



# Safeguarding Policy

## 1. What is Safeguarding

Safeguarding is work to prevent and stop abuse and neglect (arising from actions or lack of actions of another person or persons). Abuse is a violation of a person's physical, emotional or mental integrity by any other person.

## 2. Our commitment to safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults

We recognise that the welfare and interests of children and vulnerable adults are paramount in all circumstances. We aim to ensure that regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation, or their socio-economic background, all children and vulnerable adults involved with activities sponsored by or managed BALGA :

- i) have a positive and enjoyable experience in a safe environment;
- ii) are protected from abuse whilst participating in activities taking place under the auspices of BALGA.

We acknowledge that some children and adults, including disabled children and adults, those with mental health problems or those from ethnic minority communities, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

## 3. Our approach to safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults

We will:

- i) designate a BALGA Committee Member as Safeguarding Lead.
- ii) promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people who come on site for legitimate purposes (i.e. children and young people who accompany an adult who currently has an allotment on an allotment site managed by BALGA. (Currently, you must be aged 18 or over to qualify for an allotment plot managed by BALGA).
- iii) ensure everyone on the Association Committee and anyone we contract to undertake work on our site understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding;
- iv) ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents or concerns being raised. This includes abuse and attempted abuse;
- v) ensure that all concerns of abuse and all aspects of safeguarding concerns are reported through the appointed Safeguarding Lead, or in their absence the Chair of the Association, to those organisations (such as the Police, Social Services) who have the lead and specific authority in their area;
- vi) prevent the deployment of unsuitable individuals by ensuring that Committee members who are, or are likely to have, regular unsupervised contact with children

and vulnerable adults involved in BALGA activities or access to individual member records have a recent (12 months) Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance;

vii) require Committee Members to sign a written commitment to this policy;

#### **4. Recognising Abuse**

1) Although safeguarding is particularly focussed on children and on adults with reduced physical or mental capacity, anyone could be at risk in vulnerable circumstances. There is therefore overlap in the scope of BALGA policies between safeguarding and policies on Equality and Diversity, Health and Safety and rules concerning behaviour set out in BALGA's written constitution.

2) Abuse is a misuse of power and control that one person has over another. It can be the result of an act or a failure to act. It includes situations when a vulnerable person is subject to or forced into behaviour or situation they have not consented to, or can't consent to. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm or exploitation. It can take many different forms including:

- **Physical:**

This includes assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, restraining someone or only letting them do certain things at certain times. It includes domestic abuse and so-called 'honour' based violence.

- **Sexual:**

This includes rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, taking sexual photographs, making someone look at pornography or watch sexual acts, sexual assault or sexual acts the adult didn't consent to or was pressured into consenting. 'Grooming behaviour' means gaining the trust of someone (particularly adults with learning disabilities and children) in preparation for sexual abuse.

- **Psychological:**

This includes emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, depriving someone of contact with someone else, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, putting pressure on someone to do something, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or support networks.

- **Financial or material:**

This includes theft, fraud, internet scamming, putting pressure on someone about their financial arrangements (including wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions) or the misuse or stealing of property, possessions or benefits.

- **Discriminatory :**

This includes types of harassment or insults because of someone's race, gender or gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

- 3) Abuse might not fit comfortably into any of these categories, or it might fit into more than one. Abuse can be carried out by one adult at risk towards another. This is still abuse and should be dealt with. The adult at risk who abuses may also be neglecting him/herself which could also be reason for a safeguarding referral.

## 5. Reporting procedure

### a) *Reporting concerns about yourself if you experience harm within BALGA*

Contact the BALGA safeguarding lead on [safeguarding@balga-online.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@balga-online.co.uk). This account is monitored daily by the designated Safeguarding Lead. If you would prefer, please contact another Committee Member who will help you raise the issue to the Safeguarding Lead. If the Safeguarding Lead is implicated or you think has a conflict of interest, then you can contact the Chairman of the Association for further guidance. If you are in immediate danger or need immediate medical assistance, contact the emergency services 999. You can also contact the Police, Social Services, your doctor or other organisations that can provide information and give help and support.

### b) *Reporting concerns about others.*

You may be concerned about harm to another person because of something you have seen or heard, information you have been told by others or because someone has confided in you about things that are happening or have happened to them.

You should not keep safeguarding concerns to yourself. If you have concerns and/ or you are told about possible or alleged abuse, poor practice or wider welfare issues you must contact the BALGA Safeguarding Lead as soon as you can by emailing [safeguarding@balga-online.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@balga-online.co.uk). If the Safeguarding Lead is implicated or you think has a conflict of interest, then report to the Association Chairman. If you are concerned about harm being caused to someone else, please follow the guidance below.

- It is not your responsibility to prove or decide whether someone has been harmed or abused. It is, however, everyone's responsibility to respond to and report concerns they have.
- If someone has a need for immediate medical attention call an ambulance on 999. • If you are concerned someone is in immediate danger or a serious crime is being committed, contact the Police on 999 straight away. Where you suspect that a crime is being committed, you must involve the police.
- Remember to be person centred/make safeguarding personal. If it will not put them or you at further risk, discuss your concerns with the person and ask them what they would like to happen next. Inform them that you must pass on your concerns to your Safeguarding Lead. Do not contact the person before talking to your Safeguarding Lead if the person allegedly causing the harm is likely to find out.

Remember not to confront the person thought to be causing the harm.

## 6. Responding to a Direct Disclosure

If someone indicates that they are being harmed or abused, or information is received which gives rise to concern, the Committee Member receiving the information should:

- Take it seriously.
- Stay calm.
- Listen carefully to what is said, allowing the person to continue at their own pace,
- Be sensitive.
- Keep questions to a minimum, only ask questions if you need to identify/ clarify what the person is telling you.
- Reassure the person that they have done the right thing in revealing the information.
- Ask them what they would like to happen next.
- Explain what you would like to do next.
- Explain that you will have to share the information with the Safeguarding Lead
- Ask for their consent for the information to be shared outside the organisation.
- Make an arrangement as to how you/the Safeguarding Lead can contact them safely.
- If appropriate, help them to contact other organisations for advice and support (e.g. Police, Domestic Abuse helpline, Victim Support).
- Act swiftly to report and carry out any relevant actions.
- Record in writing what was said using the person's own words as soon as possible. It is important **not** to:
  - Dismiss or ignore the concern.
  - Panic or allow shock or distaste to show. It is important **not** to:
    - Make negative comments about the alleged perpetrator.
    - Make assumptions or speculate.
    - Come to your own conclusions.
    - Probe for more information than is offered.
    - Promise to keep the information secret.
    - Make promises that cannot be kept.
    - Conduct an investigation of the case.
    - Confront the person thought to be causing harm.
    - Take sole responsibility.
    - Tell everyone

## **7. How we will take action**

Once a concern has been passed to the BALGA's Safeguarding Lead, they will coordinate the response for BALGA in line with the Safeguarding Procedure outlined in Appendix A. The Safeguarding Lead will keep clear records of decision making, actions taken, and the outcomes achieved. They will also collect feedback from the person who is at risk.

## **5. How we will communicate our safeguarding policy and procedures**

The policy and procedures will be made available to all BALGA members via the BALGA website in addition to a copy available for inspection at our BALGA members' shop. Summary guidance will be posted on allotment notice boards.

***Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.***

## **9. Contacts**

- BALGA Designated Safeguarding Lead:  
Alison Gentle Phone 079 218 958 28  
Email [safeguarding@balga-online.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@balga-online.co.uk)
- HCC child abuse - 0300 123 4043
- HCC adult abuse - 0300 123 4042
- Hertfordshire Safeguarding Emergency Line - 0300 123 4042.
- NSPCC Helpline – 0800 136 663

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## Appendix A

### Procedure for Safeguarding Lead

