



GS4 Green Synergy Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

Purpose of the Policy

Green Synergy is committed to ensuring that the organisation's policy framework is inclusive, responsive, robust and accountable. The organisation believes that sound policies in the defining the safeguarding and child protection policies and standards by which the charity will operate and abide by. This will significantly benefit the overall efficiency of the governance of Green Synergy and promote the best interests of its employees, volunteers, Trustees, members and voluntary officers.

Statement of Policy

This policy defines Green Synergy safeguarding policy framework. The policy forms part of Green Synergy external service delivery principles and the charity's internal governance management and arrangements and is in accordance with the Charities Commission England and Wales.

In the event of a Safeguarding Issue, please contact:

Green Synergy Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO): Ali Talbot: Chief Executive – 07769
342251

Deputy DSO: Abbie Phillips, Projects & Delivery Manager – 07770 410880

If you ever have any questions, concerns or issues to raise about Safeguarding, please do not hesitate to call.

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Charity Number: 1153883 Company Number: 08399741

Email: info@greensynergy.org.uk Web: www.greensynergy.org.uk



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SECTION ONE: Our Safeguarding Policy and Statement

This policy, and our Children and Young People Safeguarding Policy, applies to all staff, including senior managers and Board of Trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, freelance staff, students or anyone working on behalf of Green Synergy.

The purpose of these policies:

- To **protect adults at risk** who receive Green Synergy services.
- To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection.

Green Synergy believes that a person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practise in a way that protects them.

Legal Framework

These policies have been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children and adults at risk, namely:

- Data Protection Act 2018.
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Equalities Act 2010
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2013
- Children and Families Act 2014
- The Care Act (2014)
- The Mental Capacity Act (2014)

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- Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice: 0 to 25 years – Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities; HM Government 2014
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for Practitioners (2015)
- Prevent strategy HM Government
- Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers; HM Government 2015
- No Secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse – updated 2015.
- Making Safeguarding Personal 2020

This policy should be read alongside our policies and procedures on:

- Children and young people safeguarding policy
- Safe recruitment, induction, training, supervision and support
- Role of the designated safeguarding officer and other staff
- Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers
- Code of Conduct participants
- On programme management
- Dealing with disclosure and concerns about a child or young person or vulnerable adult
- Managing allegations against staff and volunteers
- Recording and information sharing
- Confidentiality
- Social media and internet safety
- Modern Slavery
- Coercive Control

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- Child Sexual Exploitation guidelines
- Anti-bullying
- Complaints and Resolution Policy
- Whistleblowing
- Health and Safety
- Lone working policy and Procedure
- Quality Assurance

We recognise that:

- The wellbeing of the person is paramount, and the wishes and feelings of an adult are fundamental to any decision-making
- All people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Some people are additionally at risk because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- Working in partnership with, adults at risk, their families, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting people's welfare.

We will seek to keep people of all ages safe by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them.
- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and a deputy and a lead board member for safeguarding.
- Adopting safeguarding practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures.

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- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- Recording and storing information professionally and securely and sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with adults at risk, their families, staff and volunteers via leaflets, posters, one-to-one discussions
- Undertaking to review our Safeguarding policy, processes and practices at least annually. Review will also be undertaken if there is substantial change to the charity's operations, any legislation changes or following any safeguarding major incident that would require review of our policy and or procedures.
- Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know and involving adults at risk, families and carers appropriately.
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately.
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise.
- Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place.
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our participants, staff and volunteers by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.

Contact Details

Green Synergy Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

Ali Talbot. Chief Executive - Green Synergy

ali@greensynergy.org.uk

Tel: 07769 342251

Deputy DSO Safeguarding Lead

Abbie Phillips. Projects & Delivery Manager - Green Synergy

abbie@greensynergy.org.uk

Tel: 077704 10880

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Board Leads for Safeguarding – Caty Collier

External sources of help and support

<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/safegu>

arding/lsab/4

Social care institute for excellence?

Making safeguarding personal -

<https://www.local.gov.uk/msp-toolkit>

Signed:

Date: 12/09/2025

Sharon Page

Chair of Board of Trustees, Green Synergy

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SECTION TWO: Our Safer Recruitment Procedures

Green Synergy takes its recruitment commitments seriously and ensures it follows equal opportunities policies with all candidates. We use the safer recruitment procedures self-audit tool on an annual basis to ensure we comply with best practice.

Due to the nature of our working environment all staff and volunteers are subject to the following pre-employment checks:

- Application Form (with history of education, job history, experiences of work with adults at risk and provides an opportunity to explain gaps in employment record).
- Interview
- A full investigation of applicant's employment history
- Two references are taken up (one to be the current or most recent employer.)
- Photographic Proof of identification (i.e. passport or driver's licence)
- Appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks suitable for the role

Employment with Green Synergy is subject to at least two satisfactory written references being taken up (three for senior managers) and an enhanced DBS check appropriate to the role. New staff are **unable** to work unsupervised with adults at risk directly or take responsibility for any person until an enhanced DBS check has been returned clear and Safeguarding training has been conducted. Trustees will also be subject to two references and a DBS Check.

Induction and Training for Staff and Volunteers.

All staff and volunteers are given a copy of this policy as part of this induction training. During their induction all staff and volunteers will receive in-house training on how Green Synergy safeguards adults at risk, how to recognise abuse, how to deal with disclosures and reporting procedures.

It is mandatory that all staff receive in-house health and safety training, and first aid training where appropriate. All new staff and long-term volunteers should receive in-house training during their induction period. Short term volunteers will need to take part in online Virtual College Safeguarding training or other appropriate training.

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Line Managers, Named People and Designated Officers will attend additional Safeguarding training. This training will be refreshed every 2 years. They will have annual refresher training at a basic level. Safeguarding Leads must have achieved Level 3 and have worked in a similar role for at least three years. Deputy Safeguarding Leads must have achieved Level 3.

All staff are asked to sign a training record which states that they have understood all of the issues above and have received the appropriate training.

All staff and volunteers receive on-going supervision and further training needs are identified.

Partnership workers are given a copy of this policy and where applicable our Children and Young People Safeguarding Policy. As stated later in this policy, this policy forms part of all service level agreements that we agree to.

Induction and Training for Trustees

All Trustees will be given a copy of this policy as part of their induction training. During their induction Trustees will receive in-house training on how Green Synergy safeguards and protects adults at risk, children and young people, safer recruitment, how to recognise abuse, how to deal with disclosures and appropriate reporting procedures.

All Board Safeguarding Lead Trustees will need to undertake online training or equivalent training to ensure they are aware of how staff and volunteers can use Green Synergy guidelines to respond to concerns about a person's welfare and safeguard themselves at the same time. It will also help them to be aware of the responsibilities for safeguarding they hold as Trustees.

Specific Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities for Staff

Delivery Staff's Role (Project Workers/ Officers/Assistants)

To directly support adults at risk and flag up concerns:

- To work within Green Synergy Safeguarding Procedures.
- To be aware of Safeguarding issues, taking all appropriate steps to safeguard adults at risk in our care.

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- To **always** highlight/ pass on concerns (no matter how small) to an appropriate person (your line manager or the designated Officer(s) for Safeguarding).
- To support people by signposting them to further support services or by taking part in forming a team around the /adult if necessary..
- To be an active yet reflective safeguarding practitioner by attend safeguarding training, take an active part in safeguarding discussions, asking questions where they are unsure and feeding into the development of safeguarding practice across the organisation.

Line Manager's Role (Project Managers, Garden Managers) – to support staff in the delivery of their role and be a good conduit of information:

- To work within Green Synergy Safeguarding Procedures.
- To have a heightened awareness of Safeguarding issues, taking all appropriate steps to safeguard any person in your care.
- To encourage your team to keep safeguarding high on their agenda and ensure that they work within Green Synergy Safeguarding Guidelines.
- To support and work with your team identify and appropriately pass on safeguarding/ concerns to the designated officers(s): to be a good conduit of **all** safeguarding information between the delivery staff and the designated officer(s) in order to flag up issues earlier rather than later.
- To always consult with the designated officer(s) **before** advising delivery staff
- To support staff to signpost people to appropriate support services or by taking part in forming a team around the adult.
- To be an active yet reflective safeguarding practitioner by attend safeguarding training, take an active part in safeguarding discussions, asking questions when unsure and feeding into the development of safeguarding practices within the organisation.
- **NB.** In an emergency situation where a person was at immediate risk of harm and where a

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designated Officer(s) or external named person could not be consulted it would fall to this role to make a decision and act.

Organisational Designated Officer's Role – to oversee Safeguarding across the organisation including making referrals:

- To work within Green Synergy Safeguarding Procedures
- To have heightened awareness of Safeguarding issues, taking all appropriate steps to safeguard any adults at risk in your care and across the organisation.
- To encourage all staff, volunteers and trustees to keep safeguarding high on their agenda and ensure that they work within Green Synergy Safeguarding Guidelines through regular training and supervision.
- To support and work with staff and volunteers to identify and appropriately pass Safeguarding/ concerns on to you.
- To support and guide named persons and line managers to act appropriately when faced with a safeguarding issue.
- To always consult with other appropriate people both within and outside of the organisation where possible **before** taking any action.
- To take final responsibility for making decisions about making referrals to social services or authorities and make the referral as and when appropriate.
- To inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) of any adult at Green Synergy including a paid, unpaid, volunteer, casual agency or self-employed worker who has behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, an adult, possibly committed a criminal offence against an adult, or , behaved towards an adult at risk in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with vulnerable people.
- To report to the LADO any assessment/allegation involving a professional's personal/family life which could suggest they may be a risk to the people with whom they are working.

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- To keep Safeguarding and referral records up to date and keep in close contact with the designated Officer(s) so that they are aware of your activities.
- To support staff to signpost people to appropriate support services or by taking part in forming a team around the adult.
- To lead the review of our Safeguarding policies and practices on an annual basis.
- To audit Safeguarding practices where appropriate
- To hold passwords to the organisation's safeguarding records
- To handle Disclosure Barring check (DBS) submissions for the organisation.
- To keep informed of the latest Safeguarding legislation, policies and practices – disseminating this information where appropriate.
- To be an active yet reflective Safeguarding practitioner by attending and leading Safeguarding training, leading Safeguarding discussions/ debriefings with appropriate people, being pro-active in own learning about safeguarding issues and leading the development of Safeguarding practices within across the organisation in line with our current Safeguarding strategy
- To sign off and keep records of staff, volunteer and trustee safeguarding records and ensure timely refresher training.

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer's Role

- To undertake all of roles and responsibilities in the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Officer.
- Undertake the Designated Safeguarding Officer role for delivery programmes.
- To attend training in line with the DSO role description.
- To support the review and audit of safeguarding policy and procedures

Trustees Role

- Green Synergy Trustees are responsible for ensuring that those benefiting from, or working with, the charity is not harmed in any way through contact with it.

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- They have a legal duty to act prudently and this means that they must take all reasonable steps within their power to ensure that this does not happen.
- Trustees are expected to find out what the relevant law is, how it applies to their organisation, and to comply with it where appropriate.
- They should also adopt best practice with adults at risk as far as possible and ensure that the appropriate safeguards are in place.
- One Trustee will be designated as the Safeguarding lead for the organisation to support the DSO with Safeguarding policy and strategy.

Modern Slavery - Our policy and approach

Green Synergy has a zero-tolerance approach to modern slavery and we are committed to acting ethically and with integrity in all our business dealings and relationships and to implementing and enforcing effective systems to ensure that modern slavery is not taking place anywhere in our charity and use our best endeavour that modern slavery is not taking place in any of the organisations we may partner with or do business with. We are committed to ensuring there is transparency in our own organisation consistent with our disclosure obligations under the Modern Slavery Act 2015. We expect the same high standards from all our partners specifically prohibitions against the use of forced, compulsory or trafficked labour, or anyone held in slavery or servitude, whether adults or young adults.

Our staff training programmes and delivery are reviewed and updated to ensure that relevant staff are made aware of the risk factors, implications of the Act and implementation of the policy in their areas of responsibility. In particular, the following areas will include anti-slavery and human trafficking elements in their delivery:

- recruitment and selection
- equality and diversity
- procurement and supply chain management
- safeguarding.

GS34 Green Synergy Trans Inclusion Policy and Guide

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Green Synergy has developed a Trans Inclusion guide to address a lack of centralised information and a lack of awareness among the Green Synergy team members about how they can be allies to transgender and non-binary people who are in the same spaces as them. This is by no means an in-depth policy at this stage to transgender issues but is simply a concise summary of basic information, policy and practises to support team members and participants. Green Synergy is undertaking an Equality and diversity audit throughout our organisation and policies to ensure best practises to support inclusion, equity and diversity.

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SECTION THREE: Safeguarding Policy & Procedures Overview

Definition of Adults at Risk

The policy and procedures apply to an adult at risk and this is defined as any person who is aged 18 years or over and at risk of abuse or neglect because of their needs for care and or support.

An adult might be considered at risk if they are aged 18 years or over and:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local council is meeting any of those needs) and;
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

An adult at risk may be a person who:

- Is elderly and frail due to ill health.
- Has a learning disability.
- Has a physical disability and / or a sensory impairment.
- Has mental health needs including dementia or personality disorder.
- Has a long -term illness /or condition.
- Misuses substances or alcohol.
- Is unable to make their own decisions and is in need of care and support.
- Is a young adult, over the age of 18, who has care and support needs and is 'in transition' from children to adults' services.
- Is a carer (looking after another person with care and support needs).

This list is not exhaustive, other people might also be considered to be adults at risk.

The Care Act 2014

The Care Act 2014 is the law that sets out how adult social care in England should be provided. It requires local authorities to make sure that people who live in their areas: receive services that prevent their care needs from becoming more serious or delay the impact of their needs.

The aims of safeguarding adults are:

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- To prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs.
- To safeguard individuals in a way that supports them in making choices and having control in how they choose to live their lives “Making Safeguarding Personal”.
- To promote an outcomes approach in safeguarding that works for people resulting in the best experience possible.
- To raise public awareness so that professionals, other staff and communities as a whole play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect.

Green Synergy Adult Safeguarding Approach

Green Synergy strives to meet the commitment to safeguarding adults at risk in the following ways:

AWARENESS: All adults working with Green Synergy are required to sign up to the charity’s Safeguarding Policy. Staff receive Safeguarding training and are expected to follow both the Staff Code of Conduct in the Staff Handbook guidelines in the Green Synergy Programme Manual.

PREVENTION: Green Synergy Safeguarding guidelines aim to help staff, trustees and volunteers recognise and reduce risks to adults at risk in their care. All staff, trustees and volunteers undergo an enhanced DBS check where appropriate.

RESPONDING: Staff and volunteers are encouraged to write down all suspicions of neglect and abuse, however minor, and report them to their project manager. If necessary, a statutory Safeguarding agency will be informed of our concerns. Any allegations against staff will be dealt with immediately, according to the disciplinary procedure contained in the Staff Handbook.

SUPPORTING: Green Synergy staff will support and help adults at risk who are suspected victims of neglect or abuse. The adult’s feelings will be carefully considered at every stage of the reporting process.

The Green Synergy Senior Management Team review the Safeguarding Policy at least annually to ensure it complies with the latest legislative changes and working practices and after any serious safeguarding issue or major legislative change.

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Code of Conduct

Guidelines for Staff and Volunteers

Staff conduct during their off-duty hours is generally not the business of Green Synergy. Staff must not subordinate their duty to their private interests nor put themselves in a position where duty and private interests' conflict with or jeopardise Green Synergy reputation or that of its projects or act in a way which compromises your ability or credibility to do your job or work with adults at risk. However, as will have been detailed during training, staff must adhere to the staff Code of Conduct for the programme at all times.

The details that follow are not intended to be exhaustive or exclusive, and the Code should be seen as the context within which you are expected to discharge your duties and the behavioural standards expected of you. At all times you must be aware that you are acting as an ambassador of Green Synergy and that any failure in meeting the standards expected of you could damage the reputation of Green Synergy. This code of conduct is reviewed annually.

Creating Safe & Positive Relationships

Staff Members must:

- Avoid situations where they are alone with an adult at risk. Where a private meeting with a lone person needs to happen, hold it in an open place in view of others or in a room visible to those outside and where a colleague has agreed to visually monitor the meeting. If that is not possible (or the person wants a greater degree of privacy, perhaps where a disclosure might be made) then the staff member should inform another staff member of their whereabouts and who they are with. If a person participates in a review of their involvement in a programme as a result of disruptive or unacceptable behaviour, it is advisable that this review is witnessed by a second staff Member.
- Not take people off site alone, (without notifying another staff member and only to a public place), to their home or that of another staff member

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- Report concerns about a person's welfare to the person designated on programme for escalating concerns.

Being a Great Leader

Staff Members must:

- Maintain professional boundaries that are characterised by:
 - an understanding of the responsibilities of the staff member's role and the purpose of a staff Member's professional relationship with the adults.
 - an appreciation of the difference between being a staff Member and a participant
- Remain positive about the role they are in and about the aims and ethos of the Green Synergy programmes
- Avoid using inappropriate language when within earshot of any person.
- Never scapegoat or ridicule an adult at risk.
- Never drink alcohol or use other illegal substances during any programme delivery or when working with adults at risk.
- Respect the insights of people as to how the programme can continue to improve.
- Take an active approach to ensuring people's welfare as well as health and safety.
- Avoid disclosure of personal information to people (address, phone number, social media handle etc) who do not require that information.
- Avoid smoking in front of participants.

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- Never 'friend' or engage with any adults at risk through personal social media accounts or through texts, shared phone numbers or phone calls, personal emails or any other form of communication (such as private personal conversations)

Creating Safe & Positive Environments

Staff and volunteers must:

- Use language that is appropriate, respectful, and inclusive at all times.
- Avoid using slang terms, negative or exclusionary language. Discriminatory language e.g. homophobic or racist language on programme is not acceptable.
- Treat all adults and staff/ colleagues with respect and dignity.
- Avoid travelling alone with any adult at risk in their cars. Where this is not possible, a manager should be informed and the person should sit in the back seat.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance from adults at risk
- Avoid invading the privacy of adults at risk when they are toileting or showering, changing or dressing.
- Never take part in intimate or inappropriate touching with adults at risk.
- Never take part in bullying of any form, including name calling or constant criticism and respond swiftly to any such behaviour that you witness or are made aware of.
- Avoid favouritism - all people should be equally supported and encouraged.
- Never physically punish a person.
- Never conduct inappropriate relationships with an adult at risk (such as sexual relationships) and avoid flirtatious behaviour.
- Never share sleeping accommodation with an individual participant.
- Never take pictures of adults at risk on personal devices and post them on social media. Storing any images on devices provided by a provider should be in line with that provider's policy.

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Working as a Team

Throughout contact with adults at risk on our programmes, staff and volunteers must:

- Involve people in the decisions that affect them as far as reasonably practicable including developing their own **Code of Conduct**
- Challenge inappropriate, sexualised or discriminatory language
- Follow the policies and procedures set out by their provider.

Not following the Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary procedure or even prosecution where a law has been broken. Green Synergy wants people to have a great time on the programme and this code of conduct has been put together to help everyone to stay safe and have the best possible experience.

*A staff member is any individual directly or indirectly employed or engaged by Green Synergy or its partners. A staff member may be a volunteer, agency worker, worker, employee, freelancer or self-employed individual (including consultants) who is engaged directly/indirectly by Green Synergy.

Specific Risk Guidelines

Being alone with an adult at risk

It is unrealistic to suggest that staff should never be alone with adults at risk. However, as abuse usually takes place in private, staff and volunteers should be aware that the possibility of allegations is greater in situations where a member of staff is alone with an individual. When a confidential conversation needs to happen with an adult at risk, the meeting should take place in the vicinity of other staff. If you feel it necessary to go somewhere quiet and private, tell a colleague the purpose and nature of the meeting.

On overnight trips away from our office bases, try to avoid using bedrooms for meetings. Never use

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a bedroom for a one-to-one meeting.

Staff and volunteers should be cautious about giving lifts to a person on their own. If there is a specific need to do so, inform another member of staff in advance and, if possible, obtain parental permission.

You should not work with people at your home and you must not offer emergency accommodation to a homeless person.

Physical contact with an adult at risk.

Normal physical contact between staff and adults at risk may be required in the event of an emergency, but the following factors should be considered:

- you should be aware of the person's age, gender and culture when deciding whether it is appropriate to have physical contact.
- in touching a person, you should be aware of the possibility of invading their privacy and should respect their wishes and feelings.
- you should feel able to provide appropriate physical comfort to a person in distress, but consideration should be given to the wisdom of being alone with them.
- as a general rule, physical comfort is not acceptable if the person does not want it.

Position of Trust

Since the 2003 Sexual Offence Act, it is a criminal offence for a person in a position of trust to have a sexual relationship with an adult at risk even if they are over the age of 16. Green Synergy staff and volunteers may be close in age to the person that they are working with, such as an 18 or 19 years old working with a 16 or 17 years old.

However, young staff and volunteers must be aware that their closeness in age does not exempt

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them from the Position of Trust.

Physical Restraint

Staff working at premises which are hosted by an organisation other than Green Synergy should be familiar with the delivery partner's Safeguarding policy on restraint. An understanding of Green Synergy's Safeguarding policy will form part of the service level agreement that must be agreed in advance to ensure safeguarding guidelines are in line with Green Synergy policies.

Every effort should be made by Green Synergy to discourage aggression and promote a peaceful environment in which disputes can be resolved through talking and debate rather than force.

While working with adults at risk, staff and volunteers have a responsibility to prevent disagreements developing into states of heightened aggression. Staff should be alert to incidents that could lead to violent conflict and act swiftly to defuse potential confrontation. This may involve stepping in to calm the person who are arguing, or coaxing a to a quieter area until he or she has regained self-control.

There may be occasions, however, when staff judge that a degree of force is required to avoid immediate danger of physical injury to the person, staff, volunteers or someone else. Please be aware that physical restraint must only be used in these circumstances and as a last resort, when all other attempts to defuse violent behaviour have failed.

Before using restraint:

- The staff member or volunteer must warn the person that it will be used if he or she does not stop; failure to do so could strengthen any subsequent action against them.
- Make every effort to ensure another member of staff are present to act as an assistant or witness.
- Do not adopt a confrontational approach, but address the situation in a calm, firm manner that does not generate fear or anger. Encourage the person into a quieter part of the

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building to talk their conflict through.

- do not belittle the person in front of his/her peers.
- If the staff member or volunteer are the focus of the person's emotion, it may be more appropriate for another adult to take charge of the situation.

When intervening physically:

- use only the minimum force necessary to prevent injury.
- use force only for the minimum period necessary to allow the person to regain self-control.
- talk to the person constantly and reassuringly.
- keep your own temper under control.

Staff or volunteers are not to use restraint if, in doing so, you are likely to put yourself at greater risk of injury than would be justified by your duty of care to that person. However, staff must also bear in mind that a failure to protect a person in their care could be considered negligent. Any physical restraint used must not be more than that which is both reasonable and appropriate in the circumstances. These are the standards that would be applied by a court deciding whether the use of force in a particular case might have constituted assault or battery.

While it is difficult to define what a court might deem to be acceptable use of force, the following would probably be considered to be reasonable and appropriate:

- a hold tactic in which a person is restrained without injury until he or she has calmed down.
- holding an arm or leg to prevent striking or kicking.
- using just enough force, without causing injury, to remove a weapon or a dangerous object from a person's grasp.
- physically preventing a person from exposing him/herself to danger by leaving the premises.

After using restraint, record the incident as soon as possible. Make sure the following information is included:

- date, time and location of the incident.

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- circumstances and significant factors which led to the incident.
- duration and nature of any restraint used.
- names of people and staff and witnesses involved.
- description of any injuries sustained and subsequent medical attention.
- description of any action taken after the incident.

Discuss the incident with your line manager or safeguarding lead as soon as possible. In extreme situations the police should be informed.

Specific Risks:

Bullying and Cyber-bullying and on-line grooming and radicalisation

Bullying is a serious safeguarding matter and should be dealt with quickly. If staff members witness or are told about bullying within Green Synergy, the matter must be reported to your line manager or the designated Officer(s) as soon as possible and make a written record.

In dealing with incidents involving bullying, it is advisable to follow the pacifying approach advocated in the previous entry on physical restraint. It is essential that any person who is the victim of bullying, whether by other people or an outsider, is given support and reassurance by staff¹.

It is also worth bearing in mind that bullies have often themselves been victims of bullying and harassment themselves, so take time to speak to them too. Cyber bullying has become more and more prevalent because the rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur anywhere.

Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying which can happen 24/7, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click. Some of these activities such as forwarding an indecent image are illegal. There have been well-publicised cases of on-line grooming and staff should ensure that adults at risk are aware of the dangers of revealing

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personal information online and through social networks, through specific sessions and workshops as part of our programming. There are more and more opportunities for predators to lure people, particularly the vulnerable, into abusive relationships, sexual exploitation and other activity such as extremist action through radicalisation.

Adults at Risk and Gang Activity²

Adults at risk who become involved in gangs and commit violent crime as a result of this involvement have significant needs themselves. They should be held responsible for their actions and harmful behaviour but practitioners also have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of these people and to prevent further harm both to themselves and to other potential victims. The risk or potential risk of harm to the person may be as a victim, a perpetrator or both – in relation to their peers or to a gang-involved person in their household.

An adult at risk who is affected by gang activity or serious violence can be at risk of significant harm through physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

Definition of a gang: Groups of people often gather together in public places to socialise, and peer association is an essential feature of most people's lives. Groups of people can be disorderly and/or anti-social without engaging in criminal activity. Defining a gang is difficult, however it can be broadly described as a relatively durable, predominantly street-based groups who see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group for whom crime and violence is integral to the group's identity.

Definitions may need to be highly specific to particular areas or neighbourhoods if they are to be useful. Furthermore, professionals should not seek to apply this or any other definition of a gang too rigorously; if a person thinks s/he is involved with or affected by 'a gang', then a professional should act accordingly.

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Volunteers working with Adults at Risk

Volunteers who will be working with adults at risk must undergo a thorough recruitment process and criminal record check before they can begin to work with individuals. **Data Protection, Information Storing and Sharing**

In terms of data protection, Green Synergy has a duty as an organisation to ensure we keep high standards in the handling of personal information and protect an individual's right to privacy – especially as we work with adults at risk where we may be in receipt of special category information. The purpose of our Data Protection Policy is to ensure the confidentiality, lawful and correct treatment of personal data. It is also necessary to process information so that staff can be recruited, projects organised and legal obligations to funding bodies and government complied with. To comply with the law, information must be collected and used fairly, stored safely and not disclosed to any other person unlawfully. To do this Green Synergy must comply with the Data Protection Principles set out in the **Data Protection Act 2018** and any subsequent amendments. It fully endorses and adheres to the principles of data protection, which are set out in our **Data Protection Policy** along with procedures which all team members should familiarise themselves with.

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Working on GS premises/gardens

When adults at risk become part of Green Synergy programmes, it is essential that we gain contact, emergency contact and medical information from carers if appropriate so that we are able to assess the needs of the adult at risk taking part in Green Synergy activities effectively and be able to act in an emergency. Also if the adult at risk does not have capacity to provide this information, carer consent should always be gained in writing **before** the person takes part in activities with Green Synergy.

Written consent is essential to cover the organisation in case something happens whilst the person are in our care. We cannot prove that verbal consent was sought or given⁶. Specific information given to carers should include:

- the nature of the work done/ activities at the Green Synergy Venue and opening times.

- Full address of and contact numbers for staff.

- A copy of the Statement of Intent (see pages 4 & 5)

Members of staff should always be working in the venue when it is open, or one fully trained member of staff and a responsible adult volunteer (people who are taking part in volunteering programmes do not count in this case).

A risk assessment of the facility should take place annually or when big changes have been made, such as a venue change. Special note needs to be made of any person with specific medical, physical or emotional needs to ensure that we provide an accessible and safe environment for them to come to and are knowledgeable enough to respond in an emergency. All staff should be involved in this activity and should be aware of what to do in an emergency.

Green Synergy keeps a record of safeguarding incidents in a secure environment.

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Teams Working away from the Venue/ Garden

A member of staff or an adult volunteer should always accompany teams working outside their normal venue. Specific information given to participants before working/visiting a new venue should include:

- the nature of the assignment/activity.
- dates and times of departure and return.
- destination with full address (where possible) and contact numbers.
- list of staff/volunteers taking part.
- method of travel and itinerary.

staff contact and emergency mobile number/s This is so that people are clear about what they A risk assessment should also **always** be carried out **before** a trip is commenced to ensure that a safe environment has been provided for all involved in the trip or project. This should confirm that all project premises, equipment, delivery areas, transport arrangements and vehicles are safe and suitable. Where we cannot guarantee the environment such as when taking public transport, all factors should be considered in order to mitigate risk.

A key worker for the trip must be identified prior to the trip and this person should take responsibility for drawing up:

- a risk assessment and trip form with:
 - an emergency contact number for each team member and the adults
 - a note of relevant medical conditions, such as asthma or diabetes
 - contact details of the designated Officer(s) and the emergency number.
 - a mobile phone number that staff can be contacted on whilst out on the trip.

A copy of the risk assessment and these trip details should be shared with any co-workers who are taking part on the trip and left with your line manager or one of the designated people with contact numbers for the team.

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Teams working in Outreach

For teams working in outreach, all of the above guidelines apply. In addition, outreach workers need to be highly alert to Safeguarding issues as there are many more outside/ unknown variables that can come into play when working in this way.

Before commencing work with a partner organisation, a safe environment for the adults at risk to gather in needs to be identified.

A Service Level agreement needs to be drawn up⁹. This is to include:

- An agreement on whose Safeguarding policy is to be followed and about reporting procedures on Safeguarding issues including what should happen if an allegation against a member of our staff or their staff is made. Names of designated persons for both organisations should be recorded in the document along with their contact details.

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- It is usual practice that in this situation that the partner organisation will have responsibility for reporting any concerns or disclosures to social services unless you suspect one of their staff in which case Green Synergy would be responsible for any reporting or follow up action. However, if you ever raise concerns with the partner organisation these must also be passed on to your project/ venue designated person(s) in case there is need for follow up action on our part.
- The provision of any support workers if required (where possible/ preferably DBS checked) for session times.
- Clear roles and responsibilities of each organisation and staff in terms his/her client group.
- In addition, a risk assessment of the facilities and any work you plan to do in the area should be carried out.

Adult at risk travel to and from projects

It is the responsibility of the adult to organise travel to and from gardens/ venues/ projects. However, when on Green Synergy business (especially if activities take place after normal opening hours), staff have a duty to make sure adults at risk are able to get home safely and without anxiety. This may involve encouraging the adults at risk to check in with their points of contact before leaving; accompanying them to a bus stop or railway station; or, if times of collection are difficult to predict – supporting them home to arrange a taxi.

Code of Conduct for Participants

Adults at risk taking part in Green Synergy programmes should develop their own code of conduct for each project or programme they take part in together with the staff responsible for them. There are five ground rules that must be present in the code:

- no alcohol or illegal drugs,

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- no violence or bullying,
- no sexual activity while on the programme under the care of our staff.
- All participants and other participants involved in our programmes are expected to treat each other with respect regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity.

SECTION FOUR: Definitions and Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

Adults at risk may be abused by a relative, a carer (i.e., a legal guardian or staff in a residential home), an acquaintance or stranger who may be an adult or young person. The abuse may be the result of a deliberate act or a failure on the part of a parent or carer to provide proper care, or both.

Abuse is a term used to describe the mistreatment of people. This policy relates to abuse of people who are over 18. *If you are concerned about a child's welfare, please refer to our [GS5 Children and Young People's Safeguarding Policy](#)*

Abuse can take different forms, ranging from exploitation and disrespectful treatment to physical harm. It can be at a low level, and taking place over a long time, or it can take place over a short time and be more extreme. It's all abuse.

Examples of Abuse

Abuse can happen anywhere - in individuals' own home, in a care home, in a hospital, at work, at a day centre or educational establishment, in supported housing or in the street. It can be deliberate, or the result of ignorance or a lack of proper training.

Whatever the type of abuse, and wherever it happens, it is not acceptable, particularly when the victim is someone who is not able to properly protect themselves.

Some examples include:

- Physical abuse - including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, pinching, shaking, misusing medication, scalding, restraint, hair pulling, or inappropriate physical sanction.
- Domestic abuse - including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called 'honour' based violence.
- Sexual abuse - including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or

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witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

- Psychological abuse - including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.
- Financial or material abuse - including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- Controlling behaviour - depriving people of social contact, or stopping them from getting services or support
- Neglect - ignoring medical or physical care needs, preventing access to care or education, withholding food, drink or heating.
- Modern slavery - encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.
- Discriminatory abuse - including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.
- Organisational abuse - including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.
- Neglect and acts of omission - including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- Self-neglect - this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

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Who Might Cause Abuse

The person who is responsible for the abuse is often well known to the person being mistreated or exploited. They could be:

- spouses / partners
- other family members
- neighbours
- friends
- acquaintances
- unpaid carers
- a health or social care worker
- any other paid staff or professionals
- another resident of a care home or user of a care service
- someone who is supposed to provide a service to them
- local residents
- volunteers and strangers

People who deliberately exploit adults they perceive as vulnerable to abuse, whether those people are already known to them or not (see our page on Scams and rogue traders for more information)

Whoever is causing the abuse, and wherever it happens, it is not acceptable, particularly when the victim is someone who is not able to properly protect themselves.

If staff think that they or someone they know is being subjected to abuse, please read in detail the next section.

Recognising Signs of Abuse

Staff or volunteers may become aware of the occurrence of abuse because:

- an adult at risk tells you.
- someone else may tell you that an adult at risk has told them or that they strongly believe an adult at risk is or has been abused.

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- an adult at risk may show some signs of physical injury for which there appears to be no satisfactory explanation.
- an adult at risk behaviour may indicate to you that it is likely that he or she is being abused.
- something in the way an adult at risk or another adult relates to another person alerts you or makes you feel uncomfortable in some way;
- your awareness of, or suspicion about, abuse may come about as a result of something disclosed to you by a third party (parent, friend, co-worker) who suspects or has been told of the abuse.

The factors described in this section are frequently found in cases of adults at risk abuse as well as child abuse. Their presence is not proof that abuse has occurred, but:

- Just be regarded as indicators of the possibility of significant harm.
- Justifies the need for careful assessment and discussion with designated / named / lead Officer, Manager, (or in the absence of all those individuals, an experienced colleague)
- May require consultation with and/or referral to the SSD.
- The absence of such indicators does not mean that abuse or neglect has not occurred.

Identifying abuse in a disabled adult

A disabled adult is as vulnerable to physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect as any other adult, though the level of risk may be raised by:

- A need for practical assistance in daily living, including intimate care from what may be a number of carers.
- Carers and staff lacking the ability to communicate adequately with the adult.
- A lack of continuity in care leading to an increased risk that behavioural changes may go unnoticed.

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- Physical dependency with consequent reduction in ability to be able to resist abuse.
- An increased likelihood that the adult is socially isolated.
- Lack of access to 'keep safe' strategies available to others.
- Communication or learning difficulties preventing disclosure.
- Guardians/carers' own needs and ways of coping may conflict with the needs of the adult

In addition to the universal indicators of abuse / neglect listed the following abusive behaviours must be considered:

- Force feeding
- Unjustified or excessive physical restraint
- Rough handling
- Extreme behaviour modification including the deprivation of liquid, medication, food or clothing.
- Misuse of medication, sedation, heavy tranquillisation.
- Invasive procedures against the adult's will
- Deliberate failure to follow medically recommended regimes.
- Misapplication of programmes or regimes
- Ill-fitting equipment e.g. callipers, sleep board which may cause injury or pain, inappropriate splinting.

Be aware that:

- where an adult is unable to tell someone of her/his abuse s/he may convey anxiety or distress in some other way, e.g. behaviour or symptoms and carers and staff must be alert to this.
- some sex offenders may target disabled adults in the belief that they are less likely to be detected.

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If Green Synergy staff are required to work with adults with disabilities or any particularly vulnerable group they will receive the appropriate level of training to support the implementation of this policy.

What to do if you are concerned about an adult

Every concern should start with a conversation with the person themselves (unless it is unsafe to do so)

Unless it is unsafe to do so each concern will start with a conversation with the adult at risk to communicate your concerns with the adult, determine their view on the concerns and what they would like to happen. Some people don't want to tell others that they are being abused. This may be because they don't want the person to get into trouble. They may prefer to ignore the problem in the hope that it will go away. Other people are ashamed or afraid of what will happen to them if they tell.

If you think you are being abused, rest assured that it is not your fault and that there are ways in which you can get help. Don't ignore the problem, it will probably not go away on its own.

Adults with care and support needs who are at risk of, or are experiencing abuse or neglect, should always be involved in every stage of their safeguarding (unless there are exceptional circumstances that would increase the risk of abuse) and this is particularly important at the start.

A person-centred approach must be taken, ensuring that the adult's communication style is understood, that this is used to make a direct connection with them and that their communication is maximised through the agreed next steps.

Lincolnshire Adult Safeguarding Board provide helpful guidance for the initial conversation.

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE – INITIAL CONVERSATION

- Speak in a private and safe place.
- Does the adult have care and support needs? Are they experiencing or at risk of abuse/neglect?
- What are the complicating factors? For example, is the adult experiencing duress, are they being.

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- controlled?
- What is your perception of risk and level of risk – to the person, children and others? What are the perceptions of the adult or others in this situation?
- What actions have been taken so far?
- Any relevant historical information
- Any reasonable adjustments (e.g. to support effective communication) or additional support/advocacy input that might be needed to enable the adult to understand and be involved
- in a safeguarding enquiry
- What are you concerned about? Why are you referring now? What is the current impact on the adult and/or others in the situation? Including on their wellbeing?
- What is working well in supporting the adult's wellbeing, what are the strengths in their life?
- What does the adult want to happen?
- Accept what the person is saying
- Don't 'interview' the person; but establish the basic facts using professional curiosity, avoiding asking the same questions more than once
- Don't promise the person that you'll keep what they tell you confidential; explain who you will tell and why

If you are aware someone is being abused

- See guidance mentioned above for positive actions to take and insert here
- Do not confront the person you think is responsible for the abuse.
- Do not disturb or destroy anything that may be evidence.
- Do not start to investigate the situation.
- If the person is in immediate danger, you should call the emergency services by dialling 999.

SECTION FIVE: Reporting Concerns, Allegations and Disclosures of Abuse

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Raising concerns about abuse or neglect

Green Synergy staff will take the following steps to deal with concerns and allegations of abuse or neglect. Wherever possible, this procedure will be implemented within the same working day.

Confidentiality

Any signs of abuse to, or self-harm by, an adult at risk must be treated with the highest degree of sensitivity and confidentiality.

However, if an adult at risk discloses personal information to a member of staff or a volunteer, the process is to initially start a conversation with the person to establish what they would like to see happen. This conversation may be with the member of staff if appropriate or the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. Assure them you will only pass information on to the people who need to be aware of it. Consent is also required if they have capacity in accordance with The Care Act 2014.

You should immediately document their concerns and pass this on to the designated Officer(s).

It is NOT the role of an individual member of staff to make a referral.

Dealing with Disclosures

In the event of a potential disclosure, it is advisable to take the following steps:

- listen and be calm.
- clarify the concerns
- Offer re-assurance about how s/he will be kept safe and
- Explain what action will be taken: tell the person that you will have to report their disclosure to your line manager and the designated Officer(s), and advise them of what may happen next;

The person must not be pressed for information, led or cross-examined or given false assurances of absolute confidentiality. Such well-intentioned actions could prejudice police investigations, especially in cases of sexual abuse.

In practice, this means that you can clarify information and in fact it is important to do these using questions such as:

- what happened?

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- who did this to you?
- where were you when this happened?
- when did this happen?
- Who have you told?
- does anyone else know?

These are relatively safe questions to ask in order to ascertain the facts, however a question that suggests the answer or contains the information the questioner is looking for example: That man touched you, didn't he? Are very leading and should be totally avoided.

Where possible: try to ensure there is another responsible member of staff present;

Immediately:

- Report the matter to the designated Officer(s) or your line manager if they are not available as soon as possible. Ensure the person is receiving comfort if needed.
- Make a written record of the disclosure and any subsequent conversations with your line manager or the designated officer. (See below for guidelines and appendices "Record of allegations, suspicions or disclosures of abuse'). Submit this to the designated Officer(s) where the record will be kept in a locked place.
- The programme delivery DSO will decide on a course of action in conjunction with the person themselves and taking into account the circumstances and any wider risk factors.

Do not:

- take the matter into your own hands. It will be followed up by a trained professional.
- try to conduct your own investigation. This needs to be done by the proper authorities.
- offer to put the person up at your own home, no matter how desperate their circumstances appear.

Reporting Procedure for Staff

If you have reason to think that an adult is at risk, in need, self-harming or is the victim of abuse, or if a person discloses such information to you, it is essential to report the matter as soon as possible to your line manager and the designated Officer(s).

Your discussion with the designated Officer(s) should concentrate on:

- Accurate retention of details disclosed

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- Information giving – be objective and factual (and where you don't know, say so!)

It is **NOT** your job to make judgements on whether a referral should be made but to give a clear account of what you know so that the designated Officer can do this. All suspicions and observations must be recorded in an Record of Concern Form (see appendix 'Record of allegations, suspicions or disclosures of abuse'). When documenting concerns ensure that you:

- Give the time, date, location and names of witnesses.
- Give full details of the disclosure or of your concerns including the risk to the person. Note their behaviour, mood and any comments they made about their own welfare.
- Give specific detail rather than using fancy/overarching terms that can be interpreted differently by different people.
- State what you see not what you perceive to be the case.
- Be specific about periods of time.
- Highlight the level of severity.
- State what follow-up action you will take.

All concerns should be discussed with a senior member of staff and where it is felt follow-up action could be necessary this is then taken further with the appropriate people.

The designated Officer should always be your first port of call, especially if a disclosure has been made to you or you have been made aware of abuse. As it is the designated Officer's role to make decisions and act on safeguarding matters arising, this is the most direct route to establishing the right support to the person concerned.

Often however, especially when the case is not seen to be urgent your line manager may be the first person you raise the issue with. This is also an acceptable route to take, but they should *always* refer any Safeguarding concern on to the designated Officer(s) for consideration before any matters are explored/ taken further.

If thought necessary, the incident will be reported to a statutory Safeguarding agency by the designated Officer(s). This may be Social Services, the local Adult Safeguarding Board or the Police

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Safeguarding Team.

The responsibility to make enquiries and investigate allegations with families etc. lies with statutory services, along with other relevant agencies **not** with Green Synergy staff. If the person is suffering from a serious injury, medical attention must be sought immediately, or if there is an immediate risk of harm to anyone the police should be called.

Reporting procedure for staff in outreach

Reporting concerns in outreach or when working with a partner can be slightly different. Firstly, refer to arrangements made in the SLA. If Green Synergy is taking the lead on referrals follow the procedures laid out above.

If however the responsibility for referrals lies with the partner organisation firstly notify the partner organisations appropriate person (either the project worker provided or the appointed person directly) of the concern/ disclosure arising and then immediately notify Green Synergy programme delivery DSO too. This is to ensure that we are aware of any involvement our staff have in Safeguarding actions in case there is need for further follow up with the partner or with the member of staff. When reporting to Green Synergy again follow the procedures above

The only exception to this rule is if you have concerns relating to a member of staff from the centre. In this instance you would report this straight to the Green Synergy designated officer and they would deal with the case directly.

SECTION SIX: Making a Referral

Referrals Procedure

Organisation's / Designated Officer's responsibility for investigating concerns

It is the responsibility of the designated Officer(s) (see list) to follow-up concerns, allegations and disclosures of abuse and self-harm from within Green Synergy and to make a decision along with the

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person themselves on what happens next. Action may include seeking support from Adult Social Care or other services appropriate to the person's needs. The process of decision making will always be done in conjunction with the person themselves, the appropriate member of staff and if necessary, in consultation with external agencies.

In addition, Green Synergy should have an external contact (either a trustee or a representative of the host organisation) who can assume the same role in the designated Officer(s) absence, or if an allegation concerns the designated Officer(s)¹². In extreme circumstances when a person is at immediate risk of significant harm and when neither designated Officer or the external person is available to consult with, it would fall to the line manager to assume the designated Officers role and make a judgement call on the most appropriate action to take.

It is essential that all designated Officer(s) are familiar with reporting procedures and follow-up actions for allegations, concerns and observations of abuse. Where there is concern that an adult at risk is experiencing or may already have experienced abuse or neglect or is likely to suffer significant harm in the future.

Assessing Levels of Risk

Often staff will have small concerns about a person that may or may not indicate abuse. It is imperative that staff are encouraged to talk to the designated Officer about these issues so that they are not making judgements for themselves about the level of risk of the situation and to the person. It will be the designated Officer's role to ensure that both they and the staff member are looking objectively at the situation to make a well-considered judgement on whether the concern is something to act on or not. Potential tools to aid this are the assessment framework and questions below. Also, reference can and should be made to the 'Making Safeguarding Personal and LSAB guidelines.

Programme Delivery Specific Incident and Safeguarding Reporting Procedures: All incidents and safeguarding concerns have to be reported in line with Green Synergy own disclosure and reporting procedures.

Making Safeguarding Personal

There are six key principles that should be used as a check list with a person involved in safeguarding and to inform the ways in which professionals communicate with people about safeguarding.

Empowerment: People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.

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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.

Raising a Safeguarding Alert to the Local Council

If you don't think you need immediate help from the police or are worried about calling them, then you can call Adult Social Care for advice..

Lincolnshire County Council - The [Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Board \(LSAB\)](#) promotes the well-being of adults who have care or support needs.

Members of the public should raise safeguarding concerns via telephone calls to the Customer Service Centre on 01522 782155

If a professional / staff member has a concern, it can be reported here [report a concern using their reporting form.](#)

When Reporting a Concern

When an abuse or neglect safeguarding concern is identified, the following actions should be undertaken by the agency as a priority

- First Priority is the safety and wellbeing of person. Ensure any immediate action regarding the safety of the adult is taken, including any emergency medical treatment. Report to the police if the suspected abuse is a crime or offence. (DIAL 999 or 101)
- Talk to the adult, unless this would put them or others at risk, regarding their view of the concern, what they want to happen and agree actions that will be taken (Consent and involving the adult –see Care Act 2014 Guidance/MSP).
- Pass information to other relevant organisations where this is required.
- The referring agencies should follow their internal policies and procedures.
- Check their records for PAST INCIDENTS, CONCERNS, RISKS AND PATTERNS in relation to both the individual and the organisation.

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[The form](#) should be used by all agencies to report a concern where abuse or neglect has been discovered, or there is 'reasonable suspicion' that abuse or neglect has occurred against an individual who, as defined by Care Act 2014

- Has need for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs); and
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either risk of,
- Or the experience of abuse and neglect.

Consent and Right to Confidentiality

When a report of incident of alleged abuse or neglect a member of the council's staff will contact the person who has reported it

They will ask permission before they take any further actions or share any information about the situation with other people.

If there is difficulty in giving permission (perhaps because there is a mental health problem or difficulties when communicating) they will ask a relative, unpaid carer or friend to give permission on the individual's behalf. They can also arrange for an advocate to help to give the person's views.

In some situations where other people may also be at risk of abuse, or if the individual is not able to make your own decision because of mental problem, they may need to take action or share information without your permission - they will explain clearly to the person when this is the case.

What Else to Expect

The Care Act 2014 sets out some 'key principles' on how health and social care professionals should work with you, including when you have been subjected to abuse or neglect. Those principles are:

- They know best.
- Their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs should always be considered.
- The main aim of professionals should be on their well-being, on reducing their need for

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care and support, and on reducing the likelihood that they will need care and support in the future.

- Any decisions made should take into account all relevant circumstances.
- Any decisions should be made with their involvement.
- Their well-being should be balanced with that of any involved family and friends.
- Professionals should always work to protect you and other people from abuse and neglect.
- Professionals should ensure that any actions taken to protect you affect your rights and freedom as little as possible.

Victim Support

Victim Support is the national independent charity that offers support to victims of crime.

The contact for Victim Support:

- The national 24/7 support line - tel 08 08 16 89 111, request support via their website, or email supportline@victimsupport.org.uk
- Call the **Victim Lincs** team on 01522 947510. Lines are open 8am – 4pm every weekday. The service is available Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm. Outside of these hours, you can call Victim Support's 24-hour support line on 0808 1689111

Making a Referral Checking Objectivity:

When supporting a member of staff who is raising concerns about an adult at risk, the designated Officer will be asking themselves:

- Are they being objective and recording what they see/ facts as opposed to assumptions?
- Is their recording accurate?
- Are they stereotyping or fearful of being seen to stereotype?
- Do they have their focus on the adult at risk or the carer? Is there over-? Are assumptions being made about the carers / guardians because they seem articulate, affluent etc.?

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- Is there over-optimism?
- Has there been an increase in dependency on the part of the family or worker?
- Are the staff following procedure or are they making assumptions/ decisions themselves?
Do they think they know best?

If the answer to any of those questions, is it is the designated Officer's responsibility to question them further and finding out further details about the case.

Designated people should also check themselves – are they?

- being objective and recording what they see/ facts as opposed to assumptions.
- Keeping accurate records of discussions and outcomes.
- Making decisions based all the evidence to hand.
- Discussing issues with those who work directly with the young person concerned.
- Getting external support and advice and where necessary.
- stereotyping or fearful of being seen to stereotype?
- Ensuring that you keep a focus on the adult at risk?
- over-identifying
- Making assumptions about the carers/ guardians because they seem articulate, affluent etc
- Being overly optimistic?
- allowing 'drift' (allowing support for the person to slip), is there a support plan in place for this adult at risk?
- Doing a continuous needs analysis of the person? Are you analysing each piece of information?
- Are you in contact with the family/the person? Do you have their consent to speak to social workers?
- Speaking to other services involved. What is already in place?

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Making the Referral

Members of the public wishing to report a safeguarding concern are advised to contact the Customer Service Centre on 01522 782155.

Professionals can refer any safeguarding concern that meets the three statutory criteria above to the Lincolnshire County Council Customer Service Centre using the Lincolnshire Adult Safeguarding

Concern form, and send this via secure email to ASC@lincolnshire.gov.uk

In addition:

If a criminal offence has occurred or may occur, contact Lincolnshire Police – 101

If a crime is in progress or life is at risk, dial emergency – 999

You must contact the Children's Services on (01522 782111) if a child is identified as being at risk of harm.

Professionals who make referrals will be notified of the outcome in writing

In urgent situations, out of office hours, the referral should be made to the Emergency Duty /Out of Hours Team (EDT and OOH respectively – details in appendices) Where available, the following information should be provided with the referral (but absence of information must not delay referral):

- Full names, date of birth and gender
- Family address
- Identity of those with parental responsibility
- Names and date of birth of all household individuals
- Ethnicity, first language and religion of adult at risk and family members
- Any need for an interpreter, signer or other communication aid

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- Any special needs of adult at risk
- Any significant/important recent or historical events/incidents in individual's or family's life
- Cause for concern including details of any allegations, their sources, timing and location.
- Individual's current location and emotional and physical condition
- Referrer's relationship and knowledge of individual and parents/carers
- Known current or previous involvement of other agencies/professionals.
- Information regarding parental knowledge of, and agreement to, the referral

The referrer should confirm verbal and telephone referrals in writing, within 48 hours, using an interagency referral form.

Social services should acknowledge referrals within one working day of receipt. If this does not occur within 3 working days, the referrer should contact social services again.

The referrer should keep a written record of (use form in appendices):

- Discussions with adult at risk
- Discussions with carer/ guardian / parent
- Discussions with managers
- Information provided to local authority
- Decisions taken (clearly timed, dated and signed)

If the decision is made not to refer:

Sometimes it is not immediately obvious or appropriate to make a referral and a period of further observation/ information sharing with other agencies may be decided upon. If that is the case, there may still be a reason to look at further support for the person. Sometimes no other action is necessary. Whatever the decision, all discussions and decisions should be written up and filed securely.

Records of Concern Files

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Green synergy stores its Record of concerns on the e-shared drive under Green Synergy Operations / Safeguarding/ Record of concerns.

Managing Allegations against Staff

Despite all efforts to recruit safely there may be an occasion when an allegation of abuse is made against a staff member.

These procedures should be applied when there is an allegation or concern that any person who works with adults at risk, in connection with their employment or voluntary activity, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed an adult at risk, or may have harmed an adult at risk
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to an adult at risk
- Behaved towards an adult at risk in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to them

These behaviours should be considered within the context of the categories of abuse (i.e. physical, sexual and emotional, financial etc). These include concerns relating to inappropriate relationships between members of staff and adults at risk.

All references to 'members of staff' should be interpreted as meaning all paid or unpaid staff and volunteers.

Allegations of historical abuse should be responded to in the same way as contemporary concerns. In such cases, it is important that Green Synergy report any such allegations to social services and / or the police for those agencies to take the appropriate action.

Persons to be Notified when an allegation is made against a member of staff

The Green Synergy DSL must inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (formerly LADO) within one working day when an allegation is made and prior to any further investigation taking place.

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The Designated Officer will advise the employer whether or not informing the carers of the adult at risk involved will impede the disciplinary or investigative processes. Acting on this advice, if it is agreed that the information can be fully or partially shared, the employer should inform carers. In some circumstances, however, the carers may need to be told straight away (e.g. if the adult at risk is injured and requires medical treatment).

The person should be helped to understand the processes involved and be fully involved in decisions that affect them. They will need to be informed of the outcome of any disciplinary process, but not the deliberations of, or the information used in, a hearing.

Green Synergy should seek advice from the Designated Officer, the police and / or LA adult social care about how much information should be disclosed to the accused person if known to the organisation.

Subject to restrictions on the information that can be shared, Green Synergy should, as soon as possible, inform the accused person about the nature of the allegation, how enquiries will be conducted and the possible outcome (e.g. disciplinary action, and dismissal or referral to the DBS or regulatory body).

The accused member of staff should:

- Be treated fairly and honestly and helped to understand the concerns expressed and processes involved.
- Be kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation and the implications for any disciplinary or related process.
- If suspended, be kept up to date about events in the workplace.

Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. Apart from keeping the adult at risk,

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parents/carers/ guardians and accused person (where this would not place the person at further risk) up to date with progress of the case, information should be restricted to those who have a need to know in order to protect the individual, facilitate enquiries, manage related disciplinary or suitability processes.

The police should not provide identifying information to the press or media, unless and until a person is charged, except in exceptional circumstances (e.g. an appeal to trace a suspect). In such cases, the reasons should be documented and partner agencies consulted beforehand.

Families /carers should also be made aware of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against the member of staff whilst investigations are underway.

Support

The wellbeing of the adult at risk is paramount. Green Synergy, together with LA adult social care and / or police, where they are involved, should take time to listen and consider the impact on the adult at risk concerned and provide support as appropriate. Liaison with the person and between the agencies should take place in order to ensure that the individual's needs are addressed.

As soon as possible after an allegation has been received, the accused member of staff should be advised to contact their union or professional association. Human resources should be consulted at the earliest opportunity in order that appropriate support can be provided via the organisation's occupational health or employee welfare arrangements.

Suspension

Suspension is a neutral act and it should not be automatic. It should be considered in any case where:

- There is cause to suspect a person has suffered, or is likely to suffer significant harm; or
- The allegation warrants investigation by the police; or
- The allegation is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal.

The possible risk of harm to adults at risk should be evaluated and managed in respect of the

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individuals involved and any other individuals in the accused member of staff's home, work or community life.

If a strategy meeting / discussion is to be held or if LA adult social care or the police are to make enquiries, the Local Authority Designated Officer should canvass their views on suspension and inform Green Synergy. Only the employer, however, has the power to suspend an accused employee and they cannot be required to do so by local authority or police.

If a suspended person is to return to work, Green Synergy should consider what help and support might be appropriate (e.g. a phased return to work and/or provision of a mentor), and also how best to manage the member of staff's contact with the adult at risk concerned, if still in the workplace.

Resignations and 'compromise agreements'

Every effort should be made to reach a conclusion in all cases even if:

- The individual refuses to cooperate, having been given a full opportunity to answer the allegation and make representations.
- It may not be possible to apply any disciplinary sanctions if a person's period of notice expires before the process is complete.

Compromise agreements must not be used (i.e. where a member of staff agrees to resign provided that disciplinary action is not taken and that a future reference is agreed).

Whistleblowing

All staff should be made aware of the organisation's whistle-blowing policy and feel confident to voice concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

If a member of staff believes that a reported allegation or concern is not being dealt with appropriately by their organisation, they should report the matter to the Designated Officer.

Timescales

It is in everyone's interest for cases to be dealt with expeditiously, fairly and thoroughly and for unnecessary delays to be avoided. The target timescales provided in the flowchart at the end of this chapter are realistic in most cases, but some cases will take longer because of their specific

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nature or complexity.

Making a Referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Who has a legal duty to refer to DBS?

Regulated activity providers (employers or volunteer managers of people working in regulated activity in England, Wales and Northern Ireland) and personnel suppliers have a legal duty to refer to DBS where conditions are met. This would include Green Synergy, and applies even when a referral has also been made to a local authority safeguarding team or professional regulator.

Legal duty to refer: the two conditions that must be met

If the organisation is a regulated activity provider, the organisation must make a referral when both of the following conditions have been met:

Condition 1

- The organisation withdraw permission for a person to engage in regulated activity with adults at risk. Or you move the person to another area of work that isn't regulated activity.
- This includes situations when you would have taken the above action, but the person was re-deployed, resigned, retired, or left. For example, a teacher resigns when an allegation of harm to a student is first made.

Condition 2

You think the person has carried out 1 of the following:

- engaged in relevant conduct in relation to children and/or adults. An action or inaction has harmed a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk or harm or
- satisfied the harm test in relation to adult at risk. e.g. there has been no relevant conduct but a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable still exists or
- been cautioned or convicted of a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence.

How to make a referral to DBS

DBS accept referrals made using their online referral form or by post.

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Either way the organisation will be asked to provide prescribed information. This is information that must be legally provided, if there is duty to refer or if the organisation falls within those persons/bodies who are legally required to provide information on request. The legal duty to provide prescribed information may apply whether you've made a referral to the DBS or not.

It's important that DBS is provided with as much relevant information as you can. DBS rely on the quality of information provided to them. Referrers are not expected to provide information that they don't have access to. As part of the process to decide if an individual should be placed on a barred list, any information in your referral may be used by the DBS and could be disclosed to the referred person or other parties.

Online referral form and registering for an online services account

DBS recommend making a referral to DBS using their [online referral form](#). To do this the DSO would need to register for a DBS online services account, to enable them to engage and communicate with us more securely.

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Appendices

Appendix One: Contact details for Designated Safeguarding Persons and external safeguarding

Within Green Synergy:

Name of organisation's Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)	Mrs Ali Talbot
Contact Number DSO	07769 342251 – Work
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer and Programme Delivery DSO	Mrs Tiwonge Simkonda
Contact number for Deputy DSO and Programme Delivery DSO	07881 308285

Name of statutory Safeguarding and Child Protection Agency	Contact details
Lincolnshire Adult Safeguarding Board LSAB	<p>https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/safeguarding/lsab</p> <p>If you have a concern about an adult, please contact:</p> <p>If you believe that an adult may be a victim of neglect, abuse or cruelty call:</p> <p>Adults safeguarding - 01522 782155 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm) or 01522 782333 (outside office hours)</p>

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Appendix Two – Record of concerns, allegations or disclosures of abuse

a. Record of Concerns (Safeguarding/Adult at Risk)

Please fill in as much information as you can. Please be specific in your statements. Please state what you see rather than what you perceive to be the case.

Time/date/location concern raised	
Name of recorder	
Name of person	
Age	
Other relevant information (inc. primary language spoken, religion, special needs etc)	
What is the nature of your concern?	
Cause for concern: What have you noticed/ witnessed/ heard? (Please give dates and times of specific incidents.)	
Are there any physical/behavioural signs connected to the concern? (Please give dates and times of specific incidents.)	
Names of additional witnesses to incidents (if any)	
Has the person concerned been spoken to?	
What was said? (Please note details of their mood and behaviour and any comments they made about their own welfare).	

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What, if anything do you know about their family life/ personal life? Do you have any worries about carers/ peers (such as family violence, drug or alcohol abuse)?	
Report passed on to	
Recorder's job title	
Recorder's signature	
Record of Actions Taken and Date	

b. Record of Suspicions, Allegations or Disclosures of Abuse or Neglect

For staff to fill in when a disclosure or allegation has been made. Please fill in as much information as you can. Please be specific in your statements. Please state what you see rather than what you perceive to be the case.

Time/date/location	
Name of recorder	
Name of person	
Age	
Other relevant information (inc. primary language spoken, religion, special needs etc)	
What is the nature of your concern? What has prompted the allegation/ suspicion/ disclosure?	

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Dates and times of specific incidents (please give details).	
Are there any physical/behavioural signs connected to the concern?	
Has the person been injured? If so, when and by whom? Was medical help sought?	
Names of witnesses to allegation/disclosure	
Is the allegation/disclosure first-hand information?	
If reported by some-one else, who was it?	
Has the person concerned been spoken to?	
What was said? (Please note details of their mood and behaviour and any comments they made about their own welfare).	
What, if anything do you know about their family life/ personal life? Do you have any worries about carers/ peers (such as family violence, drug or alcohol abuse)?	
Has the alleged abuser been named? Who is it?	
Report discussed with/passed on to	
Recorder's job title	
Recorder's signature	

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Record of Actions Taken and Date	
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c. Record of Concern/ Disclosure Follow Up

For the Designated Officer to fill out after conversation with reporting staff

Date Report / Referral Received	
Time/date of discussion with staff	
Name of designated Officer	
Name of person and staff concerned (inc. details of their relationship)	
Any additional information not already recorded in staffs report	

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Has contact point been contacted? (Where appropriate)	
Has the guardian / carer been contacted/ spoken to about your concerns? What was their response?	
Is this person at risk?	
Action Taken or Recommendations for follow up (include timescale and dates)	
Follow up with Team Member	

Inter - Related Policies:

The following policies should be read and noted in conjunction to the Green Synergy Safeguarding Policy

- Green Synergy Equity and Diversity Policy
- Green Synergy Data Protection Policy
- Green Synergy Anti-bullying Policy
- Complaints Policy & Procedures
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Social Media Guidance and Procedures

Related Policies

Green Synergy Data Breach Policy

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Green Synergy Recruitment & Selection Policy

Green Synergy Sickness and Absence Policy

Green Synergy Payment of Salary Policy

Green Synergy Hours of Work and Leave Policy

Green Synergy Resignation and Notice Period Policy

Green Synergy Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Policy

Green Synergy Grievance and Disciplinary Policy

Green Synergy Harassment and Bullying Policy

Green Synergy Whistleblowing Policy

Green Synergy Professional Development and Training Policy

Green Synergy Appraisal and Performance Policy

Green Synergy Code of Conduct – Team Members

Green Synergy Code of Conduct for Volunteers

Document Control

Version	Date of Review	Reviewed by:	Approval
Version 1.3	February 2017	CEO	Board
Version 1.4	June 2019	CEO	Board
Version 1.5	June 2020	CEO	Board
Version 1.6	16.09.2022	CEO	Trustee Basecamp Approval System

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Version 1.6	24.04.2023	CEO	Trustee Basecamp Approval Process
Version 1.7	21.06.2023	CEO	Trustee Basecamp Approval Process.
Version 1.8	04.12.2023	Vice Chair and CEO	Trustee Basecamp Approval Process
Version 1.9	26.06.2024	CEO	Trustee Basecamp Approval Process
Version 1.10	17.09.2024	CEO	Trustee Google Drive Governance Portal
Version 1.11	12.09.2025	CEO	Trustee Google Drive Governance Portal

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