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# SAFEGUARDING POLICY:ADULTS AT RISK & CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

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**WIDOWS  
EMPOWERMENT  
TRUST**

15/05/2028

THE WIDOWS EMPOWERMENT TRUST

Biz Space business park Wilson house, Monsall Manchester, M40 8WN

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The Care Act 2014 details the statutory framework for **adult safeguarding**, setting out the responsibilities of local partners and requiring each local authority to establish a Safeguarding Adults Board. In Manchester, the arrangements for adult safeguarding are overseen by the **Manchester Safeguarding Partnership (MSP)** and are set out in the Manchester Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements 2024.

The **Children Act 1989 and 2004**, supported by statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)*, set out the legal duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of **children and young people under the age of 18**.

This **Safeguarding Policy** sets out how The Widows Empowerment Trust (the “Charity”) will implement arrangements to reduce harm where possible to both **adults at risk** and **children/young people**. This Policy applies to the CEO, all trustees, employees, volunteers and other Charity personnel acting on behalf of the Charity.

The Policy outlines how the Charity will work with service users, families, agencies, and partner organisations to protect and promote the welfare of both adults and children.

The welfare of those at risk whether adult or child is paramount regardless of age, faith, religion, culture, ethnicity, race, disability, gender, or sexual identity. Everyone has the right to be protected from abuse and harm.

The Charity recognises that some groups may be at **heightened risk of abuse**, including those with disabilities, high levels of dependence, communication needs, or other vulnerabilities. The Charity will take extra care to look out for signs of abuse in these groups, ensuring their needs are not neglected due to barriers in communicating concerns.

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All suspicions and allegations of abuse, whether involving an adult at risk or a child/young person, will be taken seriously and responded to immediately, with appropriate action taken.

This Policy applies to:

1. CEO;
2. Trustees;
3. Employees (including Senior Managers and Supervisors):
4. Volunteers; and
5. Any other Charity personnel than may come into contact with adults at risk in their role.

#### **A. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- Protect adults at risk who receive support or access services, or events run by the Charity.
- Provide a safeguarding framework that the Charity can use to ensure the group approach to safeguarding adults at risk is appropriate.
- Provide trustees, employees, and volunteers with information on safeguarding in line with current legislation.
- Set out the Charity's responsibilities towards the safeguarding of adults at risk **and children/young people under 18** *who receive support or access services or events run by the Charity.*”
- Contribute towards sustainable communities and improve the quality of life for those people who live, work, and visit the area.

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## **B. SCOPE**

This Policy and procedure is designed to enable everyone who works (and volunteers, where applicable) for the Charity to understand and carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding both:

- **Adults at risk** who need care and support and are at risk of, or experiencing, abuse or neglect; and
- **Children and young people (under 18)** who may be at risk of, or experiencing, abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

It applies to all trustees, employees, volunteers, contractors, and anyone acting on behalf of the Charity who may come into contact with adults at risk or children/young people through our services, activities, or placements.

## **C. DEFINITIONS**

For the purpose of this Policy the following definitions will apply:

1. **Adults at risk:** term that refers to any adult aged 18 years or over who:
  - a. has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs)
  - b. is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
  - c. as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.
2. **Safeguarding:** term that refers to our duty to protect people's rights (especially adults at risk) to live in safety, free from harm and responding appropriately when required. The term refers to people, the Charity, and other organisations working together to prevent and stop the risk and experience of abuse or neglect, whilst ensuring that people's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action.

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3. **Abuse:** Abuse and neglect take many forms. Many situations cannot always be neatly categorised as they may involve a combination of abusive elements. The Charity should not be constrained in their view of what constitutes abuse or neglect, and should always carefully consider the circumstances of the individual case.

- a. The main forms of abuse set out in the Care Act 2014 (Chapter 14) are as follows:
  - i. Physical abuse
  - ii. Domestic violence
  - iii. Sexual abuse
  - iv. Psychological abuse
  - v. Financial or material abuse
  - vi. Modern slavery
  - vii. Discriminatory abuse
  - viii. Organisational abuse
  - ix. Neglect and acts of omission
  - x. Self-neglect

## **2 PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED WHEN RESPONDING TO AN ALLEGATION OR SUSPECTED ABUSE**

The minimum requirement for all staff and volunteers is that they know how to:

1. Recognise, record and report abuse
2. Take any immediate action to prevent further harm
3. Access help and advice for the adult at risk

These guidelines follow four procedural stages:

1. Alerting
2. Reporting
3. Investigating
4. Monitoring

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### **A. ALERTING**

Member of staff or volunteers working with adults at risk could be alerted to the possibility of abuse or neglect.

Alerting could mean that you witness an act of abuse, a person saying that abuse has occurred, or suspicions raised by indicators listed in these guidelines.

It is important for the person that is alerted to keep a detailed record of the initial cause for concern, noting down exactly what the complainant or alleged victim has said or indicated to you or what you have witnessed. Any such records must clearly separate factual information from expression of opinion. The member of staff must be aware that the report may be required later as part of legal or disciplinary action.

If the disclosure is made by a Service User, staff must accept what the person is saying and never make a decision without consulting with their line manager to ignore or suppress a disclosure because it is thought to be fantastic or improbable. Do not make comments other than to be comforting and sympathetic.

If an adult is in immediate danger, you should ring the emergency services or contact the police on 999.

### **B. REPORTING ABUSE WITHIN THE CHARITY**

The disclosure received and any suspicion of abuse should be reported to the CEO verbally and in writing. In the following course a written account will be requested on a form. Urgent concerns can be reported verbally to a session leader.

Whistle-blowers will be supported throughout to ensure their concerns are met to the full extent. They will be kept informed of progress into the matter and will be kept anonymous to whom the allegation is made against.

If the situation does not require emergency assistance you should report your concerns to:

**Protect confidential whistleblowing advice helpline**

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020 3117 2520

## **Manchester City Council**

Telephone: 0161 234 5001 (open 24 hours a day, seven days a week)

Email: [mcsreply@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:mcsreply@manchester.gov.uk)

Online through: Sign-Video

Manchester City Council and its partners have a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) that screens all contacts concerning the welfare or safety of a or adult.

The Manchester MASH operate a consultation line for partner agencies – the number is 0161 219 2895 and is available between 8.45am and 4.30pm on weekdays. Outside of these hours the Emergency Duty Service (EDS) team will respond to urgent safeguarding referrals, including overnight, weekends and bank holidays.

All concerns about the safety or welfare of an adult must go through the Manchester City Council Contact Centre.

If there is an **immediate risk to life**, or a **serious injury**, or a **serious crime** has been committed, the police must be contacted direct as set out below:

**Immediate response**- For incidents concerning an adult at risk where there is immediate danger to life, risk of injury or a crime being committed, dial 999.

**High** - For incidents taking place against an adult at risk where there is no immediate risk to life or property, but a police response is required as soon as practicable due to the seriousness of the incident and/or potential loss of evidence, dial 101.

**Routine**- For incidents that have taken place against an adult at risk where that person wishes to report a crime please dial 101 and specify that a crime has been committed and that the person concerned wishes to make a complaint of crime.

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### **C. CONSENT**

It is always essential in safeguarding to consider whether the adult at risk is capable of giving informed consent in relation to the investigation. If they are, their consent should be sought. This includes an awareness of the risks of disclosing that an investigation is being undertaken.

Where an adult at risk with capacity has made a decision that they do not want action to be taken and there are no public interest or vital interest considerations, their wishes must be respected.

The adult at risk must be given information and have the opportunity to consider all the risks and fully understand the likely consequences of that decision over the short and long term.

If, after discussion with the adult at risk who has mental capacity, they refuse any intervention, their wishes will be respected unless:

- there is a public interest, for example, not acting will put other adults or children at risk
- there is a duty of care to intervene, for example, a crime has been or may be committed

However, consent may need to be considered in relation to the adult at risks participation in activity that may be abusive. If consent to abuse or neglect was given under duress, for example, as a result of exploitation, pressure, fear or intimidation, this apparent consent should be disregarded with a safeguarding adults investigation going ahead in response to the concern that has been raised.

### **D. SUPPORT FOR VOLUNTEERS RECEIVING DISCLOSURES**

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A volunteer who receives a disclosure will be offered the choice of how involved they wish to remain with the given service user. If they wish to remain involved, they will be given training on how to respond and continue to be aware of the issue while maintaining their relationship and continuing to care for the service user's wellbeing.

#### **E. MAKING A REFERRAL**

- Adults Practitioners should complete the online form available on the MCC website: [secure.manchester.gov.uk](https://secure.manchester.gov.uk)
- & Families Practitioners should complete a multi-agency referral form for social work support: [Request for Social Work Support \(issued Nov 2017\) WORD VERSION](#) OR [Request for Social Work Support \(issued Nov 2017\) PDF VERSION](#)

The [Request for social work support – guidance](#) should also be consulted.

(Note: this form was formerly known as the 'Multi-agency Safeguarding Referral Form')

The consultation line enables agencies considering making a referral to discuss any concerns they may have for a with a senior social worker within the MASH. The social worker will reduce the [Levels of Need \(multi-agency Decisions Framework\)](#) and where the threshold for social work intervention is not met the Social worker will be able to have an informed discussion with the referrer as to why not, and where appropriate advise that an [Early Help Assessment](#) is undertaken, or direct the professional to a local Early Help Hub.

PLEASE DO NOT EMAIL A REFERRAL TO THE MSB INBOX– this may result in a delay in your referral reaching the correct team.

#### **Early Help Practitioner Zone**

Guidance and resources for practitioners, including the Early Help Assessment Form and Levels of Need Framework; and how to contact the Early Help Hubs can be found in the Early Help Practitioner Zone on the MCC website [Help & Support Manchester hsm.manchester.gov.uk](https://hsm.manchester.gov.uk)

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Practitioners can find the [full list of forms](#) in our resource hub – this includes a link to [allegations management](#), [SAR referrals](#) and [SCR referrals](#).

#### **F. PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS AGAINST STAFF MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS**

We approach the volunteer by indicating the reason for the discussion without putting any complainant at risk by revealing their identity. After a discussion with them on a one-to-one basis we would come to a resolution after some time for decision-making. The volunteer would be informed in writing of the outcome.

### **3 INFORMATION SHARING AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

There is a duty to report all serious safeguarding incidents to the Charity Commission.

Legally staff can share confidential information with the service users' consent. If the information is in the public interest, it is legal to share the information without the service users' consent.

Staff should always record the reason for disclosing information and whether disclosure was made with or without consent.

#### **A. FAILURE TO SHARE INFORMATION CAN PUT INDIVIDUALS AT SERIOUS RISK**

- Confidentiality is a serious consideration for all public services but within the confines of Safeguarding arrangements information can be safely shared. Responsible information sharing plays a key role in enabling services to protect victims of adult abuse and in extreme cases saves lives.
- Articles 2 and 3 of the Human Rights Act 1998 place an obligation on public authorities to protect people's rights to life and their freedom from torture, inhumane and degrading treatment. Meeting these obligations may necessitate lawful information sharing. However, all information sharing should be done on a case-by-case basis.

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- In all cases, the worker involved should discuss the proposal to share information with, and seek approval from, their Line Manager. The reasons for sharing information, what information is shared and who this has been shared with should be recorded.

## **B. CONFIDENTIALITY**

- The legal principle that the “welfare of the adult at risk<sup>1</sup> is paramount” means that considerations of confidentiality which might apply to other situations in the Charity should not override the right of the individual to be protected from harm.
- Any concern for the welfare of an adult at risk must be reported immediately to one of the Safeguarding Leads and further action taken as required.
- The Society will make sure that all records will be limited to those who require access or have a specific interest in the issue. Records will be stored securely and destroyed within a reasonable time frame, unless there is a need to keep them.

## **4 THE POLICY**

The guiding principles in our approach to safeguarding adults at risk are based upon the principles and values that govern how safeguarding procedures should be implemented. These reflect the most recent national guidance and the MSP.

### **EMPOWERMENT**

- We will support and encourage individuals to make their own decisions and informed consent.
- We will support people to recognise abuse and what they can do to keep themselves safe.
- We will encourage people to report abuse and make it easy to do so.
- Where appropriate we will consult individuals before we act.
- We will publicise and promote our services which could support those who are at risk.

<sup>1</sup> Language updated from ‘vulnerable adult’ to reflect changes implemented by the Care Act 2014.

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## PREVENTION

- We understand that it is better to take action before harm occurs.
- Staff and volunteers will be familiar with the six principles underpinning adult safeguarding.
- Staff and volunteers will be trained to recognise the symptoms of abuse and be able to respond effectively and appropriately to safeguarding concerns.
- We will proactively identify customers who may be at risk.
- Recruitment practices will reflect safer recruitment guidance.
- We will make appropriate enquires concerning suspected abuse or neglect.

## PROPORTIONALITY

- Safeguarding concerns will be responded to proportionately by investigating and taking the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- We will ensure we have effective ways of assessing and managing risk.

## PROTECTION

- Where appropriate we will work with partner agencies to support and protect those reporting or being abused.
- We will use all relevant tools or powers available, according to our best professional judgment.
- We will ensure that suspected criminality is reported quickly to the police.
- We will respond to and monitor each reported case of abuse or neglect until a satisfactory outcome is achieved.
- We will promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults concerned partnership.
- We will actively engage with Manchester Safeguarding Adult's Board (MSAB) and Strategic Housing.

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## PARTNERSHIP

- We will align services with the wider Government and Local Authority guidance and initiatives.
- We will incorporate learnings from Serious Case Reviews.
- We will develop effective safeguarding networks.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

- We will have clear Adult Safeguarding operational policies, procedures and information sharing protocols.
- We will treat all reports of abuse and neglect as confidential, adhering strictly to our data protection policy and data protection laws.
- We will reflect local and national best practice.
- Our safeguarding approach will be regularly audited and evaluated.
- We will use feedback from customers to review how we deliver our services.
- We will understand our customers' needs and monitor any emerging issues/themes.

# Children & Young People Safeguarding

## Introduction

The Widows Empowerment Trust recognises its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people (anyone under the age of 18) who come into contact with the charity through our services, activities, volunteering opportunities, or student placements.

This section sets out how we will meet our legal duties under the **Children Act 1989 and 2004**, the **Education Act 2002**, and the statutory guidance **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)**.

## Policy Statement

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- The welfare of the child is paramount (Children Act 1989, Section 1).
- All children and young people, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion, belief, or sexual orientation, have the right to protection from harm.
- We will take all safeguarding concerns seriously and respond promptly and appropriately.

## Scope

This section applies to all trustees, staff, volunteers, and contractors who may work with, or come into contact with, children and young people through the charity.

## Definitions

- *Child/Young Person*: Anyone under the age of 18.
- *Child Safeguarding*: Protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of health or development, ensuring safe and effective care, and enabling children to have the best life chances.
- *Abuse Types*: Physical, emotional, sexual abuse, neglect, child sexual exploitation (CSE), child criminal exploitation (CCE), online abuse, bullying, and radicalisation (Prevent duty).

## Procedures When Concerns Arise

If a safeguarding concern involves a child or young person:

1. **Recognise** the concern.
2. **Respond** by listening carefully and reassuring the child. Do not promise confidentiality.
3. **Record** the details factually, including time, date, and names.
4. **Report** immediately to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**, Ese Idiegbe.
5. The DSL will make a referral to **Manchester City Council Children's Services (MASH)** or the Police if necessary.

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## Referral contacts for children:

- Manchester City Council Children's Services (MASH): **0161 234 5001** (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) . Consultation line (0161 219 2895, EDS out of hours).
- If a child is at immediate risk of harm, call **999**
- For non-emergencies where police involvement is required, call **101**

## Consent

Unlike adults, a child's welfare is paramount even if they do not consent to sharing information. If there is a safeguarding concern, the DSL may share information with statutory services without parental consent if this is necessary to protect the child.

## Responsibilities

- The **DSL (Ese)** is the first point of contact for all concerns.
- All staff and volunteers are required to complete safeguarding training relevant to children and young people.
- Safer recruitment practices will be followed for anyone working with children and young people (see Recruitment Policy).

## Information Sharing

Concerns will be shared on a need-to-know basis in line with GDPR, but never withheld where a child is at risk. Records will be kept securely.

## Monitoring & Review

This section will be reviewed alongside the Adults at Risk Safeguarding Policy every 3 years or sooner if legislation or guidance changes.

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## 5 **RESPONSIBILITY**

The CEO, Oyovwe Kigho is responsible for ensuring that this Policy complies with legislative requirements. All trustees, employees, volunteers, and where appropriate contractors are responsible for implementing this Policy.

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

The Lead Safeguarding Person for the Charity is **Ese Idiegbe**. The DSL has overall responsibility for safeguarding and protecting adults at risk and children/young people within the organisation. The DSL is the first point of contact for all safeguarding concerns, disclosures, and referrals.

#### **Responsibilities include:**

- Acting as the **main point of contact** for safeguarding concerns, ensuring these are responded to promptly and appropriately.
- Receiving, recording, and assessing safeguarding concerns or disclosures, and deciding on the appropriate action in line with Charity policy and statutory guidance.
- Referring cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant statutory agencies (Manchester City Council MASH, Police, etc.).
- Ensuring that concerns are escalated to the CEO and trustees when appropriate.
- Keeping secure, accurate, and up-to-date safeguarding records.
- Providing **advice and support** to staff and volunteers on safeguarding matters.
- Ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures are effectively implemented and reviewed regularly.
- Liaising with the Manchester Safeguarding Adults Board and other external safeguarding partners as required.
- Ensuring all staff and volunteers receive **appropriate safeguarding induction and training**.

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- Promoting a culture where safeguarding is recognised as everyone's responsibility.
- Acting as a source of support for adults at risk and children/young people, ensuring they are listened to and their wishes are respected, while balancing duty of care.
- Deputising responsibility to the CEO in the DSL's absence, ensuring continuity of safeguarding leadership.

### **Contact details (DSL):**

- **Email: [Safeguarding@widowsempowerment.com](mailto:Safeguarding@widowsempowerment.com)**
- **Phone: 07479916948**

## **6 MONITORING, REVIEW AND EVALUATION**

- Operations Committee will monitor performance relating to safeguarding.
- The Charity's board will receive updates on live cases and notifications of Serious Case Reviews.
- This Policy will be reconsidered against all relevant legislative changes and will be reviewed every three years as a matter of course.

## **7 LEGISLATION**

This Policy and any subsequent procedures have been written in accordance with relevant guidance and legislation, including:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Protection of Children Act 1999
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991)
- Data Protection Act 2018 (replaces 1998 Act, aligns with UK GDPR)
- Equality Act 2010

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- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018, updated 2023)
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Mental Health Act 2007
- Care Act 2014 (and statutory guidance for implementation)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Manchester Safeguarding Standard (2011)
- Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency Safeguarding Policy – Manchester Safeguarding Adults Board (2010)

### **Schedule of Responsibilities**

#### **1. Trustees**

- a. To ratify this Policy.
- b. To have an awareness of the issues relating to service users and abuse.
- c. To read and understand Charity Commission Guidance ‘Safeguarding and Protecting People for Charities and Trustees 2017’.
- d. To ensure there are measures in place to protect people who come into contact with the Charity from harm.

#### **2. [Senior Managers]**

- a. To create and review this Policy.
- b. To authorise variations in the Policy in local circumstances.
- c. To authorise and monitor any actions resulting from an investigation.
- d. To decide upon what information should be shared with individuals and agencies during the course of and following an investigation into abuse.

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- e. To deploy staff in a way that deters collusive relationships and opens up opportunities for disclosure.
- f. To enforce this Policy and the procedures.
- g. To report any alerted allegation or suspicion of abuse to the registering authority.
- h. To carry out an initial assessment of any allegation or suspicion of abuse.
- i. To report any allegation or suspicion of abuse to the Chief Executive, Police where appropriate, Social Services and service user's family or 'significant other'.
- j. To know the MSAB procedures for reporting and investigating allegations or suspicions of abuse for each service within their responsibility.
- k. To identify any potential conflict that exists between the Charity and the local authority procedures.
- l. To assess the 'safety' of services by observing and listening to service users and looking for positive and negative indicators of performance as part of their visits to services.
- m. To produce a written report following an investigation for the Chief Executive and Trustees together with any recommendations for action.
- n. At the discretion of the Chief Executive, a Senior Manager may be made responsible for carrying out a staff disciplinary investigation into abuse.

### **3. [Supervisors]**

- a. To implement this Policy and the guidelines within their service.
- b. To set standards and practice within the service which promote a 'safe service' from abuse.
- c. To ensure there are written aims and objectives for the service.
- d. To immediately notify a Senior Manager or the Chief Executive of any alerted allegation or suspicion of abuse. To be aware of the Local Authority policy and procedures for reporting and investigating an allegation or suspicion of abuse.

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#### **4. All Employees and Volunteers**

- a. To personally uphold the Charity's Code of Conduct.
- b. To be aware of abuse as an issue and to alert their or another Manager of any concerns, suspicions or allegations of abuse.
- c. To maintain a service user's safety and wellbeing at all times. They should secure the service user's immediate safety where possible and ensure immediate medical attention if required.
- d. To ensure their duty to alert overrides any desire to keep a confidence.
- e. To make clear and detailed written records when abuse is disclosed, witnessed or alleged.

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## Acknowledgment

The employee/volunteer below understands the safeguarding procedures for both adults at risk and children/young people within the Charity. Furthermore, the employee or volunteer agrees to abide by the procedures outlines in this Policy for the duration of their professional relationship with The Widows Empowerment Trust.

**I have read and understand the Safeguarding Policy: Adults at Risk and Children/Young People.”**

[illegible]


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