Safeguarding Adults

Safeguarding adults is everybody’s business. Any person may recognise and report abuse or neglect, and everyone can play a part in building communities where abuse does not happen. As community leaders, championing the wellbeing of their constituents, councillors are in a position to raise awareness of adult safeguarding. They may become aware of individual cases of abuse through their work with constituents and so have a duty to report it.

What is adult safeguarding?

People’s wellbeing is at the centre of safeguarding practice, and this includes respecting people’s views and feelings about what they want to happen in response to any abuse or neglect.

The aims of adult safeguarding are to:

- stop abuse or neglect wherever possible
- prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs
- safeguard adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live
- promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults concerned;
- raise public awareness so that communities as a whole, alongside professionals, play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect
- provide information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or well-being of an adult
- address what has caused the abuse or neglect.

Safeguarding adults differs from the safeguarding and protection of children in a number of ways, including different legislation. A key difference is that while there is a legal expectation that children are protected from physical or psychological damage, adults with mental capacity have a right to make their own choices, take risks, be free from coercion, and to make decisions about their own safeguarding plans.

What is abuse or neglect

Anyone can be at risk of harm, and risk is a complex term to define. In social care, it is not possible to estimate risk objectively and accurately, as so much depends on contextual factors and human decisions. Abuse and neglect are defined under a number of categories:
What to do if you believe an adult is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected

- Contact Adult Social services to tell them.
  - During office hours, phone Adults Access team 020 8891 7971 or
  - out of hours contact emergency duty team on 020 8744 2442.
- In an emergency, you should always call the police or emergency services on 999.
- For more information on Safeguarding in the Borough please look at the Wandsworth council Website
  [http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/info/200385/safeguarding_adults](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/info/200385/safeguarding_adults)