

# Scarborough Maritime Heritage Centre (SMHC)

## Vulnerable Persons Policy

### **Appointed Person, volunteer co-ordinator: Lindy Rowley**

The abuse of vulnerable people constitutes a clear infringement of their rights and freedom as citizens. This policy aims to protect vulnerable people, who are at risk of all forms of abuse, receive a safe sound and supportive service, through the process of identifying, investigating, managing and preventing such abuse. As a service we are committed to promoting equality of opportunity to all members of our community. It is every person's right to live in safety and to be free from abuse or fear of abuse from others. It is every person's right to live an independent life based on 'self-determination' and personal choice.

It is the responsibility of Scarborough Maritime Heritage Centre and all agencies and professionals to actively work together to help prevent abuse of vulnerable people. This will be achieved by raising awareness, empowering people to make their own decisions and putting safeguards in place. When a situation is discovered in which a vulnerable person reports, or is thought to be at risk of abuse, then the agencies will react quickly in a coordinated manner to help them to overcome these difficulties.

Scarborough Maritime Heritage Centre recognises that people are discriminated against on the basis of race, culture, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation. We are committed to working with vulnerable people in a positive manner that values them as individuals in line with the Valuing People Now Legislation (2007).

### **Definitions:**

**Vulnerable person:** Describes a person who is, or may be in need of, community care services because of frailty, learning or physical disability or mental health difficulty or age **and** who is or maybe unable to take care of him or herself or take steps to protect him or herself from significant harm or exploitation.

**Harm:** Introduced in the Children Act 1989. "Harm" should be taken to include not only ill treatment (including sexual abuse and forms of ill treatment which are not physical), but also the impairment of, or an avoidable deterioration in physical or mental health; and the impairment of physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.

**Abuse:** is a violation of individual human and civil rights by any other person(s). This definition of abuse includes singular and repeated acts or mistakes. Abuse may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction, to which he or she had not consented to.

1. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of the person subject to it.
2. Physical abuse includes hitting, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate touch or punishment.
3. Sexual abuse includes rape and sexual assault or sexual acts of touching of intimate places to which the vulnerable person has not or could not consent to and/or was pressured into consenting.
4. Psychological abuse includes emotional abuse, obvious or implied threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming controlling, intimidation, compulsion,

inappropriate language, verbal or racial abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive and/or spiritual networks, withdrawal or omission to provide opportunities and choice including choice of gender of carer.

**5. Financial or Material abuse-** including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills property or inheritance or financial transactions or the misuse of misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits. Damage or threats of damage to property.

**6. Discriminatory abuse** includes racist, sexist opinions, or opinions based on an individual's disability, or other forms of harassment, taunts or similar treatment.

**Neglect or acts of omission:** Failing to act appropriately whether intentionally or negligently. This may include ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational and leisure services, the withholding of the necessities of life such as; medication, adequate and appropriate nutrition, information, clothing, comfort, relationships, safety and environment.

**Signs of Neglect may include:**

An individual showing obvious signs, such as low weight and appearing hungry.

Soreness, chafing to areas of skin owing to poor personal hygiene.

Deterioration of condition of skin around pressure areas.

Changes in behaviour/interaction with staff and other service users.

Loss of interest in activities

If you have concerns about an individual's vulnerability at any point in time, please contact the appointed person within your organisation.

**In the Case for a referral to Social Services:**

The safeguarding of all vulnerable people attending Scarborough Maritime Heritage Centre is the main priority of all Trustees, staff and volunteers. The increased risk to vulnerable people whose community activities are complicated by the private and the voluntary sector must be recognised. The organisation should always take the initial lead on referring any possible incident. This may include taking immediate action to protect the person, if appropriate, and arranging an early discussion with the police if a criminal offence may have been committed. Scarborough Maritime Heritage Centre will also co-ordinate initial information gathering, background checks and ensure a prompt notification to Social Services and other relevant agencies.

**Summary**

We will all actively work together with Our Vulnerable Persons Policy to achieve effective communication with appropriate agencies. We have a risk management framework and clarity about agency and professional responsibility, authority and accountability. We actively promote the empowerment and wellbeing of Vulnerable People through the activities we provide. We act in a way which supports the rights of the individual to lead an independent life, based on self-determination and personal choice. We recognise that the right to self-determination can involve risk and ensure that such risk is recognised and understood by all involved with the Scarborough Maritime Heritage Centre and that we will minimise it whenever possible; and ensure that the law and statutory requirements are known and used appropriately so that Vulnerable People receive the protection of the law and access to the judicial process.