



Exeter Pride Safeguarding Policy

Monitoring and review

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Approved by:	Exeter Pride Committee Members
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Date	Amendments	Who by

Introduction

Exeter Pride is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all people (including children, young people and vulnerable adults) engaged in the breadth of its activities. The purpose of this policy is to outline the duty and responsibility of trustees, committee members and volunteers working on behalf of Exeter Pride in relation to the protection of individuals and groups (including children, young people and vulnerable adults) from abuse. Exeter Pride is also committed to proactively safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its members, as well as taking all reasonable steps to ensure that those who come into contact with Exeter Pride and its activities

do not come to any harm. All individuals have the right to be safe from harm and should be able to live free from fear of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

The key objectives of this policy are:

- To protect individuals (including children, young people and vulnerable adults) who engage with Exeter Pride.
- To explain the responsibilities Exeter Pride and its members, volunteers and trustees have in respect to safeguarding its service users from abuse.
- To provide members of Exeter Pride with information regarding what abuse is and how to identify it.
- To provide a clear procedure to be implemented in the case of a safeguarding concern being raised.

Responsibilities

Exeter Pride acknowledges that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all trustees, committee members and volunteers will agree and adhere to Exeter Pride's safeguarding policy. Exeter Pride has a trained Designated Safeguarding Lead who has ultimate responsibility over safeguarding procedure and will ensure the proper implementation of the charity's safeguarding policy and adherence by all members to this. The Designated Safeguarding Lead must be a committee member and have sufficient training or be in the process of receiving such training in safeguarding to carry out their duties. The Designated Safeguarding Lead has a duty to report serious incidents to the relevant regulatory bodies in consultation with trustees, ensure accurate and secure record keeping and the up-to-date training and background checks (Disclosure and Barring Service) of trustees, committee members and volunteers where needed.

Trustees

Trustees have a legal responsibility to comply with the charity's governing documents, to work in the best interests of the charity, to ensure the charity is carrying out its purpose for public benefit and to hold the charity accountable. This includes ensuring adherence to the safeguarding policy and being mindful to protect the welfare of its members. All trustees will be DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checked regardless of the likelihood of direct interaction with children, young people and vulnerable adults as well as other barring checks in PVG in line with the Charity Commission's guidance. Trustees will consult with the Designated Safeguarding Lead if a safeguarding concern has arisen and support them in making the necessary referrals to the Charity Commission.

Committee Members & Volunteers

All committee members and volunteers agree to adhere to the charity's safeguarding policy and undertake necessary training and background checks. Committee members and volunteers will report all safeguarding incidents to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Legal Framework

The guidance laid out in this policy reflects the principles and procedures contained within the following pieces of legislation.

The equalities act 2010 protects discrimination based on protected characteristics including age, race, disability, sexuality, sex, gender reassignment, religion, pregnancy and marital status.

The Children Act 1989 outlines the legal responsibility of local authorities to safeguard children and the need for speed in responding to concerns relating to abuse.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA) created a framework for whistle blowing across the private, public and voluntary sectors. The Act provides almost every individual in the workplace with protection from victimisation where they raise genuine concerns about malpractice in accordance with the Act's provisions.

Recognising Safeguarding Concerns

A safeguarding concern may arise in several ways. The following are examples of how a safeguarding concern may come to your attention:

- You may witness abuse or harm taking place.
- You may receive a disclosure from a member of Exeter Pride or someone working with Exeter Pride.
- You may notice behaviour which gives rise to suspicion that someone is at risk of or has been harmed.

Recognising harm or risk of harm can be complicated and it is not Exeter Pride's responsibility to decide whether harm has occurred but to pass on this information to the relevant professional bodies.

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship (family members, relatives, professional staff, paid care workers, volunteers, other service users, neighbours, friends, associates and people who deliberately exploit vulnerable people, and strangers) and it may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

Exeter Pride recognises that all members have a duty to look out for signs of abuse and harm and act if there are concerns. You should therefore ensure that you are aware of the risks of abuse and harm which include:

Physical abuse: Including hitting, slapping, punching, burning, misuse of medication, inappropriate restraint.

Indicators include: any injury not fully explained by the history given; injuries inconsistent with the lifestyle of the vulnerable adult; bruises or clusters of injuries forming regular patterns or reflecting the shape of an article; burns; multiple fractures.

Sexual abuse: Including rape, indecent assault, inappropriate touching, exposure to pornographic material, abuse of a position of trust.

Indicators include: significant change in sexual behaviour or attitude; poor concentration; vulnerable adult appears withdrawn, depressed or stressed; choosing to spend the majority of time alone; bruising; sexually transmitted diseases.

Psychological abuse: Including belittling, name-calling, threats of harm, humiliation, intimidation, isolation and conversion therapy.

Indicators include: change in appetite; low self-esteem, deference, passivity and resignation, excessive compliance; unexplained fear, defensiveness, ambivalence; emotional withdrawal; sleep disturbance.

Financial abuse: Including stealing, selling assets, fraud, misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Indicators include: unexplained sudden inability to pay bills or maintain lifestyle; unusual or inappropriate bank account activity; withholding money; vulnerable adult does not have access to own financial documents e.g. cheque book; person managing financial affairs is evasive or uncooperative

Neglect and acts of omission: Including withholding the necessities of life such as medication, warmth and food. It also includes ignoring medical and physical needs and failing to intervene in behaviour known to be harmful to the individual.

Indicators include: person appears to be withdrawn, agitated or anxious; they are inappropriately or improperly dressed; they may display physical or verbal outbursts which are out of character; depression may be identified; they may appear confused, are overly subservient or anxious to please; there may be a sudden and dramatic change on behaviour and personality, including sexualised behaviour, self-harm, eating disorders, excessive drinking.

Discriminatory abuse: Including racist, sexist, biphobic, transphobic, homophobic, ableist language, attitude and actions that discriminate on the basis of specific characteristics. This includes the protected characteristics but are not exclusive to these.

Indicators include: lack of respect shown to an individual; signs of a sub-standard service offered to an individual; repeated exclusion from rights afforded to citizens such as health, education, employment, criminal justice and civic status.

Institutional abuse: including regimented routines and cultures, unsafe working practices, lack of person-centred care carried out by an organisation.

Indicators include: inappropriate or poor care; misuse of medication; lack of respect shown to the vulnerable adult; failure to ensure appropriate privacy or personal dignity; lack of flexibility and choice; lack of adequate procedures; lack of personal clothing or possessions; unnecessary or inappropriate rules and regulation; lack of stimulation and diversion interests.

Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Members should be aware that whilst some forms of abuse are easy to recognise other situations may be more subtle and have a complicated set of dynamics at work. It is important that children and vulnerable adults are protected from abuse. All complaints, allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously and follow the agreed procedure. This procedure must be followed whenever an allegation of abuse is made or when there is a suspicion that a vulnerable adult or child has been abused. Promises of confidentiality should not be given as this may conflict with the need to ensure the safety and welfare of the individual. A full record shall be made as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and any other relevant information.

This should include information in relation to the date, the time, the place where the alleged abuse happened, your name and the names of others present, the name of the complainant and, where different, the name of the adult who has allegedly been abused, the nature of the alleged abuse, a description of any injuries observed, the account which has been given of the allegation. Accounts should be factual and state what was seen and heard without any suggestion or exaggeration.

It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. This is a task for the professional protection agencies, following a referral from the Designated Safeguarding Lead at Exeter Pride. Such agencies include Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub, Adult Social Care and the Police. Exeter Pride is committed to reporting all serious incidents to the Charity Commission for England and Wales via a serious incident report and/or to the Office of the Charity Regulator in line with their respective procedures.

If a safeguarding incident is witnessed or brought to your attention you must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will assess the level of risk following the Charity Commissions guidance.

Severe Risk

Immediate escalation to the Police where needed and to the Trustee Board for consideration of reporting under Serious Incident Reporting Procedure. A beneficiary or other individual connected with the charity's activities has/alleges to have suffered serious harm, for instance;

- Allegation that a trustee or volunteer has been sexually assaulted by another trustee or volunteer.
- Allegation that a member has physically or sexually assaulted or neglected a service user whilst engaging with Exeter Pride.
- Exeter Pride failed to carry out DBS/PVG or equivalent checks which would have identified that a member of staff or trustee was disqualified in law (under safeguarding legislation) from holding that position.
- Breach in safeguarding policy/procedure presents risk of legal action, and/or high risk there is a likelihood of reputational damage and loss of trust for Exeter Pride.

High Risk

Possible referral to the Police, incident report for Board of Trustees required outlining a factual account of the incident and response by the charity at the time. If the threshold for Significant Harm is met, this requires a referral to the Charity Regulators including if:

- Charity's response was not in line with policy and procedures.
- Risk of reputational damage/loss of trust for Exeter Pride.

Moderate Risk

Threshold for external referral met and the incident response was appropriate, signposting support and ensuring the safety of the victim actioning any external referrals to appropriate bodies.

Actioned by Designated Safeguarding Lead, referral made in consultation with Board of Trustees.

Low Risk

Threshold for external referral not met. Concern documented and reported to Designated Safeguarding Lead then appropriate signposting to support services provided and referrals made to appropriate bodies if needed. Actioned by Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Any serious incident reports to the Charity Regulators must be reviewed and approved by the board of trustees.

Responding to a safeguarding concern

In the event of an incident or disclosure at any Exeter Pride Event or during the running of the charity:

DO

- Make sure the individual is in a safe space and safeguard the situation, where possible.
- Think hard about why you suspect abuse is taking place.
- Listen to what the service user is saying and concentrate on what you are observing.
- Assess whether emergency services are required and if needed call them.
- Offer support and reassurance.
- Ascertain and establish the basic facts.
- Make careful notes and obtain agreement from them.
- Ensure notation of dates, time and persons present are correct and agreed.
- Take all necessary precautions to preserve forensic evidence.
- Follow correct procedure notifying the Designated Safeguarding Lead for Exeter Pride.
- Explain the procedure to the individual making the allegation and the need to pass on this information,
you cannot keep this confidential.
- Remember the need for ongoing support.

DON'T

- Arouse the suspicion of the person(s) who you suspect may be abusing the service user.
- Confront the alleged abuser.
- Be judgmental or voice your own opinion.
- Be dismissive of the concern.

- Investigate or interview beyond that which is necessary to establish the basic facts.
- Disturb or destroy possible forensic evidence.
- Consult with persons not directly involved with the situation.
- Ask leading questions.
- Assume information.
- Make promises.
- Ignore the allegation.
- Elaborate the information in your notes.

Whistleblowing & complaints

Exeter Pride strongly encourages members to feel confident to report any concern they may have regarding other members of the charity or of the charity itself to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The public Interest Disclosure Act protects workers from victimisation when they do blow the whistle and all concerns will be dealt with professionally and in line with the Chairty's procedures protecting the whistle blower. Exeter Pride also acknowledges members right to raise any concerns with the Charity Commission if they do not feel able to speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and / or if the concern is about the Designated Safeguarding Lead. This can be done through the Gov Website <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity>.

Referral contacts

Vulnerable adult referrals:

0345 1551 007 (Monday to Thursday 8.00 am to 5.00 pm, Friday 9.00 am to 4.30 pm and Saturday 9.00 am to 5.00 pm).

Outside of the hours above or on bank holidays call the Emergency Duty Service on 0345 6000 388.
safeguardingadultseast-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

Child referrals:

If you are concerned about the safety of a child in Devon or want to speak to someone, or if you are a child worried about your own safety, you can contact our Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) by:

- completing an online [request for support form](#)
- calling us on 0345 155 1071
- emailing mashsecure@devon.gov.uk and giving as much information as you can

Serious Incident referral to the charity Commission:

<https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/report-a-serious-incident>

If anyone is at immediate risk contact the police on 999.