



NORTHAMPTONSHIRE NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH ASSOCIATION

Social Safeguarding Policy

1. Safeguarding Policy

1.1 Northamptonshire NHW Association (NNWA) commits to protect the welfare of all children and vulnerable adults with whom it comes into contact with, or who are involved in Neighbourhood Watch activity, to ensure that they are welcomed into a safe, caring environment, with a happy and friendly atmosphere.

1.2 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. NNWA recognises that it is the responsibility of each one of its Officers, Members and Volunteers to prevent the neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children and vulnerable adults and to report any suspected abuse.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy and procedure outlines the specific responsibilities of NNWA Officers, Members and Volunteers to safeguard children and vulnerable adults and to promote their welfare.

2.2 Any reference to Northants NWA includes NNW Association members, NHW area and street co-ordinators and any other persons aligned to the County Neighbourhood Watch Network, or having a role supporting Neighbourhood Watch activity in any capacity within Northamptonshire.

2.3 Any reference to NNWA members also includes Association Personnel whilst engaged with work related to NNWA, including but not limited to consultants, contractors, journalists, celebrities and politicians who may, upon occasion, visit NNWA events and locations.

3. Safeguarding Lead

3.1 The appointed Safeguarding Lead (by default) is the elected NNWA Chairperson.

3.2 Members must immediately report any issue arising from this policy to the Safeguarding Lead who will review and ensure that any issue is raised with the relevant statutory authority and a record is issued to the NNWA Executive Committee, as soon as is practicable.

4. Neighbourhood Watch Associations

4.1 District NNW Associations that are not entities in their own right must abide by this policy and procedure and advise the NNWA Safeguarding Lead when they have reported safeguarding concerns about a child or a vulnerable adult to their local Children's or Adult Social Care Team or to the local Police.

4.2 Where District Associations elect to be registered charities, they are expected to adopt this policy and have their own Safeguarding Lead and similar procedures in place to safeguard children and vulnerable adults.

5. Reporting Concerns to Children's Social Care

5.1 It is important that NNWA Officers, Members and Volunteers report safeguarding concerns to Children's or Adult Social Care and / or their local Police force immediately they become aware.



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5.2 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults – and in particular protecting them from significant harm - depends upon effective collaboration between Agencies and the professionals that deliver many different roles and expertise.

For example, individual children, especially some of the most vulnerable children and those at greatest risk, will need co-ordinated help from health, education, children's social care, and quite possibly the voluntary sector and other agencies, including youth justice services.

5.3 For those children or vulnerable adults who are suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm, collaboration across Agencies will be essential to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child(ren) or vulnerable adult(s) and – where necessary – to help bring the perpetrators to justice.

6. Recognising Signs of Abuse or Neglect

6.1 All NNWA Officers, Members and Volunteers should ensure they:

- are alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect
- are alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children or vulnerable adults
- share information so that an assessment can be made by Social Care Teams of the needs and circumstances of a child or vulnerable adult
- contribute to whatever actions are necessary to safeguard and promote the child or vulnerable adult's welfare.

7. Definitions of abuse and neglect:

7.1 **Abuse and neglect** ~ are abhorrent forms of maltreatment.

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or vulnerable adult by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children or vulnerable adults may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting. Perpetrators may be known to them or, more rarely, be a stranger.

Children may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

7.2 **Physical Abuse** ~ may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent, family member or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in, a child or vulnerable adult.

7.3 **Emotional Abuse** ~ is persistent emotional maltreatment such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development or the health and well-being of a vulnerable adult. It may involve conveying to children or vulnerable adults that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.

These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing a child or adult participating in normal social interactions.



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It may involve seeing, or hearing about, the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children or vulnerable adults to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children or vulnerable adults. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child or vulnerable adult, though it may occur alone.

7.4 Sexual Abuse ~ involves forcing or enticing a child, young person or adult to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child, young person or adult is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve inappropriate physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative sexual acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children or vulnerable adults in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

7.5 Neglect ~ is the persistent failure to meet a child's or vulnerable adult's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health, wellbeing or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child or vulnerable adult from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-providers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child or vulnerable adult's basic physical and/or emotional need.

8. Staff, Trustee and Volunteer awareness

8.1 All NNWA Officers and Members will be made aware of this policy as part of their initial induction (Welcome) process and there will be regular briefings and updates for all members.

Where deemed necessary, Members will be encouraged to attend appropriate training courses.

8.2 Volunteers who will work on NNWA projects with young people or vulnerable adults will be made aware of this policy by the Safeguarding Lead and where appropriate, will attend appropriate training.

9. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks

9.1 Where NNW Association members or volunteers are involved in Regulated Activity with children or vulnerable adults, NNWA will ensure that all Officers, Members and Volunteers involved have had a satisfactory DBS check before allowing them to undertake that activity. A 'satisfactory' check is defined as having no criminal convictions (including cautions, reprimands and final warnings) relevant in relation to the anticipated role.

9.2 District Associations are responsible for ensuring that volunteers who work on local NHW led projects with young people or vulnerable adults are similarly DBS checked before undertaking that activity.

9.3 All NNWA Officers, Members and Volunteers involved in Regulated Activity with children or adults must report any subsequent criminal convictions to the NNWA or local NHW District Association Safeguarding Lead.



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10. NORTHANTS NWA Safeguarding Procedures

10.1 NNWA recognises its responsibility to implement, maintain and regularly review procedures which are designed to prevent, and raise awareness of, the abuse of children and vulnerable adults.

10.2 NNWA is committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with children and vulnerable adults and to providing supervision and maintaining and promoting good links with relevant statutory services and encouraging District Associations to do likewise.

11. What to do if you have concerns about a child or vulnerable adult

11.1 You may have concerns about a child or vulnerable adult because of something you have seen or heard, or a child or vulnerable adult may choose to disclose something to you.

If a child or vulnerable adult discloses information to you:

- Do not promise confidentiality, there exists a duty of care to share this information and refer to Children's or Adult Social Care Services.
- Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is said at face value.
- Re-assure the child or vulnerable adult, but only as far as is honest, don't make promises that may not be able to be kept
eg. 'Everything will be alright now' or 'You'll never have to see that person again'.
- Do re-assure and alleviate guilt, if the child or vulnerable adult refers to it.
For example, a comment such as 'You're not to blame' or 'It is not your fault'.
- Do not interrogate the child or vulnerable adult; it is not NNHW responsibility to investigate.
- Do not ask leading questions (eg. Did he/she touch your private parts?), ask open questions such as 'Is there anything else you would like to tell me?'
- Do not ask the child or vulnerable adult to repeat the information for another NNHW member or volunteer.
- Explain what must happen next and who must be notified of what has occurred.
- Take notes if possible or write the details of your conversation as soon as possible afterwards, whilst still fresh in your memory.
- Record the date, time, place any non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child or vulnerable adult (resist the desire to paraphrase).
- Record statements and observable things rather than interpretations or assumptions. Whatever the nature of your concerns, discuss them with the designated NNHW Safeguarding Lead.

11.2 The individual, the NNWA or the recognised Safeguarding Lead should immediately refer the matter to the appropriate safeguarding organisation (eg. Local Authority Child or Adult Social Care department or the local Police).

12. What information will you need when making a referral?

12.1 You will be asked to provide as much information as possible. This will include the child or vulnerable adult's full name, date of birth, address.



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Where possible, include languages spoken, any disabilities they may have and GP details. Where a child is involved, include the details of their school and the details of their Parent(s) or Guardian(s). Do not be concerned if you do not obtain all these details, you should still make the referral. Follow upon any verbal referral that is made, with a written summary within forty eight (48) hours.

13. Allegations Involving a Northants NWA Officer, Member or Volunteer

13.1 NNWA is committed to having an effective process, including DBS checks, for all Officers, Members and Volunteers who may become involved in regulated activity involving children or vulnerable adults.

13.2 All allegations of abuse or suspicions of abuse of children or vulnerable adults by an Officer, Member or Volunteer of the Northants NWA or a District Association must be taken seriously and shall be subject to an initial review undertaken by the Safeguarding Lead.

13.3 The following procedure should be applied in all situations where it is alleged that an Officer, Member or Volunteer of the Association has possibly:

- behaved in a way which has, or may have harmed a child or vulnerable adult;
- committed a criminal offence against, or relating to, a child or vulnerable adult;
- behaved towards a child, children or vulnerable adult(s) in a way which indicates that he/she is unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults.

The allegations may relate to the person's behaviour at work, at home, as a volunteer or in another setting outwith the Northants NWA.

13.4 All reports concerning allegations must be submitted within forty-eight (48) hours to the local Child or Adult Social Care service and / or local Police force.

13.6 Such allegations may result in:

- A police investigation of a possible criminal offence and / or
- Enquiries and assessment by Children's or Adult Social Care Services as to whether the child or vulnerable adult is in need of protection or in need of services

13.7 A NNWA Officer, Member or Volunteer, who is the subject of a safeguarding allegation that is being investigated by the police or being dealt with by Social Care Services, shall be temporarily suspended from their role until the outcome of the investigation is known.

13.8 Should the outcome of the investigation indicate that the Officer, Member or Volunteer is guilty of abuse of a child or vulnerable adult, then the NNW Association Chairperson will remove the individual(s) from any and all roles within Northamptonshire Neighbourhood Watch Association.



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14. Reviewing the Policy and Procedure

14.1 This policy and procedure will be reviewed for adequacy every two (2) years and any updates, where required, will be made. The revised document will be reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee and placed into use until such time as the document can be approved by all Members at the subsequent AGM.

The appending of the signatures of the Northamptonshire Neighbourhood Watch Association Executive Committee below, acknowledges their understanding of, and agreement that they and their District Association membership will comply with, the Safeguarding Policy and Guidelines here-in.

14.2 This Policy document shall remain in force for a period of two years from the date of signature and issue, after which time it will become due for review by the Executive Committee. This process may be fore-shortened where it has been determined that the document is no longer fit-for-purpose and/or fails to fully meet a defined, strategic need.

ISSUE DATE: 12-September-2022
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 31-August-2024

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<u>NAME:</u>	Alan Earle	Andrew Crisp
<u>ROLE:</u>	Chairperson	Vice Chairperson
<u>DATE:</u>	15 th September 2022	15 th September 2022

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<u>NAME:</u>	T B A	Paul Goddard
<u>ROLE:</u>	Secretary	Treasurer
<u>DATE:</u>	<i>write date</i>	15 th September 2022