

Biggleswade Community Gardens Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

Version: 2.0

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Approved by: Steering Group

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Rhiannon Barrow 07972353793

1. Policy Statement

Biggleswade Community Gardens believes that everyone, regardless of age, ability, gender identity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, has the right to live free from abuse and neglect. We are committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and adults at risk who come into contact with our organisation.

We recognise our responsibility to promote the welfare of those we work with and protect them from harm, abuse, and exploitation. Safeguarding is a priority in everything we do, from activities to recruitment, training, and partnerships.

2. Purpose of This Policy

This policy aims to:

- Protect children and adults at risk who engage with Biggleswade Community Gardens activities.
- Outline our approach to safeguarding and protecting people from harm caused by contact with our organisation or representatives.
- Set out our responsibilities and provide guidance to staff, volunteers, trustees, and other stakeholders.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all volunteers and members of Biggleswade Community Gardens.

This policy does **not** cover safeguarding incidents outside the organisation's remit but outlines how we would support individuals affected.

4. Legal Framework

This policy is underpinned by the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- **Children Act 1989 and 2004**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)**
- **Care Act 2014**
- **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006**
- **Human Rights Act 1998**
- **Equality Act 2010**
- **GDPR & Data Protection Act 2018**

5. Definitions

Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse, and neglect.

Child means anyone under the age of 18.

Adult at risk is an adult who has needs for care and support (whether or not these are being met), is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and is unable to protect themselves.

Abuse can include:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional/psychological abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect or acts of omission
- Financial or material abuse
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational abuse
- Domestic abuse
- Online abuse

6. Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities

Organisation Responsibilities

Biggleswade Community Gardens will:

- Appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputy.

- Ensure all personnel understand and follow this policy.
- Provide safeguarding training appropriate to roles.
- Design and deliver activities in ways that reduce risks.
- Safely recruit volunteers (including DBS checks where applicable).
- Report concerns to statutory agencies where appropriate.
- Maintain records securely and follow GDPR requirements.
- Regularly review and update safeguarding policies and practices.

Individual Responsibilities

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All steering group members and volunteers must:

- Understand their safeguarding duties and code of conduct.
- Promote a safe, inclusive environment.
- Report any concerns or disclosures immediately to the DSL.
- Respect confidentiality but never promise to keep safeguarding concerns a secret.

7. Prevention Measures

We will take all reasonable steps to:

- Plan all activities with safeguarding in mind, including risk assessments.
- Ensure parents, guardians and support workers provide appropriate supervision of children and adults at risk when attending community garden activities.
- Communicate expectations clearly with children, adults, carers and community members.
- Challenge poor practice and inappropriate behaviour.

8. Recognising and Responding to Concerns

All safeguarding concerns should be taken seriously. Signs may include:

- Unexplained injuries
- Fearful or withdrawn behaviour
- Sudden changes in mood or behaviour
- Neglect or poor hygiene

- Disclosure by the person themselves

What to do if someone discloses abuse:

- **Listen** without judgement.
- **Reassure** them they've done the right thing.
- **Do not promise confidentiality** – explain you need to share this with the DSL.
- **Record** the facts (who, what, when, where).
- **Report** immediately to the DSL or Deputy.

9. Reporting and Managing Safeguarding Concerns

Concerns can be reported to:

DSL: Rhiannon Barrow 07972353793 rhi.barrow@hotmail.co.uk

If a concern relates to the DSL, it should be reported to a trustee or external body.

External reporting contacts:

- Central Bedfordshire Children's Services: 0300 300 8585
- Central Bedfordshire Adult Services: 0300 300 8122
- Police (non-emergency): 101 | Emergency: 999

10. Whistleblowing

Any volunteer or member who raises a safeguarding concern in good faith is protected under our whistleblowing policy. We encourage a culture of speaking up and will take concerns seriously.

11. Confidentiality & Record Keeping

All safeguarding information will be:

- Treated with the utmost sensitivity.
- Only shared on a need-to-know basis.
- Stored securely in password-protected systems.

Records will include:

- Date/time of the disclosure.

- The exact words of the person where possible.
- Actions taken and who was informed.

12. Support for Survivors

Biggleswade Community Gardens will offer support to individuals who experience harm. This may include:

- Listening support
- Referral to specialist services
- Emotional or practical assistance

Support will be survivor-led and based on their needs and wishes.

13. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- Annually, or
In response to changes in legislation, guidance, or an incident.

The Steering Group holds responsibility for this policy.