

Policy Name	<b>Green Earth Plan CIC - Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy</b>
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## 1. Introduction and scope

The Law enshrines that vulnerable adults should be protected from harm and not subjected to discrimination or abuse. Protecting those who are vulnerable is everyone’s role and we all have a part to play in escalating concerns over others well-being when they are observed or disclosed.

Any organisation whose activities mean that staff or representatives may come into contact with adults who may be potentially vulnerable, must ensure that staff and representatives are:

- mindful not to follow any course of action that could cause harm, abuse or be of a discriminatory nature,
- aware of potential signs of abuse, and
- have appropriate policies and procedures in place to ensure that risks are minimised and concerns relating to abuse are escalated.

All staff working for Green Earth Plan CIC or acting as a registered volunteer with the intention of supporting projects that involve meeting or interacting with members of the public, including vulnerable adults will undergo appropriate DBS checking.

Green Earth Plan CIC will have appropriate safeguards in place that protect and promote the welfare of vulnerable adults as well as enhance the confidence of staff and volunteers in being aware of and dealing with safeguarding issues.

This policy applies to those who are working directly or indirectly on behalf of Green Earth Plan CIC as a registered Volunteer.

Local Safeguarding Teams are multi-disciplinary teams of professionals who are qualified to ensure that all allegations that are raised are investigated thoroughly and objectively. They act to ensure that the short and longer terms needs of a potential victim are prioritised and where appropriate any criminal sanctions are applied. It is **not the role** of Green Earth Plan CIC or anyone working or acting on its behalf to investigate a concern that has been raised, our duty is to report and escalate any concern that comes to our attention to the appropriate authority.

Green Earth Plan CIC will:

- Treat all adults with respect;
- Ensure where possible there is more than one adult present during activities;
- Respect a person’s right to personal privacy;
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers working with vulnerable adults are monitored and supervised and that they have opportunities to learn about safeguarding in accordance with their roles and responsibilities;
- Support vulnerable adults and help them to have positive experiences when involved with Green Earth Plan led projects;
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations or suspicions of abuse;
- Take all allegations seriously;
- Have a clear, open and well publicised complaints procedure which enable adults and children to voice concerns about unacceptable and/or abusive behaviour towards vulnerable adults.

**It is not the responsibility of Green Earth Plan CIC to decide whether or not abuse has taken place but it is the responsibility of Green Earth Plan CIC to act if there is cause for concern, in order that the appropriate agencies can investigate and take the necessary action to protect a vulnerable person.**

## 2. Definitions

<b>Vulnerable adult</b>	<p>The definition of a vulnerable adult is a person over the age of 18 years who: Is or may be in need of / eligible for Community Care Services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; <b>AND</b> is unable to take care of him / herself; <b>OR</b> is unable to protect him / herself from significant harm or exploitation.</p> <p>A vulnerable person may fall into any one of the following groups: older and frail people; people with a mental health need, a learning difficulty, a physical impairment, a sensory impairment; people who are substance or alcohol dependent; or family carers providing assistance to another vulnerable adult.</p>
<b>Volunteer</b>	<p>A person who is affiliated to Green Earth Plan CIC and recorded as a “Volunteer” and who has provided an appropriate DBS check.</p>
<b>Abuse</b>	<p>Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other persons(s) or group of people. Abuse may be single or repeated acts. It includes the harming of another individual usually by someone who is in a position of power, trust or authority over that individual. The harm</p>

	may be physical, psychological, or emotional or it may be directed at exploiting the vulnerability of the victim in more subtle ways such as withholding or denying access to basic needs.
<b>Physical abuse</b>	Bodily assaults resulting in injuries, for example but not limited to hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, malnutrition, dehydration, medical or healthcare maltreatment.
<b>Sexual abuse</b>	Rape, incest, acts of indecency, sexual assault, sexual harassment, being forced to participate in non-consensual sexual acts. It could also include exposure to pornographic materials, being made witness to sexual acts and non-contact abuse.
<b>Psychological or emotional abuse</b>	Threats of harm, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, enforced isolation, withdrawal from services or support networks, humiliation, bullying.
<b>Financial abuse</b>	Includes the illegal or unauthorised use of a person's property, money, pension book or other valuables, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance.
<b>Neglect</b>	Ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, withholding the necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
<b>Discriminatory behaviour</b>	Includes racist or sexist remarks or comments based on a person's disability, age or illness, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment. This also includes stopping someone from being involved in religious or cultural activity, services or support networks.
<b>Institutional abuse</b>	The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to vulnerable people. This includes a failure to ensure the necessary safeguards are in place to protect vulnerable adults and maintain good standards of care in accordance with individual needs, including training of staff, supervision and management, record keeping and liaising with other providers of care.
<b>Radicalisation</b>	The process by which people come to support terrorism and violent extremism and, in some cases, then join terrorist groups. The Government " <b>Prevent</b> " strategy is aimed at ensuring that those who may be in a position to identify those who may have been targeted for radicalisation and where their details may be referred for further investigation.
<b>Modern day slavery</b>	The severe exploitation of other people for personal or commercial gain. An umbrella term for all forms of slavery, human trafficking, and exploitation. Modern slavery is a serious crime being committed across the UK in which victims are exploited for someone else's gain. It can take many forms including trafficking of people, forced labour and servitude. Victims are often hidden away, may be unable to leave their situation, or may not come forward because of fear or shame.

### 3. Recognising signs of potential abuse

Abuse can be subtle and caused by various means; the presence of signs of abuse does not necessarily mean that abuse has taken place, however; it is essential that potential signs are reported and appropriately investigated by the relevant authority.

Modern slavery and radicalisation are also forms of abuse that are becoming more prevalent in our society and those who are vulnerable are often the most likely targets.

Working or volunteering for Green Earth Plan CIC may give a limited period of time working with members of the wider community rather than prolonged and regular contact and as such, some of the possible signs may not be apparent. However; where any signs are observed it is important to share concerns so that those who are appropriately trained may investigate.

Possible signs might include:

- A history of unexplained falls or minor injuries, bruising, finger marks, burns, injuries at different stages of healing, injury shape similar to an object, history of GP or agency hopping, reluctance to seek help, weight loss, weight gain, ulcers, bed sores, drowsiness, recurring crises/hospital admissions might be an indication that abuse is taking place.
- A victim may disclose or partial disclose an incident or incidence of sexual abuse, genital infections, pregnancy, they may demonstrate difficulty walking or sitting, disturbed behaviour, depression, withdrawal from activities, lack of sleep, nightmares, self-injury, showing fear or aggression, inappropriate sexual behaviour, loss of appetite.
- A victim may demonstrate isolation, appear unwashed, over meticulous, be inappropriately dressed, withdrawn, show a change in appetite, insomnia or excessive sleep, tearfulness, unexplained paranoia, excessive fear, low self-esteem, confusion, clothing in poor condition, weight loss or weight gain, untreated injuries, poor personal hygiene.

### 4. What to do if abuse is reported or suspected

- React calmly, do not panic or show panic and reassure the person that they were right to tell if they are disclosing details of abuse.
- Be clear that you are unable to keep secrets if you feel that an adult is being harmed in some way.
- Keep questions to a minimum and only ask in order to clarify what is being said, rather than enquiring. It is up to social services and the police to investigate the matter fully, not your organisation.
- Take what is said seriously. Make a full record of what is being said, heard or seen as soon as possible.
- Consider if immediate medical assistance is required. Call 111 or in an emergency 999.
- Do not delay in passing information to the Local Safeguarding team who are best placed to investigate. Each county has a multi-disciplinary team who are specially trained to investigate such reports and work closely with the police to ensure appropriate action has been taken. If you suspect a crime, for example rape or theft of valuables, then you should also refer the matter to the police.
- If you are not satisfied that the matter has been dealt with appropriately within the organisation, they should refer the matter to Social Services.

The flow chart in Appendix 1 will help you to guide you through the steps you should follow if abuse is disclosed to you or you suspect abuse has taken place.

### 5. Contact information

Local Safeguarding team	Use Google [or another search engine] to search for the local Safeguarding team, e.g. If the incident occurred in Dorset search <i>Dorset Safeguarding team</i> .
Person within the organisation	Office & Mobile No
In an emergency dial 999	

### 6. Training

All staff and volunteers MUST read through all Green Earth Plan CIC policies and procedures to ensure that they are aware of the risks that may apply or issues that they may face as part of their role.

Additional reference materials are available on the Green Earth Plan website that will help staff and volunteers to develop a greater awareness and knowledge of Safeguarding and our collective responsibilities to protect those who are vulnerable.

Documents listed below are very useful reference materials.

### 7. Supporting documentation and legislation

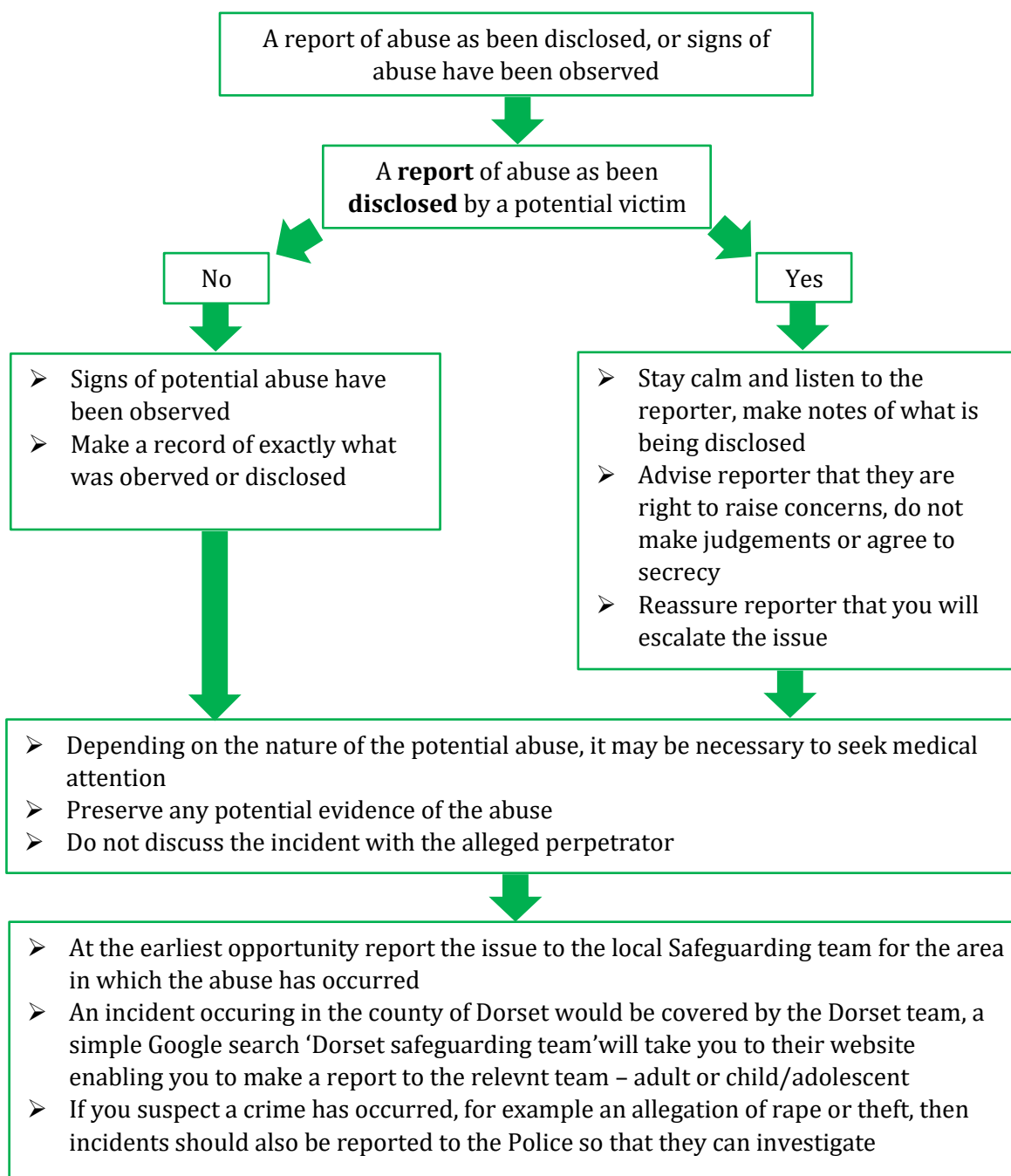
The key pieces of legislation are:

- The Care Act 2014
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Health and Social Care Act 2012
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- Safeguarding Policy: Protecting Vulnerable Adults;  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-policy-protecting-vulnerable-adults>
- Modern Slavery Act; <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/30/contents/enacted>
- Modern Slavery; <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/publish-an-annual-modern-slavery-statement>
- Prevent Duty Guidance; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

## 8. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis or in the event of a change in legislation or reporting procedures

### Appendix 1 - Reporting Potential Abuse Flow chart



## Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment and Statement

		Yes/No	Comments
1.	Does the policy/guidance affect one group less or more favourably than another on the basis of:		
	Race	No	
	Ethnic origins (including gypsies and travellers)	No	
	Nationality	No	
	Gender	No	
	Culture	No	
	Religion or belief	No	
	Sexual orientation including lesbian, gay and bisexual people	No	
	Age	No	
	Disability - learning disabilities, physical disability, sensory impairment and mental health problems	No	
2.	Is there any evidence that some groups are affected differently?	No	
3.	If you have identified potential discrimination, are any exceptions valid, legal and/or justifiable?	No	
4.	Is the impact of the policy/guidance likely to be negative?	No	
5.	If so, can the impact be avoided?	N/A	
6.	What alternatives are there to achieving the policy/guidance without the impact?	N/A	
7.	Can we reduce the impact by taking different action?	N/A	