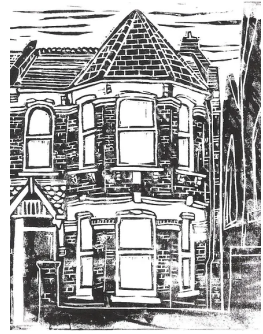


Giuseppe Conlon House CIO

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Our Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

Having policies and procedures to safeguard children and adults at risk is a legal requirement under various statutory legislation including the Care Act 2014 and the Children Act 1989.

Safeguarding means protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

Commitment

Giuseppe Conlon House is committed to Safeguarding in line with national legislation and relevant national and local guidelines.

We will safeguard adults and children by ensuring that our activities are delivered in a way which keeps them safe regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

Giuseppe Conlon House is committed to creating a culture of zero-tolerance of harm which necessitates: the recognition of who may be at risk and the circumstances which may increase risk; knowing how abuse, exploitation or neglect manifests itself; and being willing to report safeguarding concerns.

This extends to recognising and reporting harm experienced anywhere, including within our daily activities, within other organised community or voluntary activities, in the community, in the person's own home and in any care setting.

Giuseppe Conlon House is committed to best safeguarding practice and to uphold the rights of all to live a life free from harm from abuse, exploitation and neglect.

Who this Policy applies to.

Adults

In the context of adult protection, the term 'adult at risk' refers to a person aged 18 years or over: 'who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and is or maybe unable to take care of him or herself, or able to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation' [Care Act 2014]

At Giuseppe Conlon House we recognise that the circumstances of the people we work with, including those who do not have status in the UK, have no recourse to public funds, or have recently experienced homelessness, come with inherent vulnerabilities and a risk of exploitation.

We understand that many of the people we work with may have undergone stressful and traumatic experiences and are at risk of mental health disorders such as anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

The safeguarding policy and procedures will therefore be implemented in all cases in which a safeguarding concern is raised even if the statutory threshold for being considered an 'adult at risk' is not strictly met.

Children

Although the guests who live in the house are all over 18, we also may on occasions work with young people who are under the age of 18. We recognise that this policy and the accompanying procedures will apply to them.

Guests and Volunteers

We believe that safeguarding is relevant to everyone. All people, including guests and volunteers, can be at risk of abuse, and in our safeguarding policy, we aim to promote and protect the safety and well-being of every person in Giuseppe Conlon House.

Guiding Principles of Safeguarding

Our safeguarding work is based on the following principles:

- a) Every person has a right to live free from abuse, neglect and fear.
- b) Safeguarding is everyone's business and responsibility.
- c) There is zero tolerance to abuse.
- d) All reports of abuse will be treated seriously.
- e) Every person should be able to access information about how to be safe from abuse, violence and neglect.

We will meet our commitment to keep people safe by:

- Empowerment: We will be person centred in our approach to safeguarding, supporting and encouraging people to make their own decisions and give informed consent.
- Prevention: It is better to take action before harm occurs and so we will put measures in place to prevent abuse including promoting safe practices and having procedures for the safe recruitment of live in and live out volunteers.
- Proportionality: Our procedures will provide for the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.

- **Protection:** We will provide a policy, procedures, information and training that will enable all live in and live out volunteers to respond appropriately to concerns about abuse including supporting and representing those in greatest need.
- **Partnership:** We will partner with statutory and other relevant local organisations in our community to ensure that safeguarding concerns are responded to appropriately.
- **Accountability:** We recognise the need for accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding, including the need for continuous learning and improvement.

Roles and Responsibilities

Live in and Live out Volunteers

All volunteers have a part to play in safeguarding. They will undertake training where necessary and must familiarise themselves with our Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Live in Safeguarding Lead

The Live in Safeguarding Lead is the designated person for Safeguarding at Giuseppe Conlon House. They are responsible for ensuring that: all volunteers are aware of and have signed the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and can access appropriate training; the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are reviewed and updated annually; the requisite DBS checks have been carried out. They will deal initially with all safeguarding concerns, and may seek advice if required from the External Safeguarding Lead.

External Safeguarding Lead

The External Safeguarding Lead will assist the Live in Safeguarding lead, if required, in dealing with any serious or complex safeguarding concern. They will also be a named point of contact for anyone wishing to raise a safeguarding concern.

Safeguarding Procedures

These procedures are designed to enable everyone at Giuseppe Conlon House to understand and carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding those who need care and support and are at risk of, or experiencing abuse. They reflect the Giuseppe Conlon House Safeguarding Policy.

Designated Safeguarding Persons

The Live in Safeguarding Lead is Martin Newell. The External Safeguarding Leads are Maggie fuller and Angela Anyanwu. The responsibilities of the Safe Guarding Leads are set out in the Safe-guarding Policy.

Publication of Contact Details for Safeguarding Leads

Clear information on who to contact in the event of a safeguarding concern and the relevant contact numbers, will be added to the package of information that we give to all guests and new volunteers. An easy-access poster of this information will also be posted in a public space at Giuseppe Conlon House.

Safe Recruitment - DBS Checks

All volunteers at Giuseppe Conlon House will be required to have a DBS check.

Live-in volunteers will be required to have an up-to-date (less than 3 years old) enhanced DBS certificate. Any volunteer waiting for their DBS certificate to come through will only work with another volunteer present, and will not lone-work until the certificate has been received.

Live in volunteers who have not lived in the UK for more than 6 months will be required to obtain and provide a criminal records check from the relevant authorities in that country.
(cf <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants>)

External volunteers who come into the house (such as those who come regularly to cook) will be required to have a standard DBS certificate, dated within one year.

Other volunteers who work outside the house, such as volunteer drivers, are not required to have a DBS certificate, *unless* they are working with one of the guests hosted at Giuseppe Conlon House (for example, driving them to a medical appointment). In such circumstances, a volunteer with a DBS certificate would accompany them.

All Trustees of Giuseppe Conlon House CIO will be required to have a basic DBS certificate.

The safeguarding lead will check all DBS certificates for prospective volunteers, and if s/he has a safeguarding concern arising from any convictions disclosed, s/he will raise and discuss it with the Trustees. Sensitive information from DBS certificates will be retained in keeping with current GDPR legislation and the Giuseppe Conlon House privacy policy.

All volunteers will be required to declare criminal convictions relevant to safeguarding (ie convictions relating to crimes of violence or sexual offences) to the Safeguarding Leads.

Training

Every member of the live-in volunteer group at GCH will receive regular Safeguarding training, to keep up to date with legislation, how to spot safeguarding concerns, what to do in the event of a safeguarding incident, etc. Live out volunteers will receive training appropriate to their role. Both the Live-in Safeguarding Lead and the External Safeguarding Lead will receive appropriate training for their roles.

Safe Working

At Giuseppe Conlon House, there are clear guidelines on the professional boundaries that must be maintained at all times between guests and volunteers (see Giuseppe Conlon House 'Healthy Boundaries' policy).

There is a live in volunteer on call at all times for the guests and other volunteers.

Minor Volunteers/Visitors

If unaccompanied under 18's volunteer at Giuseppe Conlon House, there will always be two live-in volunteers (with up-to-date enhanced DBS checks) present with them.

If children are visiting or staying at Giuseppe Conlon House, they should be accompanied by a parent or guardian at all times. A guardian could be a live in volunteer who is a relative of the child, or is known to the parents who consent to the child being under their care whilst at Giuseppe Conlon House.

Safeguarding of children will be included in the general safeguarding training required for all volunteers.

What is Abuse?

Abuse is defined as:

'A single or repeated act or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress to a person who needs care and support'.

Abuse can take many forms; it can be physical, psychological, sexual, neglect, discriminatory, organisational and financial.

Abuse also includes domestic abuse, Modern Slavery, organisational and self-neglect.

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other persons or person.

Examples of abuse are:

Hitting, slapping, rough handling.

Giving medication incorrectly

Deprivation of warmth, food, clothing health care etc.

Any kind of sexual activity that the person has not consented to or cannot consent to.

Misuse or theft of money or property.

Shouting or swearing at someone

Neglect of a medical or physical need

Discrimination or harassment, whether because of gender, ethnicity, sexuality, religion etc.

What action should I take if someone tells me that they are being or have been abused?

Our primary aim should always be to determine the outcome that the person who needs care and support wants, and to support them to achieve this.

If there appears to be an immediate and significant risk to life, health or public safety.

Remain calm and obtain relevant factual information.

- f) Where is the abuse happening?
- g) Who is affected?
- h) What is the impact of the abuse?
- i) Who is alleged to be causing the harm?

Establish what outcomes the person is seeking by sharing this with you.

Advise the person that it is best that they makes contact with the Police (999) or Haringey First Response Team (Adult Social Services) (0208 489 1400)

If the person is still unwilling, or appears unable, to pass the information on and you remain concerned that there is an **immediate and significant risk** to life, health or public safety contact the Emergency services on 999 and explain your concerns.

Inform the Live in Safeguarding Lead of any actions taken.

If the risk of harm is not immediate

Obtain relevant factual information (as above).

Establish what outcomes the person is seeking by sharing this with you.

Contact the Live In Safeguarding Lead or the External Safeguarding Lead for advice. They will assess the situation (including any need for onward disclosure – see Consent below) and if needed signpost the person to the appropriate external authority where they can report, and have appropriate action taken, in response to their concern.

The Safeguarding Lead will make a record of the discussions, any actions and outcomes.

When obtaining information from a person about abuse

Stay calm and listen

Be objective

Empathise

Take them seriously and offer support

Keep them safe if necessary

Make a written record of what you have been told, note the time and date

Do not promise to keep secrets

Do not ask investigative questions or make judgemental comments

Do not use leading questions

Do not destroy any evidence

Do not confront the alleged abuser

What action I should take if I notice Abuse or Indicators of Abuse

Report your concerns to :

- the Live In Safeguarding Lead

- Or
- the External Safeguarding Lead
- Or
- Haringey First Response Team (Adult Social Services) (0208 489 1400)

Consent

If the person raising the safeguarding concern is an adult and refuses any supporting intervention, and is unwilling to consent for the information to be shared with statutory agencies or is unwilling to contact relevant sources of support themselves, this should normally be respected.

Exceptions to this may be where a criminal offence may have taken place or where there may be a significant risk of harm to a third party when it may be appropriate for the designated Safeguarding Leads to breach confidentiality and disclose information to an appropriate authority.

Children

If a child visitor or volunteer tells you that they are being or have been abused you should;

- Obtain relevant factual information (as above)
- If there is an immediate and significant risk to life, health or public safety contact the emergency services on 999 and explain your concerns
- If the risk of harm is not immediate, refer the concern to the Live In Safeguarding Lead or the External Safeguarding Lead who will assess the situation and if appropriate make a referral to the appropriate statutory authority

Confidentiality

All live-in and live-out Volunteers must understand their responsibilities in the area of confidentiality regarding all information disclosed in relation to a safeguarding concern, so that all who share such information can have confidence that their privacy will be respected.

Whistle-blowing Policy

Who is covered by this policy?

All live in volunteers, external volunteers and trustees.

What is covered by this policy?

This policy outlines how to raise issues of concern which fall outside the scope of other Giuseppe Conlon House policies and procedures, and how staff are protected against any ramifications of raising issues.

Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, a whistle-blower is prevented from suffering any detriment or having their contract of employment terminated for whistle-blowing for any matter which they raise under this policy. Under the Employment Rights Act 1996, workers who become whistle-blowers are protected where they reasonably believe that some form of illegality, injustice or breach of health and safety has occurred or is likely to occur. According to the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, the disclosure has to be 'in the public interest'.

The policy

This policy is for dealing with concerns raised in relation to specific issues which are in the public interest.

These include:

- the unauthorised use of Giuseppe Conlon House's funds;
- possible fraud or corruption;
- sexual, emotional or physical abuse or ill treatment or exploitation of guests or volunteers;
- health and safety risks (including risks to the public or the potential for harm);
- conduct which is a criminal offence or breach of the law, including failure to comply with legal obligations;
- disclosures related to miscarriages of justice (where Giuseppe Conlon House has acted improperly or unfairly);
- damage to the environment;
- other unethical conduct, including any deliberate concealment of any of the above.

The legal protections provided by the legislation, require any whistle-blower to satisfy certain conditions and have followed the prescribed procedures. The following applies:

- Disclosure to the community lead(s) will be protected, provided that it is made in good faith and the whistle-blower has a reasonable suspicion that the alleged malpractice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur.
- Disclosure to a regulator (for example, The Health and Safety Executive, The Environment Agency or The Charity Commission for England and Wales) will be protected where, in addition, the whistle-blower honestly and reasonably believes that the information and any allegation in it are substantially true.
- Disclosure to other bodies is protected if, in addition to the above, it is reasonable in all the circumstances and is not made for personal gain.

The whistle-blower must also meet one of the following requirements:

- They reasonably believed that they would be victimised if they raised the matter internally.
- They reasonably believed that the disclosure related to a criminal offence and, therefore, was a 'qualifying disclosure'.
- There was no appropriate regulator in relation to the specific issue, and they reasonably believed the evidence was likely to be concealed or destroyed.
- The concern had already been raised with the community lead(s) or an appropriate regulator.
- The concern is of an exceptionally serious nature.
- They had suffered an identifiable detriment.

Giuseppe Conlon House encourages volunteers to raise in good faith concerns they may have regarding any procedure or practice within the organisation and will ensure that anyone who makes a disclosure along the lines listed above will not be penalised or suffer any adverse treatment for doing so. However, a live in volunteer or trustee who does not act in good faith or makes an allegation without having reasonable grounds for believing it to be true or makes it for purposes of personal gain, maliciously or vexatiously may be subject to disciplinary proceedings.

This policy only applies to issues which fall outside the scope of Giuseppe Conlon House's other policies and procedures. The policy will not apply to personal grievances concerning an individual's terms and conditions of employment or other aspects of the working relationship such as complaints of bullying or harassment or disciplinary matter. Giuseppe Conlon House investigates such complaints under the applicable procedure. If it becomes apparent to the external investigator, during the course of any investigation into a public interest disclosure, that the concern relates more appropriately to another procedure, that procedure will be invoked.

The procedure

If you have a concern about malpractice, you should raise it first with the community lead(s) (or chair of trustees if you are a trustee). This will obviously depend upon the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and who is suspected of the malpractice.

If you believe that the community lead(s) are involved or you feel, for whatever reason, unable to raise it with them, you should then raise the issue with the chair of the board of trustees. If your concern involves a trustee, then you should go to the chair of trustees, and if the chair of trustees is involved, go to the community lead(s).

You should put your name on the complaint. If requested, your identity will be kept confidential for as long as possible, provided that this does not prejudice the enquiry. Anonymous complaints may be investigated or acted upon as the person receiving the complaint believes to be appropriate, having taken into account the seriousness of the issue raised, the credibility of the complaint, the prospects of being able to investigate an anonymous complaint and fairness to any individual mentioned in the complaint. Giuseppe Conlon House aims to respond to any concerns raised.

The person investigating the concern will then write to you:

- acknowledging the concern has been received;
- indicating how it is proposed to deal with the matter;
- giving an estimate of how long it will take to complete the investigations;
- telling you whether any initial enquiries have been made;
- supplying you with information on how Giuseppe Conlon House will support you if you think this is necessary.

While Giuseppe Conlon House cannot guarantee that all matters will be addressed in the way that you might wish, it will always aim to handle the matter fairly and properly. By following this policy, you will help Giuseppe Conlon House achieve this.

If you do take the matter outside Giuseppe Conlon House, you should not disclose confidential information unless necessary for the investigation.

If your concern is not substantiated, you should not take any subsequent action or make any disclosure to anyone other than those referred to in this policy.

Naomi Orrell (Live-in Safeguarding Lead)

Reviewed: 21st August 2025