Ceddesfeld Hall home of the SCA

SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS' POLICY

1. Vulnerable Adult

"A person who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself against significant harm or exploitation" (1997 consultation paper "Who Decides?" issued by the Lord Chancellor's Department).

This policy recognises that whilst none of Sedgefield Arts, Recreation & Community Association CIO (SCA) members is currently classified as a vulnerable adult by this definition, any member may be vulnerable at times.

2. Aims

The aims of this policy are to:-

- make every member aware of the kind of behaviour that may constitute abuse, ill treatment or unfairness.
- make members aware of a range of behaviours that will therefore not be tolerated
- encourage its members to speak out against any occasion of such behaviour either experienced or witnessed.

It also gives information on the actions to be taken should there be a suspected case of abuse.

3. Abuse Definitions

The definitions outlined below are derived from 'No Secrets' with some additional areas identified through consultation.

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. (See also Article 3 of the European Convention of Human Rights.)

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, sexual, verbal or psychological; it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to or exploitation of the person subjected to it.

As a result of abuse harm is done which results in psychological, physical or emotional damage to a person from whom they need care and support to recover.

- *Physical abuse:* Any deliberate act to cause physical harm including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication or restraint or the use of inappropriate sanctions.

- *Sexual abuse:* Includes rape and sexual assault, or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or to which he or she could not consent or was pressured into consenting. Also the exposure to and observation of sexual acts without informed consent.

- *Psychological abuse:* Includes emotional abuse, threats or harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

- *Financial or material abuse:* Includes theft fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

- *Neglect or acts of omission:* Includes ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access t appropriate health or social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life such as medication, nutrition and heating.

- *Discriminatory abuse:* Includes racist, religious and sexist abuse, abuse based on a person's disability and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

- *Institutional abuse:* Is mistreatment or abuse by a regime or the individuals within an institution.

4. Who Abuses?

Anyone, but those who have greater access therefore have the greater opportunity to abuse. This can include family members, friends, neighbours, care workers or even professionals. Abusers can also be other service users, or volunteer worker or visitor. There are also those, including strangers, who set out deliberately to exploit people. Groups, cults and sects can inadvertently abuse by putting vulnerable people under pressure to join or contribute, in an effort to get their message or beliefs across. Adult abuse can occur across all racial, cultural, gender and social-economic groups.

5. What to do if you suspect, experience or witness a case of abuse

If abuse is suspected, Trustees, members and volunteers associated with SCA will ensure that the SCA Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Trustee, Wendy Gill, is alerted to take appropriate action. In her absence any Trustee may be contacted. A list of Trustee contact details is displayed on the Ceddesfeld Hall notice board.

6. Confidentiality

Information about an alleged abuse will be shared on a 'need to know' basis and treated in the strictest confidence.

The alleged abusers right to confidentiality must also be upheld.

7. DBS Requirements

Adults who work with vulnerable adults are checked and cleared through the Criminal Records Bureau at the appropriate level, and will hold an Enhanced DBS - (DBS Guidelines - Crime and Policing Act 2026)

Signed on behalf of SCA.....Wendy R Gill.....

This Policy was adopted on:… 20/7/26…….

This Policy will be reviewed by:……31/7/27……..