

Fen Edge Voices Community Choir

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

INTRODUCTION

Fen Edge Voices is a community choir that welcomes all adults aged 18 or over. The choir is open to the wider community and is not specifically targeted at people with care and support needs; however, we recognise that some members may have these needs and may be considered adults at risk.

AIM

The aim of this policy is to create a safe and supportive environment in which all adults, particularly adults at risk, are protected from harm, abuse, and exploitation.

An adult at risk is someone who:

- Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting those needs);
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- As a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy is underpinned by UK legislation, primarily the Care Act 2014.

The Care Act 2014 sets out six key safeguarding principles:

- Empowerment – People are supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and give informed consent.
- Prevention – It is better to take action before harm occurs.
- Proportionality – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- Protection – Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- Partnership – Services work with local communities, which have a role in preventing, detecting, and reporting neglect and abuse.
- Accountability – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

IMPLEMENTATION

This policy applies to all members, volunteers, committee members, and any other individuals involved with Fen Edge Voices Community Choir. It covers rehearsals, performances, activities, and any other events or engagements organised by the choir.

Safeguarding is the responsibility of all choir members and the committee. The policy will be available on our website, and all members of our choir community are expected to read and adhere to it.

The named Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) is:

REPORTING PROCEDURES

The Care Act guidance identifies the following types of abuse that adults may experience:

- Physical abuse
- Domestic violence or abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological or emotional abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational or institutional abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Self-neglect

Any concerns or allegations must be taken seriously and reported immediately by:

- Contacting the Designated Safeguarding Officer with details of the concern or allegation;
- Providing a clear and factual account, including any evidence or witnesses where possible; and
- Maintaining confidentiality and sharing information only with those who need to know.

If the Designated Safeguarding Officer is unavailable, concerns can be reported directly to Cambridgeshire County Council Adult Safeguarding:

- Telephone: 0345 045 5202
- Online: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/adults/report-a-concern-about-an-adult>

In an emergency, dial 999.

What to do if an adult at risk tells you they have been abused or neglected

- Do your best to ensure the immediate safety of the adult at risk.
- Listen carefully and observe what is said and how it is said.
- Ask only necessary questions to clarify whether there is a safeguarding concern.
- Record, as soon as possible, exactly what has been said to you, using the individual's own words where appropriate.

Keep in mind:

- Keep an open mind about what you see and hear.
- Explain what you will do next in a way that is appropriate to the person's understanding.
- Do not promise to keep information secret or confidential.
- Remember that reporting concerns is not a betrayal of trust.

DEALING WITH CONCERNS OR ALLEGATIONS

The Designated Safeguarding Officer will:

- Assess the concern and decide on the appropriate course of action;
- Ensure that all actions taken are recorded and stored securely and confidentially; and
- Liaise with external agencies as required, such as Adult Social Care or the police.