



## VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION POLICY

**The Walking Football Association (WFA) aims to create an atmosphere where all adults feel valued and safe and a place where their welfare is promoted. This policy sets out the procedures for protecting vulnerable adults working with the Association staff, board members or volunteers.**

### **Safeguarding principles**

*The WFA's* arrangements in fulfilling its commitment to safeguarding children and young people:

1. John Croot is the Senior Safeguarding Officer with responsibility for safeguarding
2. has in place responsible recruitment processes which include:-
  - Statements in job adverts and in job descriptions as to the organisation's commitment to safeguarding
  - Job descriptions
  - Interviews
  - Enhanced DBSs checks for those working with children and young people as required for the role.
  - The taking up of two written references

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The WFA also outlines its commitments and requirements for safeguarding to all partner organisations and any commissioned service providers.

3. All WFA staff and volunteers receive in-house training on identifying and reporting concerns in respect of safeguarding. In addition support is provided for those involved in dealing with reporting incidents.
4. The WFA is committed to ongoing safeguarding training and development, appropriate to the role of the employee and the level of their involvement with children, young people and vulnerable adults.
5. The WFA committed to the sharing of information to protect children, young people, in line with Working Together (2013) and the Data Protection Act (1998).
6. In addition to this Safeguarding Policy, the WFA promotes a number of initiatives which seek to address and encourage young people's and families' enjoyment as participants and spectators.

## **Vulnerable Adults**

A vulnerable adult is defined as:

- Any person aged 18 years or over who:***
- ***Is in need of community care services by reason of mental ill health, physical or learning disability, age or illness***  
***Or***
  - ***May be unable to take care of him/herself or protect him/herself against significant harm or serious exploitation.***

Any concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon appropriately and the organisation will pay attention to what adults feel.

We will be rigorous and vigilant in protecting everyone using our services from abuse, bullying and intimidation. We will do this through a careful recruitment and selection process, on-going supervision and monitoring arrangements and guidance on appropriate behaviour.

Everyone involved in The Walking Football Association is obliged to make sure that anyone using the services is safe.

**They must report concerns without delay.**

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All those involved in the organisation will be made aware of this policy and of what to do if they have any concerns. There is guidance for those responsible for responding to concerns so that they are properly dealt with.

## **RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF STAFF**

Determined abusers have often managed to gain access to vulnerable adults. Our policy and procedures are important safeguards to stop this happening. They will be understood by good applicants and will put ill intentioned people off.

All volunteers and staff, including temporary personnel will be subject to a careful and rigorous selection and vetting process with the following elements:

- All aspects of recruitment will involve a WFA member of staff or several Directors. Staff will only act in an advisory capacity.
- At least one trustee and the line manager will sit on interviewing panels.
- Recruitment methods must avoid informal discussions which may discriminate against certain groups.
- All appointments will involve the completion of an application form and checking the person's identity by their national insurance number.
- Selection procedures will take account of the value of unpaid community and voluntary work and of experience gained in domestic or family work.
- Throughout the selection procedure the only information about a candidate will be that contained on the application form, together with information obtained during the interview.
- Shortlisting will be carried out by the whole panel on the basis of the essential requirements listed in the person specification.
- Prior to the interview the panel will agree questions to be asked, who is to ask which question and how to record notes.
- All questions asked at interview will relate directly to the person specification. No candidate will be asked about their personal circumstances.
- All efforts possible will be made to facilitate the employment of any candidate with a disability or additional needs.
- The organisation is committed to the principle of flexible working arrangements with regard to how and when hours are worked.
- Training in equal opportunities recruitment and selection procedures is made available to all trustees and staff.

### **References:**

- Two references will be used to support or deny the appointment of a candidate, and not to choose between candidates.

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- For the recruitment of people who will be working with vulnerable adults the candidates will be asked to identify reasons for gaps or inconsistencies in employment.

**Terms and conditions of employment:**

- Conditions of employment will incorporate good practice on equal opportunities issues as well as adhering to employment legislation. This may require operating flexibly and sensitively to take account of any needs of staff members who have domestic or family responsibilities or who have medical or other personal needs.
- Written grievance and disciplinary procedures are not part of the terms and conditions of employment, but staff are consulted before changes are made.

**Support and supervision:**

- All staff will receive support, supervision and line management which will be carried out with due regard to equal opportunities.

**Procedures for dealing with breaches of the policy**

- a) In the case of paid staff, a serious breach of this policy may be grounds for disciplinary action.
- b) In the case of members (including Directors), a serious breach of this policy may result in termination of membership and removal from the Board, in line with the procedures contained within the Memorandum of Agreement and Articles of Association (which includes calling a Special General Meeting).
- c) In the case of honorary officers, a serious breach of this policy may result in the other Board members voting to remove them from office but they cannot be removed from the Board other than by calling a Special General Meeting, as above.

**Safe Working Arrangements**

- The Senior Safeguarding Officer is the person responsible for adult protection responsible and making sure that the vulnerable adult protection policy is working. She/he will be trained to know how to respond when adult protection concerns are raised to him/her.
- All relevant staff will receive training in recognising the signs of abuse. Forms of abuse are physical, sexual, neglect and emotional. They can include bullying, or putting people down because of their race, religion, culture, gender, sexuality, disability, etc.
- The Walking Football Association will ensure that users of the service, their families and carers are aware of the adult protection policy and who to speak to if they have any concerns and the procedures to follow.

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- ❑ The WFA will develop appropriate guidance for staff involved with vulnerable adults, which outline codes of behaviour. These will be developed on a group by group basis taking into account the needs of the particular group.
- ❑ Responsibility for implementing and monitoring the policy rests with the Board.
- ❑ All work with vulnerable adults will be monitored in accordance with the organisation's monitoring and evaluation procedures which are:
  - The Board receive regular reports from its recruitment panels, sub-groups and staff.
  - All staff receiving line management which includes monitoring the equal opportunities aspects of their work.
  - Specific surveys are carried out from time to time in communities experiencing deprivation.
  - The results of any monitoring and evaluation exercises are fed into priorities for work and future funding.

### **Guidance for Workers on Action to be taken**

If you suspect a vulnerable adult is being abused:

- immediately discuss with the Senior Safeguarding Officer
- record the facts as you know them

If a vulnerable adult discloses abuse by someone else:

- allow them to speak without interruption, accepting what is said
- advise that you will offer support where possible, but you must pass the information on

If you receive an allegation about any adult or about yourself:

- immediately discuss with the Senior Safeguarding Officer
- record the facts as you know them
- try to ensure no-one is placed in a position which could cause further compromise

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE SENIOR SAFEGUARDING OFFICER**

You should:

- ❑ Know about signs and symptoms of abuse
- ❑ Know about how abusers (perpetrators) behave
  - Ask about training if you don't know these things
- ❑ Know about National guidelines on dealing with concerns about abuse
- ❑ Know who to contact in Social Services so that you can either:
  - Ask for advice when you are not sure what to do

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- Refer a case without delay where there are vulnerable adult protection concerns
- Make sure the vulnerable adults using The WFA know
  - About the vulnerable adults protection policy and procedures
  - You are the person to speak to if they have any concerns
  - Who to speak to if you are not there
  - Make sure staff and volunteers know how to respond if a vulnerable adult talks to them about abuse
  - Make sure they have access to guidelines.
- Provide information about help lines and other sources of help for vulnerable adults.

## **GUIDELINES FOR PROJECT WORKERS/VOLUNTEER: RESPONDING TO A REPORT OF ABUSE FROM A VULNERABLE ADULT**

### **Do's and Don'ts**

#### **DO**

- Do treat any allegations extremely seriously and act at all times towards the vulnerable adult as if you believe what they are saying
- Do tell the vulnerable adult they are right to tell you.
- Do reassure them that they are not to blame
- Do be honest about your own position, who you have to tell and why
- Do tell the vulnerable adult what you are doing and when, and keep them up to date with what is happening
- Do take further action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse – tell your DSO immediately
- Do write down everything said and what was done (see notes on recording)

#### **DON'T**

- Don't make promises you can't keep
- Don't interrogate the vulnerable adult – it is not your job to carry out an investigation – this will be up to the police and social services, who have experience in this
- Don't cast doubt on what the vulnerable adult has told you, don't interrupt or change the subject
- Don't say anything that makes the vulnerable adult feel responsible for the abuse
- Don't do nothing – make sure you tell your DSO immediately – they will know how to follow this up and where to go for further advice

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**Fear puts a lot of people off telling about wrongdoing.**

**Remember, you always have a duty to make sure concerns are reported. Then appropriate action can be taken.**

**Tell the Senior Safeguarding officer at the WFA S/he will be able to get further advice and/or refer the situation to social services or the police.**

**If for any reason you cannot tell the SSO, then you should tell the most senior person on duty.**

## **KEEPING A RECORD OF CONCERNS**

When a vulnerable adult concern arises, it is essential you record what is said or seen and what action was taken.

This record or any other written record should be kept in a locked cabinet or drawer. Access should be limited to only:

- ❑ The person who has completed the form
- ❑ The DSO or deputy
- ❑ The Chair of The WFA if the person complained about is the Director.

It may be shown to the police or social services and could possibly be used in court, although this is rare. The vulnerable adult concerned can be shown this document but discretion should be used. Their permission should be obtained before showing to the family/carer.

## VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

### Types of Abuse

(a) **Physical Abuse**

Physical injury or unreasonable physical constraint to an individual where there is definite knowledge, or a reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented, e.g.:

- Assault and battery
- Hitting, slapping, scratching
- Misuse of medication
- Pushing or rough handling
- Restraining without justifiable reasons

(b) **Sexual Abuse**

The involvement of individuals in sexual activities, to which they may not have given informed consent, may not fully comprehend or with which they do not wish to continue or that violate the social taboos of family roles, e.g.:

- Inappropriate touching
- Non contact abuse - e.g. pornography
- Rape or attempted rape
- Sexual harassment

(c) **Psychological Abuse**

Action that is not of a physical nature but severely affects the psychological well being of the individual, e.g.:

- Emotional abuse
- Humiliation or ridicule
- Threats of punishment or exclusion
- Verbal assaults

(d) **Discriminatory Abuse**

Psychological abuse that is racist, sexist or linked to a person's age or disability e.g.:

- Racial or sexual harassment
- Insults or harassment based on disability
- Deliberate denial of cultural or religious needs



(e) **Financial Abuse**

Misappropriation of an individual's funds or any other action that is against the person's best interests, e.g.:

- Theft of money, possessions, property or other material goods
- Misuse of money
- Fraud or extortion of material assets

(f) **Neglect**

Neglect of individuals to such an extent that their physical and/or mental well-being is seriously impaired, e.g.:

- Failure to keep the person clean, warm and in good health
- Failure to provide reasonable care
- Failure to give prescribed medication
- Failure to give privacy and dignity
- Failure to provide supervision for behaviour which could be dangerous
- Failure to access medical care or technical aids.
- Failure to provide nourishment

### **Criminal Offences**

Some instances of abuse will constitute a criminal offence. In these cases reference to the police should be made as a matter of urgency. The responsibility for initiating action rests with the police and the Crown Prosecution Service.

- Criminal investigation by the police takes priority over all other lines of enquiry.

### **Who are the Abusers?**

Vulnerable adults may be abused by a wide range of people including:

- Relatives and family members
- Professional staff
- Paid care workers
- Volunteers
- Other service users
- Neighbours, friends and associates
- People who deliberately target vulnerable people
- Strangers

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## **Contacts**

- John Croot- Senior Safeguarding Officer- 07896314692
- Paul Carr – Chief Executive 07517 033248

External practitioners and advice

- The Police - 101
- Social care emergency (out of hours) – 01629 532600