



# PITSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

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## Pitstone Community Car Scheme

### Safeguarding Policy

#### Working with Vulnerable Adults

The Safeguarding Policy means that the Pitstone Community Car Scheme and all volunteers will never condone abuse of any kind and that the scheme has a duty of care with respect to both vulnerable clients and volunteers.

As a first line measure, the scheme undertakes Disclosure and Barring Service checks on all volunteers coming into contact with vulnerable adults. Employment and/or character references are also required from volunteers wishing to work with vulnerable adults. The following information outlines the scheme guidelines on what you need to do if you do learn of, or observe, abuse.

#### **1. What is abuse of a Vulnerable Adult?**

A Vulnerable Adult is any person aged 18 years or over who is, or may be, in need of community care services by reason of disability, age or illness; and is or may be unable to take care of or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation. Abuse is any action that harms another person. Abuse can be caused by a person deliberately intending to harm or neglect, failing to take the right action or through their ignorance. It can involve one or a number of people. Abuse of adults with care and support needs is where someone in a position of trust hurts, harms or causes someone distress. Abuse is unacceptable; everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect and to live free of abuse or mistreatment, whether they live on their own, live with others, live in a care/nursing care home, attend a day centre or are in hospital.

#### **2. What to do if you suspect a client or fellow volunteer is being abused?**

#### **Observing Abuse**

Take great care when reporting suspected abuse. It is important not to make a subjective judgement. Behaviour that is not acceptable to you does NOT always constitute abuse. Abuse is when one person inflicts harm on another.

#### **What to Say to the Client**

Explain to the client/volunteer that you have an obligation to report what you have seen or what they have said to you. Explain that you will report the abuse to the car scheme co-ordinator accurately and appropriately. Once the abuse has been reported, it will be investigated further by the co-ordinator who will ensure the client's confidentiality is maintained unless it is decided that the abuse must be reported to a higher authority (i.e. Social Services). This will be discussed with the client prior to alerting Social Services. It is important that volunteers do not help a vulnerable adult conceal abuse.

It is essential to report the facts only. Include name, date, time, what was said to you and who was present when it was said. You must then pass this information on to the co-ordinator.

**The procedure should be as follows:**

Volunteer

Scheme Co-ordinator

Appropriate Agency

**3. Alleged abuse by Volunteers**

If a client/volunteer approaches you regarding alleged abuse by a volunteer, the abuse must be reported to the co-ordinator. The co-ordinator will then work to investigate the claim and take appropriate action, involving the Local Authorities where necessary.

**4. How to React If a Client is Telling You about Abuse**

- Stay calm and do not show shock.
- Actively listen to what is being said.
- Don't tamper with evidence.
- Don't ask leading questions.
- Don't warn the abuser.
- Don't pressurise for details.
- Don't promise to keep the abuse a secret.
- Try and substantiate by asking when, where, how, what and why.

**5. For more information**

Action on Elder Abuse : 0808 808 8141

Volunteers can direct the client/volunteer to this service.

More information about working with vulnerable adults can be found on the internet at: <http://www.buckinghamshirepartnership.gov.uk/safeguarding-adults-board/>

**Review**

These Guidelines were adopted by Pitstone Parish Council on .... *25 February 2021*.....

minute reference ..... *332/20*..... and will be reviewed on at least an annual basis.

Signed on behalf of Pitstone Parish Council by:

*D Nicholls*

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Chairman