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Blooming Gardeners CIC

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

## What is safeguarding?

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' right to live in safety, free from harm, abuse and neglect. It refers to the measures undertaken to protect vulnerable adults who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm.

In Blooming Gardeners, we understand it to mean protecting people, including vulnerable adults, from harm that arises from coming into contact with our personnel and activities.

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect people, particularly vulnerable adults, from any harm that may be caused by their contact with Blooming Gardeners. This includes harm arising from:

* The conduct of staff or other personnel associated with Blooming Gardeners
* The design and implementation of Blooming Gardeners programmes and activities

This policy lays out the commitments made by Blooming Gardeners and informs staff and others of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

## Scope

This policy covers:

* All staff contracted by Blooming Gardeners
* Other associated persons whilst engaged in work or visits related to Blooming Gardeners, including but not limited to the following:

volunteers, directors, consultants, freelancers, patrons, contractors and visitors

This policy does not cover:

* Sexual harassment in the workplace – this is dealt with under Blooming Gardeners’ Equal Opportunities Policy
* Safeguarding concerns in the wider community not perpetrated by Blooming Gardeners staff, volunteers or associated persons. Any such concern disclosed by a Blooming Gardener attendee will be referred to the appropriate agency.

# *Policy Statement*

# Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility:

Everyone has a right to live a life free from abuse, neglect and fear. Safeguarding work aims to

* prevent abuse from taking place
* make enquiries quickly and effectively when abuse is taking place or is suspected. All reports of abuse will be treated seriously. There will be zero tolerance of abuse. Blooming Gardeners will ensure that adequate systems and procedures are in place for employees, gardeners, volunteers and others to raise a concern with a board member in safety.
* take appropriate action

The following principles will inform the way in which we work with vulnerable adults:

* Empowerment - people will be supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and give informed consent. The focus will be on identifying and trying to meet the person's desired outcomes
* Prevention - it is better to take action before harm occurs
* Protection - support and representation for the vulnerable adult
* Proportionality - use of the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented
* Partnership - safeguarding vulnerable adults involves effective joint working between agencies and professionals with different roles and expertise.
* Accountability and transparency in the approach to safeguarding

Blooming Gardeners addresses safeguarding throughout its work in three ways - prevention, reporting and response.

# Prevention

## Blooming Gardeners responsibilities:

Blooming Gardeners will:

* Ensure all staff and volunteers have a PVG check carried out
* Ensure all staff and volunteers are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy
* Design and carry out all its activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their contact with Blooming Gardeners. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our activities is gathered, stored and communicated
* Implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff, volunteers and other personnel
* Ensure staff and volunteers receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organisation
* Ensure support and supervision are in place for those who are working with vulnerable adults
* Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly
* Ensure that this policy is kept under review

## Responsibilities of Blooming Gardeners personnel:

Blooming Gardeners recognises that it is the responsibility of each one of its staff, paid and unpaid, to prevent the neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse of vulnerable adults and to report any abuse discovered or suspected.

Blooming Gardeners staff, volunteers and associated personnel must not:

* Subject anyone to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect
* Sexually abuse or exploit anyone
* Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual activity.
* Engage in any sexual relationships with clients, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics

Additionally, Blooming Gardeners staff, volunteers and associated personnel are obliged to:

* Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy
* Be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to vulnerable adults
* Be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect
* Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by a Blooming Gardeners staff member, volunteer or associated person to the appropriate person
* Share and help to analyse information so that an assessment can be made of an individual's needs and circumstances
* Contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the individual's welfare;
* Take part in regular review of the outcomes for the individual against specific plans
* Work co-operatively with parents and/or other carers unless this is inconsistent with ensuring the individual's safety.

# Reporting

Blooming Gardeners undertakes to ensure that staff, volunteers, associated persons and the communities we work with are able to report safeguarding concerns in safe, appropriate and accessible ways. Any staff, volunteers or associated persons reporting concerns or complaints through formal whistleblowing channels will be protected by Blooming Gardeners Whistleblowing Policy.

Blooming Gardeners also undertakes to accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies.

# Response

* Blooming Gardeners will follow up safeguarding concerns and reports according to legal and statutory obligations and its own policy and procedures.
* Blooming Gardeners will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff, volunteers and associated persons found in breach of policy.
* Blooming Gardeners will offer support to survivors of harm caused by staff, volunteers or associated persons, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out (such as an internal investigation). Decisions regarding support will be led by the survivor.

# Procedures

### How to report a safeguarding concern

First consider if immediate action is needed to protect the vulnerable adult and whether emergency services should be called.

In talking to the person suspected of being abused, the person who identified the concern should ***not***

* promise to keep secrets
* ask investigative questions or make judgemental comments
* ask leading questions
* destroy any evidence
* make decisions on their own

When a concern is identified, the following information should be collected:

* is there an immediate or future risk?
* what are the person's views and has consent to proceed been explored?
* when and where did the incident take place?
* who was involved?

The complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Contact. If a staff member or volunteer does not feel comfortable reporting to the Safeguarding Contact (for example if they feel that the report will not be taken seriously or if that person is implicated in the concern) they may report to any other appropriate Blooming Gardeners board member.

The Safeguarding Contact will be responsible for determining the appropriate course of action, including whether to contact the parents or carers of the individual concerned, social work services or the police. (S)he will keep a record of the disclosure or concern, the response and whether a referral is made to an outside agency.

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and its management should be shared on a need to know basis only and should be kept secure at all times.

Blooming Gardeners recognises its responsibility to implement, maintain and regularly review procedures, which are designed to prevent and to be alert to such abuse.

**Safeguarding Contact: Mr M. Herd 01862 892047**