



Friends of Nunhead Cemetery

PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE ADULTS' POLICY

AIM OF POLICY

The aim of this policy is to ensure the safety of vulnerable adults by outlining clear procedures and ensuring that all Friends of Nunhead Cemetery (FONC) volunteers and officers/trustees are clear about their responsibilities.

DEFINITION

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited.

This **may** include a person who:

- Is elderly and frail;
- Has a mental illness including dementia;
- Has a physical or sensory disability;
- Has a learning disability;
- Has a severe physical illness;
- Is a substance misuser;
- Is homeless.

WHAT IS ABUSE?

It is the policy of the Friends of Nunhead Cemetery that the safety and welfare of vulnerable adults is of the utmost importance. It is the duty of all FONC members undertaking activities on behalf of FONC to protect each vulnerable adult from abuse and to be alert to the possibility of abuse.

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It can take a number of forms:

§ Physical abuse e.g. hitting, pushing, shaking, inappropriate restraint, neglect or abandonment;

§ Sexual abuse e.g. involvement in any sexual activity against his/her will, exposure to pornography, voyeurism and exhibitionism;

§ Emotional/psychological abuse e.g. intimidation or humiliation;

§ Financial abuse e.g. theft or exerting improper pressure to sign over money from pensions or savings etc.;

§ Neglect or acts of omission e.g. being left in wet or soiled clothing, or malnutrition;

§ Discriminatory abuse e.g. racial, sexual or religious harassment;

§ Personal exploitation – involves denying an individual his/her rights or forcing him/her to perform tasks that are against his/her will;

§ Violation of rights e.g. preventing an individual speaking his/her thoughts and opinions;

§ Institutional abuse e.g. failure to provide a choice of meals or failure to ensure privacy or dignity.

REPORTING PROCEDURES

It is the duty of all FONC members undertaking activities on behalf of the Friends to report such abuse either to FONC officers, Adult Southwark Social Services or to the police, as appropriate. Where possible and safe to do so, FONC members should intervene to offer protection to vulnerable adults or to seek the intervention of suitably qualified professional responders.

In emergency situations (e.g. where there is the risk or occurrence of severe physical injury), where immediate action is needed to safeguard the health or safety of the vulnerable adult or anyone else who may be at risk, the emergency services must be contacted as soon as practicable.

If a FONC officer/trustee has been told about the allegation of abuse in confidence, they should attempt to gain the consent of the victim to make a referral to another agency. However, the gaining of the consent is not essential in order for information to be passed on. Consideration needs to be given to:

§ The scale of the abuse;

§ The risk of harm to others;

§ The capacity of the victim to understand the issues of abuse and consent.

If there is any doubt about whether or not to report an issue to Southwark Social Services then it should be reported.

Where a crime is taking place, has just occurred or is suspected, the police must be contacted immediately.

RESPONSIBILITIES

FONC volunteers (including corporate volunteers) who are in regular contact with 'vulnerable adults' have a responsibility to be aware of this policy and to report any suspicions that they might have regarding adult abuse.

FONC trustees will ensure that this policy is shared. All volunteers and corporate volunteers can access the information in this vulnerable adult's policy on the FONC website. The link for this policy will be made available via the contacts page in the FONC newsletter. A hard copy will be accessible in the portacabin and the policy will also be brought to the attention of volunteers at the volunteer induction.

DBS CHECKS

Potential recruited FONC staff who may be in regular, unsupervised contact with vulnerable adults will have a DBS check.

CONTACTS

Contact Southwark Social Services on 020 7525 5000 and ask to be transferred to:

- 1) Adults for physical or sensory disability and older people;
- 2) Adults with a mental illness; or
- 3) Adults with a learning disability.

Contact the after-hours emergency number outside working hours.

LEGISLATION

This policy is informed by, and adheres, to:

NHS and Community Care Act 1990;
Mental Health Act 2007;
Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

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