

**Hillfields Community Garden
Safeguarding Policy Adults and Children**



Date adopted: December 2024

Date for review: December 2025

HCG Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Sarah Rogers (Director) 07709 053290 (or in case of emergency 07904211039) email ceo@hillfieldscommunitygarden.co.uk

HCG safeguarding alternative contact: Becca Mills (Chair of Trustees) 07872 315975
chair@hillfieldscommunitygarden.co.uk

Organisational contact: info@hillfieldscommunitygarden.co.uk

1. Introduction: What is safeguarding?

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, well-being and human rights so as to enable them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

As a Charitable organisation comprising different roles, we understand it to mean protecting people - in particular, 'at risk' adults and children – while they participate in any activity or event which we organise, and where they will be in close contact with our staff and volunteers.

Adult (anyone 18 years old or over) safeguarding duties apply to any adult who:

- Has needs for care and support.
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect.
- As a result of those care and support needs are unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

Child safeguarding duties apply to all children under the age of 18.

Examples of adults with care and support needs include:

- A person with a physical disability, a learning difficulty or a sensory impairment.
- Someone with mental health needs, including dementia or a personality disorder.
- A person with a long-term health condition.
- Someone who misuses substances or alcohol to the extent that it affects their ability to manage day-to-day living.
- An older person.

Further definitions relating to safeguarding are provided in the glossary.

2. Policy Statement

Hillfields Community Garden (HCG) believes that everyone we come into contact with, regardless of age, gender identity, disability (physical or learning), sexual orientation, ethnicity or neurodiversity has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. HCG are determined

to ensure that all necessary steps are taken so that all children, young people and adults (including vulnerable adults) who participate in HCG activities are protected from harm. HCG will not tolerate abuse and exploitation either by or to its staff and volunteers, or associated personnel. HCG commits to address safeguarding throughout its work, through the three pillars of prevention, reporting and response.

HCG runs regular groups and larger community events that work with children (with their parents and carers) and adults (including vulnerable adults). Staff and volunteers will be working directly and in regular contact with these groups. It is not our responsibility to diagnose abuse but it is very important that we act when we are concerned or uneasy about something. Even if a concern is very small it might be a crucial part of a bigger picture.

HCG subscribes to the NSPCC

(<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/policy/nspcc-policy-summary-mandatory-reporting-child-abuse.pdf>) and SCIE (<https://www.scie.org.uk/>) definitions of abuse, which are defined as when someone harms a child or adult. It can be physical, sexual, psychological, financial, or involve neglect. Children and adults who experience abuse may struggle to speak out. We acknowledge that it's vital as an organisation we are able to recognise the signs of abuse which can include, physical abuse, domestic violence or abuse, sexual abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, financial or modern slavery, discriminatory abuse, organisational or institutional abuse and self-neglect.

At HCG the designated contact person for all safeguarding issues is the Safeguarding Lead (see Contacts listed in this policy). Their responsibilities are:

- To be familiar with this policy and to implement it.
- To obtain training on safeguarding for children and vulnerable adults and communicate key messages on this to the wider team and ensure it is part of the training for new volunteers.
- To liaise with Bristol City Council or other appropriate agencies regarding child or vulnerable adult protection and welfare issues.
- To ensure that any incidents of inappropriate behaviour, allegations or disclosures are recorded and a confidential record of action taken, liaison with other agencies and the outcome is kept.

3. Training support

Anyone working with HCG who is supporting or leading groups with children or vulnerable adults should complete relevant Safeguarding Training prior to commencing. A list of Training Courses available can be found in our Training Reference Guide.

4. Types of abuse

Abuse may take many forms and may range from an isolated incident to on-going systematic abuse. It falls into these categories:

Physical Abuse Financial/material Emotional/Psychological Abuse Institutional Sexual Abuse Discriminatory	Signs to be aware of are numerous and include: - Bruising, especially in a place which doesn't correspond to normal childhood injuries from	- Age inappropriate sexual behaviour and language; - Often seeming hungry at the beginning of the day; - Regular tiredness beyond
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Neglect Domestic Forced marriage Female Genital Mutilation Modern Slavery Human trafficking Hate Crime Sexual Exploitation	sport etc.; - Fear of going home at the end of the day; - Physical repulsion at human touch; - Lack of eye contact in normal conversations; - A general lack of hygiene and unkempt appearance over a length of time; - Withdrawal from peers or staff as a change from previous relationships; - Inappropriate and extraordinary attention seeking from adults;	what is usual; - Using punitive or derogatory language to describe themselves; - Deliberate self-harm or thoughts of suicide ideation - Depression - Over-sedation - Loss of sleep - Unexpected changes in behaviour - Unexplained shortage of money - Unexplained gifts, money, new accommodation
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None of these signs, on its own, indicate that abuse is happening. If two or more exist together the concern is greater and you should be more mindful.

5. Prevention

HCG will:

- Ensure all staff and volunteers have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities under this policy.
- Design and undertake all its programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with HCG.
- Ensure information about individuals involved in our activities is gathered and communicated sensitively and complies with all GDPR requirements.
- Enable staff and volunteers to attend Safeguarding training where possible and appropriate to their role or tasks being carried out (if a voluntary role).
- Ensure that staff and volunteers do not work alone when they are running sessions with the public. Or where this is not possible to avoid, the lone worker ensures they have a HCG contact on duty in case of emergency.
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly according to this policy.
- Ensure anyone who may now, or in the future, be working with and responsible for children or vulnerable adults where carers are not present will have an enhanced DBS check before such work can begin.

Staff responsibilities:

- Be aware of safeguarding issues and attend Safeguarding training where possible/appropriate.
- Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding issues arising and promotes wellbeing for all.

- Report any concerns or suspicions regarding any safeguarding issue promptly to the HCG Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Declare any unspent convictions to allow the HCG management to determine the suitability of roles on offer.

Volunteer responsibilities:

- Attend safeguarding training sessions (where relevant) to understand and recognise potential safeguarding issues.
- Maintain vigilance and actively contribute to creating a safe and supportive environment for all participants.
- Promptly report any concerns or suspicions related to safeguarding to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, staff or a supervisor.
- Follow all organisational policies and procedures related to safeguarding to ensure the protection and well-being of everyone involved.

6. Reporting

If a child or vulnerable adult discloses that they are experiencing or have experienced abuse, then upon receiving the information you should:

- React calmly
- Reassure the person that they were right to tell and that they are not to blame and take what they say seriously.
- Keep questions to an absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. Don't ask about explicit details. Do not ask leading questions.
- Reassure but do not promise confidentiality, which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments.
- Inform the person what you will do next.
- Make a full and written record of what has been said / heard as soon as possible and don't delay in passing on the information.
- If the disclosure relates to someone known to you, do not confront them.
- Written reports must be factual and must not contain any personal opinions. In the case of a serious disclosure being made, staff or volunteers could consider recording the full name and the date of birth of the victim/perpetrator, but only if it feels safe and appropriate to do so.

In an emergency, the Police should be called on 999. If it is not an emergency but help is needed fast, call 101.

7. Reporting Actions

1. All issues relating to safeguarding, including emergency situations, should be reported immediately or as soon as possible (within 2 hours maximum) to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
2. If a member of staff, volunteer, or member of the public does not feel comfortable talking to this person, they may report it to any other member of the Management Team or Trustees.

3. It is not HCG's responsibility to decide whether abuse has taken place or not, however, if we have a safeguarding concern we will report it to Bristol City Council (see Contacts at the end of this policy).
4. Once you have spoken to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, you have the right to know what action they have taken and the outcome of their action.
5. If they don't make the referral or they don't share the same concern as you, but you feel that a child or adult is at risk of being abused or is being abused or neglected, you have a professional duty to contact Children's/Adults Services yourself to make a referral. Please see contact details at the bottom of this document.
6. *Remember: you are not expected to investigate concerns yourself.* Once you have spoken to the named safeguarding person, you have the right to know what action they have taken and the outcome of their action.

8. Whistleblowing - [whistleblowing](#) support

Whistleblowing is when someone raises a concern about a dangerous or illegal activity or any wrongdoing within their organisation. Raising a concern is known as "blowing the whistle" and is a vital process for identifying risks to people's safety. Sharing information or talking through a concern can be the first step to helping an organisation identify problems and improve their practices.

HCG expects everyone involved in the organisation to maintain the highest standard of conduct, integrity and ethics. If a staff member or volunteer has any genuine concerns about malpractice, HCG wishes to encourage them to communicate these without fear of reprisals and in the knowledge that they will be protected from victimisation.

If you have any concerns about a child or adult you should raise this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the first instance.

NCPCC: Support for professionals who are worried about how child protection issues are being handled in their workplace

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/dedicated-helplines/whistleblowing-advise-line/>

9. Response

HCG will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns promptly. The DSL will decide what action is appropriate, which may be:

- Report to Bristol City Council.
- Offer support to staff, volunteers or members of the public affected.
- Reflect on anything that HCG could do to improve the situation, for example by running a group in a different way.
- The DSL with input from the Trustees will also offer and provide support to staff or volunteers when disclosure is made. HCG is committed to supporting our staff or volunteers if they witness an incident or concerning behaviour.

If, in the case of safeguarding responses, the Designated Safeguarding Lead is unavailable, unable to act or respond, then contact should be made with the safeguarding alternative contact detailed in this

policy. Remember: you are not expected to investigate concerns yourself.

10. Confidentiality

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

Date of Change:	Changed By:	Comments:
July 2024	S.Rogers	Changes to Staffing and Volunteering as well as further best practice guidelines.
December 2024	S.Rogers	Update on contact details for DSL.

Hillfields Community Garden

Registered Charity number: 1204254

Registered Address: Hillfields Park Community Centre, Thickett Ave, Hillfields, Bristol, BS16 4EH

Contact details:

Email address info@hillfieldscommunitygarden.co.uk

Website: www.hillfieldscommunitygarden.co.uk/

Director email address: ceo@hillfieldscommunitygarden.co.uk

Contacts

HCG Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Sarah Rogers (Director) 07709 053290 (or in case of emergency 07904211039) email ceo@hillfieldscommunitygarden.co.uk

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Charities Commission Number: 1204254

Bristol City Council Safeguarding for Adults:

Care Direct contact details

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/residents/social-care-and-health/adults-and-older-people/report-suspected-abuse>

To contact Care Direct please email adult.care@bristol.gov.uk.

In an emergency contact the emergency services by dialling 999.

Call Care Direct: 0117 9222700 (8.30-5pm Mon-Fri answerphone available outside those hours)
mini-com 0117 9036689.

Bristol City Council Safeguarding for Children:

Webform (please note the preferred contact method is via the web form)

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/residents/social-care-and-health/children-and-families/concerns-about-a-child/first-response-for-professionals-working-with-children>

CHILD Emergency Duty Team on 01454 615165.

First Assessment Service using the on-line web form, link in the resources, or telephone them on 0117 9036444.

Police:

In an emergency call 999. If it is not an emergency call 101.

Reference:

<https://bristolsafeguarding.org/> <https://swcpp.trixonline.co.uk/>

Training and further information:

Useful training resources from Bristol City Council:

<https://www.open.edu/openlearncreate/course/index.php?categoryid=551>

Information about types and indicators of abuse in adults:

<https://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults/introduction/types-and-indicators-of-abuse>

Definitions and signs of child abuse:

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/definitions-signs-child-abuse>

Glossary of terms used in this policy

Child: a person under the age of 18

At risk adult: sometimes also referred to as vulnerable adult. A person who is or may be in need of care by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

DSL: Designated Safeguarding Lead. The person within the organisation appointed to make sure that the organisation and staff adhere to safeguarding policies.

Harm: Psychological, physical and any other infringement of an individual's rights In the context of this policy and the kind of activities which at risk adults might take part in, psychological harm includes humiliating and degrading treatment such as bad name calling, constant criticism, belittling, persistent shaming and social isolation.

Sexual abuse: the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

Safeguarding: taking all reasonable steps to prevent harm, particularly sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment from occurring; to protect people, especially vulnerable adults and children, from that harm; and to respond appropriately when harm does occur. As a community group, we understand it to mean protecting people, including children and at risk adults, from harm that arises from coming into contact with our members or any events or activities that we organise. Safeguarding is at the centre of all we do.

DBS: Disclosure and Barring Service. In the context of this policy, the DBS will carry out a background check of designated people who are responsible for organising and attending HCG activities where necessary.

Hillfields Community Garden – Safeguarding Reporting and handling process

1. Safeguarding issue and emergency situation reported **immediately** or as soon as possible (within 2 hours maximum) to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
2. Detail of the safeguarding issue to be recorded and given to the DSL in the Safeguarding Reporting Form below.
3. Send details of the issue to contacts at BCC Safeguarding Teams Adults/Children
4. Report raised to Trustees of the incidence issue and the actions taken so far
5. If the person identified is internal then the Chair of Trustees should temporarily suspend staff or volunteer until Trustees have more information
6. Feedback given to individual who raised the concern and offer of debrief follow up. HCG is committed to supporting our staff and volunteers if they witness an incident or concerning behaviour.
7. Follow up with BCC where necessary
8. Decision on staff or volunteer and their role in HCG made - no more than 2 months after event
9. Review of safeguarding policy and change of practice if required.

Hillfields Community Garden – Safeguarding and Incident Reporting Form

The following form should be used to record initial details relating to safeguarding concerns that need to be raised to the DSL to allow them to take further actions, referrals or internal process changes.

Please email, print or phone this information into the **DSL AS SOON AS A SAFEGUARDING INSTANCE HAS BEEN NOTICED**. Do NOT hesitate to act. Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone involved in HCG.

Safeguarding Report

Date:	Time:	Location:
Dates when reported:	To Senior Management:	To Trustees:
To BCC or other external contacts in Safeguarding offices:		
Non-identifiable, coded initials for the individual: Initials: Position: (Staff, Volunteer, Resident, Visitor, Contractor):		
Description of the Safeguarding instance identified: <i>Remember: you are not expected to investigate concerns yourself. Once you have spoken to the named safeguarding person, you have the right to know what action they have taken and the outcome of their action.</i>		
Witnesses: Any further people involved State if any witnesses, and list names		

Indicate where witness statements may be found.	
Statement from DSL: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Actions taken: ● BCC contact name reported to: ● Date: ● Feedback given to individual who raised the concern: ● Lessons learned: ● Date: 	
Statement from Board of Trustees (dated): <i>IF REQUIRED</i>	