

COCKLE ISLAND BOAT CLUB

SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS' POLICY STATEMENT

1. Opening Statement

This safeguarding vulnerable adults' policy applies to all members of Cockle Island Boat Club (the club) and their guests while taking part in organised club activities.

2. Aim

Cockle Island Boat Club (the club), aims to ensure that vulnerable people, are protected and kept safe from harm.

3. Definition of a Vulnerable Adult

In Northern Ireland, a vulnerable adult is defined as someone aged 18 or over who, due to factors like mental health problems, disability, or illness, may be unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation.

4. Duty of Safeguarding

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (Northern Ireland) 2007 was passed to help avoid harm, or risk of harm, by preventing people who are deemed unsuitable to work with children and adults at risk from gaining access to them. All adults should be able to live free from fear and harm. But some may find it hard to get the help and support they need to stop abuse. An adult may be unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation due to many reasons, including their mental or physical incapacity, sensory loss or physical or learning disabilities. This could be an adult who is normally able to protect themselves from harm but maybe unable to do so because of an accident, disability, frailty, addiction, or illness.

5. Key Principles

The club adheres to the following six key principles that underpin safeguarding work:

- Empowerment of vulnerable adults.
- Prevention of harm to vulnerable adults.
- Proportionality of both care and response to expressions of concern.
- Protection of all.
- Partnership in ensuring increased protection and awareness.
- Accountability of individuals and the club.

6. Awareness

Club members are encouraged to be aware of these key principles and how they can provide support. This is one of the club founders' values.

7. The Club's Reporting Procedure

The club will use the following procedures in the event of an expression of concern for a vulnerable adult:

- In the first instance this should be reported to the club's Designated Safeguarding Officer who will advise on the process to follow.
- If the issue is connected to the club's Designated Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Officer in any way, such as allegation, behaviour, or incident then the matter is to be reported directly to the Commodore.
- The reporting mechanism and guidance as laid out by the RYA will be followed.

8. The Club Designated Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Officer

The following person is the club's Designated Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Officer:

Name: Lex McCoubrey, mobile 07738237293

9. Review

This policy is to be reviewed on an annual basis.

Signature:
A G McCoubrey

Date: 9 April 2025

Club Position:

Review date: 9 April 2026

Designated Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Officer

Appendix A

Types and Signs of Abuse

It has been estimated that two-thirds of those harming a **vulnerable adult** are family members. Research has shown that in most instances the abuser is financially dependent on the vulnerable adult's resources and have problems related to alcohol and drugs.

The word abuse covers many ways someone may harm a vulnerable adult.

Physical abuse is intentional bodily injury. Some examples include slapping, pinching, choking, kicking, shoving, or inappropriately using drugs or physical restraints.

Sexual abuse is non-consensual sexual contact (any unwanted sexual contact). Examples include unwanted touching, rape, sodomy, coerced nudity, sexually explicit photography.

Mental mistreatment or emotional abuse is deliberately causing mental or emotional pain. Examples include intimidation, coercion, ridiculing, harassment, treating an adult like a child, isolating an adult from family, friends, or regular activity, use of silence to control behaviour, and yelling or swearing which results in mental distress.

Exploitation occurs when a vulnerable adult or his/her resources or income are unlawfully or improperly used for another person's profit or gain. Examples include illegally withdrawing money out of another person's account, forging checks, or stealing things out of the vulnerably adult's house.

Neglect occurs when a person, either through his/her action or inaction, deprives a vulnerable adult of the care necessary to maintain the vulnerable adult's physical or mental health. Examples include not providing basic items such as food, water, clothing, a safe place to live, medicine, or health care.

Self-neglect occurs when a vulnerable adult fails to provide adequately for themselves and jeopardises his/her well-being. Examples include a vulnerable adult living in hazardous, unsafe, or unsanitary living conditions or not having enough food or water.

Abandonment occurs when a vulnerable adult is left without the ability to obtain necessary food, clothing, shelter, or health care. Examples include deserting a vulnerable adult in a public place or leaving a vulnerable adult at home without the means of getting basic life necessities.

Signs of physical abuse

- Bruises, black eyes, welts, lacerations, and rope marks
- Broken bones

- Open wounds, cuts, punctures, untreated injuries in various stages of healing
- Broken eyeglasses/frames, or any physical signs of being punished or restrained
- Laboratory findings of either an overdose or under dose medications
- Individual's report being hit, slapped, kicked, or mistreated
- Vulnerable adult's sudden change in behaviour
- The caregiver's refusal to allow visitors to see a vulnerable adult alone

Signs of sexual abuse

- Bruises around the breasts or genital area
- Unexplained venereal disease or genital infections
- Unexplained vaginal or anal bleeding
- Torn, stained, or bloodstained underclothing
- An individual's report of being sexually assaulted or raped

Signs of mental mistreatment/emotional abuse

- Being emotionally upset or agitated
- Being extremely withdrawn and non-communicative or non-responsive
- Unusual behaviour usually attributed to dementia (e.g., sucking, biting, rocking)
- Nervousness around certain people
- An individual's report of being verbally or mentally mistreated

Signs of neglect

- Dehydration, malnutrition, untreated bed sores and poor personal hygiene
- Unattended or untreated health problems
- Hazardous or unsafe living condition (e.g., improper wiring, no heat or running water)
- Unsanitary and unclean living conditions (e.g., dirt, fleas, lice on person, soiled bedding, faecal/urine smell, inadequate clothing)
- An individual's report of being mistreated

Signs of self-neglect

- Dehydration, malnutrition, untreated or improperly attended medical conditions, and poor personal hygiene
- Hazardous or unsafe living conditions
- Unsanitary or unclean living quarters (e.g., animal/insect infestation, no functioning toilet, faecal or urine smell)
- Inappropriate and/or inadequate clothing, lack of the necessary medical aids
- Grossly inadequate housing or homelessness
- Inadequate medical care, not taking prescribed medications properly

Signs of exploitation

- **Sudden changes in bank account or banking practice, including an unexplained withdrawal of large sums of money**
- **Adding additional names on bank signature cards**
- **Unauthorized withdrawal of funds using an ATM card**
- **Abrupt changes in a will or other financial documents**
- **Unexplained disappearance of funds or valuable possessions**
- **Bills unpaid despite the money being available to pay them**
- **Forging a signature on financial transactions or for the titles of possessions**
- **Sudden appearance of previously uninvolved relatives claiming rights to a vulnerable adult's possessions**
- **Unexplained sudden transfer of assets to a family member or someone outside the family**
- **Providing services that are not necessary**
- **Individual's report of exploitation**

Signs of abandonment

- **Deserting a vulnerable adult in a public place**
- **Deserting a vulnerable adult in his/her own home or living space**
- **Individual's report of being abandoned**