



# Open Door Exmouth Policies Document

The trustees have produced this document showing a commitment to keeping staff, volunteers and service users safe within all areas of Open Door Exmouth's work. Everyone involved in Open Door Exmouth and its activities must be made aware of this document and the implications as part of their introduction to their work. Each individual should be aware of their own responsibility toward making this policy effective.

<b>Open Door Exmouth</b>	
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# **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

## **1. Safeguarding policy statement**

Open Door Exmouth, through its work with children and vulnerable adults is committed to the protection and well-being of all who are in contact with the Open Door Exmouth projects. Open Door Exmouth is concerned about the safety and welfare of all young people and vulnerable adults associated with our projects and will endeavour to protect them from physical, sexual and emotional harm to the best of our ability.

Open Door Exmouth is committed to creating a safe environment in which young people and vulnerable adults can feel comfortable and secure whilst they are engaged in any of our sessions, activities, events or workshops. Staff and volunteers should at all times show respect and understanding for individual rights, safety and welfare and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the ethos and principles of the organisation. All members of staff and volunteers are aware of the part they play in safeguarding the people involved in Open Door Exmouth, and they are required to familiarize themselves with this policy document in the course of their induction training.

The trustees of Open Door Exmouth accept the legal responsibilities that arise from this work, but are, in addition, committed to ensure that the staff members and volunteers who work on the Open Door Exmouth projects value and relate effectively to those who they meet in the course of this work. The trustees are also concerned that the staff members and volunteers are properly supported and trained. This policy is intended to lay down clear guidelines and procedures that deal with any form of abuse that may be encountered in the running of the projects.

Christian communities should be places where all people of whatever age feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse. Open Door Exmouth is particularly called by God to support those at the margins, those less powerful and those without a voice in our society. Staff members and volunteers can work towards creating a safe and non-discriminatory environment by being aware of some of the particular situations that create vulnerability. Consideration must be given to both the physical environment and the attitudes of workers. A person who might be considered vulnerable has the right to:

- be treated with respect and dignity;
- have their privacy respected;
- be able to lead as independent a life as possible;
- be able to choose how to lead their life;
- have the protection of the law;
- have their rights upheld regardless of their ethnicity, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religion or cultural background;
- be able to use their chosen language or method of communication; and to be heard.

## **2. Safeguarding children and young people**

This guidance reflects the principles contained within the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) ratified by the United Kingdom in 1991 and the Human Rights

Act 1998. The Children's Act 1989 sets out the legislative framework for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and the Children's Act 2004 underpins the Every Child Matters, Change for Children programme.

- In all dealings with children, the welfare of the child is paramount.
- No child or group of children must be treated any less favourably than others in being able to access services which meet their particular needs.
- All children without exception have the right to protection from abuse, regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs.
- All workers and volunteers who are in contact with children and young people through Open Door Exmouth must refer to the policy document relating to these activities.
- This policy applies to all staff, workers, volunteers and trustees of Open Door Exmouth.

### **What do we mean by 'children and young people'?**

For the purpose of this document, a child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children's Act 1989). All children have the right to protection from all forms of abuse including exploitation, neglect, physical and mental abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual orientation.

### **The role of staff, volunteers and trustees**

All staff, volunteers and trustees working on behalf of Open Door Exmouth have a duty to promote the welfare and safety of children.

Staff and volunteers may receive disclosures of child abuse and observe children who are at risk. This policy will enable staff/volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

All staff and volunteers working with children at an Open Door project will be required to undergo an Enhanced DBS Check. No staff or volunteers will have unsupervised access to children or young people in the course of their duties unless they have first been vetted through the DBS.

Open Door Exmouth will aim to provide training in Child Protection issues for any staff or volunteers directly engaged with children or young people on a regular basis. We will also encourage all members of staff to develop an awareness of these issues.

### **Guidelines for Interacting with Children and Young people**

These guidelines are intended to protect both staff/volunteers and children:

- Treat all children and young people equally and with respect
- Avoid being alone in an unobserved position with a child or young person
- Avoid close physical contact, maintain a safe and appropriate distance
- Only provide physical support/assistance if it is necessary and the child or young person is unable to cope without physical assistance
- Do not take the child or young person into a private vehicle or house without written consent from a parent or guardian
- Do not use physical or verbal chastisement, including shouting, swearing and humiliating behaviour

- Do not use any images of children or young people in displays, publications or in any other way without written permission from a parent or guardian

### **Definition of Abuse**

These definitions of abuse are commonly accepted throughout England and Wales, both by local authorities and by private sector agencies.

- **Neglect:** The persistent or severe neglect of a child, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in a significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.
- **Physical Injury:** Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or the failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a child.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child may be dependent and/or emotionally immature.
- **Emotional Abuse:** Actual or likely severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment.

These definitions, of necessity clinical and stark in their language, may be amplified by further reading. For the present purpose the Open University syllabus on Child Abuse and Neglect offers useful comment.

**Neglect** occurs when those responsible for caring for a child "fail to meet the basic essential needs of children, like adequate food, clothes warmth and medical care." Leaving young children alone and unsupervised is another example of neglect. Non-organic failure to thrive may result from, "refusing or failing to give adequate love and affection", and is defined as emotional neglect.

**Physical abuse** may not result in visible injury. Some abusers take great care to avoid leaving outward signs of their activities. Those activities are still abuse but lie on the border between physical and emotional injury. However the damage is experienced such abuse occurs when a responsible person, adult or older child, "physically hurts, injures or kills a child." This can involve hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning or biting. It also involves giving a child poisonous substances, inappropriate drugs or alcohol, and attempted suffocation or drowning. It includes the use of excessive force when carrying out tasks like feeding or nappy changing.

**Sexual abuse** occurs "when adults (or older children, often siblings) seek sexual gratification by using children." This includes any kind of sexual activity from fondling to sexual intercourse. It also includes exposing children to "sexually explicit behaviour or pornographic material." It is widely believed that the motivations of those who sexually abuse children arise as much from a need to dominate as from a sexual interest.

Understanding abusers of this kind is very difficult, especially for those who have never suffered from addictions or compulsive behaviour themselves. A great deal of work is done in this field both by those involved in the reintegration of offenders and those concerned with ministry to them during their imprisonment.

It may help us to recognise three general types of person. There are those who could not, under any circumstance, sexually abuse a child. There are those who do abuse children

sexually. There are those who, although they have the potential within themselves to abuse in this way, have faced their compulsion in such a manner that abuse does not occur. Sadly the mores of our society may not really allow such a process of self discovery to take place until the need for it is evidenced by abusive behaviour.

**Emotional abuse** results from persistent lack of love and affection, or threats, verbal attacks or even just shouting. The effects may be as devastating as any other form of abuse. Sometimes more so. It is impossible to imagine any form of abuse which does not include some element of emotional abuse. Emotional abuse may occur on its own, however, without evidence of other forms. It is also important to note that most abusive acts, of whatever kind, are carried out by adults very close to the child, primarily by parents and relatives but also by others who stand in a comparable relationship of intimacy and trust within the child's circle of adult contacts. This is true in around 90% of all reported cases.

The effects of all forms of abuse are long term and may lie hidden for many years. The psychological damage may be buried so deeply that it only emerges half a lifetime later, and then with devastating effects on home and family.

### **How can abuse be recognized?**

***The following signs may or may not be indicators that abuse has taken place, but the possibility should be considered.***

#### **Physical signs of abuse**

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries that occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care, etc. which may indicate that the child is being neglected
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains
- Bruises, bites, burns, fractures etc. which do not have an accidental explanation
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse

#### **Indicators of possible sexual abuse**

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse
- Child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour, or who regularly engages in age-inappropriate sexual play
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations
- Eating disorders – anorexia, bulimia

### **Signs of emotional abuse**

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging. Also depression/aggression, extreme anxiety.
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Running away/stealing/lying

### **How to respond to a child wanting to talk about abuse**

Where a disclosure is made to a volunteer the matter should immediately be referred to the Project Leader or Projects Director of Open Door Exmouth.

It is not easy to give precise guidance, but the following may help:

### **General points**

- Show acceptance of what the child says (however unlikely the story may sound) and reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Keep calm
- Listen carefully to what is being said
- Allow the child to continue at his/her own pace
- Tell the child you will need to let someone else know – don't promise confidentiality – but it will only be disclosed to those who need to know about it
- Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking leading questions
- Record in writing what was said as soon as possible, using the child's own words
- Even when a child has broken a rule, they are not to blame for the abuse
- Be aware that the child may have been threatened or bribed not to tell
- Never push for information. If the child decides not to tell you after all, then accept that and let them know that you are always ready to listen, but immediately report this conversation to the Project Leader or Projects Director of Open Door Exmouth.

### **Helpful things to say**

- I believe you (or showing acceptance of what the child says),
- Thank you for telling me
- It's not your fault
- I will help you

### **Don't say**

- Why didn't you tell anyone before?
- I can't believe it!
- Are you sure this is true?
- Why? How? When? Who? Where?
- Never make false promises

- Never make statements such as “I am shocked, don’t tell anyone else”

### **Concluding**

- Again reassure the child that they were right to tell you and show acceptance
- Let the child know what you are going to do next and who you will share the information with

### **What to do next**

When a child confides a story of abuse, that child has already suffered much, not only from the abuse but from fighting through the taboos and fears and the need for secrecy which may well have been instilled by the abuser. Therefore the way in which the allegation is received at the initial stages is very important.

After such an interview the child may well need reassurance and may want to be in frequent contact with you, or with whoever received the allegation. Be available but make sure that someone else knows of any contact that follows as it occurs. It is not our role to check the veracity of an allegation of this nature. That is the task of the Social Services or the Police.

As well as being told by a child, an allegation of abuse may be made in a variety of ways and from different sources. It may come from another child who is concerned. A member of the child’s family may share their fears and suspicions with you. A colleague of the suspect may express concern. However it reaches you the person making the allegation deserves the same consideration as if the abuse were directed at them personally. Unless the allegation is malicious (which may happen) the person making it is likely to be doing so at great cost to them. If the allegation is spurious you will have lost nothing by showing proper concern. If it turns out to be true you will have helped the process of detection.

### **Follow this procedure:**

1. It is important that children are protected from abuse. All complaints, allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously.
2. Promises of confidentiality should not be given as this may conflict with the need to ensure the safety and welfare of the child.
3. If the complainant is a child, questions should be kept to the minimum necessary to understand what is being alleged and leading questions should be avoided. The use of leading questions can cause problems for the subsequent investigation and any court proceedings.
4. A volunteer must at the earliest possible opportunity inform the Project Leader of that session or Projects Director, making sure that what is said is confidential and cannot be overheard by anyone else.
5. Whoever receives the allegation of abuse must complete a Safeguarding Recording Form (Appendix) as soon as possible (preferably within an hour of being told), writing down exactly what the child said and what you said in reply to the child. Safeguarding Reporting Forms are available from your Project Leader or any other member of staff. Describe the circumstances of the disclosure (e.g. the nature of the alleged abuse, description of activity, any observed injuries), and record the date and time of the event as well as the time when you made the record. Record as many details as you can on the form but do not make up or guess any information that you do not know, leave these sections blank. These notes may be required in any



prosecution.

6. The written report must be handed to the Project Leader or Projects Director as soon as it has been written.
7. The Project Leader must contact the Projects Director by phone at the earliest possible time and pass on the written report as soon as practicable.
8. The Projects Director and Open Door Safeguarding Officer will consider whether or not it is safe for the child to return home to a potentially abusive situation. On rare occasions it may be necessary to take immediate action to contact Social Services and/or Police to discuss putting into effect safety measures for the child so that they do not return home.
9. In any event the Open Door Safeguarding Officer will pass the report on to MASH. It is not the duty of any staff member, volunteer or the Open Door Safeguarding Officer to investigate any allegation of abuse or suspected abuse. That investigation is the responsibility of Social Services under the Children Act 1989.
10. All members of staff and volunteers must be aware of the strict duty of confidentiality and any information concerning abuse or suspected abuse must not be shared with any person or organization other than MASH and/or the Police.

### **3. Safeguarding vulnerable adults**

Open Door Exmouth has a moral and legal duty to ensure that it functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults. We are committed to fulfilling the requirements of the relevant legislation aimed at the protection of vulnerable adults.

Open Door Exmouth recognizes that adults can be harmed because they are vulnerable for various reasons whether permanently or on a temporary basis and this abuse can take place in their own homes, in residential care, at work or in activities including those provided by Open Door Exmouth. Some adults, who do not see themselves as 'vulnerable' under this definition, may still find themselves exploited, bullied or abused. The safeguarding of adults when harm occurs is the responsibility of everyone. Awareness of the ways people can suffer harm enables us to be vigilant during the activities of Open Door Exmouth.

There is a particular responsibility for staff members and volunteers working for Open Door Exmouth to ensure that all people are treated with respect and that any complaints are dealt with promptly and fairly. Safeguarding adults is based on sound pastoral care and good practice.

Open Door Exmouth aims to enhance wellbeing by: listening to service users and, when possible and within project boundaries, responding appropriately to their needs and requests; creating a positive partnership through the use of good communication and active listening skills; and by enhancing self belief and worth by encouraging, enabling and supporting service users.

To help us focus on those people for whom Open Door Exmouth should have a particular care, a recognized definition of vulnerability is:

*Any adult aged 18, or over, who, by reason of mental, or other disability, age, illness, or other situation is permanently, or for the time being unable to take care of him or herself, or to protect him, or herself against significant harm, or exploitation.*

Mistreatment is further defined in as '*a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person, or persons*'.

The term covers abuse, bullying and harassment. Harm is what results from mistreatment and abuse.

### **Who might harm adults?**

Adults may be abused by a wide range of people including relatives and family members, professional staff, paid care workers, volunteers, other service users, neighbours, friends and associates, people who deliberately exploit vulnerable people and strangers.

It is a matter of particular concern when someone in a position of power or authority uses his or her position to dominate or harm a vulnerable adult. Open Door Exmouth has a responsibility to all vulnerable adults who have been abused and may also have responsibilities in relation to some perpetrators of abuse.

Depending on the context of the abuse a different kind of response may be appropriate. This may necessitate involving external agencies.

### **How might harm to adults happen?**

Abuse of adults may occur on a single occasion or on multiple occasions. Those adults who are particularly vulnerable due to their circumstances (especially those within residential or institutional care settings) may benefit from additional safeguards that assist to prevent the potential for abuse.

Patterns of abuse and abusing vary and reflect very different dynamics. These include:

- serial abusing in which the perpetrator seeks out and 'grooms' vulnerable individuals. Sexual abuse usually falls into this pattern as do some forms of financial abuse;
- long term abuse in the context of an ongoing family relationship such as domestic violence between spouses or generations;
- opportunistic abuse such as theft occurring because money has been left around;
- situational abuse which arises because pressures have built up and/or because of difficult or challenging behaviour;
- neglect of a person's needs because those around him or her are not able to be responsible for their care, for example if the carer has difficulties attributable to such issues as debt, alcohol or mental health problems;
- institutional abuse which features poor care standards, lack of positive responses to complex needs, rigid routines, inadequate staffing and an insufficient knowledge base within the service;
- unacceptable 'treatments' or programmes which include sanctions or punishment such as withholding of food and drink, seclusion, unnecessary and unauthorised use of control and restraint or over-medication;
- failure of agencies to ensure staff receive appropriate guidance on anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practice;
- failure to access key services such as health care, dentistry, prostheses;

- misappropriation of benefits and/or use of the person's money by other members of the household;
- fraud or intimidation in connection with wills, property or other assets.

### **What is abuse of adults?**

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it. The following are taken from 'No Secrets':

**Physical Abuse** may include hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions.

**Sexual Abuse** may include rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting.

**Psychological Abuse** may include emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

**Financial/Material Abuse** may include theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

**Neglect (and acts of omission)** may include ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

**Discriminatory Abuse** may include racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

**Institutional/Organised Abuse** may occur where there is poor professional practice in a setting. This may take the form of isolated incidents of poor or unsatisfactory professional practice, at one end of the spectrum, through to pervasive ill treatment or gross misconduct at the other. Repeated instances of poor care may be an indication of more serious problems.

**Spiritual Abuse** may occur when inappropriate expectations are imposed upon adults. It may involve conveying to them the dire consequences of sinfulness so causing them to accept what someone is preaching /teaching /saying through bullying and causing them to be fearful. Spiritual abuse may occur as a form of bullying, exploitation of emotions, manipulation of frail minds and a corruption of the Gospel message.

### **How can abuse of adults be recognized?**

It may not always be obvious that an adult is being subjected to mistreatment or abuse and it may not be appropriate to question them at the time. However there may be general indicators that something is amiss and that the adult is unhappy about their situation. Marked change in their behaviour or disclosure of concerns should be discussed with the Projects Director or Safeguarding Officer.

Some general indicators that may be noticed about the vulnerable person:

- covering up or rationalising, injuries or demeaning behaviours towards them
- confusion and / or denial that anything is amiss despite marked deterioration
- withdrawal from things that they normally engage with or do
- not being allowed to speak for themselves, or see others without permission
- flirtatious, precocious or expressive sexual behaviour out of character
- indications of unusual confinement e.g. closed off in a room

Behaviours that may be observed about the partner, carer, or family member or the person close to the adult at risk include:

- getting the vulnerable person to pay for their (i.e. partner's) shopping/petrol/ tickets
- taking advantage of their naivety or trust
- attitudes of indifference or anger towards the vulnerable person
- blaming or chastising them e.g. that soiling themselves was deliberate
- aggressive or harsh behaviour (threats, insults, harassment)
- inappropriate display of affection or care
- social isolation or restriction of activity
- obvious absence of assistance or attendance

### **What to do next**

Follow this procedure:

1. A volunteer must at the earliest possible opportunity inform the Project Leader of that session or Projects Director, making sure that what is said is confidential and cannot be overheard by anyone else. Remember to have regard for your own safety. Leave the situation if it is not safe for you.
2. Whoever receives the allegation of abuse must complete a Safeguarding Recording Form (Appendix) as soon as possible (preferably within an hour of being told), writing down exactly what the adult said and what you said in reply to the adult. Safeguarding Recording Forms can be obtained from any member of staff. Describe the circumstances of the disclosure (e.g. description of activity), and record the date and time of the event as well as the time when you made the record. Record as many details as you can on the form but do not make up or guess any information that you do not know, leave these sections blank. These notes may be required in any prosecution.
3. The written report must be handed to the Project Leader or Projects Director as soon as it has been written.
4. The Project Leader must contact the Projects Director by phone at the earliest possible time and pass on the written report as soon as practicable.
5. The Open Door Projects Director and Safeguarding Officer will consider what further action Open Door Exmouth can take. On rare occasions it may be necessary to take

immediate action to contact Social Services and/or Police to discuss putting into effect safety measures for the adult so that they do not suffer further abuse.

6. In any event the Open Door Safeguarding Officer will pass the report on to Care Direct. It is not the duty of the Open Door Projects Director, or any staff member, volunteer or the Open Door Safeguarding Officer to investigate any allegation of abuse or suspected abuse. That investigation is the responsibility of Devon County Council Social Services.
7. If concerns relate more generally to the individual's well being, help and advice should be sought from the Project Leader, Projects Director or Open Door Safeguarding Officer.
8. All members of staff and volunteers must be aware of the strict duty of confidentiality and any information concerning abuse or suspected abuse.

#### **4. Use of photographic/video equipment**

When taking and using photographs and videos of children and vulnerable adults, the following guidelines should be adhered to:

- Avoid using the person's names (first or surname) in photograph captions. If the person is named in an article or online, avoid using his or her photograph. If the person is in the photograph, avoid using his or her name in the article or online.
- Always seek permission from the person in the photograph/video. For children, use a parental permission form to obtain consent as well as seeking permission from the child.
- Only use images of people in suitable dress to reduce the risk of inappropriate use. Some activities – swimming, drama, gymnastics and athletics for example – present a much greater risk of potential misuse.
- These guidelines will be passed on to professional photographers and the press if they are invited to an event, making clear the organisation's expectations of them in relation to safeguarding. Photographers will not be granted unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults and no photography sessions will be arranged for outside the project / event, or at a person's home.

#### **5. Confidentiality**

Safeguarding raises issues of confidentiality which should be clearly understood by all.

- Staff and volunteers have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other agencies, particularly investigative agencies.
- Clear boundaries of confidentiality will be communicated to all. All personal information regarding a child will be kept confidential except when it is suspected that they are the victim of abuse.
- If a child confides in a member of staff or volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the child sensitively that he or she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies for their own sake.
- Within that context, however, the child should be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it.

- If a vulnerable adult expresses a wish for concerns not to be pursued then this should be respected wherever possible. However, decisions about whether to respect their wishes must have regard to the level of risk to the individual and others, and their capacity to understand the decision in question. In some circumstances their wishes may be overridden in favour of consideration of safety. Decisions should be made following discussion with the appropriate line manager.

For Open Door Exmouth's full Confidentiality policy, see page 16.

## **6. Crisis Protocol for working with Vulnerable Children and Adults**

Through Open Door Exmouth we provide some level of support for vulnerable children and adults. Situations may occasionally arise where service users are experiencing a crisis and need additional support or information **during work hours**.

Although Open Door Exmouth does not undertake to provide one-to-one crisis support and is not an on-call service, nevertheless it has a duty of care to its clients, staff and volunteers and must be seen to be acting responsibly, appropriately and with integrity.

Depending upon the nature of the crisis, different actions and/or information may be appropriate.

**IN THE EVENT THAT THE SERVICE USER IS ACTING IRRATIONALLY AND/OR THREATENING VIOLENCE AGAINST SELF OR OTHERS, PRIORITY SHOULD BE GIVEN TO ENSURING THE SAFETY OF YOURSELF AND ALL OTHERS PRESENT.**

**IF AT ANY TIME YOU FEEL THERE IS AN IMMEDIATE RISK OF THE SERVICE USER HARMING THEMSELVES OR OTHERS, DIAL 999 AND ASK FOR THE POLICE STRAIGHTAWAY.**

1. Encourage the service user to ring their GP or another person of their choice **if this is an appropriate action in the circumstances**. This may be a family member or their specified emergency contact. If there is a difficulty with them ringing their GP or other person, ask for permission to ring their preferred contact on their behalf.
2. If the above approaches appear to be unsuccessful, encourage the service user to make their own way to A&E for further support (if appropriate to the age of the person and the nature of the issue). If they are willing but unable to, dial 999 and request an ambulance or pay for a taxi to Exmouth Hospital if an ambulance is unnecessary.
3. If the service user indicates that they don't intend to go to A&E, and still appears to be presenting a potential risk to themselves or others, dial 999 and ask for the Police.

### **Other useful contacts:**

- Police – non-emergency: 101
- Crisis Resolution & Home Treatment Team (til 9:30pm): 01392 674988
- Children & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS): 01392 208600
- Exmouth Hospital (til 10pm): 01395 279684

- Devon Doctors: 111 (urgent out of hours calls)

Out of hours Emergency Duty Service - Devon: 0345 6000388

(The Emergency Duty Service will discharge Devon County Council's statutory social care responsibilities whilst ensuring public safety, by providing an emergency social care crisis response outside of normal working office hours, and can be contacted by adults, children, service users with mental health issues or learning disabilities, their families and carers plus concerned other parties such as neighbours or individuals wishing to report important information or social care concerns about Devon residents or social care users.)

# Confidentiality & Data Protection Policy

At Open Door Exmouth, we want the people we meet to feel safe, and confidentiality is an important part of the respect we show.

## Purpose of this Policy

It is recognised that within the Open Door Exmouth projects, information which is of a personal and sensitive nature will be required, provided and at times shared. Examples of such information are:

- Details provided by service users, volunteers or staff members at the point of application/referral, including emergency contact information, or at a later date in relation to personal circumstances that arise.
- Service users will be asked to disclose certain personal information, necessary to ensure that the Project Leader or Support Worker has a sufficient understanding of their needs.
- If a service user discloses information to a member of staff or volunteer within a support session, it may be appropriate for the member of staff or volunteer to discuss this with the Project Leader in order for them to receive support, advice or guidance.

This confidentiality policy is designed to address such information disclosure and provide guidance about the extent and limitations of confidentiality.

## Maintaining confidentiality

- Information which is disclosed will be treated with discretion and in confidence by all staff and volunteers of Open Door Exmouth and will be shared only with those personnel who require the information. Documentation will be securely stored in accordance with data protection guidelines. Staff and volunteers should be mindful of the nature of the information they are sharing with each other.
- Should a service user choose to share sensitive information with volunteers, it is the responsibility of the volunteer not to discuss this with others unless they have permission to do so from the person, with the exception of the Projects Director, Project Leader or Support Worker.
- Staff and volunteers should never agree to 'keep a secret' for a service user since in doing so they could compromise themselves and Open Door Exmouth, whilst placing the service user at risk.
- It is accepted best practice that Open Door Exmouth's staff, volunteers and service users should avoid casual conversations regarding the personal details of other staff, volunteers or organisations.

## Consent

**At the outset of the relationship between Open Door Exmouth and a service user, Open Door Exmouth will require the advance informed consent of all service users in compliance with Open Door Exmouth policies and procedures.**

The rights and responsibilities of service users, staff and volunteers under Open Door Exmouth policies will be explained to service users by staff and volunteers, and a written copy may be provided to service users on request.



Appropriate forms will be used by Open Door Exmouth for the purpose of explaining rights and responsibilities and evidencing consent to a contractual agreement, where records of a service user are being kept.

Consent for the use of Open Door Exmouth services will be required from:

- Adults (those over the age of 18) with mental capacity in accordance with current UK law
- A child aged 16 and over with mental capacity in accordance with current UK law
- Parents or others with legal parental responsibility for a child or young person under the age of 16 using Open Door Exmouth Services. (This is subject to the proviso that in circumstances where for the welfare of the child, or others, it is unsafe or inappropriate to seek consent from a specific person with parental responsibility, the consent of another person or persons with parental responsibility for that child may suffice).

### **Need to know/Disclosure**

In all but defined cases (e.g. Disciplinary and Grievance procedures) the person to whom it relates is the ultimate reference point for deciding who should be informed of a piece of confidential information. They should be fully informed of the consequences of consent or non-consent, and authorisation in writing may be necessary, depending on the nature of the information.

Any information shared during session briefings and discussions with the Project Leader must be treated as confidential and not communicated to anyone outside Open Door Exmouth other than where expressly permitted under the terms of this policy.

As a Christian organization, we understand that some staff and volunteers may feel the need to pray for clients situations. However, if they choose to pray in a public environment (e.g. housegroups or church), all client details must be kept confidential. No names or identifying information can be shared.

### **Staff and volunteers**

Personal information about a member of staff or volunteer will not be divulged without the permission of the individual concerned. Personal files containing volunteer application and references will be kept in a locked cabinet or on a password protected shared drive. Supervision information will be confidential to the persons concerned.

### **Open Door Exmouth service users**

In exceptional circumstances, if a staff member or volunteer has good reason to suspect that a service user may cause danger to themselves or to others such consent need not be sought, though the matter is to be referred to the Project Leader or Projects Director and only disclosed by the Projects Director, if appropriate.

### **Records**

A record of relevant or significant events involving service users will be kept for each session and will be confidential to staff and authorised volunteers, on a need to know basis only. In some cases where multi-agency working would be beneficial to a service user, they may be

asked to sign to give consent for professional agencies to share information. Staff and volunteers will always check with a service user before sharing sensitive information with another agency. Records may be used if referrals need to be made in accordance with the law, government guidance, Open Door Exmouth policies (e.g. for safeguarding purposes), in compliance with legal requirements, or where permitted by law. All records will be factual, not anecdotal.

**Open Door Exmouth will breach the confidentiality of its services users in the following circumstances:**

- Where the law requires disclosure in cases involving terrorism, drugs and money laundering
- Where the law permits disclosure
- With the written consent of the service user

In our service user contract, service users also agree that Open Door Exmouth may refer where necessary, to any appropriate persons, organisations, agencies, or education establishment if required by law, or if there is a serious cause for concern about the health or welfare of the service users or others.

A serious cause for concern means;

- Danger to health, safety or well-being; and
- Danger is about to happen right away or in a short period of time; and
- Urgent intervention is required, probably from police or other medical and emergency professionals.

**Adults:** Advance consent for any disclosures which may be necessary in accordance with this policy, including referrals to MASH, should already have been obtained at the outset of the contractual relationship between Open Door Exmouth and all adult service users who have the mental capacity to give their consent. If for any reason this has not been done, it should be obtained before referral.

**Children:** Advance consent for disclosures which may be necessary in accordance with this policy should have been obtained from those with parental responsibility for children under the age of 16 provided that it is both safe and appropriate to do so. If for any reason this has not been done, it should usually be obtained before referral **BUT disclosures made without consent, or without prior warning may be necessary for safety and protection in the circumstances outlined in this policy.**

In some circumstances a referral may be necessary in accordance with law and government guidance (e.g. in safeguarding a child or a vulnerable adult). Open Door Exmouth uses the Devon *Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub* (MASH) for safeguarding issues in relation to children (see <https://new.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/child-protection/making-a-mash-enquiry>)

In some situations, it may be illegal and/or unsafe to warn another person of the intention to make a referral e.g. in cases of terrorism such a warning is illegal. In the case of certain children or vulnerable adults in need of urgent protection, it may also be unsafe to warn

their family, carers or others with parental responsibility in advance that a referral will be made, because to do so may create or worsen the risk of harm to that child, vulnerable adult or to others.

If an external agency requests disclosure of information held by Open Door Exmouth, the agency must be asked to state, preferably in writing, under what legal authority or statutory power the information is being sought.

In extreme circumstances where there is a serious cause for concern it may be appropriate to immediately notify the police or other emergency services. If there is no immediate risk, the Project Leader, or in their absence, the Projects Director or a Deputy member of staff should be contacted at the earliest opportunity. It will then be at the decision of the staff member whether to inform the appropriate agencies, authorities or personnel.

In anything other than exceptional circumstances, breaches of confidentiality may result in the staff disciplinary process or the termination of a volunteer's involvement with Open Door Exmouth. Should any individual involve with Open Door Exmouth consider that their rights to confidentiality have not been upheld in line with this policy, they should contact the Open Door Exmouth Projects Director.

### **Whistleblowing**

Open Door Exmouth is committed to the highest standards of openness and accountability.

An important aspect of accountability and transparency is a mechanism to enable staff and volunteers of Open Door Exmouth to voice concerns in a responsible and effective manner. It is a fundamental term of every contract of employment that an employee will faithfully serve his or her employer and not disclose confidential information about the employer's affairs. Nevertheless, where an employee or volunteer discovers information which they believe shows serious malpractice or wrongdoing within the organisation then this information should be disclosed internally without fear of reprisal, and there should be arrangements to enable this to be done independently of line management (although in relatively minor instances the line manager would be the appropriate person to be told).

The Public Interest Disclosure Act, which came into effect in 1999, gives legal protection to employees against being dismissed or penalised by their employers as a result of publicly disclosing certain serious concerns. Open Door Exmouth has endorsed the provisions set out below so as to ensure that no members of staff or volunteers should feel at a disadvantage in raising legitimate concerns.

It should be emphasised that this policy is intended to assist individuals who believe they have discovered malpractice or impropriety. It is not designed to question financial or business decisions taken by Open Door Exmouth nor should it be used to reconsider any matters which have already been addressed under harassment, complaint, disciplinary or other procedures. Once the "whistleblowing" procedures are in place, it is reasonable to expect staff and volunteers to use them rather than air their complaints outside of Open Door Exmouth.

The Whistleblowing policy is designed to enable employees and volunteers of Open Door Exmouth to raise concerns internally and at a high level and to disclose information which the individual believes shows malpractice or impropriety. This policy is intended to cover concerns which are in the public interest and may at least initially be investigated separately but might then lead to the invocation of other procedures e.g. disciplinary. These concerns could include

- \* Financial malpractice or impropriety or fraud
- \* Failure to comply with a legal obligation or Statutes
- \* Dangers to Health & Safety or the environment
- \* Criminal activity
- \* Improper conduct or unethical behaviour
- \* Attempts to conceal any of these

### **Allegations against Staff and Volunteers**

All safeguarding allegations will be treated seriously and investigated thoroughly. Whilst this is happening the member of staff or volunteer will have no contact with children/young people/vulnerable adults. The member of staff may also be suspended whilst the investigation takes place.

For more details about the Open Door Complaints procedure, please see the Complaints policy. If you wish to make a complaint, please request a copy of the Open Door Complaints Form and follow the procedure of complaints, as outlined in the policy.

## **Data Protection**

### **General Statement**

This policy document refers to records kept relating to members of staff, volunteers and service users of Open Door Exmouth. The Data Protection Act 1998 applies to all organisations which acquire personal data from individuals and process such information. The rules about data protection apply to manual and computer records. Open Door Exmouth is registered under the current Data Protection legislation.

### **What is personal data?**

Personal data is data relating to an individual. Examples of personal data are staff/volunteer details, names, addresses and other information relating to service users and other individuals. Processing includes obtaining, holding, disclosing, using, retrieving and destroying information about a person.

Only the minimum necessary should be recorded. No information of a sensitive nature relating to ethnic origin, physical or mental health, political opinions, religious beliefs or details about sexual activity, criminal records and proceedings, will be held without the volunteer's express and written consent.

### **The rights of individuals**

Any person whose personal data has been collected and recorded can at any time request sight of that personal data. This is called a 'subject access request'. This request should be made in writing which includes email and text. Personal data is the property of the

individual and must not be made available to any other person without the consent of the individual to whom it relates. There is also a right to have any inaccuracies in data corrected or erased.

Handwritten personal notes made during or following a session/interview are not covered by the Data Protection Act but may be disclosed to the person to whom the notes relate following a subject access request under section 7 of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Under the data protection legislation, Open Door Exmouth cannot be required to produce any information that in any way refers to another person other than the person requesting the production of data held on him/her. There is also an exemption which allows for non-disclosure of sensitive data if Open Door Exmouth holds it for the purpose of preventing the occurrence of crime due to violence.

### **Holding and processing personal data**

As part of our monitoring and assessment of our project provision, our working relationship with other local agencies and authorities and to ensure we are accountable, records are kept of our activities and levels of involvement with the community.

All records kept in the course of the activities of Open Door Exmouth will comply with the principles of the Data Protection Act. Information must be:

- Fairly and lawfully processed
- Processed for limited, specific purposes
- Adequate, relevant and not excessive
- Not kept any longer than necessary
- Processed in accordance with the individual's rights
- Kept in a secure place
- Not disclosed to any other person, company or organisation without the consent, preferably in writing, of the individual to whom the information relates

### **How long will records be kept for?**

The Data Protection Act 1998 states that 'personal data processed for any purpose or purposes shall not be kept longer than is necessary for that purpose or those purposes'.

**Staff records**, including personal information, payroll details and supervision notes, will be kept for 7 years following cessation of employment in line with best practice guidelines. Application forms and interview notes of unsuccessful candidates will be kept for one year.

**Volunteer records**, including personal information and supervision notes, will be kept for 6 months after cessation of volunteering. If a volunteer confirms that a reference may be required in future, records will be kept for 18 months, after which records will be destroyed and references will no longer be possible.

**Service user records** will be archived one year after cessation of support. Notes for adult service users will be held for a period of 7 years after the ending of a service user's contract with Open Door Exmouth, and records held for children under the age of 18 will be retained for seven years after the end of their engagement with Open Door Exmouth or until the

child reaches the age of 18, whichever is the later date. Adult service users and children with the capacity to consent will have the right to access personal information held in their records, in accordance with the Data protection legislation.

**Financial records** will be held for 7 years, in line with best practice guidelines.

**Accident books, paperwork relating to safeguarding or child protection issues, and trustee minutes** will be kept indefinitely.

## Health & Safety Policy

This is the Health and Safety Policy of Open Door Exmouth (ODE). **ODE** is committed to the delivery of its obligations under Health and Safety legislation. The objective of this policy is to identify and take steps to minimise health and safety risks with the aim of reducing accidents and enabling **ODE** to comply with its legal obligations.

**ODE** aims to actively encourage safe working habits amongst its employees and to assist all its employees in understanding their own duties in relation to health and safety in the workplace. Health and Safety at work is the responsibility of everyone who is part of Open Door Exmouth. Open Door Exmouth as an employer, its staff and volunteers, accept their responsibility to develop and pursue policy and procedures, so far as it is reasonably practicable, that will ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees and volunteers whilst working on behalf of Open Door Exmouth and all other persons whilst on any of its premises.

All staff and volunteers, with appropriate support, training and supervision, are required to operate safe working practices and procedures, and to work with due consideration for the safety of others.

The policy is arranged in the following order:

1. General statement of health and safety
2. Purpose and scope of the policy
3. Responsibilities of staff, volunteers and users of Open Door
4. Health & safety training
5. Health & safety arrangements
  - a. Reporting health and safety hazards
  - b. Risk assessment
  - c. Workplace
  - d. First Aid
  - e. Fire and emergency arrangements
  - f. Working with Display Screen Equipment
  - g. Manual handling
  - h. Health and safety arrangements specific to Men's Shed project
6. Policy monitoring and review
7. Template risk assessment form to be actioned by all project leaders for their respective projects

### 1. General statement of Health and Safety Policy

Open Door Exmouth is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its volunteers, staff, service users and any other persons who may be affected by our activities. All staff, volunteers, and service users are required to observe all notices, instructions and procedures relating to Health and Safety regulations. All persons working or volunteering for Open Door Exmouth will have the opportunity to discuss Health and Safety issues and how these affect their particular task/s. We shall ensure that the requirements of the Health and

Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and other relevant statutory provisions are carried out so far as reasonably practicable. Open Door Exmouth's statement of general policy is:

- To take appropriate steps to ensure that the working environment is safe and without risk to health, to staff, volunteers, service users and any other visitors to its premises, and to provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising out of its work activities.
- To maintain safe and healthy working conditions.
- To prevent accidents and cases of work related ill-health.
- To consult with staff and volunteers on matters affecting their health and safety.
- To provide and maintain safe equipment.
- To ensure safe handling and use of substances.
- To ensure that where equipment, machinery or hazardous substances are used or where staff or volunteers handle, store or transport goods, safe working practices are established and adhered to.
- To provide appropriate information, training and supervision for staff and volunteers and to provide protective equipment where required.
- Where accidents or incidents do occur, to ensure they are properly examined and recorded and relevant action is taken to reduce or prevent a recurrence.
- To establish procedures to monitor the operation of the policy and to review and revise this policy as necessary at regular intervals.

In deciding what is 'reasonable' we will take into account business, economic and work constraints but will not compromise on safety. We must continuously use our skills to make all of our facilities, new and old, as free as possible of hazards which could cause injury.

## **2. Purpose and scope**

As the General Health and Safety Policy for **ODE** this document outlines how health and safety will be incorporated into its management structure and the responsibilities that it implies for employees at all levels within the organisation. The document explains the organisation and arrangements through which the policy is implemented and demonstrates **ODE's** commitment to discharge its safety responsibilities.

The policy applies to and will be made available to all existing permanent employees, contract and temporary staff and volunteers working for **ODE** and covers site-based, mobile and home workers.

Individual project leaders are responsible for producing their own risk assessment and health and safety procedures within the guidelines of the **ODE** General Health and Safety Policy, which should outline the local organisation, responsibilities and arrangements in place for their particular project.

## **3. Responsibilities**

### **Projects Director / Health & Safety Officer**

Responsible for:

- ensuring that this Health and Safety policy is followed by all staff and volunteers.
- ensuring that new staff are trained on health and safety issues in their induction and regularly consulted on any issues that arise.



- ensuring DBS checks are carried out for staff and volunteers, where appropriate.
- approving actions recommended by risk assessments undertaken by project leaders.
- investigating, with project leaders, any accidents reported under RIDDOR (*Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013*).

### **Project Leaders**

Responsible for:

- ensuring this policy is put into practice throughout all Open Door Exmouth projects.
- carrying out regular risk assessments of the project premises and activities, including risk assessments of service users and volunteer roles, where appropriate and security assessments, and reporting any identified required actions to the Projects Director.
- carrying out regular fire drills so emergency procedures are followed.
- providing volunteers with regular supervision and ongoing support, and with details of what to do / who to contact in an emergency.
- identifying all equipment in need of maintenance and reporting to Projects Director.
- checking all chemicals or substances (e.g. cleaning products) are suitable and safe for use and if they present a hazard, ensuring a risk assessment has been carried out.
- recording all accidents, incidents and near misses in an accident book, reporting accidents under RIDDOR.
- ensuring that new volunteers are trained on health and safety issues in their induction and regularly consulted on any issues that arise.
- Ensuring that windows are closed, appliances and lights switched off and doors are locked at the end of each session.
- Ensuring that identification is requested from any visitor to the project premises who they do not recognize or expect, calling the police if necessary.

### **Volunteers**

Responsible for:

- Planning for their own safety e.g. preparing for sessions, being aware of the surroundings, listening to service users, taking action to avoid risk.
- Being familiar with the premises. Being aware of exits and potential dangers.
- Dressing appropriately for the tasks being undertaken e.g. clothing/appearance/footwear.
- Recording and reporting any incidents that cause concern.
- Communicating any concerns to the Project Leader or Projects Director.
- Acting according to Open Door Exmouth's policies and procedures.

### **All ODE staff and volunteers**

The successful implementation of this policy requires total commitment and cooperation from all volunteers and staff within the organization, including commitment to undertaking training as required. Each individual has a legal obligation to take reasonable care of his/her own health and safety, and the safety of other people who may be affected by his/her acts or omissions. All Open Door Exmouth staff and volunteers are responsible for familiarising themselves and complying with the charity's procedures on health and safety and working to the highest possible standards of safety with regards to activities and service users. All staff and volunteers are also responsible for reporting all health and safety concerns to the

Project Leader or Projects Director and for recording all accidents or injuries that are caused by the working environment, recording incidents on an accident form and giving the form to the Project Leader/Projects Director. If any staff member or volunteer is unsure how to perform a task safely, or believe it would be dangerous to do so, they must inform the Project Leader or Projects Director. Any volunteers or staff who fail to comply with these principles will be subject to disciplinary action, which could lead to dismissal.

#### **4. Health and safety training**

Health and safety training, relevant to job roles, will be incorporated into training programs for new ODE volunteers and trainees, and into induction training for employed staff. Health and safety training needs will therefore be identified through regular risk assessment and performance reviews, and be planned for in the same manner as other training. Training will be conducted at the expense of the organisation and wherever possible will be carried out during normal work hours.

All staff and project leaders will be required to attend an 'Emergency First Aid in the Workplace' course and to keep the qualification up to date. Open Door Exmouth will fund the cost of this training course for all staff. Volunteers will also be offered annual first aid training refresher courses which will train people in the basics of first aid.

All health and safety related training will be logged in staff and volunteer training logs, with details of the course attended, date of completion and date that renewal is required.

#### **5. Health and safety arrangements**

##### **a) Reporting health and safety hazards**

It is the responsibility of every employee and volunteer to report any condition that may represent a hazard as soon as it is practicable. Staff and volunteers should report the hazard to the Project Leader or Projects Director, who will in turn report to the Health and Safety Officer who will be responsible for reporting relevant hazards to the appropriate official body.

Any accidents or near accidents must be reported in the Project Accidents Book at the earliest opportunity and the Project Leader or Projects Director should be alerted to the new entry.

Any incidents or other hazardous conditions, which could not be considered an accident or near accident, should be reported via an Open Door Incident Form which can be requested from any staff member.

##### **b) Risk assessment**

ODE will ensure that all areas of its undertaking are subjected to a suitable risk assessment to identify potential hazards and to introduce control measures to eliminate or reduce harm. Each Project Leader is responsible for completing the ODE risk assessment form and introducing appropriate health and safety procedures in response to the assessment.

##### **c) Workplace**

**ODE** will ensure that all areas of its undertaking are subjected to a suitable assessment to determine the maintenance, cleaning and housekeeping programmes required to assist in providing safe and efficient working environments.

#### **d) First Aid**

It is **ODE's** policy to make provisions for first aid in accordance with the *Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981*.

There will be a fully stocked first aid box on each project site, which all staff and volunteers will be made aware as to its location.

There will therefore always be a qualified first aider on every project and volunteers will be made aware of who it is. In the unlikely event that a staff member or project leader is not present and a volunteer is worried about the health of a colleague or service user, they should call 999.

At Exmouth Community College, ICE volunteers can send students to the school nurse for assistance.

All incidents should be recorded in the project Accidents book.

#### **e) Fire and emergency arrangements**

Each project site will establish a fire safety programme with the objective of guarding against the outbreak of fire and to ensure, in so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of persons on the premises in the event of the outbreak of fire or other emergencies.

The fire safety programme at each site will include conducting a fire risk assessment, and establishing a fire precautions plan.

The fire risk assessment will identify potential fire hazards and the control measures needed including the requirements for fire prevention and protection.

The fire precautions programme at each facility will include:

- identification and installation of appropriate fire detection and fire fighting equipment including procedures for its regular inspection, testing and servicing in line with the relevant British Standards;
- evacuation plan to be used in the event of fire or other emergencies;
- individual responsibilities with respect to emergency evacuation including the names of the site fire co-ordinator and any fire marshals;
- arrangements for the training of those with responsibilities in respect of fire precautions, together with the provision of training and written details of evacuation procedures to all members of staff;
- fire escape site plan; and
- procedures for handling other emergencies relevant to the site.

## **Fire procedure**

The project fire coordinator will be the project leader, and in their absence an assigned session leader or staff member. All staff, volunteers and service users are required to observe all notices, instructions and procedures relating to fire regulations. These are prominently displayed at appropriate sites in the buildings. All staff and volunteers must be familiar with the evacuation procedures of the building in which they are based:

### **If you become aware of a fire**

1. Sound the alarm at the nearest alarm call point and evacuate the area by the nearest, safest fire exit.
2. Project leaders/Fire Officer: Help with evacuation process and once outside check with other staff that all areas are clear of people.
3. Only tackle the fire if it is safe to do so.
4. Call the Fire Brigade on 999 (or if in school, alert the relevant person to phone 999).

### **Evacuation of the Open Door Centre:**

- a) Kitchen Area: Clear kitchen, staff entrance onto Church Street. If this is blocked by fire evacuate via the main entrance.
- b) Ground Floor Area, including toilets, showers and laundry area: clear sitting area via Fire Exit doors onto South Street. Alternative exit via main entrance onto Church Street.

### **f) Working with Display Screen Equipment (DSE)**

All staff and volunteers who, as part of their work for Open Door Exmouth, use DSE continuously for periods of an hour or more on most days worked, will be given guidelines on using DSE, including risks and symptoms associated with using DSE and guidelines on how to minimise the risk. Once assigned a workstation they will also be asked to complete a DSE assessment form so any potential risks can be identified and appropriate solutions found.

### **g) Manual handling**

Open Door Exmouth will comply with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended), which place a requirement on the employer and employee to reduce the hazards to health associated with the manual handling of loads.

Accordingly, we will so far as is reasonably practicable:

1. Avoid manual handling operations where a significant risk of injury could occur
2. Design and provide safe and ergonomically suitable workplace environments
3. Assess the risks associated with manual handling activities and eliminate or reduce these to a tolerable level
4. Introduce appropriate measures to reduce the risk of injury
5. Provide equipment to enable manual handling activities to be undertaken safely
6. Provide suitable and sufficient supervision, training (including periodic refresher training) and information to all staff involved in manual handling operations.

### **h) Health and safety arrangements specific to Men's Shed project**

Managers and supervisors should, at all times, be aware of both the activities ongoing in the Men's Shed and of the environment itself. If a hazardous situation exists, even on a

temporary basis, the manager / supervisor must take immediate action to eliminate the hazard. Examples of potential hazardous situations are:-

- trailing extension leads obstructing walkways;
- overloaded power points or extension leads;
- people struggling with heavy loads;
- people carrying sharp tools without due care;
- people using dangerous equipment without training or authorisation.

All woodworking machines can be dangerous if not operated in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and without adherence to basic safety procedures.

The principle of Men's Shed is to transfer the skills of expert craftsmen volunteers through their training non-skilled people. Part of that training must be the safe operation of any equipment used. To this end, trainers will include the following in their training process:-

- i. basic operating safety procedures, including manufacturers operating instructions,
- ii. actual risks and dangers associated with each machine or process being employed,
- iii. during training, to instruct the pupil with best practice,
- iv. to identify potential risks inherent in the operation of the equipment in use, and how best to avoid them,

Following the completion of any training programme, the trainer will update the register of trained persons and sign and date the completion of the programme.

Trainers are also required to be aware of those operating hazardous machinery. Any person who has not received training on a particular machine should be accompanied by a competent trainer, who can assess their level of basis confidence, pending their undergoing proper training and logging.

It is incumbent upon all visitors to Men's Shed to respect and adhere to all health and safety procedures and practices operated by Men's Shed. Failure to follow these rules could place both the visitor and other participants attending the premises at the time in danger. Any visitor failing to adhere to this condition would be given corrective training. Should the failure continue, the visitor may be asked to leave.

Operating instructions and safety notices specific to each machine, listing the specific areas of danger associated with that machine, will be maintained and prominently displayed with each machine, and general health and safety notices will be displayed throughout the Men's Shed premises.

## **6. Policy monitoring and review**

The Health and Safety Advisor will monitor the success of the policy and will conduct audits on a yearly basis to measure compliance across all **ODE** projects. The Health and Safety Advisor will issue a report to the Director and the Board recommending actions in order to continue the development of the Health and Safety Management Plan.

The policy will be formally reviewed and updated every two years.

## Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

Open Door Exmouth (ODE) is a Christian organisation committed to social justice and actively opposed to discrimination in society. ODE seeks to promote services on a fair and equitable basis, taking into account only the needs of people accessing its services. No person requiring services from ODE will be treated less favourably than any other on the grounds of sex, age, HIV or marital status, sexual orientation, race, creed, colour, religion or belief, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability or impairment, trade union activity or similar bases.

We also recognise that potential staff or volunteers may have criminal records, and may be reluctant to apply for either paid or volunteering roles where they would be required to disclose details of their record. Having a criminal record is not necessarily a bar to working or volunteering with us, and Open Door Exmouth welcomes applications from ex-offenders.

Furthermore, we value difference, and recognise the value that the different backgrounds, skills, outlooks and experiences of our staff and volunteers bring to the organisation.

Open Door Exmouth is committed to promoting and enabling equality and diversity in all that we do, whether it is concerning our staff, volunteers or those with whom we work. We are both legally and morally responsible for considering equality and diversity in our policies, ensuring that everyone who comes into contact with us is treated fairly, with dignity, and with respect for their personal circumstances.

1. We value and respect all individuals involved with Open Door Exmouth, both service users and staff/volunteers.
2. We will aim to ensure that our service provision is appropriate, relevant and accessible to all groups of people represented in the community.
3. We will strive to ensure that no member of staff, volunteer, or service user experiences unlawful discrimination.
4. Volunteering/employment opportunities are open to all within our local community, unless they carry a Genuine Occupational Requirement (GOR).
5. Volunteers/staff will exercise thoughtfulness and care to avoid stereotyping of individuals and groups.
6. Any racist or other offensive remarks or behaviour will not be tolerated and always challenged.

We are committed to employing and developing a diverse workforce. This fosters innovation and a wider range of solutions, allows Open Door Exmouth to respond to change, and informs our policies and the services we offer so they reflect the needs of the wider public. Our aim is to create a working environment where people feel valued and respected, and to nurture the potential in people to perform well.

ODE is a Christian organisation committed to building Jesus' model of the Kingdom of God on earth. Accordingly, as a Christian organisation, there are posts which can only be filled by Christians. Role descriptions will make this clear in each case and they will be kept under regular review. The nature of these posts or the context in which they are carried out and

their link to the ethos of the organisation give rise to a genuine occupational requirement (GOR) for the post holders to be Christians. All staff/volunteers in these posts are required to demonstrate a clear, personal commitment to the Christian faith. Any position carrying a GOR will be identified as such on the basis that it requires the post-holder to express the faith of the organisation to members of the public, staff, or client groups.

If you feel you have been discriminated against, please let the Project Leader or Projects Director know, who will pro-actively investigate and attempt to resolve any concern raised. Should this not be possible, then the complaints procedure should be used.

## **Recruitment & DBS**

### **Recruitment of staff members and volunteers**

The recruitment and selection decision is of prime importance as the vehicle for obtaining the best possible person-to-job fit which will contribute significantly towards the effectiveness of Open Door Exmouth. It is also becoming increasingly important, as Open Door Exmouth evolves and changes, that new recruits show a willingness to learn, adaptability and ability to work as part of a team.

This policy ensures our Recruitment and Selection Policy will:

- be fair and consistent;
- be non-discriminatory;
- conform to all statutory regulations and agreed best practice.

## **4.1 Applicants for Employment**

### **Recruitment procedure**

- A job description and person specification will be produced and signed off by the Open Door Exmouth Projects Director.
- The position will be advertised through appropriate channels, including internally, through local church networks, and external adverts in the local press and on local recruitment websites.
- Applicants for paid positions will be asked to complete and submit an application form. Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed by the Projects Director, Project Leader and/or an Open Door Exmouth trustee.
- When interviewing, the interview panel will ensure that Equal Opportunities legislation is strictly adhered to, with no discrimination shown on any grounds.
- When all candidates have been interviewed, the panel will score them appropriately, and based on this decide on the most suitable person for the post. The appointing manager will arrange to inform the successful candidate as soon as possible, agreeing a commencement date and starting salary.
- The appointing manager will then write to the appointee, offering the post providing satisfactory references and pre-employment checks have been received. Once the appointee has accepted the offer of employment, the appointing manager will inform all other interviewees that they have been unsuccessful and provide feedback if requested.
- Open Door Exmouth will apply for a DBS Certificate where appropriate, only for applicants offered a position, and will only run a check with the knowledge and consent of the person concerned. If a DBS check is required, it will be made clear in the job description and at application stage.

## **4.2 Volunteers**

### **Recruitment procedure**

- A job description and person specification will be produced and signed off by the Open Door Exmouth Projects Director.
- The position will be advertised through appropriate channels, including internally, through local church networks, and external adverts in the local press and on local recruitment websites.
- Applicants will be asked to complete a volunteer application form, listing two referees. Once satisfactory references have been received, the applicant, may be asked to apply for a check of their criminal record from the Disclosure and Barring Service before the appointment is confirmed, depending on the volunteer role. If a DBS check is required, it will be made clear in the job description and at application stage.

### **Staff and volunteer training**

Open Door Exmouth considers the training and support of its employees a priority and seeks to create an environment where training is seen as an essential on-going part of employment.

Open Door Exmouth requires all staff to have an up-to-date First Aid qualification, to ensure that across all projects, there will be at least one person who is qualified to administer first aid. This staff training will be fully funded by Open Door Exmouth and staff members are expected to make every effort to attend, claiming time off in lieu if necessary. Volunteers will also be offered the opportunity to receive basic first aid training through annual refresher courses.

Open Door Exmouth will also run regular training sessions for all volunteers on safeguarding and child protection. All staff and volunteers must be aware of the Open Door safeguarding and child protection policy and reporting procedures and should make every effort to attend the safeguarding training when possible, to ensure they are fully aware of what to look out for and how to appropriately deal with potential safeguarding situations.

In addition to our own training schedule, Open Door Exmouth seeks to respond positively to training requests by employees where they increase or expand skills relating to their work with the Open Door Exmouth and where budgets permit. Equally, volunteers are encouraged to request training that they would consider helpful to their role within Open Door and where possible, this training need will be accommodated.

Project specific training programmes will be drawn up by each project leader and staff will be expected to attend as part of their normal work practice. Volunteers likewise will be encouraged to see these training programmes as an important part of their role in providing a consistently high quality of service to our clients.

### **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Policy**

Open Door Exmouth uses The Churches Agency for Safeguarding to carry out Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to assess the suitability of both staff members and volunteers, when required. As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks



processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Open Door Exmouth complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and National Care Standards guidance regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificates, and undertake to treat all volunteers/applicants fairly. We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

The DBS Code of Practice requires Open Door Exmouth to have a written policy and procedure on the recruitment of people with a criminal record and to ensure anyone applying for a job at Open Door Exmouth receives a copy. Open Door Exmouth is committed to the principle of equal opportunities and, subject to the overriding consideration of protecting children and vulnerable adults, we will endeavour to prevent unfair discrimination against those with a criminal record.

Where appropriate and justified under the current regulations, volunteers and applicants who are offered placements / employment will be asked to apply for a check of their criminal record from the Disclosure and Barring Service before the appointment is confirmed. There are two different levels of check:

*Standard* contains details of all convictions on record (including spent convictions) plus details of any cautions, reprimands or warnings. Information obtained on the government lists is of people considered unsuitable to work, or gain access to sensitive information relating to children/young people/vulnerable adults.

*Enhanced* involves an extra level of check with local police force records in addition to checks with the Police National Computer and the government department lists held by the Department for Children, Schools, Families and Department of Health, where appropriate. If you are working with children or young people, or in a support work capacity with vulnerable adults, for Open Door Exmouth, an Enhanced check will be required. It is illegal for a person who is on the appropriate barred list to apply to undertake regulated activity, just as it is illegal for an organization knowingly to enable such a person to undertake regulated activity on its behalf.

- Open Door Exmouth can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that we are legally entitled to know about. Where a DBS certificate at either standard or enhanced level can legally be requested (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended, and where appropriate Police Act Regulations as amended), Open Door Exmouth can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected.

- An application for a criminal record check is only submitted to DBS after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position.

- Open Door Exmouth ensures that all those who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. Open Door Exmouth also ensures that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- At interview, or in a separate discussion, Open Door Exmouth ensures that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment or volunteering.
- Open Door Exmouth undertakes to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar applicants from working or volunteering with Open Door Exmouth. This will depend on the nature, circumstances and background of the offence, and the time elapsed since the offence.

**If the DBS check confirms that there is nothing on the disclosure certificate to prevent the applicant from working in their chosen role, Open Door Exmouth will retain the certificate number and date of check only. Any copies of ID will be shredded.**

All DBS Certificate information will be kept in a locked cabinet with access strictly limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties. It is a criminal offence to pass this information onto anyone who is not entitled to see it. Certificate information is used only for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given. Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we retain DBS Certificate information for a period of up to six months. This is to allow time to consider and resolve any disputes or complaints. If, in exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep the information for longer, we will consult the DBS, taking data protection and human rights issues into consideration. Once the retention period has elapsed, any certificate information will be shredded. We will not keep a copy of the certificate or record its contents. We may however keep a record of the certificate number and type of certificate, date it was issued, name of subject and position applied for, and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

The DBS Certificate does not recommend a specific renewal interval for DBS checks. However, following the National Care Standards' recommendation, it is Open Door Exmouth's policy to renew all DBS Certificates every three years.

## Entrance & Exclusion Policy

### General Statement

The purpose of this document is to ensure that guidelines on security are set and complied with and that there is a common approach to potentially difficult situations across all Open Door Exmouth projects. The rules that follow are concerned with creating and maintaining a harmonious and welcoming atmosphere within the designated areas of Open Door Exmouth premises.

### Risk Management

During project hours it is essential that all areas of activity are covered by at least one volunteer/staff member. It is particularly important that the responsible staff member of project leader is familiar with this policy and with the names and faces of people known to present actual or potential risks to the security of the project or its visitors.

Enforceable rules are considered necessary to secure an atmosphere that enables the users, staff and volunteers to feel safe. Therefore the following will be enforced at all times:

### Rules

1. No alcohol or drugs on any Open Door Exmouth premises. Any bottles or cans must be surrendered on entry and returned to the user when they leave.
2. No admittance to anyone under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
3. No threatening or aggressive language or behaviour, violence or threats of violence.
4. No racist or sexist language or behaviour.
5. No stealing from Open Door Exmouth.

Failure to observe any of the above may lead to temporary or permanent exclusion from the project, in accordance with the table below:

Misdemeanor	Length of ban
Possession of drugs or alcohol	1 week
Under the influence of drugs or alcohol	1 week
Verbal abuse	1 week (minimum)
Harassment (racist or sexist)	1 week (minimum)
Stealing	1 week (minimum) + return of goods
Suspicion of and/or dealing drugs	1 month, subject to review
Suspicion of and/or taking drugs	1 month, subject to review
Threatening behaviour	1 – 3 months, subject to review
Damage to property	1 – 3 months, subject to review
Actual violence	3 – 6 months, subject to review
Use of a weapon	6 – 12 months, subject to review

Exclusions will take account of the circumstances and be flexible but nevertheless consistent. Repeated exclusions for similar incidents will carry additional time penalties. 'Subject to review' means that, after consultation, a visitor may be allowed to use the Open Door project again, after signing a written agreement, or the exclusion period may be

extended. All exclusions of 2 weeks or more will require service users to enter into a written agreement not to repeat the offence before being allowed to return.

No person, employed or voluntary, working in the project should subject themselves to unnecessary danger and should always seek assistance if required. If, in the interests of safety, staff consider it necessary to call the Police, this should be done by dialling 999. If the incident is of a serious nature, the Trustees may bring charges against the individuals concerned. **Unless the Project Leader or a staff member is not present, volunteers should refer any disruptive behaviour to the Project Leader or a staff member, and leave them to deal with the situation.**

Incidences of violence, threatening behaviour, or substance abuse may need to be reported to the Police after the event for their record and to protect the centre.

### **Other guidelines**

1. If anyone is showing signs of suspicious or unacceptable behaviour do not delay in taking action. If you not feel competent to cope with the situation, avoid confrontation and contact the Team Leader.
2. Staff and volunteers should not divulge their own or anyone else's home address or telephone number to a service user.
3. Storage of personal items belonging to service users will not be allowed.
4. All bags should remain in full view and if possible close to the person who brought them. No-one else should be allowed to tamper with them.
5. Money will not be given or loaned to service users. If someone asks for money, refer them to the project leader.
6. No personal items of value will be stored on Open Door premises.
7. Interviews should be conducted in public areas where possible. If privacy is required, volunteers/staff members should inform the Project Leader that they are using the interview room (Café and Contact Centre). Staff should sit between service users and the door so they can exit quickly in case of threatening behaviour against them.

### **Dogs**

Dogs are not permitted on Open Door premises, unless they are Guide Dogs. All other dogs must be left outside the premises securely fastened to an anchor point. Where dogs are felt to be a threat to the safety of service users, staff, volunteers, or the general public, their owners must be asked to remove them.

### **Restricted access at The Open Door Centre**

The kitchen, laundry and offices are off limits to the users of the Open Door Centre. Access may only be granted to authorised staff and volunteers specifically working in those areas.

### **Daily Diary or Log Book of significant events**

A record of relevant or significant events will be kept for all projects and verbal information will be passed on as necessary (but see also Open Door Exmouth's Confidentiality Policy).

### **Risk Management Procedure**

Staff and volunteers are asked to be aware of the need for good behaviour across all projects. When necessary, service users must be challenged about unacceptable behaviour and made aware of the consequences of their failure to respond to that challenge.

- Be aware of the signs and try to prevent the incident from occurring or escalating.
- Try to reduce the opportunities for violence against yourself or others.
- Deal with the situation as calmly and sympathetically as you can and not alone if possible.
- Always report incidents to the Project Leader who will follow up with the Projects Director.
- Ensure the incident is recorded in the diary.

### **Alarm procedure in the Open Door Centre**

Alarm buttons are installed in the front two offices. When pressed the intruder alarm sounds and the alarm panel displays 6 for the Interview Room, and 7 for the Admin Office.

- a. Volunteer team leaders should report immediately to those locations when the alarm sounds.
- b. Upon arrival at the scene of the alarm and with due regard to personal safety, staff or volunteers will determine the cause of the alarm and intervene in an appropriate manner.
- c. The Project Leader or responsible staff member will then instruct a volunteer to turn off the alarm and call the emergency services, if required.

## Complaints Policy

Open Door Exmouth aims to identify and solve problems at the earliest possible stage.

### Who has the right to complain?

Anyone! Any staff member, volunteer or service user has the right to complain if they have been involved with Open Door Exmouth and are not satisfied with their experience.

Open Door Exmouth helps many people during the course of a year. We try to do our best to meet the needs of all who come to us. However, every so often someone comes away from Open Door Exmouth feeling unhappy. Perhaps you felt that you were not treated with respect or courtesy. Perhaps the advice we gave you was wrong or didn't help you. Unfortunately, these things can happen. We are not perfect although we aim to be as good as we can be. That is why we have a complaints procedure. We want to learn from our mistakes. What you are able to tell us helps us to learn how to improve the service we give. Your complaint will be treated confidentially and quickly.

### What can you do?

If you are unhappy, it is important that you let us know. Please make your comments to a staff member or project leader or the person who is in charge of the project. He or she may be able to sort out the problem straightaway.

If this does not satisfy you, you can make a formal complaint. This can be done in several ways. You can make an appointment to see the Project Leader, and talk to him/her about your complaint. You can request a complaints form from any staff member or project leader and hand it in to the Open Door Centre when it is open or send it by post to the following address: Open Door Exmouth, Church Street, Exmouth, EX8 1PE, marking it for the attention of Helen Tribble, Projects Director, or Daryl Fulls, Chair of Trustees. Alternatively, you can send your complaint by e-mail to Helen Tribble, Projects Director: [helen@opendoorexmouth.org.uk](mailto:helen@opendoorexmouth.org.uk).

### Protection

This policy is designed to offer protection to those employees and volunteers of the Open Door Exmouth who disclose such concerns provided the disclosure is made:

- \* in good faith
- \* in the reasonable belief of the individual making the disclosure that it tends to show malpractice or impropriety and if they make the disclosure to an appropriate person (outlined above). It is important to note that no protection from internal disciplinary procedures is offered to those who choose not to use the procedure. In an extreme case malicious or wild allegations could give rise to legal action on the part of the persons complained about.

### Confidentiality

Open Door Exmouth will treat all such disclosures in a confidential and sensitive manner. The identity of the individual making the allegation may be kept confidential so long as it does not hinder or frustrate any investigation. However, the investigation process may

reveal the source of the information and the individual making the disclosure may need to provide a statement as part of the evidence required.

### **Whistleblowing**

Open Door Exmouth is committed to the highest standards of openness and accountability.

An important aspect of accountability and transparency is a mechanism to enable staff and volunteers of Open Door Exmouth to voice concerns in a responsible and effective manner. It is a fundamental term of every contract of employment that an employee will faithfully serve his or her employer and not disclose confidential information about the employer's affairs. Nevertheless, where an employee or volunteer discovers information which they believe shows serious malpractice or wrongdoing within the organisation then this information should be disclosed internally without fear of reprisal, and there should be arrangements to enable this to be done independently of line management (although in relatively minor instances the line manager would be the appropriate person to be told).

The Public Interest Disclosure Act, which came into effect in 1999, gives legal protection to employees against being dismissed or penalised by their employers as a result of publicly disclosing certain serious concerns. Open Door Exmouth has endorsed the provisions set out below so as to ensure that no members of staff or volunteers should feel at a disadvantage in raising legitimate concerns.

It should be emphasised that this policy is intended to assist individuals who believe they have discovered malpractice or impropriety. It is not designed to question financial or business decisions taken by Open Door Exmouth nor should it be used to reconsider any matters which have already been addressed under harassment, complaint, disciplinary or other procedures. Once the "whistleblowing" procedures are in place, it is reasonable to expect staff and volunteers to use them rather than air their complaints outside of Open Door Exmouth.

The Whistleblowing policy is designed to enable employees and volunteers of Open Door Exmouth to raise concerns internally and at a high level and to disclose information which the individual believes shows malpractice or impropriety. This policy is intended to cover concerns which are in the public interest and may at least initially be investigated separately but might then lead to the invocation of other procedures e.g. disciplinary. These concerns could include

- \* Financial malpractice or impropriety or fraud
- \* Failure to comply with a legal obligation or Statutes
- \* Dangers to Health & Safety or the environment
- \* Criminal activity
- \* Improper conduct or unethical behaviour
- \* Attempts to conceal any of these

### **Allegations against Staff and Volunteers**

All allegations will be treated seriously and investigated thoroughly. For safeguarding allegations, the member of staff or volunteer will have no contact with children/young

people/vulnerable adults during the investigation. The member of staff may also be suspended whilst the investigation takes place.

### **What we will do**

The Project Leader/Projects Director/Chair of Trustees will acknowledge receipt of your written complaint within 5 working days. They will then fully investigate the matter, and where necessary, inform the member of staff, against whom the complaint is made, of their right to be accompanied by a trade union or other representative at any future interview or hearing. If there is evidence of criminal activity, the police will be informed.

A judgement concerning the complaint will be made by the investigating officer and will be detailed in a written reply to the complainant. We aim to send this within 15 working days. However, if the issue is complicated, any delay beyond this will be explained to you. You will be kept informed of progress. The reply will:

- a. Set out the complaint so that the complainant can be sure it has been understood
- b. Describe the event and circumstances surrounding them
- c. Set out the findings, giving reasons for the decision
- d. Apologise on behalf of Open Door Exmouth if the complaint is upheld and explain the steps it has taken to avoid it happening again

If the complaint is shown to be justified, then the Open Door Exmouth disciplinary procedure or other appropriate measures will be invoked, as deemed necessary.

### **A review of your complaint**

If you are not satisfied with the response, you can ask for a further review. Your request must be made in writing or by e-mail within 14 days from the date of the response by Open Door Exmouth. An independent adjudicator will conduct the review. The independent adjudicator will be a minister of one of the churches that are members of Churches Together in Exmouth, and will be appointed by the Board of Trustees of Open Door Exmouth. You will be informed of the outcome of this review within four weeks from your request for the review, or if the matter is complex, you will be kept informed of the progress of the review. For any complaints regarding the Child Contact Centre, if the complainant is still not happy with the response, they may write to the Chief Executive of NACCC who will aim to facilitate a satisfactory conclusion.

### **Anonymous Allegations**

This policy encourages individuals to put their name to any disclosures they make. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less credible, but they may be considered at the discretion of Open Door Exmouth.

In exercising this discretion, the factors to be taken into account will include:

- The seriousness of the issues raised
- The credibility of the concern
- The likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources



### **Untrue Allegations**

If an individual makes an allegation in good faith, which is not confirmed by subsequent investigation, no action will be taken against that individual. In making a disclosure the individual should exercise due care to ensure the accuracy of the information. If, however, an individual makes malicious or vexatious allegations, and particularly if he or she persists with making them, disciplinary action may be taken against that individual.

### **Grievance & Disciplinary**

If a complaint or concern is raised about a staff member or volunteer, Open Door Exmouth will follow its grievance and disciplinary procedure. The main principles of the grievance and disciplinary procedure are:

- Open Door Exmouth will attempt to solve any problems before any formal complaint is made, by discussing the issue with the relevant parties.
- Staff members and volunteers will have the procedure explained to them and will be supported at all stages.
- Staff members and volunteers have a right to reply to any complaint and to appeal any disciplinary action that is taken.
- Any grievance will be kept confidential other than to those directly involved in the disciplinary procedure.
- The outcome of any grievance or disciplinary procedure will be recorded and copies provided to relevant parties.

Examples of unacceptable conduct may include, but are not limited to:

- Refusing to follow reasonable instructions
- Breach of any of the Open Door Exmouth policies and procedures
- Unsatisfactory performance of the duties of the role
- Frequent no-show at contracted (staff) or agreed (volunteer) hours/sessions without due reason
- Breach of confidentiality
- Inappropriate behaviour or harassment towards clients, staff or volunteers
- Dishonesty
- Incapacity to perform the role due to drunkenness or unauthorised drug taking

Full details of the Open Door Exmouth Disciplinary and Grievance Policy can be obtained on request from a member of staff.

## **Emergency Contacts**

- Police – non-emergency: 101
- Adult Mental Health Service (AMHS) and Crisis Resolution & Home Treatment Team (til 9:30pm): 01392 674988
- Children & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS): 01392 208600
- Exmouth Hospital (til 10pm): 01395 279684
- NHS Direct / Devon Doctors: 111 (urgent out of hours calls)
- Samaritans (24/7 support): 116 123
- Saneline (mental health helpline): 0300 304 7000
- Hopeline UK (suicide prevention helpline for people up to aged 35): 0800 068 4141 or text 07786 209697

Out of hours Emergency Duty Service - Devon: 0345 6000388

(The Emergency Duty Service will discharge Devon County Council's statutory social care responsibilities whilst ensuring public safety, by providing an emergency social care crisis response outside of normal working office hours, and can be contacted by adults, children, service users with mental health issues of learning disabilities, their families and carers plus concerned other parties such as neighbours or individuals wishing to report important information or social care concerns about Devon residents or social care users.)

## **Open Door Contacts**

Projects Director: Helen Tribble 01395 224218 / 07766 355529

Safeguarding Officer: Peter Chalkley 01395 275783 / 07710 599742

Child Contact Centre Project Leader: Marion Ley 07595 313854

Haven & Ice Project Leader: Jenna Burnett 07587 152775

## **Other agencies involved in safeguarding children**

In all projects involving children or young people Open Door Exmouth works with the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub run by Devon County Council which can be contacted on 0345 155 1071 or email [mashsecure@devon.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:mashsecure@devon.gcsx.gov.uk). For further info, see [www.devon.gov.uk/childprotection](http://www.devon.gov.uk/childprotection)

Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

Devon: Evergreen House,

Victoria Park Road,

Exeter EX2 4NU

Tel: 01392 208600

Child Exploitation Online Protection Centre can be contacted on 01870 000 3344 or [www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)

NSPCC can be contacted on 0808 800 5000 or [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

Childline can be contacted on 0800 1111 or [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

Who Cares? Is a free advice and counselling service for young people in care: 020 7017 8901 or [www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk](http://www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk)

[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk) provides anti bullying advice. Call 0207 730 3300 or Parent Advice Line 0207 823 5430

[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk) provides information for children, young people and their parents about mental health and wellbeing.

The Children's Legal Centre is an independent national organisation concerned with law and policy affecting children and young people, including refugee and migrant children. For free advice and information, see [www.childlawadvice.org.uk](http://www.childlawadvice.org.uk)

**Agencies with which we work**

In all projects involving vulnerable adults Open Door Exmouth works with Care Direct which can be contacted on 0345 1551 007 (or the Emergency Duty Service on 0345 6000 388) or [csc.caredirect@devon.gov.uk](mailto:csc.caredirect@devon.gov.uk)

The Open Door Child Contact Centre is affiliated to the National Association of Child Contact Centres which can be contacted on 0845 4500 280 or [www.naccc.org.uk](http://www.naccc.org.uk)

## Appendix 1 - Safeguarding Reporting Form

This form must be used to record information about a safeguarding concern. When completing the form **please use facts wherever possible** and distinguish between fact, observation, opinion and information from others.



Name and position of person completing the form:		
Telephone number:		
Email address:		
Name of Open Door project:		
Date of safeguarding incident:		
Name of vulnerable adult or child causing concern:		
Address of vulnerable adult/child (if known):		
Telephone number (if known):		
Names, date of birth and gender of any child/ren causing concern and any siblings:		
Name	Date of Birth	Gender
Names of any other household members or significant others involved with the adult / child:		
Name	Relationship to adult / child	
What is the adult / child's first language?		
Does the adult / child have special needs? (Y / N)		
If 'Yes' please give details:		

Nature / reason for your concern:			
Please give an opinion as to whether the adult / child may need urgent action to make them safe:			
Name of other agencies and workers involved with the adult / family / children:			
Contact name of worker	Agency of worker		
If the concern is regarding a child, has a parent with parental responsibility given written consent for a referral to be made to Children's Services or a Safeguarding Board? <span style="float: right;">Y / N</span>			
<b>To be completed by Projects Director or Safeguarding Officer:</b>			
<b>Please record the action agreed or that no further action is to be taken and the reasons for this decision</b>			
Name:		Date:	

## **Appendix 2: Additional Child Contact Centre Policies**

### **Domestic Abuse Policy**

The Exmouth Child Contact Centre believes that everyone has the right to live safely and without the fear of violence and cruelty. We recognise that domestic abuse is unacceptable and that it occurs throughout society, irrespective of class, culture, gender, income, race, religion or sexuality. Its effects are far-reaching and can impact on others, notably the children. We recognise that every child has the right to grow and develop in an environment free of domestic abuse, whether directly as a victim or witness of violence in its own home or in the community.

Exmouth Child Contact Centre accepts that some families using its Centre will have experienced varying levels of domestic abuse and we will ensure that they will receive sensitive and appropriate services. We also accept that the Centre needs to be organised and run in a way which allows these families, other Centre users and volunteers / staff to be safe. In order to meet these requirements we will ensure that:

1. The Centre's referral form will ask if domestic abuse is a feature of the case, currently and/or historically.
2. No family will be accepted until a referral form has been completed in full and received by the Project Leader.
3. Any information concerning domestic abuse will be treated seriously.
4. Use of the Centre will be denied to individuals or families where the Project Leader feels their presence is likely to present a threat to the well-being of other Centre users and volunteers / staff.
5. Once a family has been accepted the Project Leader will consider their safety needs and develop a plan by which they can be met. These will include the following:
  - a) Parents being invited to visit the Centre separately in advance of contact commencing.
  - B) Parents being given clear instructions in writing about which entrances to use and what times to arrive.
  - c) Where appropriate resident parents being asked to explore the possibility of someone other than themselves or their new partner bringing the child(ren) to the Centre.
  - d) The contact waiting room doors being kept closed and precautions taken to ensure parents do not meet each other in any other area of the centre.
  - e) The non-resident parent will be asked to wait at the end of contact until the resident parent has left the Centre and the area immediately around it.
  - f) Addresses, telephone numbers and other sensitive information will always remain strictly confidential.
6. Any distress to children or adults brought about by bullying or pressure to disclose information will be dealt with promptly and firmly.

7. If an individual or family's behaviour is threatening, causes distress or is disruptive they will be asked to leave. If they refuse to leave the police will be called.

### **Managing domestic abuse and conflict – guidelines for staff/volunteers**

1. There must be a minimum of three volunteers/staff on duty at all times. More may be needed depending upon the number of families using the Centre.
2. Volunteers/staff will be made aware of the particular needs of each family attending the Centre.
3. All volunteers/staff will receive training in the areas of domestic abuse, child protection and conflict management.
4. Volunteers/staff will have immediate access to a telephone when the Centre is open and will be made aware of the procedure to follow in the event of an incident or an emergency.

### **Training Policy**

It is essential that the Exmouth Child Contact Centre is a safe place to be and that means developing the awareness and knowledge of the staff and volunteers involved in running it. Our NACCC training programme is mandatory for all staff and volunteers and forms part of our accreditation. All staff and volunteers must complete the training programme over a 3-year rolling period. A training record will be kept for all staff/volunteer, stating the date and title of completed training. Upon completion of a training module, all staff and volunteers must inform Kelly Lawton, Volunteer Co-ordinator, by email [info@opendoorexmouth.org.uk](mailto:info@opendoorexmouth.org.uk) or telephone 01395 224218.

### **Training programme**

1. Induction training for all new volunteers
2. Family breakdown
3. Health & safety risk assessment
4. Encouraging positive contact – working with dads
5. Conflict management
6. Domestic violence and abuse
7. Understanding substance misuse – impact on families
8. Managing reluctant family members
9. Family risk assessment
10. Safeguarding training (repeated annually)

The NACCC training programme will be delivered through a combination of online (e-learning) and face to face training delivered by the Project Leaders or Safeguarding Officer, using the NACCC training workbooks where necessary.

### **Additional training for Project Leaders**

All project leaders running the Exmouth Child Contact Centre will attend the NACCC co-ordinator training once every three years.

## **Toys Policy**

### **Purpose and Scope**

Exmouth CCC is committed to providing a safe environment for children and parents using our centre. We will ensure that all toys and games are clean and fit for purpose.

### **Aims**

This policy will assist all volunteers and co-ordinators to ensure that all toys and games are fit for purpose, that they are cleaned appropriately and stored correctly and that they are checked regularly for signs of damage and wear and tear.

### **Responsibilities**

The volunteer team leaders will ensure that all volunteers are familiar with this policy, that they are aware of cleaning methods, that there is a system in place for cleaning and will monitor and review the policy annually.

### **Criteria**

1. All toys and games that are used should be capable of being cleaned thoroughly.
2. Soft toys must be able to be laundered.
3. Electrical games will be included in the Open Door annual PAT testing.
4. Donated items will be accepted if they are appropriate and can be cleaned.
5. Toys will be checked each session to ensure that they are fit for use.
6. Toys used for babies and young children must be cleaned at the end of the session using anti bacterial wipes. Other toys will be cleaned on a monthly basis.

### **Cleaning Procedure**

The Exmouth CCC has a handheld steam cleaner that can be used for disinfecting many of our toys.

Soft toys	Laundered or steam clean
Books	Use with anti bacterial wipes
Construction toys	Use steam cleaner
Plastic toys	Use steam cleaner
Handheld games with batteries	Use anti bacterial wipes
Games	Use anti bacterial wipes



## **Appendix 3: Additional Haven Policies**

### **Self Harm Policy**

This policy forms an essential part of Open Door Exmouth's safeguarding policy. It should be viewed in conjunction with this.

#### **Aim**

The overall aim is to ensure that staff and volunteers are able to recognise and act swiftly and appropriately to all cases of self-harm.

#### **Objectives**

To recognise any form of self-harm. To understand that self-harming is almost always a symptom of some underlying emotional or psychological issue. To put in place a framework for support. To be alert to the possibility that self-harm may arise from abuse and may require a safeguarding procedure to be followed.

#### **What is self-harm?**

Self-harm is any deliberate behaviour that inflicts physical harm on someone's own body and is aimed at relieving emotional distress.

Self-harm can include:

- cutting themselves
- scratching themselves
- burning or scalding their body
- banging and bruising themselves
- scrubbing or scouring their body
- deliberate bone-breaking
- punching themselves
- sticking things into their body
- swallowing inappropriate objects or liquids
- taking too many tablets (overdose)
- biting themselves
- pulling their hair or eye lashes out
- attempting to terminate an unwanted pregnancy

(This is not an exhaustive list)

Less obvious self-harm behaviours also include:

- controlled eating patterns – anorexia, bulimia, over-eating
- indulging in risky behaviour
- risky sexual behaviour
- destructive use of drugs or alcohol
- an unhealthy lifestyle
- getting into fights

#### **Prevention**

An estimated 1 in 12 children self-harm at some point and it is far better to prevent self-harm before it happens.

The risk of self-harm can be significantly reduced by the creation of a supportive environment in which individual's self-esteem is raised and healthy peer relationships are fostered. This can be achieved through development of good relationships by all members

who attend Haven and in particular through the activities and engagement alongside our well trained volunteers.

Staff and Volunteer awareness of issues leading to self-harm is increased through training and the understanding of our comprehensive policies on Safeguarding and Child Protection. This policy is circulated to all staff and volunteers, and is available to anyone else, including parents, by email or hard copy upon request.

### **Warning signs**

Self-harm may present as visible or invisible signs. The latter can include ingested materials or cuts/ bruises under the clothing.

Staff, volunteers, parents and peers may become aware of warning signs that might indicate that someone is experiencing difficulties that may lead to self-harm or suicide. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and anyone observing any of these should seek further advice from the Project Leader and or Open Door's Safeguarding Officer.

### **Warning signs may include:**

- visible signs of injury (e.g. scarring)
- a change in dress habit that may be intended to disguise injuries (e.g. an unexpected / sudden change to wearing long sleeved tops)
- changes in eating or sleeping habits
- increased isolation from friends or family; becoming socially withdrawn
- changes in activity or mood (e.g. becoming more introverted or withdrawn)
- lowering of academic achievement
- talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- abusing drugs or alcohol
- expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- changes in clothing / image

### **Links to emotional distress (including abuse)**

Those who self-harm are usually suffering emotional or psychological distress and it is vital that all such distress is taken seriously to assist in alleviating that distress or to minimise the risk of increasing distress and potentially suicide.

***Any young person who suggests they are experiencing suicidal feelings must be taken extremely seriously and safeguarding procedures put in place immediately; a young person showing this level of distress must NOT be left unattended.***

Emotional/psychological risk factors associated with self-harm could be:

- recent trauma e.g. death of a friend or relative
- parental divorce
- negative thought patterns
- low self-esteem
- bullying

- abuse – sexual, physical, emotional or through neglect
- sudden changes in behaviour and/or academic performance
- relationship difficulties (with family or friends)
- learning difficulties
- pressure to achieve (from teachers or parents)
- substance abuse (including tobacco, alcohol or drugs)
- issues around sexuality

Other causal or risk factors

- inappropriate advice or encouragement from internet websites or chat-rooms
- experimentation
- ‘dares’ or bravado
- ‘copycat behaviour’
- concerns by a girl that she may be pregnant (including an attempt to terminate this)
- a history of abuse of self-harming in the family
- parental separation
- domestic abuse and/or substance misuse in the home
- media influence
- issues surrounding religious or cultural identity

Information must be available within Haven to help those who may seek further information during a session. Those experiencing distress may choose to find an appropriate person to talk, e.g. a volunteer.

Within Open Door, Safeguarding Officer (Peter Chalkley), working in coordination with the Project Leader, are responsible for self-harm matters. Anybody concerned about someone self-harming must liaise and report all conversations to the Project Leader, who, with support from the Safeguarding Officer, will follow up with sensitivity, discretion and in line with the Safeguarding Policy. See procedure below.

Haven Project Leader (Jenna Burnett): 01395 255672 / 07541 308264

Open Door Safeguarding Officer (Peter Chalkley): 07710 599742

Open Door Projects Director (Helen Tribble): 01395 224218 / 07766 355529

**Open Door’s Procedures for dealing with self-harm**

If there is concern that a child may be self-harming or is thinking of self-harming, this should be reported to the Project Leader.

The Project Leader will then arrange to have a 1:1 discussion with the child and discuss self-care and where there is no child protection issue raised, we will support the child to inform their parents to foster an honest relationship. This can be after the session or that evening, with the support of the Project Leader if desired or the Project Leader can inform parents on

their behalf. Each individual case and approach needs to be handled carefully and sympathetically to support the wellbeing of the child. The decision about how parents/guardians will be told will be made in consultation between the Project Leader and the child.

In a situation in which it is disclosed that self-harm is symptomatic of abuse in the home, the Project Leader or the Open Door Safeguarding Officer may take the decision to make a referral directly to the appropriate authority without informing the parents.

When parents are informed, they will be encouraged to work in partnership with Haven in supporting the child through this difficult time. Their family will be given advice and information about appropriate support organisations. Parents will also be invited to attend our parent support sessions. Open Door Exmouth will continue to support the child on their recovery journey. Parents will be given an information and support pack around self-harm the evening they are informed their child is self-harming.

In the case of **severe** self-harm requiring medical intervention/A&E, parents will be informed immediately.

If serious physical harm has occurred the child should be taken by their parents to A&E for medical assessment and care. In an emergency, an ambulance must be called and parents will be informed.

Children who are known to be self-harming attending the group must not display open wounds/injuries - these must be dressed appropriately.

As stated in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, staff and volunteers must not promise confidentiality, but reassure the child that only those people who need to know will be informed for their safety.

Volunteers must report incidents of self-harm concerns in person to the Project Leader or the Open Door Safeguarding Officer by completing a concern/Safeguarding form. Matters of self-harm may be raised by any volunteer.

If a child suggests that there is evidence of self-harm beneath his/her clothing, a member of staff or volunteer should accept such statements and not ask the pupil to remove clothing to reveal wounds/bruises etc. If needed a referral to the School Nurse will be made and they may investigate such evidence in a sensitive and appropriate manner in the Health Centre.

### **Advice to parents**

Parents should not feel isolated if they know or suspect that their child (or one of their child's friends) is at risk or is actually self-harming. The advice contained within this policy provides a first source of useful information and guidance. If a parent has any concerns they

are welcome to attend our parent support sessions at the Open Door Centre for help, support and advice. If more immediate advice is needed contacting the GP is advised and or online support (see below).

### **Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually (or earlier if necessary) by the Projects Director.

### **Linked Policies**

The Safeguarding and child protection policy is linked to this policy and should be noted when dealing with cases or suspected cases of self-harm.

### **Useful Resources and Helplines**

**Childline** – 24hr helpline for children and young people. 0800 1111 (free phone from landlines) or 0800 400 222 – text phone. [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

**Young Minds** – national charity committed to improving the mental health of children and young people. Interactive website for advice and information. [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

**Recover Your Life** – Self-harm support community providing support and advice to those seeking to recover from self-harm. [www.recoveryourlife.com](http://www.recoveryourlife.com)

**National self-harm network** – support for individuals who self-harm, friends and family. 0800 622 6000 (Thursday – Saturday 7 p.m. – 11 p.m., Sunday 6.30 p.m. – 10.30 p.m.) [www.nshn.co.uk](http://www.nshn.co.uk)

**Selfharm.co.uk** – Online support for those experiencing self-harming behaviour and excellent parent advice and support.

**The Mix** – online support for those under 25 <http://www.themix.org.uk/mental-health/self-harm> - articles and stories from people who self-harm

## **Confidentiality**

This Haven specific information forms an essential part of Open Door Exmouth's Safeguarding and Confidentiality policies, and therefore should be viewed in conjunction with these.

### **Aim**

The overall aim is to ensure that children, parents, staff and volunteers understand the limited confidentiality we can offer at Haven.

### **Objectives**

To have a clear guideline on what can/ cannot be kept confidential.

### **What is confidentiality? Open Door Exmouth's Procedures**

In practice there are few circumstances where absolute confidentiality is offered at Haven. We strive to strike a balance between ensuring the safety, well-being and protection of all we support, ensuring there is an ethos of trust where children, young people and parents can ask for help when they need it and ensuring that when it is essential to share personal information e.g. for child protection concerns the Open Door Exmouth Safeguarding Policies and Procedures are followed. This means that in most cases what is offered is limited confidentiality.

Teachers and lecturers are not legally obliged to inform parents or guardians automatically of confidential disclosures by students, such as those concerning their emotional lives. However, at Haven we believe that it is essential to work in partnership with parents and carers and we endeavor to keep them involved in their child's progress/journey, so there may be times when we share concerns about their progress or behavior. We also need to maintain a balance so that our attendees can share any concerns and ask for help when they need it. Where a child does discuss a difficult personal issue, volunteers are trained to encourage them to also discuss the matter with their parents or carers and may be supported to do so where it is appropriate. The safety, well-being, and protection of the children is the paramount consideration in all decisions staff and volunteers make about confidentiality.

As stated in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, staff & volunteers must not promise confidentiality, but reassure the child that only those people who need to know will be informed for their safety. All those attending Haven will be informed about confidentiality from the outset.

### **Monitoring and Review**

The Open Door Exmouth Confidentiality policy will be reviewed annually (or earlier if necessary) by the Open Door Exmouth Projects Director.