



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Commitment to safeguarding

Letchworth Arts and Leisure Group (LALG) believes that no one should experience abuse of any kind.

About this policy

- This policy applies to all Members, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of LALG or taking part in LALG activities and events.
- The purpose of this policy is to provide Members and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to the protection of people at risk.
- This policy recognises people at risk as:
 - Adults aged over 18 defined as vulnerable (at risk) by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006; this might include adults with a learning or physical disability, a physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs, or reduced physical or mental capacity.
- Definitions of abuse are detailed in the attached annex.
- This policy aims to:
 - Protect adults at risk who are Members of, or volunteer for, LALG, or take part in LALG activities and events.
 - Ensure Members and volunteers working with adults at risk are carefully recruited and understand and accept responsibility for the safeguarding of those at risk individuals they are interacting with.
 - Ensure that safeguarding of adults at risk is a primary consideration when LALG undertakes any activity or event.

How LALG might work with people at risk

Membership of LALG is open to members of a household over 18 years of age. We run activities and events for Members and for the general public. As such our involvement with people at risk might include, but is not limited to:

- People who attend activities and events
- Relatives and friends of members who attend activities and events
- Audience or participating members at public events

Named Safeguarding Person

- The Committee has appointed a Named Safeguarding Person. This person will normally be a Committee member but can be another LALG Member with appropriate experience. The Safeguarding Person can be contacted at safeguarding@lalg.org.uk or via the Secretary at secretary@lalg.org.uk.
- The Named Safeguarding Person has responsibility for safeguarding issues. All queries and concerns relating to safeguarding should be referred to the Named Safeguarding Person in the first instance.
- Any activities or events that will knowingly involve people at risk must be planned with the involvement of the Named Safeguarding Person and should be in line with established procedures and guidelines (see below).
- In the absence of the Named Safeguarding Person, the Chair of the Committee or another officer will act.

Procedures and guidelines

Safeguarding procedures and guidelines, which form part of this policy, are set out in a separate document.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Committee. It will also be reviewed in response to changes in relevant legislation, good practice, or to an identified failing in its effectiveness.

Review date: July 2026

This policy was amended and then affirmed by the Committee at its meeting on 16 July 2025

Annex

Definitions of abuse

Abuse is a violation of a person's human rights or dignity by someone else. There are many kinds of abuse, some of which are listed below:

- Physical: Including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate physical sanctions.
- Domestic: Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. This includes psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse or 'honour'-based violence.
- Sexual: Including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment or assault, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure or sexual acts to which the adult at risk has not consented or was pressured into consenting.
- Psychological: Including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal from services or supportive networks.
- Financial or material: Including theft, fraud, internet scamming, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, the misappropriation or misuse of property, possessions or benefits.
- Modern Slavery: Including slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude, or traffickers and slave masters coercing, deceiving and forcing individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.
- Discriminatory: Including racist or sexist behaviour, slurs and harassment based on a person's ethnicity, race, culture, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability.
- Organisational abuse: Including neglect, poor care practice or ill-treatment within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home for example. This might be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.
- Neglect or acts of omission: Including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health care, care and support or education services, or withholding necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- Self-neglect: Neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings. Self-neglect may not prompt a Section 42 inquiry, an assessment should be made on a case by case basis.

Online abuse includes:

- Online bullying and harassment.
- Sexual exploitation and grooming online.
- Discrimination and abuse on the grounds of any protected characteristic.
- Sharing of illegal and inappropriate imagery.
- Cyberstalking.
- Impersonation and hacking.
- Disinformation and misinformation.
- The oversharing of personal information.

Any of these forms of abuse can be deliberate, or be the result of ignorance or lack of training, knowledge or understanding. Often if a person is being abused in one way they are also being abused in other ways.

Abusers

The person who is responsible for the abuse may be a stranger, but is often well known to the person abused and could be:

- A relative/family member
- A professional
- A paid care worker
- A volunteer
- Another service user
- A neighbour
- A friend or associate

Signs of abuse

Some of the signs of abuse are:

- Multiple bruising or finger-marks
- Injuries the person cannot give a good reason for
- Deterioration of health for no apparent reason
- Loss of weight
- Inappropriate or inadequate clothing
- Withdrawal or mood changes
- A carer who is unwilling to allow access to the person
- An individual who is unwilling to be alone with a particular carer
- Unexplained shortage of money
- Sudden and unexplained wealth