Safeguarding policy

Policy agreed: October 2026
Review date: October 2028

Purpose
ICVA believes that no child or vulnerable adult should experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that safeguards them and the people we work with.

The policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children and vulnerable adults are paramount in all circumstances. The policy aims to ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio- economic background, all people who come into contact with ICVA should:

- have a positive, supportive and effective experience of membership of ICVA;
- be clear from ICVA resources that effective safeguarding features throughout our work, and;
- be protected from abuse and harm if visited in custody by an employee or director of ICVA by ensuring appropriate behaviour from ICVA staff, and/or by reporting any disclosed concerns regarding custody staff for further investigation.

The policy will be promoted to both members and the public via ICVA's public website. Adherence to the policy is mandatory for everyone involved in ICVA whilst undertaking duties pertaining to ICVA. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

Definitions
Child / Young Person
A child is defined as anyone who has not reached the age of 18. This is enshrined in UK law and the UN Convention of Human Rights. For the purposes of this policy and relevant procedures the term "child" and "young person" are used to mean the same thing.

Safeguarding children is defined in "Working together to safeguard children 2018" as: protecting children from maltreatment;

- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Vulnerable Adults / Adults at Risk
ICVA will use the definition of an adult at risk taken from the NHS Safeguarding advice. This details that a vulnerable adult is someone:

- Aged 18 years or over.
- Who may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, and;
- who is or may be unable to take care of themself, or;
- unable to protect themself against abuse, significant harm or exploitation.

For the purposes of this policy ICVA will apply similar standards and responses to young people as vulnerable adults.

Types of Abuse
Abuse is defined as: "a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by

inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or by others (e.g. via the internet)."

Children and adults may be vulnerable to neglect and abuse or exploitation from within their family and from individuals they come across in their day-to-day lives. These threats can take a variety of different forms, including sexual, physical, and emotional abuse; neglect; exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups; trafficking; online abuse; sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation.

Whatever the form of abuse or neglect, ICVA will put the needs of children, young people and vulnerable adults first when determining what action to take. Abuse may be perpetrated by a range of people including family members, adult(s) known to the young person or adult, and offences are committed by females as well as males.

ICVA recognises that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely stand-alone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

Scope
This policy applies to all employees and directors of ICVA, irrespective of their role or contract type and any person or organisation working on ICVA's behalf.

Responsibilities
ICVA believes that the responsibility for safeguarding is shared by everyone working with us, but with a clear leadership and accountability structure running through the organisation.

- Board of directors: reviews and approves the Safeguarding Policy and has a named director with specific responsibility for safeguarding. The named director for ICVA is Kirsty Scott.
- CEO: sets the organisational culture of safeguarding.

All employees are responsible for ensuring that the welfare of members and those visited in custody remains paramount in all that we do.

Managing Concerns and Disclosures
All concerns and allegations will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. ICVA recognises that whilst some incidents and allegations will require the support and / or intervention of external agencies, others may be supported through existing internal support mechanisms.

Procedure
Member disclosure
If a member discloses that they have been a victim of abuse, or if an ICVA employee or director has concerns that a child, young person or adult is at risk of harm or abuse, they should immediately:

1. Inform the member that what they say may not be able to be kept confidential (if they are at risk of harm or someone else is).
2. If they continue, allow the person to speak without interruption, accepting what is said. Reassure them that they have done the right thing while passing no judgement.
3. Ensure no situation arises that could cause any further concern.
4. Record the facts as you know them and pass to the Designated Safeguarding Lead / or Senior Employee at the soonest opportunity for them to raise with non-emergency police services.
5. If a member of staff suspects abuse, or has concerns about another staff member, but it has not been disclosed, follow the process as above but without Steps 1 and 2.

Detainee Disclosure
If a child or vulnerable adult discloses that they have been a victim of abuse whilst an ICVA employee or

director is present in custody for ICVA purposes, they should immediately:

1. Inform the young person/vulnerable adult that what they say may not be able to be kept confidential (if they are at risk of harm or someone else is).
2. If they continue, allow the person to speak without interruption, accepting what is said. Reassure them that they have done the right thing while passing no judgement.
3. Ensure no situation arises that could cause any further concern.
4. Record the facts as you know them and pass to the Custody Sergeant responsible for the detainee as soon as possible.
5. If the abuse is thought to have arisen from treatment of the child or vulnerable person in custody by a member of custody staff, ICVA employees should ensure the detainee is able to make a complaint and refer the matter to the Senior Police Officer/OPCC/IOPC for full investigation as appropriate.

Police and Social Services – Who to contact

ICVA will take the following approach if external agencies need to be involved:

- Child Protection and Welfare Concerns: ICVA will inform the police of any concerns in this area via the non-emergency police telephone number for the relevant area.
- Criminal offence committed against a young person or vulnerable adult: inform the police in the area in which the offence has occurred.

Information Sharing and Confidentiality

Data protection legislation is not a barrier to sharing reasonable safeguarding concerns.

ICVA will always share information concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Leader or the police, to prevent a young person or adult at risk from suffering neglect or physical, mental, or emotional harm then that information must be shared.

Prevent Policy

The aim of the Government's Prevent Strategy is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. In the Act this has simply been expressed as the need to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". Prevent covers international and domestic terrorist threats and includes the activities of far-right groups and animal rights groups.

ICVA's policy is that it will raise concerns with appropriate authorities if it is identified that any young person, vulnerable adult, staff member or volunteer is expressing vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs on any of its programmes.

Monitoring and Review

ICVA will review its Safeguarding policy at the time of any change in the Law, service delivery module or at a period of time elapsing of no less than every other year whichever is soonest.

Allegations against staff and volunteers

Any allegation that an employee or board member from ICVA has behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed an any member of ICVA, ICV or detainee in custody, will be taken seriously and dealt with sensitively and promptly.

Whistleblowing

ICVA has a clear whistleblowing procedure and promotes a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and the welfare of children to be addressed.