

Biggleswade Community Garden Safeguarding Policy

Policy Statement

Biggleswade Community Garden believes that everyone we come into contact with, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. Biggleswade Community Garden will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by members, volunteers, leadership team or the public or personnel associated with our organisation.

This policy will address the following areas of safeguarding child safeguarding, adult safeguarding, and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. These key areas of safeguarding may have different policies and procedures associated with them (see Associated Policies and our Constitution)

Biggleswade Community Garden commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the three pillars of prevention, reporting and response.

Our policy's purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect people, particularly children, at risk adults and beneficiaries of assistance, from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with Biggleswade Community Garden. This includes harm arising from:

- The conduct of members, volunteers, leadership team or the public or personnel associated with Biggleswade Community Garden.
- The design and implementation of Biggleswade Community Garden's programmes and activities.

The policy lays out the commitments made by Biggleswade Community Garden Leadership team and informs members, volunteers, leadership team or the public of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

This policy does not cover safeguarding concerns in the wider community not perpetrated by Biggleswade Community Garden or associated personnel.

What is Safeguarding?

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect

We understand it to mean protecting people, including children and at risk adults, from harm that arises from coming into contact with our group or programmes.

Scope

Members, volunteers, the leadership team or the public or personnel contracted by Biggleswade Community Garden.

Associated personnel whilst engaged with work or visits related to Biggleswade Community Garden including but not limited to the following: consultants; volunteers; contractors; programme visitors including journalists, celebrities and politicians.

Response

Organisational responsibilities

Biggleswade Community Garden will:

- Ensure all people that all members, volunteers and leadership team, have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within 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 our group. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programmes is gathered and communicated.
- Implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying members, volunteer and associated personnel
- Ensure those that need it, receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organisation.
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process.

Members, volunteers, and the leadership team responsibilities

Child safeguarding

Biggleswade Community Garden members, volunteers, and the leadership team and associated personnel must not:

- Engage in sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18
- Sexually abuse or exploit children
- Subject a child to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect
- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children including child labour or trafficking

Adult safeguarding

Biggleswade Community Garden members, volunteers, and the leadership team and associated personnel must not:

- Sexually abuse or exploit at risk adults
- Subject an at-risk adult to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect

Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse

Biggleswade Community Garden members, volunteers, and the leadership team and associated personnel must not:

- Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual activity. This includes any exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries of assistance
- Engage in any sexual relationships with beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics

Additionally, Biggleswade Community Garden members, volunteers, and the leadership team and associated personnel are obliged to:

- Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy.
- Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by a Biggleswade Community Garden member volunteer and the leadership team and associated personnel to the appropriate person.

Enabling Reports

Biggleswade Community Garden will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to members, volunteers, leadership team or the public or associated personnel and the communities we work with.

Any member volunteers, and the leadership team reporting concerns or complaints, or if they request it, will be protected by our constitution and associated policies.

We will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners, and official bodies.

How to report a safeguarding concern

Anyone who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to the leadership team. If the person does not feel comfortable reporting to the Safeguarding Lead (for example if they feel that the report will not be taken seriously, or if that person is implicated in the concern) they may report to any other appropriate person. For example, this could be someone else in the Leadership group.

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Response

Biggleswade Community Garden will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligations (see Procedures for reporting and response to safeguarding concerns in Associated Policies). We will apply appropriate measures to members, volunteers and the leadership team found in breach of policy.

Biggleswade Community Garden will offer support to survivors of harm caused by members, volunteers and the leadership team, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out (such as an internal investigation). Decisions regarding support will be led by the survivor.

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 case management should be shared on a need-to-know basis only and should be kept secure at all times.