

**Policy Title:** Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy

**Approval:** Board of Trustees

**Summary:**

This policy establishes the roles and responsibilities of staff, volunteers, and trustees in relation to the protection of any ‘adults at risk’ with whom their work brings them into contact.

The welfare of the adult at risk in each situation is the primary consideration. The approach Didcot Train will take is based on the principles of the Care Act 2014 and other relevant legislation and guidance relating to the protection of ‘adults at risk’.

**Implementation:**

This policy will be disseminated to employees and volunteers via the electronic filing system and access to Microsoft teams shared drive.

The Trustees are responsible for the protection of adults at risk when accessing the services of Didcot Train, which includes ensuring the implementation and monitoring of this policy.

Didcot Train will include an application form outlining this policy in its activities regarding recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers who work with adults at risk. This includes all criminal disclosures regardless of when they were committed or whether they were of major or minor consequence, including spent convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.

Didcot Train will also ensure references are taken which refer to candidates’ suitability to work and/or have contact with adults at risk.

It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to ensure that all staff and/or volunteers are aware of and understand the importance of implementing this policy and are proactively doing so.

<u>Version</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Comment/Changes</u>	<u>Review</u>
<u>1</u>	<u>October 2020</u>	<u>Approved</u>		<u>Annually</u>
<u>2</u>	<u>April 2023</u>	<u>Approved Sep 2023</u>	Updated to reflect relevant regulatory guidance and best practices with regard to safeguarding children at risk	April 2025 or earlier if triggered by legislative change.

*Biannual review: to ensure it continues to reflect legislative changes and best practices with regard to safeguarding adults at risk.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Didcot Train (“TRAIN”) recognises that:

- Every member of TRAIN is responsible for the protection and safety of at-risk adults, irrespective of their role.
- It has a duty to keep adults at risk and those whom staff may come into contact with safe.
- Any abuse, including physical, verbal or psychological, sexual, financial, or neglect of an adult at risk, is unacceptable and TRAIN is committed to ensuring that its service users and staff remain as safe as possible at all times.
- TRAIN recognises and adheres to the requirements of the current legislation regulating adults at risk.

## 2. DEFINITION

- An adult at risk is any person “*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 against significant harm or exploitation*”.
- Didcot Train also adopts the Department of Health’s guidance that an ‘*adult at risk*’ includes a person aged 18 years and over with one or more of a number of impairments. These include learning difficulties, mental health difficulties, older people and people with a disability or impairment, particularly when additional factors, such as physical frailty or chronic illness, sensory impairment, challenging behaviour, drug or alcohol problems, social or emotional problems, poverty or homelessness, complicate their situation.

## 3. DEALING WITH ADULT AT RISK

While Didcot Train does not exist primarily to support at-risk adults, it is likely that staff and volunteers will come into contact with at-risk adults while carrying out their daily duties. Therefore, if a disclosure is made to a staff member or volunteer, the process outlined below should be followed.

All Safeguarding concerns should be directed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as a matter of urgency as soon as possible (within 24 hours). It is the Designated Safeguarding Lead’s responsibility to assess the risk of harm and take the following actions:

- Raise the concern with *Oxfordshire Adult Social Care Multiagency Safeguarding Hub: 0345 050 7666*
- Inform the Police (if it appears the person is at immediate risk of significant harm, dial 999)
- Signpost to relevant services whose primary focus is working with adults at risk.

## 4. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

It is essential for Didcot Train to remain compliant with relevant Safeguarding responsibilities. A key element of this involves training and development. To ensure ongoing knowledge and standards, Didcot Train will:

- Disseminate via the trustee board and designated safeguarding lead any relevant safeguarding legislation updates to all staff and volunteers, including any changes to practice and procedures.
- Enable and ensure all staff and volunteers undertake safeguarding training every three years to ensure a sound, up-to-date understanding of Safeguarding responsibilities.
- Ensure staff and volunteers receive the appropriate training to recognise the signs of abuse and know what action to take if abuse is suspected or disclosed.

- Ensure staff and volunteers receive a code of good practice to understand how to act when working with Didcot's community.

## 5. ADULTS AT RISK CODE OF GOOD PRACTICE

- 5.1 This Code has been developed to provide advice that not only protects adults at risk but will also help staff and volunteers identify practices that could be mistakenly interpreted and possibly lead to allegations of abuse. At all times, appropriate firm boundaries must be adhered to.

Good practice will also protect Didcot Train by reducing the possibility of anyone using their role to gain access to adults at risk in order to abuse them. Consider how an action or activity may be perceived as opposed to how it is intended.

### 5.2 Staff and Volunteers should be guided by the following advice:

- Do not subject an at-risk adult to physical, emotional, or psychological abuse or sexual exploitation.
- Do not engage in or allow any sexually provocative games involving or observed by service users, whether based on talking or touching.
- Never make suggestive remarks or discriminatory comments to anybody.
- Do not engage in or tolerate any bullying of anybody.
- Do not engage in or tolerate inappropriate physical activity.
- Respect everybody, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, or sexual identity.
- Never trivialise abuse.
- Never let allegations by anyone go unreported, including any made against you.

## 6. PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH ADULT AT RISK

- 6.1 The priority should always be to ensure the safety and protection of service users, and it is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to act on any suspicion or evidence of abuse or neglect.

- 6.2 All staff should ensure they remain alert and compliant with these procedures. There is no expectation of staff or volunteers to investigate abuse. Staff and volunteers must also be aware that, to protect adults, in some circumstances, it may be necessary to share what might normally be regarded as confidential information. **The following principles *must* be adhered to:**

- Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis.
- Information will only be shared when it is in the best interests of the service users.
- Informed consent should be obtained, but if this is not possible and adults at risk are at risk of abuse, it may be necessary to override it.

- 6.3 **Procedure to be followed by Staff and Volunteers if you think an adult may be at risk of abuse is being, or has been abused either by** a member of staff, a member of their family, or any other person, including another adult at risk.

- Staff or volunteers, who, for any reason, become concerned that an adult may be at risk, is being, or has been abused must immediately report that concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead shall, within 24 hours, discuss the concerns or disclosure with you to clarify the cause and obtain all the known relevant information.

- Where the Designated Safeguarding Lead is not available or where the concern relates to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, contact the Chair of the board of trustees (Chairperson). However, where the concern relates to the Chairperson, contact any Trustee who is not involved in the matter.
- In immediate danger or emergency cases, safeguarding concerns must be reported to the Police or other relevant authorities immediately. You must also notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead of the incident as soon as possible and make a factual record of events.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead shall keep a record of all safeguarding disclosures.

#### 6.4 Procedure to be followed if an adult discloses to you that they are being, or have been abused:

6.4.1 People will occasionally disclose abuse to an individual they have come to feel they can trust. They may feel as if they are betraying someone they are close to and whom they love. It is not unusual for them to love the abuser but want the abuse to stop, especially when that person is a family member or carer. Equally, it may be someone they fear, e.g., someone they perceive to be able to influence decisions concerning their future. Either way, it takes great courage for a person to talk about abuse, and your response can be crucial. It can be more difficult for some adults at risk to tell than others. For example, adults at risk who have a disability may have to overcome barriers before disclosing abuse. They may well rely on the abuser for their daily care and have no knowledge of alternative sources.

6.4.2 If an adult discloses abuse, it is important to react appropriately:

<p><b>Do:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remain calm and receptive.</li> <li>• Listen without interrupting.</li> <li>• Only ask questions for clarification if you are unclear about what the person is saying.</li> <li>• Make it clear their disclosure is taken seriously.</li> <li>• Acknowledge their courage in disclosing the abuse.</li> <li>• Inform them they are not responsible for the abuse and that it was right for them to disclose it to you.</li> <li>• Check what they have said to you with them to ensure your understanding is correct.</li> <li>• Let the person know you will do what you can to support them and, where possible, get their consent to inform the <i>Oxfordshire Adult Social Care Multiagency Safeguarding Hub: 0345 050 7666</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Do Not:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow any shock to show.</li> <li>• Probe for more information or ask leading questions.</li> <li>• Make assumptions, judgements or speculate.</li> <li>• Make negative comments about the alleged abuser or anyone.</li> <li>• Make promises you cannot keep.</li> <li>• Agree to keep the information secret.</li> </ul>
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- Make an immediate record of what the adult has said, using their own words with facts, dates and times.
- Follow the instructions for reporting to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, as set out in the policy, as soon as possible.
- Tell them that you will have to inform your Designated Safeguarding Lead and that, if appropriate, the Oxfordshire Adult Social Care team or the Police may also have to be informed.
- Didcot Train recognises that our activities may involve one-to-one contact with adults at risk. Therefore, it is particularly relevant to be always mindful of appropriate boundaries.

## 7. ASSOCIATED POLICIES

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the other associated policies, such as the Whistleblowing Policy, Code of Conduct, Children Safeguarding policy and Safe Recruitment policy.

## 8. CONTACT DETAILS

- For safeguarding suspicion or disclosure occurs, report to TRAIN's Designated Safeguarding Lead:

S/N	Position	Phone/ Email
1.	Youth Work Delivery Manager	<a href="mailto:Alex@didcottrain.org.uk">Alex@didcottrain.org.uk</a>
2.	Senior Youth Worker	

- If the concerns relate to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, contact the Chairperson.

Position	Phone/ Email
Chairperson	Nicole@didcottrain.org.uk

- In the event that safeguarding leads or Chairperson cannot be contacted, staff should contact the Oxfordshire Adult Social Care Multiagency Safeguarding Hub.