



**Lambourn Junction CIC**

# **Volunteer Safeguarding Handbook**

Version 1.0

October 2025

## 1. Welcome

Thank you for volunteering with **Lambourn Junction CIC**. Our mission is to support the Lambourn community and surrounding areas through projects that address need, build confidence, and strengthen community spirit. These include the Youth Junction, Food Bank, Lunch Club, and other social initiatives. Many people who benefit from our work are children, young people, or adults who may be vulnerable due to illness, disability, age, or life circumstances.

Safeguarding is a shared responsibility across our entire organisation. Whether you are handing out food parcels, supporting a youth session, or talking to someone at the Friendship Café, you are in a position of trust. This handbook aims to ensure that you understand: - What safeguarding means and why it matters. - How to recognise signs of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. - How to respond safely and appropriately when concerns arise. - The steps to follow under Lambourn Junction CIC's Safeguarding Concerns Reporting Procedure.

By being vigilant, compassionate, and consistent, you play a crucial part in keeping everyone safe.

## 2. What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding means protecting a person's right to live safely, free from harm, abuse, or neglect. It is about creating environments in which everyone feels secure, respected, and supported.

It includes: - **Protecting children and young people** from abuse and exploitation. - **Protecting adults at risk** (for example, those with disabilities, poor mental health, or frailty) from abuse or neglect. - **Promoting wellbeing and safe environments**, ensuring everyone can participate without fear.

**Key principle:** *The welfare of the child or vulnerable adult is always paramount.*

Safeguarding also means being proactive. It's not only about reacting when something has gone wrong; it's about fostering an organisational culture that prevents harm through awareness, training, and consistent practice.

## 3. Your Role as a Volunteer

As a volunteer, you are an ambassador for Lambourn Junction and play a vital role in creating a safe, caring, and inclusive environment. You are expected to: - Be familiar with this handbook, our **Safeguarding Policy**, and our **Safeguarding Concerns Reporting Procedure**. - Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with all participants. - Treat everyone with respect and dignity. - Stay alert to signs of harm, neglect, or exploitation.

- Report any safeguarding concern **immediately**. - Cooperate fully with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Directors, and statutory authorities if required.

You are **not expected to investigate or prove** whether abuse has occurred. Your responsibility is to **notice, record, and report**. If you are ever unsure whether something counts as a safeguarding concern, always err on the side of caution and report it.

**Examples of good safeguarding practice:** - Never be alone with a child or vulnerable adult in a closed space. - Avoid unnecessary physical contact. - Communicate openly and transparently with team leaders. - Use Lambourn Junction communication channels (not personal social media or private messaging) when contacting participants.

## 4. Types of Harm and Abuse

Abuse can take many forms. The following list is not exhaustive but includes the most common types.

### **Physical abuse:**

Deliberate harm, such as hitting, slapping, shaking, or misuse of medication.

*Examples:* unexplained bruises, burns, frequent injuries, or flinching when approached.

### **Emotional or psychological abuse:**

Persistent emotional maltreatment that causes distress or low self-worth.

*Examples:* belittling language, shouting, ignoring, threats, or constant criticism.

### **Neglect:**

Failing to meet basic physical or emotional needs.

*Examples:* poor hygiene, inadequate clothing, untreated medical issues, persistent hunger, or failure to attend appointments.

### **Sexual abuse:**

Any sexual activity without consent, or where the individual is unable to give consent.

*Examples:* inappropriate touching, sexual comments, exposure to pornography, or signs of fear around specific individuals.

### **Financial or material abuse:**

Improper use of someone's money or possessions.

*Examples:* missing cash, sudden financial hardship, changes in wills, or unexplained purchases.

### **Discriminatory abuse:**

Harassment or exclusion based on race, gender, disability, religion, or sexual orientation.

*Examples:* racist remarks, mocking accents, or refusing access due to a person's background.

**Bullying (including online):**

Repeated intimidation or humiliation, whether in person or through digital means.

*Examples:* threatening messages, social exclusion, or cruel jokes on social media.

**Self-harm:**

Deliberate injury to oneself or expressions of hopelessness.

*Examples:* visible cuts, talk of worthlessness, or withdrawal from normal activities.

**Digital abuse:**

Harassment, coercion, or exploitation through technology.

*Examples:* sexting, online grooming, or sharing personal images without consent.

## 5. How to Respond to a Concern

When someone tells you something that causes concern, or you notice worrying signs:

1. **Stay calm.** Do not show shock or disbelief.
2. **Listen carefully.** Let them speak in their own words without interruption.
3. **Reassure them.** Say, "You've done the right thing by telling me."
4. **Do not promise confidentiality.** Explain that you must share this information with people who can help.
5. **Record the facts.** Write down who, what, when, and where — as soon as possible.
6. **Report immediately.** Follow Lambourn Junction's reporting procedure.

If someone is in **immediate danger**, call **999** first, then inform the DSL.

**Do:**

- Use simple, clear language.
- Write exact words spoken if possible.
- Keep your notes factual and free of opinion.

**Don't:**

- Ask leading questions.
- Confront the alleged abuser.
- Delay reporting.

## 6. Reporting Concerns at Lambourn Junction CIC

Our safeguarding reporting process ensures that all concerns are acted upon swiftly and appropriately.

1. Notice and record your concern.
2. Report it to a **LJCIC Director** immediately.
3. The Director reviews and refers it to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**.

4. The DSL assesses the concern and, if appropriate, contacts statutory services.
5. The DSL logs the concern in the confidential **Safeguarding Register**.
6. Feedback is given to the reporting volunteer, where appropriate.

If your concern involves a **staff member or volunteer**, report directly to the DSL. If the DSL is implicated, report to another Director. Serious concerns will be referred to **West Berkshire Council Safeguarding Team**.

## 7. Practical Examples

### Example 1:

A child says, "I don't want to go home because Dad hits me."

→ Stay calm, listen, reassure, record, and report to a Director or DSL.

### Example 2:

An adult repeatedly asks for cash loans or gifts.

→ Politely decline, record the incident, and report it.

### Example 3:

A youth shows you explicit messages from someone online and asks you to keep it secret.

→ Explain you cannot keep secrets about safety, reassure them, record, and report.

### Example 4:

A volunteer overhears a participant making racist remarks to another.

→ Intervene calmly to stop the behaviour, report the incident to the DSL, and note the date and time.

### Example 5:

You notice an older adult's appearance deteriorating week by week.

→ Gently express concern, make notes of your observations, and report to the DSL.

## 8. Confidentiality and Data Protection

All safeguarding records are stored securely by the DSL and accessed only by those who need to know. GDPR applies, but the duty to protect someone from harm always takes priority. Volunteers should: - Keep notes factual and avoid unnecessary details. - Never share information outside the reporting chain. - Dispose of written notes securely after they have been passed to the DSL.

Remember: *Confidentiality protects the individual, but secrecy protects the abuser.*

## 9. Support for Volunteers

Dealing with safeguarding concerns can be distressing. Lambourn Junction offers support for volunteers through:

- Private debriefs with the DSL or a Director.
- Guidance and reassurance on how the concern will be handled.

Volunteers are encouraged to speak up if they feel uncomfortable, uncertain, or affected emotionally. Looking after your own wellbeing helps you continue safeguarding others effectively.

## 10. Training and Good Practice

Volunteers will receive this introduction to safeguarding when they join Lambourn Junction. Periodic refresher sessions and updates will be provided.

Good safeguarding practice also includes:

- Using sign-in sheets to record attendance.
- Maintaining clear sightlines when working with young people.
- Reporting any health and safety hazards.
- Respecting diversity and inclusion.

## 11. Key Contacts

### **Directors:**

Christian Noll – 07401 489832

Julie Blogg – 07840 780345

Charles Lochrane – 07721 410255

Graham Jones – 07767 690228

**Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** Anna Field – 07799 652728

**West Berkshire Children's Services:** 01635 503090

**West Berkshire Adult Social Care:** 01635 503050

**Police (non-emergency):** 101

**Emergency:** 999

## 12. In summary...

Safeguarding is about protecting people from harm — physical, emotional, or otherwise. Your role as a volunteer is vital. You do not need special qualifications to make a

difference; you only need care, awareness, and the courage to act when something feels wrong.

At Lambourn Junction, safeguarding is not a bureaucratic process — it is a moral duty rooted in kindness and respect.

**Notice. Listen. Record. Report.**

By following this simple process, you help make Lambourn Junction a place where everyone is safe, supported, and treated with dignity.

Lambourn Junction Community Interest Company

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