

# **Bow Arts Trust**

183 Bow Road  
LONDON  
E3 2SJ  
t:+44 [0] 20 8980 7774  
[www.bowarts.org](http://www.bowarts.org)

## **Protection of Vulnerable Adults Policy**

### **Aim of Policy**

Bow Arts Trust delivers work within a range of community groups and setting. This policy aims to ensure the safety of vulnerable adults by outlining clear procedures and ensuring that all staff members, freelancers, trustees and interns are clear about their responsibilities. This policy aims to provide staff members, freelancers, trustees and interns support to carry out their roles to the best of their abilities and deliver work that is in line with best practice.

### **Introduction**

The characteristics of adult abuse can take a number of forms and cause victims to suffer pain, fear and distress reaching well beyond the time of the actual incident(s). Victims may be too afraid or embarrassed to raise any complaint. They may be reluctant to discuss their concerns with other people or unsure who to trust or approach with their worries.

There may be some situations where victims are unaware that they are being abused or have difficulty in communicating this information to others.

### **Definition**

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited.

This **may** include a person who:

- Is elderly and frail
- Has a mental illness including dementia
- Has a physical or sensory disability
- Has a learning disability
- Has a severe physical illness
- Is a substance misuser
- Is homeless
- Any adult who receives care from any other person or persons for example carers, family, friends, social workers, district nurses, staff at day centres, residential, nursing or other supporting living care staff can be potentially seen as at risk of abuse or neglect

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Registered Charity number 1046958.

## What is abuse?

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It can take a number of forms:

- a) Physical abuse e.g. hitting, pushing, shaking, inappropriate restraint, force-feeding, forcible administration of medication, neglect or abandonment
- b) Sexual abuse e.g. involvement in any sexual activity against his/her will, exposure to pornography, voyeurism and exhibitionism
- c) Emotional/psychological abuse e.g. intimidation or humiliation
- d) Financial abuse e.g. theft or exerting improper pressure to sign over money from pensions or savings etc.
- e) Neglect or acts of omission e.g. being left in wet or soiled clothing, or malnutrition
- f) Discriminatory abuse e.g. racial, sexual or religious harassment
- g) Personal exploitation – involves denying an individual his/her rights or forcing him/her to perform tasks that are against his/her will
- h) Violation of rights e.g. preventing an individual speaking his/her thoughts and opinions
- i) Institutional abuse e.g. failure to provide a choice of meals or failure to ensure privacy or dignity.  
**Remember, abuse often happens in people's own homes.**
- j) Abduction - this is a crime and the Police should be informed.

## Who is likely to abuse someone who is vulnerable?

The person being abused or neglected very often knows the abuser. Anyone can potentially be an abuser, for example:

- carers or volunteers
- health workers, social workers or any other professional person
- relatives, friends or neighbours
- another resident or service user
- a visitor or someone providing any kind of service
- someone who deliberately exploit vulnerable and/or older people

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## **Reporting Procedures**

If the allegation or suspicion of abuse is discovered by a Bow Arts Trust staff member, freelancer and/or intern then they should inform another member of Bow Arts Trust staff as soon as possible. The member of Bow Arts Trust staff will then inform the Bow Arts Trust SMT member responsible for adult protection (or in their absence, another member of Bow Arts Trust SMT).

The member of Bow Arts Trust staff will make a written record of the allegation or suspicion of abuse (see appendix 1) and discuss the situation with the Bow Arts Trust SMT member responsible for adult protection. The SMT member should carry out a risk assessment and contact the appropriate local Adult Care Team;

### **The Adult Care Team, Tower Hamlets**

Tel: 0207 364 5005

Fax: 0207 364 3860

Email: [Adultcare@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:Adultcare@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

If a student/staff member has been told about the allegation of abuse in confidence, they should attempt to gain the consent of the client/participant to make a referral to another agency. However, the gaining of the consent is not essential in order for information to be passed on. Consideration needs to be given to:

1. The scale of the abuse
2. The risk of harm to others
3. The capacity of the client/participant to understand the issues of abuse and consent

If there is any doubt about whether or not to report an issue to Bow Arts Trust SMT team member then it should be reported.

### **Emergency duty team, Tower Hamlets**

Tel: 0207 364 7000 (out of office hours)

In emergency situations (e.g. where there is the risk or occurrence or severe physical injury), where immediate action is needed to safeguard the health or safety of the individual or anyone else who may be at risk, the emergency services must be contacted.

- **For an ambulance call 999**

Where a crime is taking place, has just occurred or is suspected, the police must be contacted immediately.

- Tower Hamlets Police control room: 0207 265 1212
- **In an emergency dial 999**

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## **Responsibilities**

All members of Bow Arts Trust staff, freelancers, trustees and interns have a responsibility to be aware of this policy and to report any suspicions that they might have concerning adult abuse.

The Bow Arts Trust SMT member responsible for adult protection is

The Bow Arts Trust Trustee responsible for 'championing' this issue at Board level is

## **CRB Checks**

All newly recruited staff, freelancers, trustees and interns who have contact with clients/participants are CRB checked (since 2003). All staff and freelancers who have contact with clients/participants will be CRB checked every 3 years to a fully enhanced level.

## **Other Contacts**

**Action on Elder Abuse** is a national charity working to prevent the abuse of older people and will also give you advice and support on any issues relating to the abuse of Older People.

UK Helpline on **080 8808 8141** or **020 8765 7000**

**Voice** is a National Charity supporting people with learning disabilities and other vulnerable people who have experienced crime or abuse. They also support families, carers and professional workers.

Voice Helpline on **0845 122 8695**

Please note: The Action on Elder Abuse or Voice UK will treat your call in the strictest confidence.

## **Legislation**

This policy is informed by, and adheres to the following legislation:

- NHS and Community Care Act 1990
- Mental Health Act 1983
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- Care Standards Act 2000

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## **Appendix 1**

### **BOW ARTS TRUST POVA INCIDENT REPORT FORM**

Name:

Project:

Address:

Telephone:

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Briefly describe what happened (include times and dates):

Names and contacts of witnesses:

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Name of person completing form:

Date:

Name of Manager responsible for investigation:

Date:

Action taken:

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