**A logo for a car scheme

Description automatically generated SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

**& INFORMATION**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to protect people, particularly children, vulnerable adults and beneficiaries of assistance, from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with SWRCCS. This includes harm arising from:

* The conduct of staff or volunteers with SWRCCS
* The design and implementation of SWRCCS’s programmes and activities

The policy lays out the commitments made by SWRCCS, and informs everyone of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding. It applies to everyone associated with SWRCCS – staff, volunteers, visitors and beneficiaries of its activities.

**AIM**

SWRCCS expects all staff and volunteers to treat others fairly with respect and dignity. SWRCCS strives to provide a safe community transport service for staff, volunteers and beneficiaries. SWRCCS believes that everyone we come into contact with, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. SWRCCS will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by or to staff, volunteers or associated personnel.

**EFFECT ON STAFF & TRUSTEES**

## **3 Pillars of Safeguarding**

SWRCCS commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the three pillars of 1. Prevention, 2. Reporting and 3. Response.

## **Prevention**

SWRCCS will ensure everyone has access to, is familiar with, and knows their responsibilities within this policy

* Design and undertake all its activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with SWRCCS. This includes the way in which information about individuals is gathered and communicated
* Implement safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and volunteers
* Ensure training on safeguarding is provided at a level commensurate with the role in the organization
* Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process
* Have a Code of Conduct which everyone involved in SWRCCS is obligated to follow.

## **Reporting**

SWRCCS will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to all.

Anyone reporting concerns or complaints through formal channels will be protected by SWRCCS’s policies.

SWRCCS will also accept concerns from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies.

**How to report a safeguarding concer**n

If you are worried that a child is at**immediate risk of harm,** phone the Police on 999 without delay

If you are worried that a child **may be at risk of harm,**please phone local Social Services contact 01478 612943

If you have a concern about a child or young person or any other queries  and are unsure which number to contact please call local Child Protection Advisors on the following numbers and they will signpost you to the right person/team:

01463 644461 – (Mon-Wed only)

07584 268884

07775 016980

07917 596598

01463 705828

If you are worried that a child may be at risk of harm and it is outwith office hours,

phone 08457 697284

source: Highland Child Protection Committee

Anyone who has a concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to the coordinator or the chair of the board of trustees. If they do not feel comfortable reporting to the above (for example if they feel that the report will not be taken seriously, or if that person is implicated in the concern) they may report to any other member of the board of trustees.

Staff: Coordinator Peter Fenton 01445791335

Officers: Chair Richard Munday 01520 755206

Secretary Mary Peart 01445790775

Treasurer Anthea Zell 01520 722951

Board members: Marcus Given 01520 722617

Rosemary Arthur 01520 733373

Anne Maxwell 01520 755375

Kalie Wilkinson 01520 755291

Lynn Henni 07768556862

Rohaise Rose- Bristow 07808578923

**Response**

SWRCCS will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to Raising a Concern: Policy and Procedure, and legal and statutory obligations.

SWRCCS will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to anyone found in breach of policy.

SWRCCS will offer support to anyone experiencing harm caused by staff, volunteers or associated personnel through signposting to appropriate professional support organisations.

## **Confidentiality**

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need to know basis only, and should be kept secure at all times.

## **Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility:**

Safeguarding vulnerable adults and children is part of the wider role of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific vulnerable adults and children who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm. As adults, everyone has a responsibility to safeguard vulnerable adults and children and to promote their welfare.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults and children depends upon effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise, for example health, justice system, education, social care and the voluntary sector.

All agencies and professionals, including SWRCCS, should:

* be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect;
* be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to vulnerable adults or children;
* share and help to analyse information so that an assessment can be made of the individual's needs and circumstances;
* contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the individual's welfare;
* take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for the individual against specific plans; and
* work co-operatively with parents and/or other carers unless this is inconsistent with ensuring the individual's safety.

As one of its activities SWRCCS seeks to serve the needs of vulnerable adults and children. In doing so SWRCCS takes seriously the welfare of all vulnerable adults and children who come onto its premises or who are involved in its activities. SWRCCS aims to ensure that they are welcomed into a safe, caring environment with a happy and friendly atmosphere.

SWRCCS recognises that it is the responsibility of each one of its staff and volunteers to prevent the neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse of vulnerable adults or children and to report any abuse discovered or suspected.

SWRCCS recognises its responsibility to implement, maintain and regularly review procedures, which are designed to prevent and to be alert to such abuse.

SWRCCS is committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with vulnerable adults or children and to providing supervision or guidance.

SWRCCS is committed to maintaining good links with the statutory social services authorities.

**EFFECT ON VOLUNTEERS**

South West Ross Community Car Scheme wishes to provide a helpful and sympathetic service to our users. We therefore expect all our volunteers to be friendly, courteous, helpful and to behave in a responsible manner at all times as laid out in the Code of Conduct. Consideration of this will form part of the selection process.

1. All applicants to our organisation will complete an application form.
2. All applicants to position of driver will be asked to provide:
   * Proof of valid Driving Licence, Motor Insurance, Road Tax and MOT where applicable
   * Names of two suitable referees - references will always be taken up prior to confirmation of an appointment.
3. Applicants will be interviewed.
4. All successful applicants will receive an overview of the organisation, to ensure they know its purpose, values, services and structure.
5. All volunteers will be issued with a volunteer manual containing appropriate information, stationery, etc and guidelines (including health and safety issues) for their role. Volunteers will be given any relevant updates to these on an on-going basis.
6. Relevant training and support will be provided on an on-going basis for volunteers.
7. SWRCCS will organise annual “Get-to-gethers”, where volunteers, board members and staff can meet up to discuss and share experiences, concerns and ideas.
8. Volunteers are made aware of any additional needs of passengers and have every right to refuse to undertake a journey.
9. Volunteers are aware they can discuss any concerns they have regarding a passenger in confidence with the coordinator or, if preferred, a member of the board.

Currently PVG/Disclosure Checks are not required for staff or volunteers. However, if due to changes in the law they are required then they may be requested prior to the staff member or volunteer taking up the post. (NOTE: reference - email dated 26/09/2013)

Volunteers, passengers and members of the community are invited to express any concerns, complaints, comments or suggestions they may have concerning SWRCCS or its activities, as and when they arise, to the co-ordinator and /or members of the board. The coordinator and board will assess any such feedback when it is received and, where necessary, take appropriate action following the appropriate policy & procedures.

South West Ross Community Car Scheme will ensure that all volunteers are aware of these policies.

**EFFECT ON USERS**

SWRCCS welcomes vulnerable adults and children using the services they provide. SWRCCS will try to ensure that their experience with the project is both positive and enjoyable. Safe guarding both volunteer and passenger are paramount.

* Passengers regarded as vulnerable or under 18 must ensure an escort accompanies the passenger on all journeys.
* Passengers with mobility issues requiring equipment such as wheelchairs, heavy zimmer frames etc, are asked to ensure someone suitable is available at both the pick-up point and destination to deal with such equipment.
* Passengers with medical conditions, made known to SWRCCS, which could distract the driver and the safety of the journey are asked to take an escort with them on all trips and sit in the rear of the vehicle.
* To alleviate anxieties and any issues for both volunteer, passenger and carers we, where possible, allocate a driver known to the passenger and their carer.

## **SWRCCS Statement on Safeguarding of Children**

SWRCCS recognise that child protection should not be treated in isolation - guidance given by Highland Child Protection Committee will be taken on board and will address recruitment and selection of volunteers and paid employees by doing the following:

* Follow ‘What SWRCCS will do for volunteers’ detailed above during recruitment
* No child under the age of 18 will be provided transport without a parent / carer or accompanying adult.

Every child regardless of age has at all times and in all situations a right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice that results in a child being physically or psychologically damaged. In SWRCCS, if there are suspicions about a child's physical, sexual or emotional well being, action will be taken.

All volunteers and staff should share concerns with the coordinator who has agreed to monitor child protection issues or, if preferred, a member of the board of trustees. If the situation is clearly an urgent case, the child is too frightened to go home or we have very serious doubts about the child's safety, we will contact Social Work Services or Police immediately (for phone number see above under **2.** **Reporting**). If concerns are more general about a child's welfare, then volunteers will discuss these with the coordinator, who would then make a referral to Social Work who will make the necessary arrangements. It is important that all volunteers and staff communicate concerns accurately. To this end, volunteers and staff will follow the Raising a Concern: Policy & Procedures.

**OTHER DOCUMENTS REFERENCED**

Code of Conduct

<https://www.swrc-carscheme.co.uk/privacy>

Raising a Concern

<https://www.swrc-carscheme.co.uk/privacy>

Document version control

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## Glossary of Terms

**Beneficiary of Assistance / User**

Someone who directly receives goods or services from SWRCCS’s programme.

**Child**

A person below the age of 18

**Harm**

Psychological, physical and any other infringement of an individual’s rights

**Psychological harm**

Emotional or psychological abuse, including (but not limited to) humiliating and degrading treatment such as bad name calling, constant criticism, belittling, or persistent shaming.

**Safeguarding**

Safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect[[1]](#footnote-1)

In SWRCCS, it is understood to mean protecting people, including children and vulnerable adults, from harm that arises from coming into contact with SWRCCS staff, volunteers or activities.

Safeguarding puts beneficiaries and affected persons at the centre.

**Sexual exploitation**

The term ‘sexual exploitation’ means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.

**Person experiencing harm**

The person who has been abused or exploited. The term is used in preference to ‘victim’. It is the individual’s choice how they wish to identify themselves.

**Vulnerable adult**

Sometimes also referred to as ‘adults at risk’.

## Definitions of abuse and neglect:

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Individuals may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

**Physical abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a vulnerable adult or child.

**Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a vulnerable adult or child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the vulnerable adult or child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to vulnerable adults or children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on vulnerable adults or children. These may include interactions that are beyond the vulnerable adult or child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the vulnerable adult or child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing vulnerable adults or children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of vulnerable adults or children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a vulnerable adult or child, though it may occur alone.

**Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a vulnerable adult or child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (*eg:* rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts.

They may include non-contact activities, such as involving vulnerable adults or children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

**Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a vulnerable adult or child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the vulnerable adult or child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a vulnerable adult or child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a vulnerable adult or child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a vulnerable adult or child’s basic emotional needs.

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)