



North Midlands LGBT Older Peoples Group  
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# Safeguarding Policy Updated October 2023

## Introduction

The North Midlands LGBT Older Peoples Group (OLGBT) is based around peer support.

Our social and other activities are primarily organised for members and prospective members of the group. Membership is only open to adults. We also occasionally support public events and other activities where young people and children may be present

The group is a registered charity managed by a board of elected volunteer trustees who have overall responsibility for the management of safeguarding issues that may arise.

## Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to protect people from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with our organisation and its activities. This includes harm arising from:

- The conduct of members or personnel associated with OLGBT
- The design and implementation of OLGBT's programmes and activities

This policy lays out the commitments made by OLGBT and informs members and associated personnel of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

OLGBT commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the three pillars of prevention, reporting and response.

## Policy Statement

OLGBT believes that everyone we come into contact with, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. OLGBT will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by its members or associated personnel.

This policy seeks to address adult safeguarding, child safeguarding and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.

This policy is not intended to prevent our members from forming friendships or engaging in intimate or sexual relationships. We are only concerned with safeguarding where the basis of a relationship may be considered as therapeutic or where there is an imbalance of power in the relationship or the relationship is abusive in some other way.

## What is Safeguarding?

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect

OLGBT has a legal and moral duty to protect people from harm that could arise in relation to the meetings, events and other activities that we undertake. This includes:

- Responding to concerns about the health and welfare of our members and prospective members.
- Ensuring that our members and prospective members do not cause harm to themselves or others when engaging with our activities.
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect visitors, volunteers and members of the public who engage with our activities.
- Reporting safeguarding concerns whenever they are raised. These concerns may relate to any adult or child and may be raised for any reason.

***If you suspect that an adult or child is at risk of harm, abuse or neglect then you must raise a Safeguarding Concern.***

## What We Do to Help Keep People Safe

To help keep everyone safe we will:

- Publish a code of conduct setting out standards of acceptable behaviour
- Implement policies that protect and promote the health and wellbeing of our members and prospective members.
- Deal with safeguarding concerns and other reports of distress, harm or potential harm relating to members, prospective members and others linked to our activities.
- Signpost people to sources of help and support to meet their needs (For example - Samaritans, Mind, CAB etc.)
- Raise awareness of the types of abuse and what to do when abuse is suspected

## Responsibilities

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Members and prospective members of OLGBT are asked to:

- Behave in ways that supports their own care and wellbeing and that of other community members.
- Respond appropriately when someone is struggling with their mental or physical health and wellbeing.
- Inform the OLGBT board if they have a safeguarding concern

When OLGBT is unable to meet someone's support needs we will signpost them to other sources of help.

## Prevention

To help prevent harm we will:

- Ensure all members have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy
- Design and undertake all its programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with OLGBT. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programmes is gathered and communicated
- Implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying volunteers.
- Ensure that relevant persons receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organisation
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly

## Our responsibilities

### Child safeguarding

In England a child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. OLGBT members and associated personnel must not:

- Sexually abuse or exploit children
- Subject a child to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect
- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children including child labour or trafficking

### Adult safeguarding

An adult at risk is any person who is aged 18 years or over and at risk of abuse or neglect because of their needs for care and or support. OLGBT members and associated personnel must not:

- Sexually abuse or exploit at risk adults
- Subject an at risk adult to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect

## Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse

When providing support on behalf of OLGBT members and associated personnel must not:

- Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual activity.
- Engage in any sexual relationships with the persons who are being provided with support on behalf of OLGBT as an organisation

Additionally, OLGBT members and associated personnel are obliged to:

- Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of this Safeguarding Policy
- Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations to any member of the OLGBT board

## Enabling reports

OLGBT will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to members and the communities we work with.

OLGBT will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies.

## How to report a safeguarding concern

Members who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to any board member. If the member does not feel comfortable reporting to a particular board member (for example if they feel that the report will not be taken seriously, or if that person is implicated in the concern) they may report directly to the Chair or to any other board member.

## Response

### **If there is an immediate threat to life do not delay, call the emergency services 999**

If someone expresses suicidal thoughts, signpost them to the Samaritans and/or other sources of support that may help meet their needs. Inform the OLGBT board of your concerns (but bear in mind that we are not an emergency service).

OLGBT will follow up all safeguarding reports and concerns according to best practice and our statutory obligations.

When board members are informed of a safeguarding concern, we will carefully consider the best way to respond. The response may include:

- Supporting the person who has raised the concern to take further action
- Signposting the person to additional support that may help
- Offering to refer someone to their local safeguarding team (this might require them to provide more information such as a full address and date of birth if we do not have the information already) In some circumstances we may need to refer matters to a local safeguarding team regardless of whether we have consent or with only the limited information available.

***We cannot by ourselves provide an emergency service or a crisis intervention. We will signpost to others who can help.***

We all need to take care not to take on individual responsibility for supporting a person in crisis. The demands of such dependency could become harmful to the person that is providing the support and then ultimately harm the person being supported.

OLGBT will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to members found in breach of the safeguarding policy.

OLGBT will offer support to survivors of harm caused by members or associated personnel. Decisions regarding support will be led by the survivor but may be limited by the resources of the charity.

## Confidentiality

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need to know basis only, and should be kept secure at all times.

## Appendix – Links to Safeguarding Information

### Concerns About Adults

- [General Information about Abuse and Neglect \(NHS England\)](#)
- [Reporting concerns about adults in Stoke-on-Trent](#)
- [Reporting concerns about adults in Staffordshire](#)

### Concerns About Children

- [Reporting concerns about children in Stoke-on-Trent](#)
- [Reporting concerns about children in Staffordshire](#)
- [NSPCC Helpline](#)
- [Childline](#)
- [Explanation of the Child Protection System in the UK](#)

Please be vigilant and report anything that concerns you. Do not attempt to investigate matters by yourself.

----- End of policy -----

### Version History

15/04/2021	Created by Maurice Greenham
25/10/2023	Amended version approved by OLGBT board