

# Bristol Tree Craft Safeguarding policy

Approved: 17/01/22

Checked and amended by Ben Pitt

12/02/24

## 1. Policy Statement

The principal purpose of this policy is to protect people, particularly children, young people under the age of 18 and vulnerable adults, from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with Bristol Tree Craft

Bristol Tree Craft believes that children and adults have the right to protection from abuse, and should be able to live free from the fear of abuse.

Bristol Tree Craft is committed to ensuring that disclosures of abuse and safeguarding concerns are taken seriously and acted upon appropriately.

This policy applies to all directors, tutors, volunteers or other people associated with Bristol Tree Craft who use our workshop or take part in our activities at other sites.

## 2. Purpose

The key objectives of the policy are to:

- Explain the responsibilities of the directors, tutors, volunteers or other people associated with Bristol Tree Craft, in respect of the safeguarding of children and adults at risk.
- Enable tutors, directors, tutors, volunteers or other people associated with Bristol Tree Craft who receive disclosures of, witness, or suspect abuse to make informed and confident responses. - Ensure that prompt action is taken to minimise the risk of harm occurring from any further abuse.
- Ensure that information relating to safeguarding is kept securely and only shared on a need to know basis.

### **3.Scope**

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. We understand it to mean protecting people, including children, young people under 18 and vulnerable adults, from harm that either (a) arises from contact with any of our directors, staff, volunteers or other associated personnel or with any of our programmes and activities or (b) comes to light as a consequence of such contact.

This policy relates to all children, young people and adults who become known to the organisation through the course of our work and who may be at risk of abuse.

Assessing whether children or adults are experiencing abuse is the responsibility of professionals within the local authority. Bristol Tree Crafts role is therefore not to assess whether abuse has taken place, but to safeguard by informing to the local authority if information becomes known to us that could indicate that abuse may have taken place, or that a child or adult may be at risk of abuse.

For the purpose of this policy, a child is defined as a person under the age of 18 and an adult is defined as a person aged 18 years or over. A young person is a child aged 13 years and over.

The Care Act 2014 defines an adult at risk as a person who has care and support needs and is, or is at risk of, being abused or neglected and unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or risk of it because of those needs.

### **4.Responsibilities**

Bristol Tree Craft delegates overall responsibility for Safeguarding to Ben Pitt as Safeguarding Officer.

The Safeguarding Officer should ensure that the Directors Committee receives necessary reports on safeguarding issues.

The Safeguarding Officer is responsible for implementing arrangements for safeguarding the welfare of children and adults at risk throughout the organisation.

The Safeguarding Officer is responsible for dealing with all instances relating to safeguarding children or adults at risk that arise within Bristol Tree Craft's activities

and will respond to all safeguarding concerns and make appropriate referrals to the local authority.

The Safeguarding Officer will ensure all Bristol Tree Crafts tutors, volunteers and associated personnel have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities under this policy.

In the absence of the Safeguarding Officer, Hugh Rose is responsible.

All Bristol Tree Craft directors, Tutors, volunteers and associated personnel have a duty to promote the welfare of children and adults at risk. It is everybody's responsibility to recognise the signs of, and to report, abuse wherever it is seen, suspected or disclosed.

All Bristol Tree Craft's directors, Tutors, volunteers and associated personnel must also respond appropriately to any disclosure and take any immediate action necessary to protect children and adults at risk.

## **5.Information**

All Bristol Tree Craft's, directors, Tutors, volunteers and associated personnel will be provided with information to enable them to recognise possible signs of abuse and respond appropriately. This information will form appendices to this Safeguarding Policy.

It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Officer to ensure this information is kept up-to-date.

It is the responsibility of all Bristol Tree Craft's, directors, Tutors, volunteers and associated personnel to familiarise themselves with this information.

## **6.Safeguarding within the context of Bristol Tree Craft's activities**

Bristol Tree Craft runs activities for children and young people, however anyone under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent/carer or designated adult who can supervise their work with tools.

Bristol Tree Craft also runs specific projects for children and young people with partner organisations where the young people will be unaccompanied, during such projects if a safeguarding lead from the partner organisation is present their own policy and procedures would apply. During such projects a member of staff from

the partner organisation would be required to be present at all times.

When running these workshops and the partner member of staff is not present Bristol Tree Crafts own policy and procedures would apply.

Bristol Tree Craft does not work on a one-to-one basis with children, young people or adults at risk.

The roles of Bristol Tree Craft directors, tutors for adults, and guest tutors for adults operating at Bristol Tree Crafts Workshops; do not fall within the legally defined eligibility criteria for requesting Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks (as outlined in the DBS eligibility guidance).

The role Bristol Tree Craft directors and tutors who are leading activities with children and young people do fall within the legally defined eligibility criteria for requesting Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and our required to have Enhanced DBS disclosures.

## **7. Confidentiality and information sharing**

All Bristol Tree Craft's, directors, Tutors, volunteers and associated personnel have a responsibility to share information about children and adults at risk if that information may indicate that the child or adult at risk is experiencing abuse.

If a disclosure is made to a director or tutor; or a director or tutor has a concern about the welfare of a child or adult at risk, the director or tutor should follow the Bristol Tree Craft procedure in the event of a disclosure or safeguarding concern (Appendix 1). This includes ensuring that the person making a disclosure is aware that the director or tutor may need to share the information, and cannot promise to keep it secret.

Information should only be shared on a strictly need-to-know basis. The director or tutor who receives the information should inform the Safeguarding Officer on the same working day. If the person who receives the information is the Safeguarding Officer, they should inform Hugh Rose or, in their absence, another director.

The Safeguarding Officer and the director or tutor will discuss the concern and decide whether to inform the relevant Safeguarding Team at Bristol City Council (see Appendix 3 for contact details).

The decision about whether to make a referral should be based on the following factors:

- The welfare of the child or adult at risk is paramount. Protecting the welfare of the person who may be experiencing abuse should be the only consideration when deciding whether a referral is needed.
- If the Safeguarding Officer and/or the director or tutor is in any doubt as to whether a referral is needed, a referral should be made.
- It is not the role of the Bristol Tree Craft director or tutor to assess whether abuse has taken place. A referral should be made if information is known that indicates that abuse may have taken place.
- In the event of a disclosure, efforts should be made to get informed consent from the person making the disclosure before a referral is made to the local Safeguarding Team. However, a referral may be made without consent if the person does not give consent and there are concerns about the welfare of a child or adult at risk.
- Information should not be shared with other Bristol Tree Craft directors or members as a matter of course. Any information that is shared should be on a strictly need-to-know basis and kept to a minimum. It is not necessary or appropriate for all directors or members to be informed on the details of safeguarding concerns.
- In the event of a disclosure, the person who made the disclosure should be kept informed about what information has been shared and with whom.

## **8. Record keeping**

In the event of a disclosure or safeguarding concern, a detailed written record must be made by the person who receives the information, as soon as possible, and always on the same day, following the Bristol Tree Craft procedure for recording concerns and disclosures (Appendix 2).

These records must be stored securely, in a locked drawer or password protected file, indefinitely. Other Bristol Tree Craft directors or members may not access these records except on a need-to-know basis.

## **9. Reviewing this policy**

This policy and its appendices will be reviewed by the directors every 2 years. The

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Safeguarding Officer will research safeguarding updates and best practice in advance of this review and make recommendations (using resources provided by Bristol Safeguarding Children Board and Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership).

This policy and its appendices are adapted from The Resource Centre's Safeguarding Policy and London Green Wood Safeguarding Policy.

<https://www.resourcecentre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Safeguarding-policy-2017.pdf>

<http://londongreenwood.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Safeguarding-Policy-250321.pdf>

## **Appendix 1: Procedure in the event of a disclosure or safeguarding concern**

It is important that children, young people and adults at risk are protected from abuse. All complaints, allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously, including those received anonymously. This procedure must be followed by Bristol Tree Craft workers and volunteers whenever a disclosure of abuse is made or when there is a suspicion of abuse.

### **1. In the event of a disclosure:**

- Reassure the person concerned.
- Listen to what they are saying.
- Record what you have been told/witnessed as soon as possible. Remain calm and do not show shock or disbelief.
- Tell them that the information will be treated seriously. Do not start to investigate or ask detailed or probing questions.
- Only ask questions to clarify the basic facts of what they are already telling you.
- Do not promise to keep it a secret.

### **2. Make sure the individual is safe.**

If the person is in immediate danger, the police or ambulance must be called straight away on 999. Ensure prompt action is taken to minimise the risk of harm from any further abuse, maltreatment or neglect. This is particularly important if:

- The person remains in or is about to return to the place where the alleged abuse occurred.
- The alleged abuser is likely to have access to the person or others who might be at risk.

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### **3. Record the information**

Make a full record of the disclosure, allegation or incident as soon as possible, within one working day. Refer to Appendix 2. Recording, concerns and disclosures.

### **4. Report to Safeguarding Officer**

Report the disclosure or concern to the Safeguarding Officer immediately or as soon as possible within one working day. In the first instance this may need to be done verbally.

If the Safeguarding Officer is unavailable, report to Hugh Rose. If Hugh Rose is unavailable report to any other director. Do not report the information to more than one director, and do not circulate it to the directors or member groups.

### **5. Support the individual**

Keep in contact with the person who made the disclosure, or you have the concern about, and ensure they know they can contact you again. Ask for their permission before sharing information, But make sure they know you may have to share it without permission. Keep them informed about who the information has been shared with.

### **Appendix 2. Recording concerns and disclosures**

It is important to ascertain and establish the basic facts, based on evidence of what is seen, heard or smelled and to make careful notes, clearly distinguishing fact from opinion. If writing by hand, use black ink so that documents can be photocopied if necessary. If you make a mistake, put a line through it - do not use correction fluid.

1. A full record of the disclosure, allegation or incident must be recorded as soon as possible and always on the same day.
2. Print, sign, date and time the record.

3. A copy should be stored by the Safeguarding Officer in a secure place in line with the Bristol Tree Craft's Safeguarding Policy.

Be aware that the report may be required later as part of legal action or disciplinary procedure and that you may need to appear at a hearing or court (although this is unlikely).

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**What to include:**

- Exactly what the person has told you, or exactly what you have witnessed. Do not include opinions or assumptions.
- A description of any injuries observed and the exact location of the injuries. Give as much detail as possible.
- Any immediate actions that you have taken to reduce risk.
- The name of the person making the disclosure and, where different, the name of the child, young person or adult at risk who has allegedly been abused.
- Where and when disclosure was made, including date, time and the names of others present.
- If you witnessed abuse, write down the date, time and place that it happened.  
Also include any of this information that is known to you:
- When and where the alleged abuse took place, including date(s) and time(s).
- Whether anybody else was present when the alleged abuse took place or was involved in the abuse.
- Details about the alleged perpetrator (including name, address, place of work).

**Appendix 3. Reporting a safeguarding concern to the local authority**

Information relating to safeguarding children and adults at risk should be reported to the relevant Safeguarding Team. Decisions about whether to make a referral should be made in line with the Bristol Tree Craft Safeguarding Policy, and always from the



position that the welfare of the child or adult at risk is paramount.

It is generally the responsibility of the Safeguarding Officer to make a referral and to communicate with the local authority. However, if the Safeguarding Officer is not available, or another director or tutor believes a referral should be made and the Safeguarding Officer has not made one, any director or tutor who is concerned should make a referral.

Information in the written record should be used to make the referral. However, do not delay making the referral if a written record is not yet complete – it can be sent

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later.

- If you're concerned that a **child** is at risk:

Contact First Response Team – 01179036444 or submit a safeguarding referral through the online form: [https://www.bristol.gov.uk/en\\_US/social-care-health/reporting-concerns-about-a-child-first-response](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/en_US/social-care-health/reporting-concerns-about-a-child-first-response)

- If you're concerned that an **adult with care and support needs** is at risk:

Contact Care Direct – 01179222700 or submit a safeguarding referral through the online form: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/social-care-health/form-contact-adult-care-services>.

- Outside of working hours you can call the Emergency Duty Team on 01454615165 or <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/social-care-health/emergency-duty-team>.
- For **non-recent (historical) abuse** please contact the numbers above and/ or the Police.
- For concerns about exploitation call the NSPCC Exploitation Helpline 0808 800 5000
- If you have an immediate concern about somebody's safety, contact the police on 999. When the concerns relate to a person who lives or receives services in another local authority area, both local authority Safeguarding Teams must be informed. Where a Safeguarding Alert is made by telephone, the Safeguarding Officer must make a written record of the date and time of the referral and the

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name and position of the person to whom the matter was reported. Where a Safeguarding Alert is sent by email, the Safeguarding Officer must check that the report has been received by the Safeguarding Team. The Safeguarding Officer is responsible for keeping directors or tutors appropriately informed and up to date on what is expected of them as any investigation proceeds; and for ensuring that they are aware of their rights to representation when being interviewed; and for ensuring they receive ongoing personal support.

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#### **Appendix 4. Dealing with allegations made against a director, tutor, member or volunteer**

Anyone wishing to make an allegation about a director, tutor, member or volunteer of Bristol Tree Craft, either in relation to any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse or non-adherence to these procedures should report it to the designated Safeguarding Officer in the first instance. Concerns about the designated Safeguarding Officer should be reported to Hugh Rose.

Allegations against directors, tutors, member or volunteers should be dealt with according to the Bristol Tree Craft Safeguarding Policy.

The protection and welfare of children and adults at risk should be considered paramount when making decisions regarding managing allegations against directors, tutors, member or volunteers.

#### **Appendix 5. Types and indicators of abuse**

Abuse, maltreatment and neglect can be passive or active; it can consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter in to a relationship to which they have not consented, or cannot consent.

Abuse can vary from treating someone with disrespect in a way that significantly affects the person's quality of life, to causing actual physical suffering or failing to prevent harm. It is behaviour towards a person that can be either deliberate or an act of neglect or an omission to act, perhaps as a result of ignorance, or lack of training, knowledge or understanding.

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. Anyone can be a perpetrator of

abuse; it could be a paid carer, volunteer or a health or social care worker; a relative, friend, neighbour or an occasional visitor; another resident or service user, or someone who is providing a service.

### **Abuse of children**

Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. The government guidelines “Working Together to Safeguard Children” identify the following types of abuse. The NSPCC identifies possible indicators of abuse (detailed below).

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

Indications of possible physical abuse include: bruising on the head, ear, neck, abdomen, back, buttocks, upper arm, back of leg, hands or feet; burns and scalds; bite marks; scarring; broken bones (including those in different stages of healing); effects of poisoning such as vomiting and drowsiness; respiratory problems.

• **Emotional abuse** This is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate. It may involve bullying, causing children to feel frightened or in danger, humiliating them, or ignoring them. It may also involve a child witnessing domestic abuse.

Babies and younger children who are experiencing emotional abuse may:

- be overly-affectionate towards strangers or people they haven’t known for very long
- lack confidence or become wary or anxious
- not appear to have a close relationship with their parent, e.g. when being taken to or collected from nursery etc.
- be aggressive or nasty towards other children and animals. Older children may:
- use language, act in a way or know about things that you wouldn’t expect them to

know for their age

- struggle to control strong emotions or have extreme outbursts
- seem isolated from their parents
- lack social skills or have few, if any, friends.

#### •Sexual abuse

This type of abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities,  
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whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Examples of physical contact include: sexual touching of any part of the body whether the child's wearing clothes or not; rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child's mouth, vagina or anus; forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity; making a child take their clothes off, touch someone else's genitals or masturbate. Examples of non-contact abuse include: encouraging a child to watch or hear sexual acts; not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others; meeting a child following sexual grooming with the intent of abusing them; online abuse including making, viewing or distributing child abuse images; allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child abuse images; showing pornography to a child; sexually exploiting a child for money, power or status (child exploitation).

Children who are being sexually abused may: avoid being alone with people, such as family members or friends; seem frightened of a person or reluctant to socialise with them; become sexually active at a young age; be promiscuous; use sexual language or know information that you wouldn't expect them to; have physical symptoms such as anal or vaginal soreness, unusual discharge, STIs or pregnancy.

#### •Neglect

Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and is the most common form of child abuse. A child may be left hungry or dirty, without adequate clothing, shelter, supervision, medical or health care. A child may be put in danger or not protected from physical or emotional harm. They may not get the love, care and attention they need. Neglect is dangerous and can cause serious long-term damage. It can be just as damaging as other types of abuse.

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Children who are being neglected may: have poor appearance and hygiene (e.g. be smelly and dirty); be hungry; have untreated medical conditions; be tired; be underweight; not have appropriate clothing (e.g. no warm coat in winter); be caring for other family members.

### **Abuse of adults**

Adult abuse can occur in any relationship and it may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it. The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) identifies the following types of abuse and possible indicators.

It is important to remember that any of these examples of abuse can happen to anyone, no matter what their gender, age or circumstance.

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#### **•Physical abuse**

Including: assault, hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, hair-pulling, biting, pushing; rough handling; scalding and burning; physical punishments; inappropriate or unlawful use of restraint; making someone purposefully uncomfortable (e.g. opening a window and removing blankets); involuntary isolation or confinement; misuse of medication (e.g. over-sedation); forcible feeding or withholding food; unauthorised restraint, restricting movement (e.g. tying someone to a chair)

Possible indicators of physical abuse include: no explanation for injuries or inconsistency with the account of what happened; injuries inconsistent with the person's lifestyle; bruising, cuts, welts, burns and/or marks on the body or loss of hair in clumps; frequent injuries; unexplained falls; subdued or changed behaviour in the presence of a particular person; signs of malnutrition; failure to seek medical treatment.

#### **•Domestic abuse**

Domestic violence and abuse includes any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. It also includes so called 'honour'-based violence, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

Possible indicators of domestic abuse include: low self-esteem; feeling that the

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abuse is their fault when it is not; physical evidence of violence such as bruising, cuts, broken bones; verbal abuse and humiliation in front of others; fear of outside intervention; damage to home or property; isolation – not seeing friends and family; limited access to money.

•**Sexual abuse** Including: rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult at risk has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting; inappropriate touch anywhere; inappropriate looking, sexual teasing or innuendo or sexual harassment; sexual photography or forced use of pornography or witnessing of sexual acts; indecent exposure.

Possible indicators of sexual abuse include: bruising, particularly to the thighs, buttocks and upper arms and marks on the neck; bleeding, pain or itching in the genital area; unusual difficulty in walking or sitting; infections, unexplained genital discharge, or sexually transmitted diseases; pregnancy in a woman who is unable to consent to sexual intercourse; the uncharacteristic use of explicit sexual language or

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significant changes in sexual behaviour or attitude; incontinence not related to any medical diagnosis; self-harming; poor concentration, withdrawal, sleep disturbance; excessive fear/apprehension of, or withdrawal from, relationships; fear of receiving help with personal care; reluctance to be alone with a particular person.

•**Psychological and emotional abuse** Including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, enforced social isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks; removing mobility or communication aids or intentionally leaving someone unattended when they need assistance; preventing someone from meeting their religious and cultural needs; preventing the expression of choice and opinion; failure to respect privacy; preventing stimulation, meaningful occupation or activities; intimidation, coercion, harassment, use of threats, humiliation, bullying, swearing or verbal abuse; addressing a person in a patronising or infantilising way; threats of harm or abandonment; cyber bullying.

Possible indicators of psychological and emotional abuse include: an air of silence when a particular person is present; withdrawal or change in the psychological state of the person; insomnia; low self-esteem; uncooperative and aggressive behaviour; change of appetite, weight loss/gain; signs of distress: tearfulness, anger.

•**Financial or material abuse** Including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in

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connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits; rogue trading.

Possible indicators of financial or material abuse include: missing personal possessions; unexplained lack of money or inability to maintain lifestyle; unexplained withdrawal of funds from accounts; the person allocated to manage financial affairs is evasive or uncooperative; the family or others show unusual interest in the assets of the person; recent changes in deeds or title to property; rent arrears and eviction notices; disparity between the person's living conditions and their financial resources, e.g. insufficient food in the house; unnecessary property repairs.

•**Neglect and acts of omission** Including failure to meet medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social-care or educational services, withholding of necessities of life, such as medication, clothing, adequate nutrition and heating, failure to give privacy and dignity.

Possible indicators of neglect or acts of omission include: poor environment –dirty or unhygienic; poor physical condition and/or personal hygiene; pressure sores or  
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ulcers; malnutrition or unexplained weight loss; untreated injuries and medical problems; inconsistent or reluctant contact with medical and social care organisations; accumulation of untaken medication; uncharacteristic failure to engage in social interaction; inappropriate or inadequate clothing.

### **Modern slavery**

Types of modern slavery include: human trafficking; forced labour; domestic servitude; sexual exploitation; debt bondage –being forced to work to pay off debts that realistically they never will be able to.

Possible indicators of modern slavery include: signs of physical or emotional abuse; appearing to be malnourished, unkempt or withdrawn; isolation from the community, seeming under the control or influence of others; living in dirty, cramped or overcrowded accommodation and or living and working at the same address; lack of personal effects or identification documents; always wearing the same clothes; avoidance of eye contact, appearing frightened or hesitant to talk to strangers; fear of law enforcers.

•**Discriminatory abuse** Including: unequal treatment based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion

and belief, sex or sexual orientation (known as 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010); verbal abuse, derogatory remarks or inappropriate use of language related to a protected characteristic; denying access to communication aids, not allowing access to an interpreter, signer or lip-reader; harassment or deliberate exclusion on the grounds of a protected characteristic; denying basic rights to healthcare, education, employment and criminal justice relating to a protected characteristic; substandard service provision relating to a protected characteristic.

Possible indicators of discriminatory abuse include: the person appears withdrawn and isolated; expressions of anger, frustration, fear or anxiety; the support on offer does not take account of the person's individual needs in terms of a protected characteristic.

•**Organisational and institutional abuse** This is systematic abuse by an organisation to service-users who are at risk. It includes failure to meet physical, medical, emotional and social needs.

Indicators of organisational or institutional abuse include: people being hungry, cold, dirty or inappropriately dressed; people not receiving suitable medical care; absence

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of visitors; lack of social activities.

•**Self-neglect** Self-neglect may require intervention if the person is unable to take care of themselves. Types of self-neglect include: lack of self-care to an extent that it threatens personal health and safety; neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings; inability to avoid self-harm; failure to seek help or access services to meet health and social care needs; inability or unwillingness to manage one's personal affairs.

•**Coercive control**

Coercive control is now recognised as the behaviour that underpins domestic abuse. It is a pattern of behaviour, which seeks to take away the victim's sense of self, minimising their freedom of action and violating their human rights. It is also used in other types of abuse, such as modern day slavery.

The Serious Crime Act 2015 creates a new offence of controlling or coercive behaviour in intimate or familial relationships (section 76). The new offence closes a gap in the law around patterns of controlling or coercive behaviour in an ongoing



relationship between intimate partners or family members.

This does not relate to a single incident. It is a pattern of behaviour that takes place over time, in order for one person to exert power, control or coercion over another.