

The General Manager and the board of trustees are ultimately responsible for the overall compliance of Headway Thames Valley in relation to safeguarding.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is the staff member responsible for supporting staff and volunteers in safeguarding matters, receiving information and, when necessary, supporting staff and volunteers to make referrals.

Role	Name	Email	Phone Number
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Heather Evans	hevans@headwaythamesvalley.org.uk	01491 411469

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed of concerns as soon as possible, and where necessary, seek advice.

In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, advice and concerns should be directed and escalated to the following members of the team.

Role	Name	Email	Phone Number
General Manager	Jamie Higgins	JHiggins@headwaythamesvalley.org.uk	01491 411469
Chair	Tom Satterthwaite	tsatterthwaite@headwaythamesvalley.org.uk	01491 411469

Everyone's responsibility: Everyone at Headway Thames Valley has a responsibility to help keep everyone, including adults at risk safe from abuse and neglect.

All staff and volunteers within Headway Thames Valley have a responsibility to ensure that they act in line with this policy.

6. Examples of potential safeguarding concerns

Examples of types of situations that may present a safeguarding concern and result in implementation of the procedure detailed are provided below. This list is not exhaustive, and staff and volunteers will need to exercise professional judgement in determining whether there are safeguarding concerns that need to be considered.

Line managers should be informed of concerns as soon as possible, and where necessary, advice sought. Advice can also be sought from the contacts detailed above.

Examples include:

- i. An adult raises an allegation of current abuse, harm, neglect or other inappropriate behaviour.
- ii. A disclosure of historical sexual or physical abuse is made, where the alleged perpetrator still has access to children or adults at risk.
- iii. A volunteer, staff member or visitor discloses information involving themselves, family members or any other person that gives rise to concerns that an individual may be harming or abusing an adult at risk (or child).
- iv. There are suspicions or indications that an adult at risk is being abused or harmed, or is at risk of exploitation, harm, neglect or abuse.
- v. There are observable changes in an adult at risks' appearance or behaviour that may be related to exploitation, harm or abuse.
- vi. A concern is raised that an individual presents a risk of abuse or harm towards an adult at risk.
- vii. Concerns arise that an individual may be subject to a forced marriage. A forced marriage is defined as one in which one or both individuals do not (or, because of an individual's vulnerability or mental capacity, cannot) consent to marriage. In the UK, forced marriage is regarded as an issue of domestic/child abuse.
- viii. Concerns arise that an individual may be subject to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).
- ix. Concerns arise that a volunteer, service user, or member of staff is vulnerable to radicalisation and there is an identifiable risk of the individual being drawn into terrorism.

The following incidents **MUST** always be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead:

- i. If an adult at risk injures themselves or is hurt by someone else.
- ii. If you are concerned that a relationship is developing with an adult at risk, which could represent an abuse of trust.
- iii. If there is a concern that a member of staff or a volunteer may present a risk of abuse or harm towards an adult at risk.
- iv. If an accusation is made against you, suggesting you have acted / spoken in a manner that could be seen as abusive or harmful.
- v. If an adult at risk reports an allegation of abuse regarding a member of an external organisation attending Headway Thames Valley facilities, or at a Headway Thames Valley event.

- vi. If an adult at risk reports concerns regarding sexual abuse, financial abuse, domestic abuse, a forced marriage, FGM or other exploitative behaviour.

If you are concerned that an adult at risk is becoming attracted to you, or if you are concerned that a colleague or volunteer is becoming attracted to an adult at risk, you should speak with your line manager, or a member of the safeguarding team at the earliest opportunity. People in professional roles, who are supporting others, are prohibited by law from having intimate relationships with the people they support.

7. Making a report

	Start	You become aware of suspected abuse or harm (from an adult at risk, child, witness, or third party)
1	Immediate principles	Do NOT ignore the concern - Stay calm and listen carefully - Keep questions to a minimum (just enough to understand)
2	Record initial information	Note times, dates, people involved, key details - If times are approximate, say so - Make notes as soon as possible
3	Reassure the person	Explain it will be handled appropriately and confidentially Explain it may be shared on a "need to know" basis with other agencies
4	Assess immediate risk	Question: Is there an urgent health or safety risk? YES -----> Call emergency services (999) if required, and follow their instructions NO -----> Continue to [5] (After any emergency response, always continue to [5])
5	Explain reporting process and consent	Tell the individual you must report the matter and explain the process - Seek consent where possible, EXCEPT: * Serious incident * Alleged abuser is employed carer or medical professional
6	Make a detailed written record	Use the internal safeguarding reporting form - Attach your factual notes and details
7	Report internally	Report to: * Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or * Your line manager

8	If you CANNOT contact DSL and you have an immediate and significant concern	Contact emergency services and/or local safeguarding team/GP first - Then report to your manager - Then inform DSL at the earliest opportunity
9	If the allegation concerns your manager or the DSL	Report directly to: * General Manager OR * Chair * Board of trustees - They will make any necessary referrals to: * Adult social care / safeguarding * GP * Police
10	Internal evaluation by DSL	DSL leads evaluation and risk assessment (with colleagues if needed) - DSL limits enquiries to what is needed to: * Address serious/immediate risk * Preserve evidence until external agencies respond * Decide if referral to adult social care / safeguarding / GP / police is required (if not already done) * Identify internal support for the adult at risk
11	Referral and support	If referral is appropriate, DSL or nominee makes referral to: * Adult social care / safeguarding * GP * Police
12	If alleged abuser is a staff member	Headway Thames Valley works alongside external agencies Internal disciplinary procedures may be initiated as necessary
13	Record keeping	DSL ensures full records of: * Risk assessment process * Decisions and actions taken Records kept in line with Data Protection Policy and legislation

8. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Headway Thames Valley will ensure that all relevant staff working with adults at risk of harm will have an appropriate background check carried out. These checks will be renewed, every 3 years.

9. Implementation arrangements

All new members of staff and volunteers are made aware of the policy and requirements during the staff/volunteer induction process. Updated and amended procedures are disseminated in accordance with the policy review dates.

Regular, mandatory training and updating of information to be completed by relevant staff.

10. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually or in line with any changes to legislation.

11. Supporting/related documents

The Data Protection Policy provides guidance in relation to Headway Thames Valley's approach to the General Data Protection Regulation.

Appendix One – Devolved Nations and legal guidance

Appendix Two – Sources of information and support

Appendix One – Legal Guidance

<i>England (Care Act 2014)</i>
An adult at risk is an individual aged 18 years and over who: (a) has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) AND: (b) is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect, AND: (c) 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.

Appendix Two – Sources of Information and Support

- (a) Headway helpline
 - 0808 800 2244
 - helpline@headway.org.uk
- (b) Find your nearest Adult Social Care service:
 - **England:** <https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/other-health-services/local-authority-adult-social-care>
- (c) Action on Elder Abuse A national organisation based in London. It aims to prevent the abuse of older people by raising awareness, encouraging education, promoting research and collecting and disseminating information.
 - Tel: 020 8765 7000
 - Email: enquiries@elderabuse.org.uk
 - www.elderabuse.org.uk
- (d) Ann Craft Trust (ACT) A national organisation providing information and advice about adult safeguarding. ACT have a specialist Safeguarding Adults in Sport and Activity team to support the sector.
 - Tel: 0115 951 5400
 - Email: Ann-Craft-Trust@nottingham.ac.uk
 - www.anncrafttrust.org
- (e) Men's Advice Line, for male domestic abuse survivors.
 - Tel: 0808 801 0327
- (f) National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline
 - Tel: 0800 999 5428
- (g) National 24Hour Freephone, Domestic Abuse Helplines
 - Tel: 0808 2000 247
 - www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/Contact-us
- (h) Rape Crisis Federation of England and Wales. Rape Crisis was launched in 1996 and exists to provide a range of facilities and resources to enable the continuance and development of Rape Crisis Groups throughout Wales and England.
 - Email: info@rapecrisis.co.uk
 - www.rapecrisis.co.uk
- (i) Respond. Respond provides a range of services to victims and perpetrators of sexual abuse who have learning disabilities, and training and support to those working with them.
 - Tel: 020 7383 0700 or
 - 0808 808 0700 (Helpline)
 - Email: services@respond.org.uk
 - www.respond.org.uk

- (j) Stop Hate Crime works to challenge all forms of Hate Crime and discrimination, based on any aspect of an individual's identity. Stop Hate UK provides independent, confidential and accessible reporting and support for victims, witnesses and third parties.
- 24 hours service:
 - Telephone: 0800 138 1625
 - Web Chat: www.stophateuk.org/talk-to-us/
 - E mail: talk@stophateuk.org
 - Text: 07717 989 025
 - Text relay: 18001 0800 138 1625
- (k) Susy Lamplugh Trust is a leading authority on personal safety. Its role is to minimise the damage caused to individuals and to society by aggression in all its forms – physical, verbal and psychological.
- Tel: 020 8392 1839
 - Fax: 020 8392 1830
 - Email: info@suzylamplugh.org
 - www.suzylamplugh.org
- (l) Victim Support provides practical advice and help, emotional support and reassurance to those who have suffered the effects of a crime.
- Tel: 0808 168 9111
 - www.victimsupport.com
- (m) Women's Aid Federation of England and Wales is a national domestic violence charity. It also runs a domestic violence online help service.
- www.womensaid.org.uk/information-support
 - Email: helpline@womensaid.org.uk