



# St Helen Without Parish Council

## Working for You

## Safeguarding Policy Add-On: Community Warm Hub

### 1. Introduction & Purpose

This add-on policy supplements the St Helen Without Parish Council Safeguarding Policy and applies specifically to the operation of the **Community Warm Hub**.

The Warm Hub provides a welcoming, safe and inclusive space for members of the community, many of whom may be **vulnerable due to age, health, disability, financial hardship, social isolation, or personal circumstances**. This policy sets out additional safeguarding measures to ensure the safety, dignity and wellbeing of all users.

Parents and carers are fully responsible for the care, behaviour, and supervision of their children during warm hub sessions

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All councillors, staff and volunteers involved in the Warm Hub
- Any contractors or partner organisations operating within the Warm Hub
- All sessions, activities and services provided as part of the Warm Hub

It should be read in conjunction with the Council's main Safeguarding Policy.

### 3. Safeguarding Principles for the Warm Hub

The Council is committed to ensuring that the Warm Hub:

- Is a **safe, respectful and non-judgemental** environment
- Treats all users with **dignity, fairness and compassion**
- Is free from discrimination, harassment, abuse or exploitation
- Encourages a culture where **concerns can be raised without fear**
- Takes **all safeguarding concerns seriously** and acts promptly

### 4. Understanding Risk in the Warm Hub Setting

The Council recognises that Warm Hub users may include:

- Older people
- People with physical or mental health needs
- People experiencing loneliness, poverty, homelessness, or crisis
- People who may be at risk of neglect, abuse, exploitation or self-neglect

Safeguarding risks in this setting may include (but are not limited to):

- Emotional, physical, financial or neglectful abuse
- Inappropriate behaviour by or towards service users
- Exploitation or coercion of vulnerable individuals
- Boundary issues between volunteers and service users
- Health and safety risks in a communal, open-access environment

## 5. Conduct

### **Warm Hub Coordinators, Staff and Volunteers**

All must:

- Follow the Council's Safeguarding Policy and this add-on policy
- Treat all users with respect and professionalism
- Maintain clear and appropriate boundaries
- Avoid favouritism or singling out individuals
- Challenge inappropriate behaviour in a calm and respectful manner
- Never promise confidentiality if a safeguarding concern is disclosed
- Report **any** safeguarding concern or worrying behaviour immediately to the DSL

To reduce risk and protect everyone involved:

- No volunteer or staff member should be alone in a private space with a service user where this can be avoided
- Physical contact should be appropriate, necessary and respectful (e.g., assisting someone with mobility, if consent is given)
- Volunteers and staff must not:
  - Give or loan money to service users
  - Accept large or inappropriate gifts
  - Become involved in personal or financial affairs of service users
  - Take service users to their home or visit them privately in a personal capacity
  - Take photographs of children without explicit parental/guardian consent
  - Consume alcohol or be under the influence of drugs
  - Take responsibility for supervising children