

Sustainability and Energy Network in Staveley (SENS)

Safeguarding Policy

1 SENS

SENS was formed in November 2007 to promote sustainability action in the village of Staveley, Cumbria, by looking at ways to reduce home energy use, promote cycling and walking, develop renewable technologies, and raise awareness of and take action on climate change.

We have a constitution, an elected committee of 9 members (including Chair, Treasurer and Secretary), and audited accounts. Our members work in an entirely voluntary capacity, and we have no paid staff. Our activities are led by one or more Committee members, at least one of whom will always be directly involved in the planning and/or delivery of any activity.

We do not have a formal membership or subscription. We publish a monthly newsletter on line (so hold email addresses for this purpose), and provide further information through the SENS website (<http://www.sustainablestaveley.org.uk/>), local social media, leaflets and posters.

We head up campaigns, lead community-based projects, and provide information and resources for local people. Recent and current examples include the Clean up the River Kent Campaign (an alliance of local river users), championing the Cold to Cosy Homes initiative, a feasibility study to explore the options for a local hydro-energy scheme, and spearheading Great Big Green Week in September 2021 ahead of COP26.

SENS is an active participant in the Cumbria Sustainability Network, and a member of the wider network of local and national sustainability groups. We work with the Staveley with Ings Parish Council, and lead on the implementation of both Biodiversity and Active Travel in the recently-published Community Plan. We also work with public sector and charitable organisations including the Lake District National Park Authority, South Lakeland District Council, South Cumbria Rivers Trust, and Cumbria Wildlife Trust.

We usually work with groups of people, and would only enter a private house very rarely eg for the Cold to Cosy Homes initiative when we would work in pairs.

Children attending any SENS event will be under the supervision of, and remain the responsibility of, a parent/guardian.

2 Policy Statement

SENS recognises that safeguarding means protecting a child or vulnerable adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

This policy exists to ensure that SENS implements appropriate arrangements, systems and procedures to ensure that the organisation has the right skills, means and resources to protect and safeguard those with whom we engage.

SENS documents many of the activities we undertake, including with photographs. We will always seek a child or young person's consent before taking any photographs of them, and obtain consent from their parent or guardian if we wish to use photographs of those under 18 years old.

This policy will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis or more frequently if required.

3 The Statutory Framework for Safeguarding

There is a duty to safeguard both children and young people and vulnerable adults. The term child has the specific legal meaning of anyone below the age of 18 years and the term adult refers to anyone aged 18 years or over.

Children and young people (under 18 years of age)

The legal framework to protect children and young people is contained in *Working together to safeguard children (2018)*. This applies to all children and young people.

Vulnerable adults (aged 18 years and above)

The *Care Act (2014)* introduced statutory safeguarding duties which apply to any adult who:

- Has needs for care and support;
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- As a result of their needs is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

The aims of safeguarding are to:

- Stop abuse or neglect wherever possible;
- Prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect;
- Raise public awareness so that communities as a whole, alongside professionals, play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect;
- Provide information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or well-being of a child or a vulnerable adult;
- Address what has caused the abuse or neglect.

4 The Role of Volunteers in Identifying Abuse or Neglect

Volunteers may be particularly well placed to identify abuse and neglect - the child or vulnerable adult may say or do things that hint that all is not well. It may come in the form of a complaint, or an expression of concern. Everyone within the organisation should understand what to do, and where to go locally to get help, support and advice.

It is vital that all volunteers are vigilant on behalf of those unable to protect themselves, including:

- Knowing about different types of abuse and neglect and their signs;
- Supporting children and adults to keep safe;
- Knowing who to tell about suspected abuse or neglect; and
- Supporting children and adults to think and weigh up the risks and benefits of different options when exercising choice and control.

Abuse includes:

- Physical abuse may result in bruises at different stages of healing, burns, bite marks or unexplained injuries;
- Sexual abuse;
- Financial abuse including theft, fraud, coercive control of finances or the misappropriation of possessions;
- Psychological or emotional abuse which can involve intimidation, threats of harm, verbal abuse or a restriction of freedom;
- Domestic abuse includes behaviour which is controlling, coercive, threatening or violent by a partner or ex-partner or a family member.

Neglect includes:

- Self-neglect of hygiene, health or surroundings;
- Neglect by those with caring responsibilities who may withhold the necessities of life, fail to intervene if the adult is at risk, or deny access to services.

5 Promoting Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding

All SENS Committee members will:

- Be provided with a copy of this Safeguarding Policy;
- Be made aware of the importance of their role in promoting safeguarding;
- Understand how they might recognise a child or vulnerable adult who may be at risk;
- Understand what action they should take if they have any concerns about safeguarding.

The SENS Safeguarding Policy will be published on the SENS website, and copies will be available to all our supporters, as well as to potential funding bodies, on request.

6 Reporting Procedures

Anyone who is concerned that a child or vulnerable adult might have safeguarding needs should raise the matter immediately with the SENS Chair or Secretary, both of whom are DBS checked.

1st Point of Contact: Sheila Adam 01539 822820 or 07957 915211

2nd Point of Contact: Isobel Stoddart 01539 821990 or 07952 786621

Early sharing of information is the key to providing an effective response where there are emerging concerns. No-one should assume that someone else will pass on information which they think may be critical to safety and/or wellbeing.

Concerns about Child Safeguarding should be reported to:

- Cumbria Safeguarding Hub
0333 240 1727

Concerns about Adult Safeguarding should be reported to:

- The Cumbria Safeguarding Adults Team (South Lakes)
Opening Hours are:
Monday – Thursday: 9.00am – 5.00pm
Friday 9.00am – 4.30pm
Tel: 0300 303 2704
Outside these hours, please call 01228 526690.

There are some cases that may require a very urgent response:

- **If you suspect a serious criminal act has taken place, telephone 999. Tell them if you think it might be the result of abuse.**
- **If the individual is injured or acutely ill seek immediate medical treatment, telephone 999. Tell the ambulance personnel or A&E staff if you suspect abuse.**

7 Recording

A written record must be kept in regard to any concern about safeguarding. This must include details of the person involved, the nature of the concern and the actions taken.

The record must be signed and dated, and will be reviewed and securely and confidentially filed by the Chair.

Safeguarding Policy approved by the SENS Committee on 5 November 2021.

Signed

Isobel Stoddart

Isobel Stoddart, Chair