


# The Rural Coffee Caravan (RCC)
# Policy: Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk

## 1. Purpose

### Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk of harm or neglect.

The purpose of this policy statement is to define how The Rural Coffee Caravan (RCC) operates to safeguard children and adults at risk of abuse or neglect in order to:

- protect them from harm.
- provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding.

RCC is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, current government guidance, best practice and legal requirements. RCC recognises that it has responsibilities for the safety and care of children under the Children Act 1989 and 2004. The organisation recognises and meets its responsibilities under **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026**. It also recognises its responsibilities to safeguard adults at risk of abuse or neglect under the Care Act 2014. The organisation will act in accordance with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, the Mental Capacity Act 2005, data protection legislation, and all other relevant legislation.

We have a duty of care and are committed to the protection and safety of everyone who comes into contact with RCC, including children and adults at risk involved as visitors and as participants in all of our activities, both on and off site. We also have a duty to safeguard and support our staff and volunteers.

This policy defines how RCC operates to safeguard children and adults at risk of harm or neglect.

This policy must be read in conjunction with RCC Procedure: Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk and it is RCC policy that the procedure is followed by all trustees, staff and volunteers.

## 2. Definitions

**Children** are defined as those persons aged under 18 years old.

**"Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children"** is defined as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children

- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.

**Adult at risk of abuse or neglect**
An adult at risk is someone aged 18 or over who, according to section 42 of the Care Act 2014:

- has care and support needs
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.
- Someone may still be an adult at risk even if they are not currently receiving care or support from a health or care service.

## 3. Persons affected

This policy applies to everyone working or volunteering on behalf of RCC, including the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students.

## 4. Safeguarding policy

RCC has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse.

RCC recognises that under the Care Act 2014 it has responsibilities for the care and protection of adults at risk of abuse or neglect. It also recognises its responsibilities for the safety and care of children under the Children Act 1989 and 2004, and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

It is committed to promoting wellbeing, harm prevention and to responding effectively if concerns are raised. Adults will be included in swift and personalised safeguarding responses.

It is also committed to inter-agency collaboration in the development and implementation of procedures for the protection of adults at risk from abuse. RCC has a duty and responsibility to make arrangements to ensure its functions are discharged with regard to safeguarding adults at risk of abuse or neglect. The policy is about stopping abuse where it is happening and preventing abuse where there is a risk that it may occur.

There can be no excuses for not taking all reasonable action to protect adults at risk from abuse, exploitation, radicalisation and mistreatment. All citizens of the United Kingdom have their rights enshrined within the Human Rights Act 1998. People who are eligible to receive health and community care services may be additionally vulnerable to the violation of these rights by reason of disability, impairment, age or illness.

The organisation is committed to following the six key principles of safeguarding adults, Making Safeguarding Personal, and good practice on capacity, consent and decision-making (see Appendix 1).

RCC is committed to the following principles:

- the welfare of the child, young person or adult at risk is paramount
- all children, young people and adults at risk have the right to protection from abuse
- safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part; and
- all suspicions and allegations of abuse must be properly reported to the relevant internal and external authorities and dealt with swiftly and appropriately
- clear arrangements are in place for information sharing, recording and reporting concerns.

- Staff, contractors and volunteers must be clear on appropriate behaviour and responses. See Appendix 1 for code of conduct. Where appropriate, failure by staff to maintain standards may be dealt with using RCC Disciplinary Procedures

- clear whistleblowing procedures are referenced in staff training and codes of conduct, alongside a culture that enables safeguarding concerns to be raised, heard and addressed.

- all staff are aware of the policy and procedures for the protection of children, young people and adults at risk through appropriate safeguarding training, supervision and support, and through creating an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns and are supported in meeting their safeguarding role.

- staff are given a mandatory induction, which includes familiarisation with safeguarding responsibilities and procedures to be followed if anyone has any concerns.

- all staff should have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they improve over time in their work with children, adults at risk and families.

- a clear line of accountability for the provision of safe services exists

- volunteers are advised to report any suspected safeguarding risks immediately to a member of staff, and not to engage in any discussions on the subject with the individual concerned

- a trustee board lead to take leadership responsibility for RCC's safeguarding arrangements.

- a designated lead for safeguarding at RCC.

- safer recruitment practices are in place, including clear policies on when DBS checks are required and how suitability decisions are made.

- clear policies are in place for dealing with allegations against people who work or volunteer with children, in line with Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) procedures where applicable. An allegation may relate to a person who works or volunteers with children who has:

    - behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child

    - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or

    - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

**The RCC Safer Recruitment practice:**

The RCC is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people and adults. We will carefully select, train and support all those with any responsibility within the charity in line with safer recruitment principles. This means that we will:

- Ensure that our recruitment and selection processes are inclusive, fair, consistent and transparent.
- Ensure job adverts contain a specific reference to the RCC Safeguarding Policy and Procedure.
- Take all reasonable steps to prevent those who might harm children or adults from taking up positions of respect, responsibility or authority where they are trusted by others
- Adhere to safer recruitment legislation, guidance and standards, responding positively to changing understandings of good safer recruitment practice
- Undertake pre-employment checks and obtain at least 2 satisfactory references
- Ensure staff and volunteers complete any required and appropriate DBS checks before commencing relevant regulated activity. RCC will provide support and guidance where needed.
- Where necessary seek advice from third parties with expert knowledge, to achieve best possible practice
- Ensure training on safer recruitment practice guidance
- Consider online safety as part of safeguarding risk assessment, staff conduct and reporting arrangements where RCC activities involve digital communication or online contact.
- Review the RCC Policy and Procedures regularly.

**The RCC will ensure that staff understand;**

- What they need to do, and what they can expect of one another, to safeguard children and adults.
- Core legal requirements, making it clear what individuals and RCC must do to keep children and adults safe. In doing so, RCC seeks to emphasise that effective safeguarding systems are those where:

- The child's needs are paramount.
- Safeguarding adults works best when it is person-led and outcome focused, engaging the adult at risk in a conversation about how best to respond to their safeguarding situation. See the following section about Making Safeguarding personal
- That all staff who come into contact with children, adults and families are alert to their needs and any risks of harm that individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children and adults at risk.
- The requirement to share appropriate information in a timely way and can discuss any safeguarding concerns with RCC safeguarding lead and appropriate external services.
- Where there is uncertainty about whether a safeguarding referral should be made, the RCC Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead will consult the MASH professional consultation line for advice.
- The necessity to use their expert judgement to put the person's needs at the heart of the safeguarding system so that the right solution can be found for each individual.
- The necessity to contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote a person's welfare and take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for them against specific plans and outcomes.
- The issues of capacity, consent and decision making in relation to safeguarding adults. (see appendix 1)

Approved by:

Richard W Browne Chair of Trustees.



Date: 01.06.2026

Policy review date: June 2027 with RCC Procedure

## Policy Appendix 1

**Key six key principles that underpin safeguarding adults at work***

- **Empowerment** – People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent
- **Prevention** – It is better to take action before harm occurs
- **Proportionality** – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented
- **Protection** – Support and representation for those in greatest need
- **Partnership** – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse
- **Accountability** – accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding

*Aligned with current safeguarding adults principles and local multi-agency safeguarding guidance.

**Making Safeguarding Personal**

Making Safeguarding Personal is a shift in culture and practice in response to what we now know about what makes safeguarding more or less effective from the perspective of the person being safeguarded. It is about seeing people as experts in their own lives and working alongside them in a way that is consistent with their rights and capacity and that prevents abuse occurring wherever possible.

Safeguarding should be person-led and outcome focused, engaging the adult at risk in a conversation about how best to respond to their safeguarding situation in a way that enhances involvement, choice and control as well as improving quality of life, wellbeing and safety. In most cases this can only happen by making sure people get the care and support that they need. It is also important that the people who care for them also get this support and recognition. Most importantly it is about listening and providing the options that permit individuals to help themselves.

It is also important that all safeguarding partners take a broad community approach to establishing safeguarding arrangements. It is vital that all organisations recognise that Safeguarding Adults arrangements are there to protect individuals, bearing in mind different preferences, histories, circumstances and lifestyles.

In order to evidence that the Safeguarding process is personalised, it is necessary to collect information about the extent to which this shift has a positive impact on people's lives.

Whilst every effort must be made to work with adults experiencing abuse within the present legal framework there will be some occasions on which adults at risk will choose to remain in dangerous situations. It may be that even after careful scrutiny of the legal framework, staff will conclude that they have no power to gain access to a particular adult at risk. Staff may find that they have no power to remove the adult from a situation of risk, investigate the adult's financial affairs, or intervene positively because the adult refuses all help or wants to terminate contact with the professionals.

It may not always be possible to provide satisfactory solutions. At the age of 18, people are legally entitled to adult status regardless of any disability or impairment they may have. It is, therefore, essential that wherever possible it is the adult at risk who will decide on the chosen course of action, taking into account the impact of the adult at risk's mental capacity where relevant. However, the people and organisations caring for, or assisting them, must do everything they can to identify and prevent abuse happening wherever possible and evidence their efforts.

In these extremely difficult circumstances, staff will be expected to continue to exercise as much vigilance as possible.

Managers will give full support to staff over problems when handling safeguarding cases of adults remaining in high-risk situations, provided that:

- It is evident from case records that Safeguarding Adults procedures have been properly followed.
- Every effort has been made, on a multi-agency basis, to intervene positively to protect the adult at risk.
- Legal advice has been obtained and acted upon

And ultimately that the adult at risk has been fully consulted and involved as far as practicable in every decision relating to their situation

**Capacity, Consent and Decision Making**

The consideration of capacity is crucial at all stages of Safeguarding Adults procedures. For example, determining the ability of an adult at risk to make lifestyle choices, such as choosing to remain in a situation where they risk abuse; determining whether a particular act or transaction is abusive or consensual; or determining how much an adult at risk can be involved in making decisions in a given situation.

The key development affecting this area of work is the implementation of the Mental Capacity Act 2005, which provides a statutory framework to empower and protect adults at risk who may not be able to make their own decisions. It makes it clear who can take decisions in which situations and how they should go about this. It enables people to plan ahead for a time when they may lose capacity. It applies to anyone aged 16 years and over therefore appropriate liaison needs to occur for young people aged 16 to 18 years with Children's Services where relevant as part of Safeguarding Adults work.

The whole Act is underpinned by a set of five key principles:

• **A presumption of capacity** - every adult has the right to make his or her own decisions and must be assumed to have capacity to do so unless it is proved otherwise.

• **The right for individuals to be supported to make their own decisions** - people must be given all appropriate help before anyone concludes that they cannot make their own decisions.

• That individuals must retain the right to make what might be seen as eccentric or **unwise decisions**.

• **Best interests** - anything done for or on behalf of people without capacity must be in their best interests; and

• **Least restrictive intervention** - anything done for or on behalf of people without capacity should be the least restrictive of their basic rights and freedoms.