

Clevedon Care Safeguarding Policy

Background to Clevedon Care

Clevedon Care (CC) is a voluntary organisation which provides transport for individuals to medical appointments in private cars belonging to volunteer drivers.

The clients can either be accompanied or travel alone. Clients from care homes are required to be accompanied by staff from the care home. Individuals can be accompanied by relatives or friends.

CC is a well-respected voluntary organisation within the community and has provided the service safely and successfully for over 35 years.

Current Practice

The main contacts with the public are through volunteer drivers who are interviewed before acceptance. This includes taking up references and having DBS checks for volunteers working with vulnerable adults. These will be updated as required by the DBS service.

Drivers wear ID badges when on duty and are issued with guidelines regarding the transport of clients which are updated regularly. The guidelines issued to drivers in the Good Practice Rules specify the drivers' responsibility for up-to-date car insurance, vehicle excise duty and meeting MOT requirements. Guidance on the use of wheelchairs is provided and the requirement is specified that all bookings must be made through the CC office with the consequent allocation of a job number to meet insurance requirements. Drivers are also required to drive safely and respond to any special needs that passengers may have e.g. car sickness or requests not to use a motorway.

Drivers are not carers or health workers and have no specialist expertise in handling the disabled. It is made clear that clients should be able to get to/from and in/out of the car without the intervention of a driver.

Safeguarding Policy

In recent years there has been an increased focus on safeguarding generally, both for children and for 'adults at risk of harm'. This concern has been reflected in legislation and for voluntary organisations in the Charity Commission guidance to charities. Clevedon Care's policy on Safeguarding is designed to reflect these changing concerns. The policy adheres to the general principles of the Charity Commission guidelines, whilst focusing on the specific risks of operating a voluntary driving scheme. In so doing it seeks to articulate an approach which is comprehensive, proportionate and fair.

Our Understanding of Safeguarding

In this policy safeguarding refers to the range of measures in place to protect the people who use CC services from harm, abuse, neglect and mistreatment of any kind. It affects the conduct of volunteers; the design and implementation of our services; our working/volunteering environment and culture and any interactions we have with the public directly or by digital means.

Our Commitment to Safeguarding

Protecting users of our services and meeting our safeguarding responsibilities is a fundamental part of operating as a charity for the public benefit. We recognise that we have duties both to those who benefit from our service but equally to our volunteers, and others with whom we come into contact. All should be treated with dignity and respect and feel that they are in a safe and supportive environment.

Our Commitment to Inclusion

Our primary users are adults, some of whom may be at risk of harm. We will support the rights of adults to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Through fulfilling our safeguarding duties, we will not stereotype, label or single out individuals based on their origins, ethnicity, faith and beliefs and other characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010.

Our Commitment to Act

We will always act on concerns of harm. In situations where there are concerns of harm our role is not to investigate, but to recognise and report to those with professional expertise and public responsibility. We will therefore work closely with statutory agencies, the police or other expert bodies where required.

As far as is practical and desirable, we will protect individuals' rights to privacy and confidentiality and only share information with those who need to know. Whilst we have a duty to keep information confidential, we also have a responsibility to share information with appropriate agencies to protect people from harm. Such information will be kept in a safe, secure and lawful manner.

Safeguarding at Clevedon Care

1. Safeguarding is **everyone's** business at Clevedon Care. All our volunteers must be aware of the risks and should be able to recognise signs of abuse. All volunteers have a responsibility to record any concerns that indicate a vulnerable person or child may be at risk of harm and to report incidents to the designated Safeguarding Officer.

2. All drivers who undertake work with vulnerable adults must have an enhanced DBS check. This is done initially within the recruitment of drivers' process undertaken by the Driver Coordinator. This involves checking for a valid certificate before volunteers start their duties to ensure there are no reports of previous convictions which would preclude a volunteer from working with vulnerable members of the community.
3. All drivers will be given a basic understanding of safeguarding and the possible circumstances they need to look out for. This will be embodied in a Safeguarding Code of Practice which will be included in the updated Good Practice Rules. Whilst drivers are not expected to be experts on safeguarding, they need to exhibit professional curiosity and be aware of their obligation to protect adults at risk of harm. Drivers must adhere to the behavioural guidance in the Code of Practice, to avoid situations which can make clients feel uncomfortable or bring the organisation into disrepute.
4. Clevedon Care (CC) officers and trustees need to have a thorough understanding of what constitutes safeguarding and be involved in the organisational risk assessment process. The designated Safeguarding Officer will be the subject matter expert on the committee and will receive training in their role. They will focus proactively on the prevention of harm to clients and volunteers.
5. When safeguarding concerns are raised by volunteers, they should be directed in the first instance to the Safeguarding Officer or their designated deputy in their absence, and if necessary complete a 'Raise a Safeguarding Adults Concern Form,' a copy of which will be included in the Good Practice Rules.
6. The Safeguarding Officer will liaise where appropriate with the North Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board at the North Somerset Council, with the Disclosure and Barring Service and with other agencies where appropriate.
7. If a safeguarding concern referred to the Safeguarding Officer has not been dealt with adequately in the opinion of the person who has raised the concern, they may appeal to the Chairman who will then investigate and try to resolve the matter.
8. The Safeguarding Officer will report serious incidents and actions taken to the Chairman. The SO will report to the committee at each regular meeting and the committee will review any changes to policy or procedure which may be necessary. The Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed annually.

Clevedon, August 2023.

