

## Safeguarding Policy

Boaz policies and procedures are in place so things run as smoothly as possible and so that you are clear about how we are committed to treating you, and how we would like you to behave during your time with Boaz.

If you have any questions or comments on any Boaz Policy please talk to the Chief Exec or HR and Projects Manager.

### Why this policy?

The Boaz Trust vision is to see people seeking sanctuary in the UK experiencing life in all its fullness. We believe that everyone has the right to live life free from abuse and exploitation. We commit to upholding that right; and as an organisation we take 'zero-tolerance' of abuse wherever it occurs.

The Boaz Trust is committed to (a) ensuring that people who use our services do not, as a result of our work, come to any harm and (b) ensuring that our working practices minimise the risk of abuse. Staff, volunteers (including students) and trustees of the Boaz Trust have a duty to identify abuse and report it.

The Boaz Trust does not work with children (aged under 18). We work with adult asylum seekers and refugees who may face challenging situations, but are not legally defined as 'vulnerable adults' (see 'definitions' below). However, as an organisation working with a client group who may be exposed to a wide range of risks, we have a duty to ensure that those under our care are protected from abuse and exploitation, and that where abuse is suspected or has occurred, we have a clear framework of response.

### Policy owner and review process

This policy is owned by the **Safeguarding Coordinator (Ros Holland- Chief Executive)** with support from the **Lead Trustee for Safeguarding (Suzannah Sammons)** and is signed off by the trustees. It should be reviewed every 12 months.

### Scope of this policy

This policy relates to all aspects of our work with destitute asylum seekers and refugees who are accommodated by the Boaz Trust through hosting, winter night shelters and shared houses. The policy relates to all our staff and volunteers including students on placement with

us and trustees. It is relevant to all areas of our work where we engage with people, including fundraising and support relations as well as frontline client support services.

## Useful definitions

### **1. Safeguarding**

At its most simple, safeguarding means protecting from harm. Everyone has the right to 'live in safety, free from abuse and neglect'<sup>1</sup>, and safeguarding covers the policies, processes and working practices we put in place to make sure that Boaz is a safe place to be.

### **2. Abuse**

#### **a. What is abuse?**

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights.

Abuse can take many forms. It may be:

- physical
- financial
- material
- sexual
- psychological
- discriminatory
- emotional
- neglect

We recognise that the experiences and needs of all individuals, including those from refugee communities, can be complex and diverse. The clients we work with may have experienced specific types of abuse such as torture, forced marriage, trafficking, forced labour, female genital mutilation (FGM) and honour based violence.

We recognise that an individual with unresolved immigration status may be at greater risk of experiencing severe and enduring abuse. In some cases, this may be due to higher levels of control by perpetrators (for example domestic violence, physical exploitation) and because of the impact of destitution, when people are not able to work or claim benefits to meet their basic needs.

#### **b. Where can abuse occur?**

Abuse may occur anywhere – in an individual's home, in someone else's home, in a project or organisation, or in a public place.

#### **c. Who abuses?**

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<sup>1</sup> The Care Act, 2014

Anyone may be an abuser, but evidence shows that an abuser is likely to be someone well known to the individual, such as a friend or family member, a professional worker or carer.

#### **d. What are the possible signs of abuse?**

There is no one specific sign, but possible indicators are unexplained changes in behaviour or mood, including self-harming, unexplained bruising or injuries, signs of neglect, or unexplained changes in financial circumstances.

### **3. Vulnerable adults**

In safeguarding terms a vulnerable adult is defined as a person over 18 'who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him- or herself, and or unable to protect him- or herself against significant harm or exploitation.'<sup>2</sup>

The Boaz Trust works with adults who are seeking asylum, or who have recently been granted refugee status. The people we work with (clients) may have faced very difficult and traumatic situations in their home countries. They may have faced or be facing challenging situations here in the UK, for example homelessness and destitution, detention, risk of deportation, however this does not define them as "vulnerable" in the legal sense.

As an organisation, we are very grateful for income given by individuals who may choose to give regularly or on a one-off basis. We recognise that some individual donors or potential donors may be vulnerable or may become vulnerable due to a permanent or temporary change in their condition or wellbeing. We abide by the [Fundraising Code of Practice](#) and have a separate policy for how will work to ensure that we treat vulnerable supporters appropriately.

### **4. Regulated activity**

There has been a move to identify adults who may be at risk of abuse particularly in regard to health and personal care services they receive ('regulated activities') rather than because of their particular circumstance or characteristics (see above). These tend to be in relation to health and personal care. The definitions are clearly set out in the Department of Health 2012 guidance on Regulated Activities.<sup>3</sup> The Boaz Trust does not provide services as given under this guidance.

### **5. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and DBS checks**

The Disclosure and Barring Service is the government body (England and Wales) with responsibility for processing criminal records checks and managing the list of people who are barred from working with children or adults in the UK. It is possible to get different levels of DBS

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<sup>2</sup> 'No Secrets' Department of Health and Home Office, 2000

<sup>3</sup>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/216900/Regulated-Activity-Adults-Dec-2012.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/216900/Regulated-Activity-Adults-Dec-2012.pdf)

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checks, from basic through to enhanced. The enhanced disclosure is a specific check that reports full criminal history including spent convictions.

It is only possible to request an enhanced DBS check if the specific role (voluntary or paid) requires this level of information. According to the government's online eligibility tool<sup>4</sup>, no role in Boaz currently fits the eligibility criteria for this level of DBS check and therefore we are not able to request these for staff or volunteers.

We do ask all staff to provide to provide us with a basic DBS check following successful recruitment.

## Responsibilities of the organisation

The Boaz Trust will ensure that:

- Adequate checks are made during recruitment of all staff or volunteers, to include but not limited to: full name, current address, phone and email contact information (via an application form) two independent references, face to face interviews (and basic DBS for all staff, renewed every three years)
- All staff and volunteers receive a copy of this policy during the induction process, and are informed how to report any concerns
- Adequate support and training is given to each member of staff and volunteers beyond induction, including a safeguarding refresher each year
- When we have been given information about, or identified a vulnerable donor we act upon this and ascertain what kind of communication, if any, is acceptable. Our database is then updated to reflect this information
- A culture of safeguarding awareness and understanding is developed and runs through the whole organisation, including at trustee level (lead trustee on safeguarding- currently Suzannah Sammons), senior management (safeguarding is a standing item at management team meetings) and through the day to day operation of our work

## Responsibilities of staff and volunteers

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

The following are guidelines for safe working practices. All staff and volunteers should:

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/find-out-dbs-check>

- Recognise their own personal limits, and not undertake any task that is beyond their skills or role
- Avoid situations where they feel vulnerable or where their conduct may be misinterpreted
- Ensure the limits of confidentiality are explained carefully to the clients, with an interpreter present where appropriate
- Have 2 leaders with any group, and wherever possible, leaders of each gender are to be present in mixed gender groups
- Be conscious of how our words and actions can be misconstrued by others as harmful
- Where staff or volunteers need to interview or have 1:1 discussions with clients this should be done in a location that is visible to others and records of the interaction made (using case notes), and do all that is practicably possible to avoid 1:1 situations in isolation from others
- Be fully familiar with appropriate policies and working practices including those listed at the end of this policy

Staff have a responsibility to provide a basic DBS check following successful recruitment.

Trustees have a specific legal duty to ensure that they minimise the risk of any safeguarding incidents and that they react responsibly to any reports of safeguarding risks and incidents of abuse, ensuring that all action is in line with current safeguarding legislation. Trustees must report any safeguarding incident to the Charity Commission, even if it has been reported to the police or other agency.

What to do if you suspect an individual is being abused?

**DO:**

- Ensure the individual's immediate safety – if there has been a crime committed, e.g. physical assault, consider whether emergency services are needed immediately and if so, dial 999
- Take seriously all allegations of abuse, listening carefully and reassuring the individual that you are taking them seriously
- Document any conversations relating to a safeguarding issue, including allegations of abuse in a non-judgmental way using a safeguarding concern form (see appendix) and where appropriate the critical incident reporting form (see appendix). These should be saved on the Shared Drive and also on LIAIF (our database)
- Explain to the individual what will happen next and when
- Where concern regards an adult in need of protection, contact Adult Social Services (0161 234 5001)
- Inform the Safeguarding Coordinator (Ros Holland- Chief Executive) as soon as possible. The Safeguarding Coordinator is nominated by the Trustees of the Boaz Trust to deal with any allegation or suspicion of abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities where appropriate.
- In the absence of the Safeguarding Coordinator, any safeguarding concern should be reported to the HR and Projects Manager (Sarah Beaney)

- Any reports in relation to safeguarding will be shared with the lead trustee for safeguarding, Suzannah Sammons ([suzannah.sammons@boaztrust.org.uk](mailto:suzannah.sammons@boaztrust.org.uk)) who should also be contacted directly should Safeguarding Coordinator and HR and Projects Manager not be available.
- In the absence of the above individuals, concerns should be reported to the Chair of Trustees (Phil Rawlings, [phil.rawlings@boaztrust.org.uk](mailto:phil.rawlings@boaztrust.org.uk))
- Any suspicions should not be discussed with any other individual except for the above mentioned

**DO NOT:**

- Minimise or ignore any concerns you have
- Confront a suspected abuser; you may put yourself or your client at further risk
- Destroy any evidence of abuse
- Initiate an investigation. Your duty is to report, not to investigate
- Make any promises you cannot keep (e.g. to keep information secret)
- Delay acting

**Important point to note:**

Where there are concerns that any individual is facing or has faced abuse or exploitation, you are entitled to breach confidentiality.

What will Boaz do, once a safeguarding concern has been raised?

When a safeguarding concern has been reported or identified, the next steps depend on the specific circumstances and who is involved.

If any individual is considered to be at risk of significant harm, the case is to be immediately referred to the police (999) and / or adult social services (0161 234 5001).

If the safeguarding concern is in relation to a third party or in relation to a historical incident, the way forwards will be agreed with the individual concerned, the main staff contact, and where appropriate, their line manager. The next steps may include contacting adult social services for advice or contacting a third party organisation directly to raise a concern. Boaz staff must ensure the wellbeing of any clients involved in this process, supporting them to seek specialist advice and support as necessary.

If the safeguarding concern is in relation to a Boaz staff member or volunteer, the concern will be initially discussed with their line manager and the Safeguarding Coordinator. Specific actions will be agreed and documented. If there is no immediate risk of harm, but further investigation is needed, the Safeguarding Coordinator will then liaise with the lead trustee for Safeguarding and the Social Services Contact Centre.

As appropriate, the matter would be dealt with through our disciplinary process which is set out in the staff handbook.

The Chief Exec must report any safeguarding issues that arise to Trustees.

**Trustees have a duty to report any serious incident to the Charity Commission, including in relation to safeguarding.**

## Useful resources and contacts

- Manchester City Council- Social Services Contact Centre: 0161 234 5001 (for any concerns about the wellbeing of a vulnerable adult or child)
- Homeless Link: Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Briefing  
<https://www.homeless.org.uk/our-work/resources/guidance-on-safeguarding-vulnerable-adults>
- Boaz office: 0161 202 1056
- Boaz out of hours emergency phone: 07535 467 877
- Boaz Safeguarding coordinator email address: [rosholland@boaztrust.org.uk](mailto:rosholland@boaztrust.org.uk) / 07511 460 655
- Charity Commission: Guidance for Trustees on reporting serious incidents;  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>

## Important dates

New policy drafted: March 2018

Policy signed off by trustees: July 2018

## Related documents and policies

- Boaz staff handbook
- Boaz volunteer handbook
- Boaz night shelter volunteer handbook
- Confidentiality policy
- Lone working policy
- Vulnerable supporters policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Risk assessment template (individual)

- Risk assessment template (off site)

These are all available from the Boaz office. Please speak to your line manager for further information.

### Policy update log

<b>Date</b>	<b>Updated by</b>	<b>Changes made</b>
3/5/18	Ros Holland	Complete revision including feedback from Lead Trustee for Safeguarding
8/5/18	Ros Holland	Updated to include reference to Vulnerable Supporters policy
31/5/18	Ros Holland	Final edits before sending to trustees
1/7/18	Ros Holland	Policy accepted and signed off by trustees
8/10/18	Ros Holland	Updated with new trustee email addresses and clarity in DBS section over enhanced checks
14/11/19	Ros Holland	Updated sections relating to basic DBS checks which are now required for all employed staff



## Appendices

1. Template for reporting a safeguarding concern
2. Critical incident form

## **Safeguarding concern reporting template**

*This form should be used when you have identified a safeguarding concern. A concern is something that causes you to question whether someone is safe, or facing / experiencing some form of abuse. We all have a responsibility to report safeguarding concerns even when there is no specific allegation of abuse.*

**Name of the reporter:**

**Contact phone number or email:**

**Date of event or conversation that has caused a safeguarding concern:**

**Time of event:**

**Place of event:**

**Who is involved?**

- *Client(s)...*
- *Boaz staff ...*
- *Boaz volunteers...*
- *Other organisations...*

**Description of what happened or what was discussed which led to this concern** *(including circumstances leading up to the event or conversation)*

**Is this concern in relation to a current or ongoing situation?**

**If yes, what actions have you taken or need to be taken now?**

*Is everybody safe in the situation?*

*Who needs to be informed- safeguarding coordinator? Police?*

*Is this a critical incident? (i.e. any event that has a stressful impact sufficient enough to overwhelm the usually effective coping skills of an individual, and that falls outside the ordinary day to day experience within Boaz). If so fill in a critical incident form.*

**If this is in relation to a historical incident, what actions need to be taken?**

*Is everybody safe?*

*Might the person involved benefit from further professional support or services in relation to the safeguarding concern?*

**What steps do you need to take to monitor the situation?**

*When will you follow up this concern? Are there any specific things you (or other staff) need to be aware of or look out for?*

**What organisational issues has this raised for the Boaz Trust which need to be changed?**  
*Did you feel you handled the concern well? Did you have everything you needed?*

**Any other points:**

**Signature:** .....

**Date:** .....

**Please give this form to your line manager as soon as possible**

**For manager's use:**

Action to be taken	By whom	By when	Date completed

Form received on.....

Name.....

Signature.....

## **Critical Incident Recording Form**

*Use a separate form for each event*

**Name of the reporter :**

**Contact phone number or email:**

**Date of incident:**

**Time of incident:**

**Place of incident:**

**Is this a safeguarding incident, and if so, has the Safeguarding Coordinator been informed?**

**Who was involved?**

**Description of what happened** *(including circumstances leading up to the incident; other agencies / services involved; outcomes e.g. injuries, damage to property...):*

**How did it affect those involved – client, family if relevant, staff, others?**

**How did it affect you?**

**Could it have been avoided?**

**What needs to be done to stop it from happening again?**

**What organisational issues has this raised for the Boaz Trust which need to be changed?**

**What learning or development needs has this highlighted for individuals (yourself and others)?**

**Any other points:**

**Signature:** .....

**Date:** .....

**Please give this form to your line manager as soon as possible**

**For manager's use:**

Action to be taken	By whom	By when	Date completed

Form received on .....

Name .....

Signature .....