

Safeguarding Policy for stABILITY

CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Policy Statement
3. Scope
4. Purpose
5. Commitments
6. Roles & Responsibilities
7. Legislation
8. Definitions

1. Introduction

stABILITY is committed to Safeguarding Adults in line with national legislation and relevant national and local guidelines. We will safeguard adults by ensuring that our activities are delivered in a way which keeps all adults safe whilst taking part in our day care provision, staying with us overnight and in the wider community.

2. Policy Statement

stABILITY is committed to promoting the safety, wellbeing and rights of all adults who use our day care and respite services. We believe that every adult has the right to live free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and to be treated with dignity and respect at all times.

We recognise our duty of care under the **Care Act 2014** and our responsibility to work in partnership with **Dorset Council**, **Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board**, and other relevant agencies to protect adults at risk from harm. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and all staff, partners and volunteers at stABILITY share a collective duty to report concerns and act promptly when an adult may be at risk.

stABILITY will:

- Create a person-centred environment where adults are safe, valued and listened to.
- Support adults to make their own choices and decisions, in line with the **Mental Capacity Act 2005**.
- Respond swiftly and effectively to any safeguarding concerns, disclosures or allegations.
- Work transparently and in partnership with adults, families, carers and professionals.
- Promote a culture of vigilance, respect and empowerment across all areas of our service.

We will ensure that all staff and partners understand their safeguarding responsibilities, receive regular training, and follow the procedures set out in this policy.

Safeguarding at stABILITY is led by the **Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs): Angela Lambert and Vicky Gordge**.

3. Scope

This policy applies to **all aspects of stABILITY's services**, including day care, respite stays, community activities, and events organised or supported by stABILITY. It covers all adults who come into contact with our organisation, whether as members, visitors, family members, staff, partners, contractors, or volunteers.

The safeguarding responsibilities outlined in this policy apply to:

- **All staff**, including permanent, temporary, and agency staff.
- **Partners** of stABILITY (Angela Lambert, Vicky Gordge & Connor Doherty).

- **Volunteers** and anyone working on behalf of stABILITY.
- **External professionals** and visitors engaging with our members on site or in the community.

This policy applies to all forms of abuse or neglect as defined in the **Care Act 2014**, including physical, emotional, sexual, financial, organisational abuse, neglect, self-neglect, domestic abuse, modern slavery, and discriminatory abuse.

It also applies to situations where adults may be at risk due to reduced capacity, vulnerability, or dependency on others for care and support.

The procedures and guidance in this document are to be followed whenever there is a safeguarding concern involving:

- A member using stABILITY's services,
- A staff member, partner, or volunteer, or
- A safeguarding issue arising during an activity organised by stABILITY, on or off site.

All safeguarding concerns must be managed in line with this policy and the **Dorset Council Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures**.

4. Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the commitment of stABILITY to safeguard adults and to ensure that everyone involved in stABILITY is aware of:

- * The legislation, policy and procedures for safeguarding adults.
- * Their role and responsibility for safeguarding adults.
- * What to do or who to speak to if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of an adult within the organisation.

5. Commitments

stABILITY is committed to upholding the highest standards of safeguarding practice to ensure that every adult in our care is protected, respected, and supported to live free from harm.

We will:

- Promote a culture of safety and vigilance where safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Value and listen to adults who use our services, ensuring their voices and wishes are central to all safeguarding decisions ("Making Safeguarding Personal").
- Act promptly when concerns arise, ensuring that all allegations or suspicions of abuse are taken seriously and reported without delay.
- Work in partnership with Dorset Council, the Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board, and other relevant agencies to protect adults at risk.
- Empower adults to make their own informed choices and decisions, in accordance with the **Mental Capacity Act 2005**.
- Provide training and supervision to ensure all staff, partners, and volunteers understand their safeguarding roles and know how to respond appropriately.
- Maintain clear procedures and records, ensuring that concerns are reported, monitored, and reviewed effectively.
- Ensure safer recruitment practices are followed for all staff and volunteers to minimise the risk of abuse.
- Respect confidentiality and only share information when it is necessary to protect an adult at risk.
- Continually review and improve our safeguarding practices through regular policy reviews, training updates, and reflective learning.

Our commitment is to provide a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment where all adults are treated with dignity, equality, and respect.

6. Role & Responsibilities

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility at stABILITY. All staff, partners, and volunteers have a duty to recognise, respond, record, and report any safeguarding concerns about adults who may be at risk of abuse or neglect.

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)

Angela Lambert and **Vicky Gordge** are the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) for stABILITY. They are responsible for:

- Leading on all safeguarding matters within the organisation.
- Providing guidance and support to staff when concerns arise.
- Deciding whether a concern should be referred to **Dorset Council Adult Safeguarding Team** or the **Police**.
- Ensuring all safeguarding concerns are recorded accurately, securely, and reviewed.
- Maintaining up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding legislation and local procedures.
- Liaising with external agencies, including the Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board, as required.
- Ensuring all staff receive safeguarding induction and ongoing training.
- Reviewing safeguarding incidents to identify learning and improve practice.

In the absence of the DSLs, any staff member who receives a safeguarding concern must take **immediate action** to protect the adult and, if necessary, contact emergency services or the **Dorset Council Adult Safeguarding Team** directly.

All Staff and Volunteers

Every staff member and volunteer has a duty to:

- Understand and follow this safeguarding policy and procedure.
- Be alert to signs of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- Treat all adults with dignity and respect.
- Record and report concerns immediately to the DSLs (or directly to safeguarding services if urgent).
- Take immediate action to ensure safety if an adult is in danger, including calling **999** where appropriate.
- Participate in safeguarding training and refresh their knowledge regularly.
- Maintain confidentiality, sharing information only on a "need to know" basis.
- Support adults in expressing their views and wishes in line with **Making Safeguarding Personal** principles.

Visitors, Contractors, and External Professionals

Visitors and external professionals working on site or supporting stABILITY activities are expected to:

- Follow stABILITY's safeguarding procedures while on the premises.
- Report any safeguarding concerns immediately to a member of staff or the DSLs.
- Cooperate with safeguarding investigations or actions where relevant.

7. Legislation

stABILITY recognises that the local authority has the main legal duty to safeguard adults at risk, and we are committed to working with them and our local Safeguarding Adults Board.

This policy, and the practices within it, are based on the relevant legislation and government guidance, including:

- The Care Act 2014; and
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (which protects people's right to make their own decisions in any situation where they can do so); and
- The Human Rights Act 1998; and
- The principles of Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP)

We base our practices on the principles laid out in the **Care Act 2014** i.e.

- Empowerment – People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
- Prevention – It is better to act before harm occurs.
- Proportionality – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- Protection – Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- Partnership – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
- Accountability – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

Under the **Human Rights Act 1998**, everyone has the right to live free from abuse and neglect.
<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights/human-rights-act>

Mental Capacity Act 2005:

All adults must be assumed to have capacity to make their own decisions and be given all practicable help before anyone treats them as not being able to do so. Consideration must always be given as to whether any other adults with care and support needs are at risk of abuse harm or neglect and appropriate action must be taken regardless of the individual's capacity. Where an adult is found to lack capacity to make a decision; then any action taken, or any decision made for, or on their behalf, must be made in their best interests.

Principles of Making Safeguarding Personal:

Person-led – safeguarding should start with listening to the adult, understanding their views, wishes, feelings, and desired outcomes. **Outcome-focused** – success is measured not just by whether procedures were followed, but by whether the adult feels safer and that their quality of life has improved. **Empowering** – adults should be supported to make choices and stay in control as much as possible, including decisions about risks. **Proportionate & respectful** – safeguarding interventions should be the least intrusive and most respectful of the person's life, rights, and independence. **Collaborative** – agencies work with the adult and (where appropriate) their family, friends, and advocates, rather than doing things “to” or “for” them.

8. Definitions

According to the **Care Act 2014** (applicable in England), the Section 42 three-part test considers:

An **adult at risk** (sometimes referred to as a vulnerable adult) is an individual aged 18 years and over who:

- has needs for care and support (whether the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and;
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect, and;
- As a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons. It can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it. Any or all of the following types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence, omission or ignorance. Often the perpetrator of abuse is known to the adult and may be in a position of trust and power.

Types of abuse

The Dorset & BCP Multi-agency Safeguarding Adults Policy defines abuse as:

Physical abuse: including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.

Domestic Abuse: (including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; 'honour' based violence.) The cross-government definition of domestic abuse and abuse is: any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

psychological

physical

sexual

financial

emotional

Controlling Behaviour: Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive Behaviour: Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim. [additional point - Coercive behaviour refers to a pattern of acts that control or dominate an individual, isolating them, exploiting their resources, and restricting their freedom to act or make choices. This behaviour is a form of abuse that can include, threats, humiliation and intimidation and it may lead to fear of violence or have a substantial adverse effect on daily activities.]

Forced Marriage: Although forcing someone into a marriage and/or luring someone overseas for the purpose of marriage is a criminal offence, the civil route and the use of 'Forced Marriage Protection Orders' is still available. These can be used as an alternative to entering the criminal justice system. It may be that perpetrators will automatically be prosecuted where it is overwhelmingly in the public interest to do so, however victims should be able to choose how they want to be assisted.

Exploitation by radicalisation: The Home Office leads on the anti-terrorism PREVENT strategy, of which CHANNEL is part (refer to www.gov.uk for information). This aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting extremism. All local organisations have a role to play in safeguarding people who meet the criteria. Contact should be made with Dorset Police regarding any individuals identified who present concern regarding violent extremism.

Sexual abuse: refers to rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting or does not have the mental capacity to consent.

Sexual exploitation: The term "sexual exploitation" means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. It may be very important in specific cases to be clear about the context in which concerns about sexual exploitation arise. Some individuals may have been groomed as children or young people, whilst others may be engaged as sex workers so are at risk because they are threatened or coerced, have drug dependencies and/or mental health needs. People with learning disabilities may be led into harm because of perceptions they are being offered friendships.

Financial or material abuse: including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Modern Slavery: Modern Slavery includes human trafficking, forced labour and debt bondage, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, domestic servitude, descent-based slavery, child labour, slavery in supply chains, and forced and early marriage.

Human Trafficking: The definition of human trafficking is the illegal movement of people through force, fraud or deception with the intention of exploiting them, typically for the purposes of forced labour or sexual exploitation. Men, women and children are forced into a situation through the use (or threat) of violence, deception or coercion. Victims may enter the UK legally, on forged documentation or secretly under forced hiding, or they may even be a UK citizen living in the UK who is then trafficked within the country but should not be confused with people smuggling, where the person has the freedom of movement upon arrival in the UK. There is no 'typical' victim of human trafficking and modern slavery. Victims can be men, women and children of all ages, ethnicities, nationalities and backgrounds. It can however be more prevalent amongst the most vulnerable members of society, and within minority or socially excluded groups.

Discriminatory abuse: including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

Internet/cyberbullying: can be defined as the use of technology, and particularly mobile phones and the internet, to deliberately hurt, upset, harass or embarrass someone else. It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with the technology offering the bully another route for harassing their victim or can be simply without motive. Cyberbullying can occur using practically any form of connected media, from nasty text and image messages using mobile phones, to unkind blog and social networking posts, or emails and instant messages, to malicious websites created solely for the purpose of intimidating an individual or virtual abuse during an online multiplayer game.

Organisational abuse: This includes neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in a person's own home. This may be a one-off incident or on-going ill-treatment. It can refer to neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

Neglect and acts of omission: This includes ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, equipment, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating

Self-neglect and hoarding: This includes a broad spectrum of behaviour. The Statutory Guidance defines self-neglect as: "a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding". Self-neglect is recognised as the failure or unwillingness by an individual to meet their own basic care needs required to maintain health. It should be noted that self-neglect or hoarding may well not prompt a Section 42 Enquiry. An assessment should be made on a case by case basis. A decision on whether a response is required under safeguarding will depend on an adult's ability to protect themselves by controlling their own behaviour. There may come a point when they are no longer able to do this, without external support.

9. Reviewing policy and procedures

This policy and its procedures will be reviewed every year.

Review Date	October 2026
Reviewed By	V Gordge
Signature	V Gordge
Next Review Date	October 2026
File Location	stABILITY Drive

Useful links

Care act- <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>

Dorset Safeguarding adults policy and procedures – <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/care-and-support-for-adults/dorset-safeguarding-adults-board/dorset-safeguarding-adults-board>

Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board “Report a Concern” - <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/reporting-a-concern>

Carer and support statutory guidance-
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/506202/23902777_Care_Act_Book.pdf

Prevent- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

Information sharing-<https://www.scie.org.uk/care-act-2014/safeguarding-adults/sharing-information/keymessages.asp>

I can confirm that I have read and understood the stABILITY Adult Safeguarding policy & procedures document. I intend to always adhere to the policy during my work with stABILITY.

Full Name	Role	Signature	Date