

ADULT SAFEGUARDING POLICY 2023

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1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. The Ri believes that safeguarding others is paramount and should be at the heart of all that we do. Adult safeguarding is:
- Protecting an adult’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect
 - People and organisations working together to prevent and stop abuse or neglect and reducing the risks of this happening
 - Making sure that the adult’s wellbeing is promoted; including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action
 - Recognising that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.¹
- 1.2. We expect all individuals associated with the Ri to:
- Share our commitment to safeguarding
 - Understand that safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility
 - Safeguard the welfare of adults at risk of harm and promote their wellbeing
 - Work together with other Ri representatives, consenting individuals, their families and relevant external organisations to help achieve the best possible outcomes for adults at risk and to protect them from harm
 - Know what to do and who to speak to if they have any safeguarding concerns about an adult or an Ri representative

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance#safeguarding-1> Paragraph 14.7

- Be aware of and follow the guidance in this policy and the Ri's Adult Safeguarding Procedure to recognise, respond to and report any concerns proactively and swiftly, with consent, no matter how minor or who is involved.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to all individuals associated with the Ri who may come into contact with adults at risk through their work with the Ri. These individuals will be referred to as "Ri representatives" throughout this policy.
 - This includes staff, contractors, volunteers, contributors to public and educational programmes, Trustees and committee members, ambassadors for the Ri, or those linked with other organisations who undertake work with the Ri which could involve adults at risk.
 - This policy does not include organisations or individuals who use the Ri purely for hire.
- 2.2. We have a legal duty to safeguard adults at risk of harm; however, this policy and the accompanying Adult Safeguarding Procedure facilitates the safeguarding of all adults that come into contact with the Ri.
 - 2.2.1. The Care Act 2014 defines an adult at risk of harm, more commonly termed an adult at risk, as anyone over the age of 18 who:
 - Has care and support needs (whether or not these needs are being met); and
 - is at risk of, or is experiencing, abuse or neglect; and
 - as a result of those needs is unable to adequately protect themselves against this (risk of) abuse or neglect.
 - 2.2.2. We recognise that circumstances affecting an adult's level of risk and/or ability to protect themselves may be different in different contexts and/or at different times and may be temporary or permanent.
 - 2.2.3. We do not expect Ri representatives to be able to determine who is an adult at risk of harm, but instead to follow the principles outlined in this policy with all adults that they come into contact with through their Ri activities.
- 2.3. This policy encompasses all activities run by or in association with the Ri, including face-to-face activities in any location and online activities.
- 2.4. This policy does not cover safeguarding people under the age of 18, regardless of any other status – please refer to the Ri's Child Safeguarding Policy.

3. Purpose

- 3.1. This policy outlines the Ri's commitment to safeguarding adults. It aims to ensure that all Ri representatives have a clear understanding of both the principles involved and their own responsibilities in safeguarding adults at risk and protecting them from harm.
- 3.2. The accompanying Adult Safeguarding Procedure includes guidance on identifying and responding to concerns, good practice involved in safeguarding adults at risk and how to record and report concerns and disclosures.

4. Principles

The following principles underline the Ri's approach to safeguarding adults:

4.1. Safeguarding is paramount

- 4.1.1. This means that safeguarding takes precedence over other considerations across all Ri activities.
- 4.1.2. We are committed to nurturing a culture of safeguarding throughout the Ri and ensuring that poor practices are challenged. This includes but is not limited to:
 - Ensuring safe recruitment, selection and vetting practices
 - Providing the appropriate training, support and supervision for all Ri representatives, proportionate to their role, to help ensure that they are clear about their roles and responsibilities regarding safeguarding.

4.2. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

- 4.2.1. This means that if anyone has a concern about an adult who may be an adult at risk, or is told about something which causes concern, they MUST report it to one of the Ri's Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) or an appropriate responsible person where this is not possible, as is outlined in the Adult Safeguarding Procedure. They cannot assume that someone else has done so, or that it is not their place to do so.

4.3. Safeguarding is person-focused

- 4.3.1. Safeguarding should be person-led and outcome-focused (referred to as "Making Safeguarding Personal in the Care Act 2014). This means that we will always work to ensure that our adult safeguarding arrangements are there to protect individuals and promote their wellbeing, centring their views, feelings and desired outcomes in any actions that we take.

The following principles relate to the six principles underpinning adult safeguarding as defined by the Care Act 2014:

4.4. **Empowerment** – People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and give informed consent.

- 4.4.1. This means that we will take into account an adult's wishes when assessing what actions to take following a safeguarding concern being raised. People have complex lives and being safe is only one of the things they want for themselves. In addition, everyone has different preferences, histories, circumstances and lifestyles and 'being safe' will mean different things to different people.
- 4.4.2. All adults have the right to make decisions about themselves (unless they lack the capacity to do so – see the Adult Safeguarding Procedure), including with respect to their exposure to risk, and have these decisions help inform what support they are given. This includes the right to make decisions which may be considered unwise.
- 4.4.3. Information relating to a safeguarding concern must always be shared with the DSO or appropriate responsible person, but all adults have the right to withhold or withdraw consent for allegations of abuse to be taken further. In some circumstances concerns can still be reported to external organisations without consent having been granted – see Sections 4.8.4 and 4.9.3.

- 4.5. **Prevention** – It is better to take action before harm occurs.
- 4.5.1. This means that we commit to promoting a culture of awareness and understanding, where abuse will not be tolerated, reports are taken seriously and acted on appropriately, and everyone can feel safe.
 - 4.5.2. Adults have a right to information to assist them to stay safe. We will make our safeguarding policies and procedures available on our website, and wherever possible we will support people to safeguard themselves.
 - 4.5.3. Ri representatives will undergo criminal record checks and/or checks against the barred list for adults where appropriate to their role. These checks will be repeated at set intervals or if changes to their role requires a higher level of check. Further details are included in the Adult Safeguarding Procedure.
 - 4.5.4. The Ri is committed to funding all required safeguarding checks and training, and any other costs required to ensure that the safeguarding of adults at risk can be properly undertaken across the Ri and Ri activities.
- 4.6. **Proportionality** - The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- 4.6.1. This means that while the first priority is to help to keep an adult at risk safe, any decision taken to assist an adult at risk must be proportionate. Actions should cause the least possible intrusion and restriction of their rights and freedoms to control their own lives and make their own decisions.
- 4.7. **Protection** - Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- 4.7.1. This means that we are committed to providing a safe environment where all adults are included, listened to and treated with respect. We recognise that some adults at risk may face additional barriers to sharing concerns or disclosures due to a variety of factors and we therefore commit to equitable treatment throughout our safeguarding practices and our work with adults.
 - 4.7.2. All safeguarding concerns or allegations of abuse must be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately. The Adult Safeguarding Procedure gives guidance for anyone who has any concerns and an overview of the processes which will be followed by the responsible staff members and/or trustees when a concern is reported to them.
 - 4.7.3. In some cases, an Ri representative may have concerns relating to poor practice. Poor practice is not in itself abuse, but can create environments where abuse or harm can more easily take place. These concerns can be discussed with the DSOs but depending on circumstances may fall under alternative reporting arrangements, such as the Ri's Whistleblowing Policy.
- 4.8. **Partnership** - Services offer local solutions through working closely with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
- 4.8.1. This means that we are committed to supporting the timely sharing of information with relevant authorities with consent when there are concerns about an adult at risk's welfare and contributing to effective partnership working between all those involved.
 - 4.8.2. No single person can have a full picture of an adult at risk's needs and circumstances, but for individuals to receive the right help at the right time, everyone has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information appropriately and taking prompt action.

- 4.8.3. We expect professionals to act on our concerns and we will escalate concerns where we are not satisfied that they have been taken seriously.
- 4.8.4. Confidentiality must be maintained so that information is handled and disseminated on a need-to-know basis only.
- Information held about individuals by the Ri will only be disclosed to others either with their consent or when there is a duty to do so, such as if there is a risk of harm to another adult at risk or a child; if the disclosure is in the public interest; or if there is a duty to report the actions of an Ri representative.
 - The DSO (or other responsible person if the DSO is not contactable) is responsible for assessing whether information can be shared with external organisations if consent has not been granted – see the Adult Safeguarding Procedure for more details.

4.9. **Accountability** - Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

- 4.9.1. This means that all Ri representatives are expected to follow the Adult Safeguarding Procedure throughout their activities for and on behalf of the Ri, and are accountable for their actions and decisions relating to safeguarding.
- 4.9.2. The DSO or an appropriate representative must be involved in all safeguarding referrals and is accountable to the Ri Safeguarding Committee and Trustees.
- 4.9.3. If a decision is made to share information without consent this will be undertaken with all possible care and sensitivity, following the guidance laid out in the Adult Safeguarding Procedure.

5. Context

- 5.1. This policy and the associated Adult Safeguarding Procedures are underpinned by the following legislation and guidance:
- [The Care Act 2014](#)² and [statutory guidance](#)³ (updated in line with the Health and Care Act 2022)
 - [The Equality Act 2010](#)⁴
 - [The Human Rights Act 1998](#)⁵
 - [The Mental Capacity Act 2005](#)⁶
- 5.2. Where Ri representatives are undertaking activities outside of England, the relevant regional or national legislation will also apply. They should contact the DSO for advice on any inconsistencies between the applicable regional guidance and this policy.

6. Governance and Responsibilities

- 6.1. The Ri Trustees have ultimate responsibility for safeguarding, even though certain aspects of the work are delegated to staff. The Audit and Risk Committee monitors safeguarding

² <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance#safeguarding-1> (updated 1 June 2023)

⁴ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

⁵ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents>; see also <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights/human-rights-act>

⁶ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/9/contents>

activity, training, vetting checks and risks, and the Chair of this committee reports quarterly to the Board of Trustees.

- 6.2. In line with safeguarding best practice, the Ri has appointed a Lead Trustee for Safeguarding, a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and at least one Deputy DSO.
- 6.3. The DSO is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day safeguarding needs of the Ri, supported by the deputy DSO(s) and a Safeguarding Working Group which is chaired by an Ri Director. The Safeguarding Working Group Terms of Reference are approved by the Ri Directorate.
- 6.4. Appointment as DSO does not signify sole responsibility for providing a full service for adult safeguarding. This is accomplished through the totality of the Ri's safeguarding arrangements.
- 6.5. The DSOs are the first point of contact for anyone who needs advice or has concerns about the safeguarding and protection of adults at risk and are there to support everyone regarding safeguarding. There are robust reporting structures in place in case a DSO is not the most appropriate person to speak to regarding a particular concern – see the Adult Safeguarding Procedure for more details.
- 6.6. This policy and the associated Adult Safeguarding Procedure should be reviewed at least annually or when legislation changes.
 - The DSO is responsible for writing, reviewing and disseminating the policy and procedure, alongside the Safeguarding Working Group.
 - The Audit and Risk Committee are responsible for reviewing the policy and procedure.
 - The Board of Trustees are responsible for approving the policy and procedure.
 - All Ri representatives are responsible for understanding and adhering to the policy and Adult Safeguarding Procedure.

7. Relevant policies, procedures and forms

- 7.1. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following Ri policies, procedures, and forms:
 - Adult Safeguarding Procedure
 - Adult Safeguarding Report Form
 - Data Protection Policy
 - EDIA Policy
 - Modern Slavery Policy
 - Social Media Policy
- 7.2. Those also working with children, as well as staff members, Trustees, Committee members and contractors, should also read:
 - Child Safeguarding Policy, Procedure and accompanying report form
- 7.3. For Staff, Trustees, Committee members and contractors, the following policies also apply:
 - Trustee Code of Conduct (Trustees and Committee members only)
 - Anti-Fraud and Bribery Policy including money laundering
 - Computer Acceptable Use and Bring Your Own Device Policies

- Disclosure in the Public Interest (Whistleblowing) Policy
- Equal opportunities and Dignity at Work Policy
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

8. Monitoring

All individuals associated with the Ri are asked to confirm that they have read this policy and share the Ri's commitment to safeguarding, with confirmations monitored by the DSOs.

Definitions:
An Ri representative is anyone who works for or with the Ri, including staff, Trustees, Committee Members, volunteers, contractors and other contributors.
An adult at risk is any adult who has care or support needs (whether or not these are being met), is at risk of or is experiencing abuse or neglect, and as a result of their needs is unable to adequately protect themselves against this (risk of) abuse or neglect.
Ri activities are any activities which take place in association or partnership with or for the Ri, no matter where they are located or if they are online.
A disclosure is when a child or adult reports abuse or concerns to you.