

# SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Something in Kent • Adults and Children • Covering Kent and Medway

Updated September 2026

## SUMMARY

This policy sets out how Something in Kent safeguards adults - and any children who may be present in our activities or families - from abuse, neglect and exploitation. It applies to all trustees, employees and volunteers.

In summary, Something in Kent commits to:

- Clear leadership and accountability for safeguarding, with named Safeguarding Officers and trustee oversight
- Recruitment and induction practices that include DBS checks where appropriate, and training refreshed at least every two years
- Recognising the signs of abuse and neglect, and knowing how to respond to a disclosure
- Clear, current routes for raising a concern or making a referral - covering both Kent and Medway, in and out of office hours
- A clear procedure for concerns about a member of staff, volunteer or trustee (a "position of trust" concern)
- Respecting the rights, wishes and mental capacity of the adults we support, in line with the Care Act 2014 and Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Working in partnership with the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board (KMSAB) and, where a child is involved, the Kent and Medway children's safeguarding partnerships

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Something in Kent is a registered charity (1173273) delivering into-work support, sports activities and social engagement to adults across Kent and Medway who experience disability, long-term health conditions, financial hardship and social isolation. This policy applies wherever we deliver that work - across Kent and Medway - and to everyone acting on behalf of the charity: trustees, employees, volunteers and anyone delivering activities for us.

The welfare of the adults and any children we work with is always paramount. This policy should be read alongside the Something in Kent Employee Handbook and Recruitment Procedure.

### Legal and statutory framework

This policy is informed by:

- The Care Act 2014 and its statutory guidance - the primary legal framework for adult safeguarding in England
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005 and its Code of Practice
- The Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010
- The Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (statutory guidance, replacing the 2018 edition) and the Children Act 1989/2004, for any child who is present in our activities or family groups
- UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, for how safeguarding information is recorded and shared

## The six principles of adult safeguarding (Care Act 2014)

| Principle       | In practice at Something in Kent                                                                                                                          |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Empowerment     | People are supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and give informed consent                                                                 |
| Prevention      | It is better to act 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                                                                                                |

## Making Safeguarding Personal

KMSAB asks every partner organisation to apply Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) - summarised on their own site as 'no decision about me without me.' In practice at Something in Kent, this means:

- Asking the adult what outcome they want, and working towards that rather than a standard process
- Recording their views in their own words, and checking they understand the options open to them
- Not treating a person's reluctance to involve others as a reason to disengage - use professional curiosity, and keep trying gently, rather than closing the matter
- Still having this conversation, in an appropriate way, with someone who lacks capacity or their representative - MSP is not "only for those who can fully take part"

## 2.0 SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS

### Adult at risk

Under the Care Act 2014, an adult at risk is someone aged 18 or over who has care and support needs, is experiencing (or at risk of) abuse or neglect, and is unable to protect themselves because of those needs. Many of the people Something in Kent supports fall within this definition, though every adult we work with is treated with the same duty of care regardless of whether they formally meet it.

### Types of abuse and neglect (as categorised by KMSAB)

This list is taken directly from the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board's own published categories, in place of the narrower child-protection categories used in our previous policy:

- Physical abuse - including assault, rough handling, misuse of medication, or inappropriate restraint or sanctions
- Domestic abuse - abuse between partners, former partners or family members; can include psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse, as well as honour-based violence, forced marriage and FGM
- Honour based abuse - a crime or incident committed to protect or defend family or community 'honour,' including forced marriage and FGM
- Sexual abuse - any sexual activity the adult did not, or could not, consent to, including rape, sexual assault, harassment or sexual photography
- Psychological abuse - including intimidation, bullying, cyberbullying, threats of harm, humiliation, unjustified withdrawal of services or support, or denying someone choices
- Modern slavery - including human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude
- Financial or material abuse - including theft, fraud, scams, or misuse of property, possessions or benefits

- Discriminatory abuse and hate crime - ill-treatment or harassment because of race, gender, culture, religion, disability, sexual orientation or age
- Organisational abuse - poor professional practice or organisational failings, whether a one-off or ongoing
- Neglect - failing to provide required medical or physical care, including essentials like medication, food, drink or heating
- Self-neglect - an inability or unwillingness to care for one's own hygiene, health or surroundings, including hoarding

### Mental capacity

Some of the adults we support may, at times, have difficulty making particular decisions. The Mental Capacity Act 2005 sets out five principles Something in Kent follows:

- A person is assumed to have capacity unless it is established that they lack it
- A person is not to be treated as unable to make a decision unless all practicable steps to help them have been taken without success
- A person is not to be treated as unable to make a decision merely because they make an unwise one
- An act done, or decision made, for a person who lacks capacity must be done, or made, in their best interests
- Before the act is done, or the decision made, regard must be had to whether the purpose can be as effectively achieved in a way that is less restrictive of the person's rights and freedom of action

## 3.0 IMMEDIATE ACTION TO ENSURE SAFETY

If someone is in immediate danger:

- Call 999 for police, ambulance or fire and rescue
- If urgent medical attention is needed, call 999 or take the person to the nearest A&E department
- If the danger is not immediate but you need police support quickly, call 101

Take whatever action is necessary to make the person safe before anything else, including completing paperwork.

## 4.0 RECOGNISING ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Abuse and neglect can happen anywhere - in someone's own home, in a family setting, in a care setting, or in the community - and can be carried out by someone known to the adult or, more rarely, a stranger. Everyone at Something in Kent should be alert to:

- Unexplained injuries, bruising, or a reluctance to seek medical treatment
- Sudden changes in behaviour, withdrawal, fearfulness or anxiety around a particular person
- Unexplained changes in someone's financial circumstances, or a carer/relative who controls access to money
- Poor hygiene, weight loss, or signs a person's physical care needs are not being met
- Signs that someone is being controlled, isolated from friends and family, or prevented from making their own decisions

A concern does not need to be certain, or fully investigated by you, before it is raised - see Section 6.

## 5.0 IF SOMEONE TELLS YOU ABOUT ABUSE

If an adult (or child) discloses abuse or neglect to you, or you witness it:

- Listen carefully. Do not interrupt or lead with questions
- Give them time and attention, in a private space if possible
- Do not promise confidentiality - explain that you will need to share this with others to help keep them safe

- Reassure them that they have done the right thing and are not to blame
- Make an accurate written record as soon as possible afterwards - timing, setting, who was present, and what was said, using their own words wherever possible
- Tell them what you are going to do next
- Do not ask them to repeat their account to anyone else - pass your written record on instead

Report to a Safeguarding Officer (Section 6) as soon as possible, and always within the same working day.

## 6.0 RAISING A CONCERN OR MAKING A REFERRAL

It is your job to report a concern, not to investigate it - that's the role of the local authority and, where relevant, the police. Passing on what you have seen, heard or been told is enough.

Something in Kent operates across both Kent and Medway, which have separate local authority referral routes. Use whichever applies to where the person lives or where the concern arose.

### Consent to a referral

Wherever possible, talk to the adult first and seek their agreement before making a referral - this is central to Making Safeguarding Personal, above. Where an adult has the mental capacity to decide and does not want a referral made, their wishes should usually be respected. A referral can still go ahead without consent where:

- There is a serious risk to the adult's own life, health or safety
- Other adults or children may also be at risk
- A serious crime has been, or may be, committed or prevented by sharing the information
- The adult has capacity but appears to be under duress or being coerced by someone else

Where a referral is made without consent, the adult should be told this has happened and why, as far as it is safe to do so.

### Removing barriers to raising a concern

- Offer more than one way to raise a concern - in person, by phone, or through a trusted person, not only in writing
- Use clear, plain communication, and offer an advocate, translator or Easy Read materials where someone needs them to understand or take part
- Never treat someone's difficulty communicating, or reluctance to speak up, as evidence there's nothing wrong

### Adult safeguarding

| Area                       | Contact                                      | When                                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Kent County Council        | 03000 416161 (textphone: 18001 03000 416161) | Monday–Friday, office hours                     |
| Medway Council             | 01634 334 466                                | Monday–Friday, 9am–5pm                          |
| Kent & Medway out of hours | 03000 419 191                                | Evenings, weekends, bank holidays               |
| Emergency                  | 999                                          | Immediate danger, at any time                   |
| Non-emergency police       | 101                                          | Not an emergency, but police involvement needed |
| Anonymous reporting        | 0800 555 111 (Crimestoppers)                 | Any time                                        |

Online referral forms are also available via the Kent County Council and Medway Council websites. Background information, policies and the current “Managing Concerns around People in Positions of Trust” guidance are published by the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board (KMSAB) at kmsab.org.uk.

### Concerns about a child

| Area                              | Contact       | When                              |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| Kent - Children's Social Services | 03000 411111  | Monday–Friday, office hours       |
| Medway - First Response Service   | 01634 334 466 | Monday–Friday, office hours       |
| Kent & Medway out of hours        | 03000 419 191 | Evenings, weekends, bank holidays |
| Emergency                         | 999           | Immediate danger, at any time     |

Further guidance is published by the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP) and the Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership (MSCP), which replaced the former Kent and Medway Local Safeguarding Children Boards.

## 7.0 CONCERNS ABOUT A STAFF MEMBER, VOLUNTEER OR TRUSTEE

If you have information suggesting that someone working with Something in Kent (paid or unpaid) has harmed, or may have harmed, an adult or child, may have committed a related criminal offence, or has behaved in a way that suggests they are unsuitable to work with adults or children:

- Speak immediately to a Safeguarding Officer, or the Chair of Trustees if the concern is about a Safeguarding Officer
- Do not investigate the concern yourself, and do not confront the person directly
- The Safeguarding Officer will record the concern and decide next steps, which may include suspending the individual from duties, contacting the police, and/or seeking advice from KMSAB

## 8.0 SAFER RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

- Enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks are carried out for roles involving regular, unsupervised contact with adults at risk or children, renewed in line with our Recruitment Procedure
- References are taken up before a new starter or volunteer begins unsupervised work
- Anyone unsure whether their training is current should check with a Safeguarding Officer

### Training levels

Larger KMSAB partner organisations run three or four training tiers; at Something in Kent's scale, two are enough:

| Level             | Who                                                                                             | Covers                                                                                                    |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| General awareness | All trustees, staff and volunteers, as part of induction and refreshed at least every two years | Recognising abuse and neglect, how to respond to a disclosure, how to raise a concern (Sections 4–6)      |
| Lead level        | Mark Dent and Andrew Rose, our Safeguarding Officers                                            | The above, plus handling referrals, the consent framework, and concerns about a staff member or volunteer |

| Level | Who | Covers         |
|-------|-----|----------------|
|       |     | (Sections 6–7) |

Training is delivered by an external provider following a competitive process.

## 9.0 IF A CHILD IS PRESENT

Something in Kent's activities are designed for adults. Occasionally a child may be present - for example, accompanying a family member who uses our services, or as a young volunteer. Where this happens, the same principles in this policy apply, alongside:

- The welfare of the child is paramount, and their wishes and feelings should be listened to and respected
- Any adult working with a child, even briefly, should never be left alone with that child without another adult present
- Concerns follow the same reporting route as Section 6 (Children) and Section 7, using the Kent or Medway contacts above

Something in Kent's approach to children is informed by Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, the current statutory guidance (which replaced the 2018 edition), and by the Kent and Medway children's safeguarding partnerships referenced in Section 6.

## 10.0 ONLINE, SOCIAL MEDIA AND ICT

- Written consent is obtained before photographs or videos of an adult (or a child's parent/guardian) are used on our website, social media or in funding applications, and can be withdrawn at any time
- Staff and volunteers do not contact adults or children we support via personal social media accounts or personal phone numbers outside agreed working arrangements
- Personal data, including safeguarding records, is stored securely and shared only on a need-to-know basis, in line with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018
- Something in Kent is mindful of the wider duties platforms now carry under the Online Safety Act 2023 to protect users from harmful content, and signposts participants to appropriate support if online harm is raised as a concern

## 11.0 CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

Safeguarding records are kept confidentially and securely, and shared only with those who need to know in order to keep someone safe. Confidentiality is always secondary to the need to protect an adult or child from harm - if sharing information is necessary to prevent harm, it should be shared even without consent, and the reasons recorded.

## 12.0 WHISTLEBLOWING

Anyone who has a safeguarding concern about the organisation itself - including its trustees, leadership, or its own practices - can raise this directly with the Chair of Trustees or, if that does not feel appropriate, with KMSAB or the Charity Commission. No one will be penalised for raising a genuine concern in good faith.

## 13.0 REVIEW AND ADOPTION

Named Safeguarding Officers:

- Mark Dent, Chair of Trustees - mark.somethinginkent@outlook.com (Primary Contact)
- Andrew Rose, Support Worker - andrew.somethinginkent@outlook.com (Secondary Contact)

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner if there is a relevant change in law, statutory guidance, or Kent/Medway referral arrangements.

Safeguarding Officers give the full board of trustees a summary of any concerns raised, referrals made and training completed at least twice a year - and immediately, outside that cycle, for anything serious.

**Date Revised: 1st September 2026**

Signed:

Chair of Trustees

Print Name: MARK DENT

Signed:

Safeguarding Officer

Print Name: ANDREW ROSE

## APPENDIX A: REPORTING FLOWCHART

- A safeguarding concern arises - you observe, are told, or suspect that an adult or child has been, or may be, harmed
  - Take any immediate action needed for safety (Section 3)
  - Contact a Safeguarding Officer and complete the Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form
  - Safeguarding Officer reviews the concern, seeking advice from Kent/Medway or KMSAB if unsure (Section 6)
  - Decision: refer to the local authority, police, or both - or no further action needed, with reasons recorded
  - If referred: Safeguarding Officer maintains contact with the relevant team and records the outcome
  - If about a staff member, volunteer or trustee: also follow Section 7

## APPENDIX B: QUICK-REFERENCE CONTACT CARD

| Situation                                                             | Contact                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Immediate danger to anyone                                            | 999                                |
| Kent - adult safeguarding concern                                     | 03000 416161                       |
| Medway - adult safeguarding concern                                   | 01634 334 466                      |
| Kent - concern about a child                                          | 03000 411111                       |
| Medway - concern about a child                                        | 01634 334 466                      |
| Kent & Medway - out of hours (all concerns)                           | 03000 419 191                      |
| Non-emergency police                                                  | 101                                |
| Anonymous - Crimestoppers                                             | 0800 555 111                       |
| Something in Kent - Mark Dent (Chair)<br>Primary Safeguarding Officer | mark.somethinginkent@outlook.com   |
| Something in Kent - Andrew Rose<br>Secondary Safeguarding Officer     | andrew.somethinginkent@outlook.com |