

WORKING WITH CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

This policy sets out how the Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership (ALCRP) operates to keep adults at risk and children safe from abuse or neglect.

The policy is about stopping abuse or neglect where it is happening and preventing abuse or neglect where there is a risk that it may occur.

We have a Duty of Care to our volunteers and service users. We are committed to the protection and safety of adults at risk and children whether they are volunteers and/or participants in our activities. We will protect and support the volunteers who work with us as well as users of our services.

All citizens of the United Kingdom have their rights enshrined within the Human Rights Act 1998. Children's legislation includes the Children's Act 1989 and 2004.

We also follow Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.

And guidance set out by Hertfordshire County Council for Adults at Risk and children.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. For our safeguarding policy to be effective everyone working/volunteering on behalf of the ALCRP, who supports us whatever their role, will play their part in keeping people safe.

PERSONS AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

This policy applies to everyone working/volunteering on behalf of the ALCRP, including its voluntary steering group members, paid staff, volunteers and contractors.

AREAS OF APPLICABILITY

All instances where the activities of ALCRP involve children or adults at risk, including where they are likely to attend events and activities.

EXAMPLES OF APPLICABILITY TO ABBEY LINE CRP ACTIVITIES

Some examples of activities that this policy is applicable to are listed below, but it should be noted that there will be other activities covered by the policy:

- Engagement with schools or community groups
- Public events
- Publicity photographs

DEFINITIONS

Adult at risk of abuse or neglect

For the purposes of this policy, an adult at risk refers to someone over 18 years old who, according to paragraph 42.1 of the Care Act 2014:

- has care and support needs
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
- as a result of their care and support needs is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

If someone has care and support needs but is not currently receiving care or support from a health or care service they may still be an adult at risk.

Children and young people

For the purposes of this policy, children and young people are defined as those persons aged under 18 years old.

“Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children” is defined in Working Together 2023 as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children’s Social Care National Framework.

POLICY

The purpose of the policy is to protect adults at risk and children from abuse or neglect of any kind.

The ALCRP has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse. Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility.

There are no excuses for not taking all reasonable action to protect adults at risk and children from abuse, exploitation, radicalisation, and mistreatment.

The ALCRP recognises that under the Care Act 2014 it has a duty for the care and protection of adults who are at risk of abuse. It is committed to promoting wellbeing, harm prevention and to responding effectively if concerns are raised.

The welfare of the children is paramount and all children have the right to protection from abuse. We follow Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.

The Designated Lead for safeguarding at ALCRP is Hertfordshire County Council's Principal Rail Officer.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for ALCRP will fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities in a way that ensures that adults at risk and children are safeguarded from harm. The Safeguarding Lead is responsible for following up and reporting any suspected reports of abuse.

We are committed to working with appropriate agencies including Hertfordshire County Council Adult Care, Safeguarding Teams, and the police etc. to ensure the reporting of abuse is appropriate and in line with local and national procedures, and requirements and information sharing guidance.

Everyone working/volunteering on behalf of the ALCRP must be clear on appropriate behaviour and responses and follow our agreed Code of Conduct. Where appropriate, failure to maintain standards will be dealt with using the ALCRP's Policies and Procedures.

Volunteers will only undertake activities agreed in advance by the ALCRP Officer.

Everyone working/volunteering on behalf of the ALCRP who comes into contact with adults at risk of abuse or neglect, and children and their families as part of their duties will be alert to possible signs of abuse or neglect and consider whether there may be safeguarding concerns. They are required to report any suspected abuse and be aware of the appropriate reporting and support procedure for safeguarding. This includes the reporting of people at risk of radicalisation and extremism.

Concerns should be noted and drawn swiftly to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or the ALCRP Officer. Concerns will be reported upwards to supervising organisations who have duty of care.

We will create an environment where everyone working/volunteering on behalf of the ALCRP feels able to raise safeguarding concerns and feel supported with their safeguarding responsibilities.

All volunteers and staff are given an induction to the organisation, which includes awareness of their safeguarding responsibilities and procedures to be followed if

they have a safeguarding concern. They will have a safeguarding refresher course every three years.

Appropriate safeguarding training is provided to all other people working on behalf of the ALCRP who come into contact with adults at risk and/or children (e.g. contractors).

Appropriate recruitment of volunteers and staff is in place including policies on when to obtain a DBS check and safer recruitment training completed by recruiting officers.

ENGAGEMENT WITH CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK

ALCRP will undertake activities with children and adults at risk as part of its community engagement role.

- Direct activities with children and adults at risk will only be undertaken through established organisations (e.g. schools, local organisations).
- ALCRP personnel should be accompanied by a member of the established organisation at all times when undertaking the activities.
- Under no circumstances should someone acting on behalf of ALCRP meet with a child or vulnerable adult on their own.

Events

Public events organised by the ALCRP are open to all. Whilst parents, guardians and carers have a general responsibility for ensuring the safety of children and adults at risk, ALCRP has a responsibility for minimising the risk of any harm arising from the event.

- The risk of physical harm and appropriate mitigating measures will be set out in the Events Plan as set out in the Risk Management Policy.
- At least two members of the Steering Group should be in attendance at any ALCRP public event at all times.
- Any unauthorised person taking photographs of children at an event will be challenged immediately.

Photographs

- Any photographs of children or adults at risk taken by ALCRP for publicity purposes will require a signed authorisation. This also applies to third-party organisations taking photographs at an event organised by ALCRP.

Reporting

At events, any issues of concern should be reported to the event organiser or, if not immediately available, any other member of the CRP Steering Committee. Any issue of concern should be reported immediately.

Any other concerns should be raised with the ALCRP Officer and/or Safeguarding Lead.

REPORTING PATHWAY

Everyone working/volunteering on behalf of the ALCRP

- If someone is in immediate danger, call 999 immediately
- Report concern swiftly to ALCRP Safeguarding Lead and/or ALCRP Officer

Safeguarding Lead

- Reporting a Safeguarding Concern About a Child (Hertfordshire): Call Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (24 hours) 0300 123 4043 <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/childrens-social-care/child-protection/report-child-protection-concern.aspx>
- Reporting a Safeguarding Concern About a Child (Hertfordshire): Call Hertfordshire Adult Services (24 hours) 0300 123 4042 or use the online form: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/adult-social-services/report-a-concern-about-an-adult/report-a-concern-about-an-adult.aspx>

USEFUL REFERENCES

[Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance](#)

[Hertfordshire County Council Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy - Herts CC Contents](#) (available on request)

[NSPCC Safeguarding and Child Protection Standards for the Voluntary and Community Sector: 2019](#)

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