

# Silvery Light Sailing (SLS)

## Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

### 1. Purpose

SLS wants to ensure that all guests and staff experience an inclusive, enjoyable and safe environment, in which they feel respected and valued. We all share an objective to keep vulnerable adults safe. All people have a fundamental right to be safeguarded from harm.

The purpose of this Policy and related procedures is to:

- Promote the welfare of vulnerable adults and protect them from harm
- Prevent harm occurring through early identification of risk and appropriate timely intervention
- Identify staff responsibilities in dealing with reports or suspicions of abuse
- Provide clear and robust guidance on how to handle these concerns
- Encourage good practice in all aspects of promotion and protection of vulnerable adults

### 2. Context

SLS will carry out its responsibilities under all relevant legislations, regulations and professional guidelines which include the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007

### 3. Scope

This Policy and related procedures deals with the safeguarding and protection of vulnerable adults from abuse as defined below.

- Vulnerable Adult

A Vulnerable Adult is a person aged 18 or over, 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 or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation (DoH No Secrets 2002)

- Abuse (See Appendix 1 for more detail)
- Neglect or acts of omission
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological/Emotional abuse
- Financial or material abuse (Exploitation)
- Discriminatory abuse

- Institutional abuse.

#### **4. General Principles**

This policy and related procedures are based on the following principles:

- SLS seeks to provide and promote a safe learning environment for all users
- SLS recognizes that anyone can be the subject of abuse and that all allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and treated in accordance with SLS's procedures
- This Policy and related procedures will be reviewed every three years to ensure they reflect current legislation and best practice
- SLS will use best practice in its safe recruitment of staff by undertaking the appropriate checks
- SLS reserves the right to refuse to employ any person who has a conviction for the abuse of any child, young person or a vulnerable adult. All SLS staff will be subject to background checks.
- SLS must follow criminal disclosure risk assessment procedures, before employing any person who has a conviction for the abuse of a child, young person or a vulnerable adult
- SLS will collaborate with regional policies and procedures with other local agencies and the Health and Social Care Trust Gateway Team
- SLS staff will listen, record, and report all concerns, disclosures and allegations of abuse in accordance with current procedures in an empathetic, prompt and secure manner
- SLS will NOT investigate instances of abuse as this is the role of other statutory agencies e.g. social services and PSNI
- SLS will inform all staff and guests of this policy
- SLS is committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with, or come into contact with vulnerable adults and to provide appropriate supervision
- The policy will be implemented in the following ways:
- All staff are required to follow the staff code of behaviour for Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding
- All staff must refer all concerns, allegations or suspicions to a Designated Safeguarding member of staff promptly using the appropriate recording methods
- The Designated Safeguarding member of staff will report these concerns, allegations or suspicions to the Designated Safeguarding Manager. This will usually be the SLS Project Manager.
- The Designated Safeguarding Manager will undertake to contact external agencies when and where appropriate

## **5. Responsibilities**

All Staff

It is the responsibility of ALL staff working in SLS to record and report abuse and incidents of concern. This responsibility extends to all staff, not just those specifically working directly with vulnerable adults.

- Anyone with a concern about the abuse of a vulnerable adult in circumstances other than an emergency should fill in the safeguarding record form and forward it on immediately to the designated safeguarding officer
- Adopt vulnerable adult guidelines including the code of behaviour for staff
- Act upon any safeguarding disclosure in accordance with SLS procedures
- Promote safe practice and challenge poor and unsafe procedure
- Ensure all health and safety procedures are adhered to

## **6. Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)**

The DSO should be contacted for information, advice and reporting of concerns, disclosures or allegations of abuse.

The role of the DSO is to:

- Receive information from any staff and members who have safeguarding concerns and record it
- Advise staff on protection policy, procedures and record keeping
- Assess the information promptly and carefully, clarifying and obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate
- Record statements and information relating to any safeguarding issues
- Store all information and recording in a secure manner and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.
- To report concerns to the Chairperson. In his or her absence and in the instance of an immediate threat to a person(s) safety or welfare to report concerns to PSNI/Social Services or the appropriate statutory body

## **7. Confidentiality**

Confidentiality and trust should be maintained as far as possible, but staff must act on the basis that the safety and welfare of the vulnerable adult is the overriding concern. The

degree of confidentiality will be governed by the need to protect the individual and therefore complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. In general the following guidelines should be used:

- The individual should be informed at the earliest possible stage of the disclosure that the information may be passed on and where possible their permission to disclose sought
- All conversation regarding a safeguarding concern should always be held in a person sensitive environment. Staff must not discuss the case with anyone other than those involved managing the case.
- If staff have any concerns about the progress of the case or have any other concerns these must be discussed with the DSO dealing with the case.

SLS complies with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998, which allows for disclosure of personal data where this is necessary to protect their vital interests. Other statutory provisions may also be relevant, but in general, legislation does not prevent sharing of information if:

- Those likely to be affected consent; or
- The public interest in safeguarding the person's welfare overrides the need to keep the information confidential; or
- It is considered the person is a danger to themselves or others; or
- Disclosure is required under court or other legal obligation

Whatever happens, we should always be open and honest with the individual

## **8. Appendices**

### **Appendix 1**

Defining abuse is complex and rests on many factors. The term "abuse" can be widely interpreted. However, "abuse" is defined in the Department of Health No Secrets guidance as the "violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons". Abuse may happen as the result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance. Here are some examples of abuse.

- **Physical Abuse**

This includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medical/chemical restraint or inappropriate sanctions.

- **Sexual abuse**

This includes rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the child/vulnerable adult has not, or could not, consent and/or was pressurized into consenting.

- **Psychological/emotional abuse**

This includes emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, verbal or racial abuse, forced marriage, isolation or withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

- **Financial or material abuse**

This includes theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuses or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

- **Neglect and acts of omission**

This includes ignoring medical or physical care needs; failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services; the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

- **Institutional abuse**

This is repeated instances of poor care of individuals or groups of individuals. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of structures, policies, processes and practices within an organization. While this in no way condones the abusive practice on the part of individuals, it recognizes the powerful influence that organizational culture has on individual behaviour.

The above should not be considered an exclusive or even exhaustive list of the types of abuse which can be experienced by children/vulnerable adults.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Staff Code of Behaviour/ Safeguarding Specific**

The duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of the members rests with all members of staff and volunteers. Implicit is the assumption that the conduct of all staff and volunteers towards members must be above reproach.

You can reduce likely situations for abuse and vulnerable adults and help protect yourself from false accusations by making sure that you are aware that, as a general rule, it doesn't make sense to...

- Spend excessive amounts of time alone with vulnerable adults away from others either on a vessel or on shore.
- Take vulnerable adults alone in a car on journeys, however short.
- Take vulnerable adults to your home.

When it is unavoidable that these things do happen, they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of the line Manager and the vulnerable person's carer where appropriate.

Staff should never:

- Engage in sexually provocative actions
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- Do things of a personal nature for a vulnerable person that a vulnerable person can do themselves.

It may sometimes be necessary for staff to do things of a personal nature for vulnerable adults, particularly if they have disabilities. In an emergency which requires this type of help carers should be fully informed as soon as is reasonably possible that it was necessary to provide such assistance. In such situations, it is important that all staff and volunteers are sensitive to the individual and undertake personal care tasks with the utmost discretion. Whenever possible a second member of staff should be informed in advance of, or as soon as practically possible thereafter, of the need to perform an assisting task of a personal nature. A record should be maintained to this effect.

Staff should be particularly careful when interacting with members in a residential setting, or in approved out-of-hours activities, where more informal relationships tend to be usual.

In all circumstances, employees' professional judgement will be exercised and for most, this code of conduct will only serve to confirm what they have always done. However inappropriate actions in relation to any of the above may lead to staff disciplinary procedures being implemented.

END