



Safeguarding Policy

1. Policy Statement

Registered charity Wyre Forest Dial-A-Ride, t/a Wyre Forest Community Transport (WFCT), is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of children, young people and adults at risk. This policy aims to:

- Protect and promote the welfare of those who engage with us.
- Clearly communicate our safeguarding approach.
- Demonstrate compliance with statutory safeguarding guidelines.
- Ensure that all employees, volunteers, and trustees understand their responsibilities in reporting concerns.

This policy and safeguarding practices will be reviewed annually by the **Board of Trustees**.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, self-employed contractors, trustees, and any third parties working with or engaging with children, young people, and vulnerable adults through our services.

3. Legal Framework

This policy is based on key safeguarding laws and guidance, including:

- The Children Act 1989 & 2004
- The Care Act 2014
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)

4. Definitions of Abuse

Abuse can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- **Physical Abuse** – Hitting, slapping, or causing harm.
- **Sexual Abuse** – Any non-consensual sexual act.
- **Psychological/Emotional Abuse** – Threats, intimidation, and humiliation.
- **Financial or Material Abuse** – Theft, fraud, or exploitation.
- **Neglect and Acts of Omission** – Failing to provide care or necessities.
- **Discriminatory Abuse** – Harassment based on race, gender, disability, etc.
- **Modern Slavery** – Human trafficking, forced labour, and exploitation.
- **Self-Neglect** – Failing to care for personal well-being.

5. Responsibilities

Board of Trustees:

- Oversee and ensure the implementation of safeguarding policies.
- Approve and regularly review safeguarding procedures.

Chief Officer:

- Ensure that all employees and volunteers receive safeguarding training.
- Allocate resources effectively for safeguarding practices.
- Ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.

Employees and Volunteers:

- Familiarise themselves with and adhere to safeguarding procedures.
- Report any concerns about abuse or neglect immediately.
- Maintain confidentiality while following proper reporting protocols.

6. Safeguarding in Practice

For Children and Young People:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Ensuring safe and effective care environments.
- Taking action to ensure the best outcomes for children.

For Adults at Risk:

- Supporting individuals in maintaining their rights to safety and dignity.
- Recognising situations where adults may be at risk of abuse or neglect.
- Encouraging empowerment, prevention, and proportional responses to risks.

All WFCT employees and volunteers working with vulnerable adults and/or children will hold an up-to-date DBS check.

7. Reporting Concerns

All concerns regarding abuse, neglect, or safety must be reported immediately to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** who is the **Chief Officer** or, in their absence, the **Chair of Trustees**.

- **Adults at Risk:** Contact Worcestershire County Council Safeguarding Team at **01905 843189** or report concerns at **01905 768053**.
- **Children and Young People:** Contact Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership at **01905 822666** (office hours) or **01905 768020** (out of hours).
- Allegations involving adults or children should be reported to the Worcestershire **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) at 01905 846221**.
- If a crime is suspected, call **999** for emergencies or **101** for non-emergencies.

8. Managing Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers

- Any allegations must be reported within one working day to the **Chief Officer as DSL or the Chair of Trustees**.
- All allegations will be thoroughly investigated following safeguarding guidelines.

9. Confidentiality and Record-Keeping

- All safeguarding concerns must be documented and submitted to the DSL.
- Reports should be factual, timely and securely stored.
- Information will only be shared with relevant authorities as required.

10. Training and Awareness

- The DSLs will undergo external safeguarding training every 2 years.
- Employees and volunteers will receive safeguarding awareness training as part of their induction.
- Ongoing refresher training will be provided as necessary.

Approved by Trustees: June 2026

Review Due: June 2027