

# **DART ANGLING ASSOCIATION**

## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE PEOPLE (Reviewed 13/1/2025)**

### **BACKGROUND**

This Policy has been developed to ensure that the members of the Dart Angling Association (DAA) understand what constitutes abuse, are clear about their duty to protect vulnerable adults and children from harm, and know what actions to take if they suspect or witness any form of abuse when children or vulnerable adults are involved in a fishing event organised by the DAA.

### **INTRODUCTION**

In 2000, the Government published a national framework, 'No Secrets', for councils with social services responsibilities, local NHS bodies, police forces and other partners to develop multi- agency codes of practice to prevent and investigate abuse. Since the publication of 'No Secrets' by the Department of Health and the Home Office, extensive adult protection work by health and social care organisations and the police has enabled many vulnerable people to live safer lives.

The aim of this Policy is to prevent abuse where possible, but if the preventive measures fail to ensure that robust procedures are in place for dealing with incidents of abuse.

### **DEFINITIONS**

The 'No Secrets' guidance offers a definition of abuse:

'Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.'

'No Secrets' also offers a definition of a vulnerable person:

'A person aged 18 years or over who is or maybe in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or maybe unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.'

'Significant harm' refers to 'ill treatment (including sexual abuse and forms of ill treatment that are not physical); the impairment of or an avoidable deterioration in physical or mental health; and the impairment of physical, emotional, social, or behavioural development.'

This policy extends to include the safeguarding of children and young people under aged 18 years who may be involved in a fishing activity with the DAA.

## TYPES OF ABUSE

There are many different forms of abuse and abusive situations rarely fit neatly into defined categories, but the following are the main forms of abuse identified within the 'No Secrets' guidance;

- **Physical abuse**, including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions
- **Sexual abuse**, including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable person has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting
- **Psychological abuse**, including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation, withdrawal from services or supportive networks
- **Financial or material abuse**, including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits
- **Neglect and acts of omission**, including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide appropriate access to health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating
- **Discriminatory abuse**, including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.
- **Institutional abuse**, neglect and poor professional practice also need to be taken into account. It may take the form of isolated incidents of poor or unsatisfactory professional practice, at one end of the spectrum, through to pervasive ill treatment or gross misconduct at the other. Repeated instances of poor care or support may be an indication of more serious problems.

## GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE

### Confidentiality

In principle, DAA members must respect confidentiality and should not divulge information given to them in confidence. However, where a member suspects that someone has been harmed, or is at risk of being harmed, they have a duty to pass on the information to the Secretary or Chairman, as appropriate. This means members are not at liberty to keep concerns to themselves and must not promise to keep secrets.

When an incident of actual or suspected abuse is reported, all members involved have a duty to ensure that information is not shared with anyone unless they have a need to know. The Secretary should pay particular attention to protecting the identities of alleged victims, perpetrators and witnesses from colleagues.

Any approach from the press or media must be referred to the Chairman.

## **Equality and Diversity**

This Policy, and the way it is implemented by members, should reflect the DAA's Equality and Diversity Policy.

Members should take account of individual communication needs and barriers, such as language, hearing or visual impairment, or cognitive dysfunction, and should find communication methods which enable individuals to express their views and give information.

Members should be sensitive to the fact that individuals may have different approaches and views about relationships and this may affect their understanding of what constitutes abuse. However, the principles and procedures within this Policy should always prevail.

## **Record Keeping**

As with all record keeping, members must ensure that any records concerning actual or alleged incidents of abuse are sufficiently detailed, accurate, concise, up-to-date, legible, factual, dated and signed. For a Log Sheet, see DAA Complaints Log.

Opinions should be kept to a minimum, recorded as such, and backed up by factual evidence. All records must be stored securely and separately in a manner that protects individual rights to privacy and security.

## **Whistle-blowing (Public Interest Disclosure)**

Members are strongly encouraged to take action and report concerns if they suspect a vulnerable person is being abused, regardless of the setting or who the perpetrator is. The DAA respects those who stand up for anyone who they suspect or know is being abused, and members are assured that they will not be victimised or treated unfairly as a result of reporting malpractice.

If a member of feels unable to report concerns to the Secretary for whatever reason, they should disclose their concerns to the DAA Chairman. The law (Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998) protects anyone making certain disclosures in the public interest.

## **Safeguarding Children and Young People**

Risk Assessments must be completed when necessary and identified risks to children and young people must be managed. Members must ensure that they report any incident of suspected or actual abuse of a child or young person to the person in charge immediately.

It is important to note that Health and Safety Risk Assessments of the event, the individual risk assessment of an individual and safeguarding issues will need to be carefully considered when considering the involvement of a child on a fishing event.

### **If you witness or suspect an incident of abuse**

Any allegation or suspicion of abuse, however minor, must be taken seriously and reported immediately to the person in charge. However difficult a situation may seem, members must understand they have a duty to report any concerns of abuse.

Ensure the immediate safety and welfare of the vulnerable person concerned and summon medical assistance if required. Inform paramedic staff and/or examining doctor of the suspicion of abuse and explain that a written report may well be required. In cases of serious abuse where there is evidence to suggest criminal activity, the police should also be summoned. Any incident involving alleged sexual abuse or involving alleged physical abuse which has resulted in injury should be reported immediately to the police. Where a serious incident has taken place, try not to disturb evidence that may be important to a police investigation.

Do not immediately question the vulnerable person concerned formally, but offer comfort, reassurance and support and allow them to give information or express distress or fears. Remember what is said, and write it down as soon as possible.

At the earliest opportunity record as much detailed information as possible. Use the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable People Log Sheet for recording incidents.

### **Providing Support**

Whilst the purpose of safeguarding arrangements is the protection of vulnerable people, everyone involved is likely to need support, including the alleged perpetrator (abuser). Any allegation must be taken seriously but it is important to remember that, until proven, it is an allegation. People who are maliciously or mistakenly accused of abusing another person are likely to experience extreme duress. Members who witness and/or report an incident of abuse may themselves need considerable support.

### **Dealing with Outcomes**

The Chairman, with the Secretary, should ensure that the process is reviewed to see whether lessons can be learned and to ensure improvements are made wherever possible to prevent further incidents of abuse or to deal more effectively with incidents of abuse.