# Chipping Norton u3a Welfare and Safeguarding Policy

## 1. Purpose of This Policy

This policy sets out Chipping Norton u3a's approach to safeguarding and member welfare. It aligns with the national u3a Safeguarding Policy and Guidance and outlines how we promote a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for all members.

## 2. Commitment to Member Welfare

Chipping Norton u3a is committed to:

- Promoting the wellbeing, dignity, and inclusion of all members.
- Providing a safe environment where concerns can be raised without fear.
- Responding promptly, sensitively, and appropriately to welfare or safeguarding concerns.
- Ensuring volunteers understand their responsibilities regarding welfare and safeguarding.

## 3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All Chipping Norton u3a members.
- Committee members, group leaders, and volunteers.
- All u3a activities, whether in person, online, or off-site.

## 4. Definitions

### Safeguarding

Protecting individuals from harm, abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

### Welfare

Supporting members' wellbeing, including physical, emotional, and social needs.

### Adult at Risk

An adult who may be unable to protect themselves from harm due to age, disability, illness, or circumstances.

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

*The Committee*:

- Ensures this policy is implemented and reviewed annually.
- Supports volunteers in understanding safeguarding responsibilities.

*The Welfare and Safeguarding Officer*:

- Acts as the first point of contact for welfare or safeguarding concerns.
- Maintains confidentiality while following appropriate reporting procedures.
- Liaises with the committee and national u3a safeguarding team when needed.

*Members and Volunteers*:

- Treat others with respect and consideration.
- Report concerns promptly.
- Follow good practice guidance during u3a activities.

## 6. Recognising Concerns

Concerns may include:

- Physical, emotional, sexual, or financial abuse.
- Neglect or self-neglect.
- Bullying, harassment, or discrimination.
- Behaviour that causes fear, distress, or risk.
- Concerns may arise from:
- Something witnessed.
- Something disclosed by a member.
- A pattern of worrying behaviour.

## 7. Reporting a Concern

Members should report concerns to the Welfare & Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible.

Reports should include:

- What happened.
- When and where it occurred.
- Who was involved.
- Any immediate risks.

If a member is in immediate danger, emergency services should be contacted.

## 8. Responding to Concerns

Chipping Norton u3a will:

- Take all concerns seriously.
- Respond calmly and sensitively.
- Record information accurately.
- Seek guidance from the national u3a safeguarding team when appropriate.
- Refer to external agencies if required.

## 9. Confidentiality

Information will be shared only on a need-to-know basis.

Records will be stored securely.

Members raising concerns will be treated with respect and discretion.

## 10. Good Practice Expectations

All members and volunteers should:

- Foster an inclusive and respectful environment.
- Avoid behaviour that could be misinterpreted or cause discomfort.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries.

- Support members who may be vulnerable.

## 11. Training and Awareness

Chipping Norton u3a will:

- Ensure committee members and group leaders are aware of safeguarding responsibilities.
- Provide access to national u3a safeguarding resources.

## 12. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if national guidance changes.

## 13. Contact

Members may also seek advice from the national u3a safeguarding team if needed.

This policy reflects the principles and expectations of the national u3a safeguarding framework while addressing the local needs of Chipping Norton u3a.