

## Safeguarding: Protecting adults from harm

Safeguarding means protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse, or neglect. This includes taking steps to prevent harm and acting when someone may be at risk.

Everyone has a role to play – including residents, staff, families, volunteers, and organisations working together.

## When does safeguarding apply?

We must act when someone:

- Has **care and support needs** (whether or not they receive care).
- Is experiencing, - or at risk of - **abuse or neglect**.
- And is unable to protect themselves as a result.

This definition comes from the **Care Act 2014**.

## What is abuse?

Abuse is when someone's **human rights are violated**, or they're harmed, controlled, or exploited. Abuse may be intentional or happen because of stress, lack of training or neglect.

Types of abuse include:

- **Physical** – hitting, slapping, misuse of medication, restraint.
- **Sexual** – rape, unwanted touching, pressured consent.
- **Psychological** – threats, humiliation, controlling or isolating behaviour.
- **Financial** – theft, fraud, misuse of property, coercion over money.
- **Modern slavery** – human trafficking, forced labour, or domestic servitude.
- **Discriminatory** – harassment based on age, race, gender identity, disability, religion, or sexuality.
- **Organisational** – neglect or poor care within services.
- **Neglect and acts of omission** – ignoring care needs, withholding essentials.
- **Self-neglect** – when someone doesn't look after themselves or their surroundings (e.g. hoarding).

## Why does abuse happen?

Abuse often happens where there is a **power imbalance**, or where someone is dependent on others. It can also arise from pressure, poor training, or a lack of resources.

## Who can abuse?

Abuse can be carried out by:

- Family members or partners.
- Friends, neighbours, carers (paid or unpaid).
- Professionals – including health and housing staff.
- Other residents or service users.
- Strangers or those providing services.

Sadly, abuse often comes from people known to the victim.

## Reporting safeguarding concerns

If someone is in **immediate danger**, call **999**.

Otherwise, concerns can be reported to:

- **Lincolnshire County Council's Safeguarding Team: 01522 782155**
- A member of Lace staff.
- Yourself – anyone can report a concern.

We'll listen, act sensitively, and involve the right services. If appropriate, we'll appoint a trained staff member to gather initial information (Fact Finder) and decide whether to make a referral.

## What happens next?

We may:

- Contact the person at risk (if safe to do so).
- Assess the urgency and risk.
- Consider the person's wishes, and whether they have capacity.
- Refer the concern to Lincolnshire County Council's Safeguarding Team.

Their role is to:

- Decide whether safeguarding procedures apply.
- Coordinate action to keep the person safe.
- Hold a **case conference**, if needed, involving relevant agencies.

We will stay involved until the risk is reduced or the person chooses not to proceed and is judged able to make that decision. Wherever possible, we follow the principle of:

**“No decision about me, without me”.**

This means the person at risk should be fully involved in decisions that affect them, unless it's unsafe or they lack capacity to do so.

### Confidentiality and sharing information

We will always try to:

- Protect your identity if you wish to remain anonymous.
- Keep the person at risk involved in decisions where possible.

But we may have to share information without consent if:

- There are others at risk.
- The person lacks capacity to protect themselves.
- Serious harm, crime, or public interest is involved.

Information will only be shared on a **need-to-know basis**, and always securely.

### People, Places, Partnerships in practice

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

For **people**, it means protecting safety, dignity, and the right to live free from abuse.

In the **places** we manage, it means recognising signs of harm and responding quickly.

Through **partnerships** – with residents, staff, families and safeguarding services – we help protect those most at risk.

If you're ever worried about someone – or yourself – speak up. We are here to help. Safeguarding starts with us all.