

# The Snowflake Trust Limited

## Operating The Snowflake Winter Night Shelter

### ADULT SAFEGUARDING POLICY

#### 1. Aims

This policy has been drawn up in recognition that there is an ever-present risk of abuse happening to vulnerable adults. It is our duty to prevent abuse and to take effective action when abuse is suspected or disclosed. Abuse is unacceptable in all circumstances. This policy sets out the steps that the Snowflake Night Shelter (Snowflake) has taken to safeguard Guests who are at risk of abuse and neglect and the responsibilities of all Volunteers in cases of suspected abuse or neglect.

#### 2. Good Practice Statement

The best defence against abuse is the strength of values incorporated in the Snowflake culture. The Snowflake Trustees believe that all Guests are entitled to be treated with dignity, courtesy and respect regardless of their age, race, gender, gender orientation or ability.

Safety is embedded within good sound practice and the growing ability of Guests to protect themselves, make their views known and be listened to.

#### 3. Vulnerable Adult

For the purposes of this policy a vulnerable adult is defined as

- a person of 18 years and over who is, or may be, eligible for community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and
- who is or may be unable to take care of him/herself, or
- unable to protect him/herself against significant harm or exploitation.'

#### 4. Abuse

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human or civil rights by any other person or persons. It is a single or repeated act or omission, occurring within a personal or other close relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm to a vulnerable adult.

Abuse can take many forms:

- **Physical** This could be someone hitting, kicking, pulling hair, pinching or shaking you, or being given too much or too little medication. This could also be assault.

- **Financial** This could be someone stealing from you, or forcing you to pay for other people's things, or when you don't have a say in how your money is being spent. This could also be theft or fraud.
- **Emotional** This could be someone calling you names, bullying you, or treating you like a child, being ignored, or blamed for things that you did not do, being shouted at, or threatened.
- **Sexual** This could be being touched, or forced to touch someone else, or made to have sex with someone when you don't want to. This could also be rape or sexual assault.
- **Neglect** This could be if you are hungry, cold, do not have clean clothes to wear, or are denied access to things that you need.
- **Discrimination** When you are treated unfairly because of your race, age, gender, gender orientation, disability, sexuality or background.

## 5. Prevention and Risk Management

- **Prevention** Snowflake employs various strategies to control the risk of abuse and target the causes and opportunities for abuse and neglect. These include:
  - Communication with Snowflake staff and Volunteers about the nature of abuse and the Snowflake Safeguarding Policy
  - Embedding the principles of safeguarding into volunteer practice
  - Risk assessment for every Guest by way of the interview process before they stay at the shelter.

Prevention strategies are specifically targeted at staff and Volunteers working with adults at risk. The Targeted Prevention Strategies include:

- **Volunteer Recruitment** - Snowflake aims to carry out Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks on all Trustees, staff and Venue Co-ordinators to ensure that any convictions indicated do not present a risk to the safety of the Guests. Other Volunteers are subject to a reference prior to allocation to the 'active' list.
- **Policies and Procedures** Volunteers are expected to be followed - Snowflake reinforces expectations of Volunteers through rules for conduct and practice and particularly in respect of confidentiality and procedures for the prevention of violence
- **Volunteer support and information** - All Volunteers will receive support from their Venue Co-ordinator and the Trustees (initially via the Project Manager). Training will be offered and information on policy and procedures will be available to all.
- **Alerting**  
Any Volunteer may be alerted to the possibility of abuse. Alerting could mean that an act of abuse is witnessed, a person is saying that abuse has occurred, or suspicions are raised.

- All Volunteers are responsible for reporting concerns, disclosures or possible indications of abuse to the Shift Leader/Venue Coordinator.
  - Information about abuse must never be withheld intentionally as failure to disclose may have an influence on the future safety of an individual.
  - Disclosures and concerns should not be treated as confidential.

Remember that as a volunteer with Snowflake you must never promise to keep secrets for a Guest. You must never be alone with a Guest, and anything you hear or see which causes you concern should in the first instance be reported to your Shift Leader or Venue Coordinator, who in liaison with the Project Manager will consider referring information on to the most appropriate agency.

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