



## VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

The Main Project is committed to ensuring that vulnerable adults who use our services are not abused and that working practices minimise the risk of such abuse. This Policy should be used in conjunction with The Main Project Child Protection Policy.

The nominated Director/Trustee for Adult Protection is Nigel Carden. Director of The Main Project.

In the absence of the nominated Director the Project Officer will assume this role.

### 1. Definition

Vulnerable adults are people who are over 18 years of age and are getting or may need help and services from the Main Project. Vulnerable adults may be unable to take care of themselves without support and unable to protect themselves from exploitation or harm by other people.

Abuse can include: - sexual, physical, financial, material, psychological, discriminatory including emotional abuse and neglect. Abuse can take place in any setting, both private and public, and can be perpetrated by anyone.

Staffs, Volunteers and Director/Trustees have a duty to identify abuse and report it.

### 2. Support to Staff and Volunteers

The Staff and volunteers reporting incidents of suspected or potential abuse may find that the victim and/or the other responsible adult concerned i.e. are upset or angry. The Project Officer will support you. Other support may take the form of support provided by work colleagues or support of counselling provided by an outside body if required.

Staff and volunteers themselves may also be the subject of an allegation of abuse. While support will be offered, The Main Project will ensure that Social Services and /or police are given all assistance pursuing any investigation. Suspension and/or discipline may be implemented.

### 3. Suspicion of abuse by a member of The Main Project Staff or Volunteers

Where a staff member or volunteer is suspected of abuse that could constitute criminal behaviour police will be involved or where the behaviour of staff or volunteers is inappropriate or unprofessional but it is clear that no offence has been committed the following action should be taken:

- The Project Officer or nominated director should interview the staff member or volunteer (a witness present may be present if requested)
- The Project Officer should make arrangements for interviewing the suspected victim. This should be done with a Main Project staff or volunteer plus a support for the victim present.
- The Project Officer and nominated director will decide whether there are grounds for the allegation before further investigation or if appropriate, recommend other action to address concerns.
- The procedure in 4 above should then be followed.

### 4. Confidentiality

Confidentiality is crucial to all our work and relationships and The Main Projects Confidentiality Policy should be adhered to however the welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount and takes precedence over it. Do not keep concerns relating to potential abuse to yourself. Report them to the nominated director.

Confidentiality may NOT be maintained if the withholding of information will prejudice the welfare of the vulnerable person

All staff and volunteers must have CRB Disclosure at enhanced level.

### 5. Contact Information

Allegation of the alleged abuse which occurred when the person is over 18 years old falls under the Protection of Vulnerable Adults and needs to be reported to the local Social Services Adult Care Duty Officer

Stockton	01642 527764 (First Contact) or Paul Green 01642 528458
Middlesbrough	01642 726004
Hartlepool	01429 266522
Redcar/Cleveland	01642 771500
Darlington	01325 346200

