

Safeguarding Policy Statement

January 2025

Background

The Care Act 2018 sets a clear framework intended to create a safe environment for adults participating in organised activities. Its provisions are particularly relevant to anyone who might be at risk of abuse or neglect due to an illness that may affect their mental or physical health.

Take Heart Support Group (THSG) provides a safeguarding policy covering three specific areas:

1. Adults at risk
2. Online content
3. Dealing with external agencies

1. Adults at Risk

Take Heart Support Group (THSG) supports adults over 18 years old who may suffer from some form of heart disease and who's age means they fall within the scope of the Act.

Trustee responsibilities

The main activities organised by THSG are the weekly exercise, relaxation and social support classes conducted by tutors with British Association for Cardiovascular Prevention and Rehabilitation (BACPR) qualifications.

Overall responsibility for these classes lies with the Trustees of THSG who have a duty to arrange suitable venues that offer a safe environment for the classes and to provide appropriate equipment.

The Trustees of THSG have undertaken to implement this Policy and monitor its effectiveness. They will also make both Members and Tutors aware of its provisions by distributing copies of the Policy to Tutors, by displaying the Policy at venues where classes are held and by uploading it to our website at www.thsg.org.uk.

Member responsibilities

Members also have mutual responsibilities to each other. If they have any concerns about the physical or mental well being of another Member or of a Tutor, they should share these with the Safeguarding Officer, their Tutor or a Trustee, so that they can be addressed in the most appropriate way.

Our concerns

The Trustees consider that the nature of the activities that THSG organises, the locations

where these take place and the direct involvement of qualified Tutors in the classes mean the most likely concern will be if a Member or a Tutor feels intimidated, hurt or humiliated by the unwanted and offensive behaviour of a Tutor or another Member.

Bullying and harassment

Such behaviour may constitute bullying or harassment, and whilst it can be intentional, with the specific aim of upsetting the person at whom it is directed, the Trustees may consider that it is more likely to arise from a misunderstanding.

On one hand, someone may act in a manner that is unnecessarily forceful, rude or too personal, perhaps because they are faced by particular challenges in their lives that reduces their awareness of the effect that their behaviour on those around them.

On the other hand, someone may be unusually sensitive, perhaps because they too are faced by particular challenges in their lives, possibly heightening their emotions.

Other concerns

As well as fostering a safe, friendly atmosphere in THSG classes, the Trustees and Tutors recognise that it is important to try and spot changes in an individual's demeanour, fitness or physique.

These might point to either a physical or mental illness, or to more practical problems.

In these circumstances, it may be appropriate to offer to have a discreet, friendly and confidential conversation with the individual, to try and establish whether they are being supported, or whether they need some external help.

Simply sharing a problem may help an individual through a difficult period, but the most likely way forward will be to encourage them to talk to their family, friends or GP. Alternatively, and if appropriate, the Safeguarding Officer is able to make a referral to the local Safeguarding Team so that they can provide appropriate help and support.

As with all matters relating to both Members and Tutors, the overriding aim is to safeguard each individual's physical and spiritual health and well being.

The Tutor's role

Circumstances can change unexpectedly, so each Tutor will check that the room provides a suitable environment for their class, and that furniture and equipment appears to be clean, sound & usable.

Tutors also have specific responsibilities for:

- Adopting exercise routines that are appropriate to the needs of each individual member, especially if the Member is frail
- Identifying Members who may not be capable of participating in the classes and, if appropriate, for suggesting that they seek medical attention
- Identifying any Member who appears to be experiencing, or to be at risk of abuse or neglect
- Identifying signs of mental problems such as depression, or symptoms of drug or

- alcohol abuse
- Notifying the Safeguarding Officer if they have good reason to think that a Member may be suffering or be at risk

Responding appropriately

The Safeguarding Officer may be able to help to calm the situation and resolve misunderstandings that might have occurred, perhaps by helping those involved to understand what has happened.

Alternatively, if a more formal approach is needed, they can facilitate meetings with Tutors or Trustees. These might take the form of a single meeting at which concerns can be aired, or as separate meetings with each of the people involved, where the issues can be discussed. In either case, the aim will be to reconcile any differences in a discrete, confidential and sympathetic way.

More affirmative action

If these simple measures prove ineffective or are thought to be inappropriate, the Safeguarding Officer is able to report the matter to the local Safeguarding Team employed by the Local Authority who have the appropriate training and experience to decide how best to respond to the particular situation and will take matters forward as they see fit.

The Safeguarding Officer has undergone the necessary training to enable them to report an incident in the proper way, using the online forms published by the local Safeguarding Team.

In extreme circumstances, where immediate action is needed to protect someone, the Safeguarding Officer, or a Tutor or Trustee acting on their behalf, is able to ask the Police to intervene, but clearly this is a 'last resort'.

2. Online Content

THSG hosts both a website and a Facebook page publicising the weekly exercise and relaxation classes hosted by THSG and other items relating to the business of THSG including fundraising and other activities.

The Administrator's role

THSG has an Administrator, appointed by the Trustees, who is also a committee member and who is responsible for the maintenance of the THSG website and Facebook page. Only the Administrator can change content on the website and only the Administrator and other individuals invited by the Administrator can change content on the Facebook page.

The administrator undertakes to ensure that no content appears on either the website or Facebook page that could constitute a safeguarding risk to any individual.

The Administrator will check that any content submitted for display on the THSG website or Facebook page does not constitute any safeguarding issues.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that no compromising or embarrassing images or text appear
- Ensuring that no confidential information is disclosed
- Liaising with Members, the Safeguarding Officer, Committee members and Trustees if there is any ambiguity identified
- Removing or amending any content identified as inappropriate as soon as is possible
- Notifying the Safeguarding Officer if they have good reason to think that a Member may have suffered a safeguarding issue or is at risk as a result of any online content

Member responsibilities

Members also have mutual responsibilities to each other. If they have any concerns about any content on either the THSG website or Facebook page, they should share these with the Safeguarding Officer, the Administrator or a Trustee, so that they can be addressed in the most appropriate way.

Our concerns

The Trustees consider that the most likely concern will be if a Member or a Tutor feels intimidated, hurt or humiliated by content shown on the THSG website or Facebook page.

Responding appropriately

The Safeguarding Officer will be able to get the Administrator to remove or amend any online content deemed a safeguarding risk and may be able to help to calm the situation and resolve misunderstandings that might have occurred, perhaps by helping those involved to understand what has happened.

Alternatively, if a more formal approach is needed, they can facilitate meetings with the originators of content shown on the website or Facebook page. These might take the form of a single meeting at which concerns can be aired, or as separate meetings with each of the people involved, where the issues can be discussed. In either case, the aim will be to reconcile any differences in a discrete, confidential and sympathetic way.

More affirmative action

If these simple measures prove ineffective or are thought to be inappropriate, the Safeguarding Officer is able to report the matter to the local Safeguarding Team employed by the Local Authority who have the appropriate training and experience to decide how best to respond to the particular situation and will take matters forward as they see fit.

The Safeguarding Officer has undergone the necessary training to enable them to report an incident in the proper way, using the online forms published by the local Safeguarding Team.

In extreme circumstances, where immediate action is needed to protect someone, the Safeguarding Officer, or a Tutor or Trustee acting on their behalf, is able to ask the Police to intervene, but clearly this is a 'last resort'.

3. External Bodies

THSG has cause to contact various external bodies regarding the weekly exercise and relaxation classes hosted by THSG and other items relating to the business of THSG including fundraising and other activities.

These include, but are not limited to:

- Contact with The Charities Commission
- Contact with the British Heart Foundation (BHF)
- Contact with South Tees Foundation Trust and other medical referrers
- Contact with the British Association for Cardiovascular Prevention and Rehabilitation (BACPR)
- Contact with management of venues hosting THSG classes
- Contact with fundraising bodies, both local authority and commercial
- Contact with suppliers of equipment and companies who maintain equipment

Committee responsibilities

THSG Committee Members are permitted by the Trustees to undertake communications with external bodies as and when required. The responsibilities of Committee Members are the same as those listed above under Trustee Responsibilities.

Whilst Committee Members are empowered to undertake any necessary communications with external bodies responsibility for such communications lies ultimately with the Trustees.

Tutor's responsibilities

Tutors may need to contact external bodies both in their role as THSG Tutors and in respect to their continuing professional development.

These may include, but are not limited to:

- Contact with the British Association for Cardiovascular Prevention and Rehabilitation (BACPR)
- Contact with South Tees Foundation Trust and other medical referrers
- Contact with management of venues hosting THSG classes
- Contact with suppliers of equipment and companies who maintain said equipment

Member responsibilities

Members are unlikely to contact external bodies on behalf of THSG but there may be occasions where such contact is appropriate, such as certain fundraising activities where members can apply for funds on behalf of THSG. Any such contact should only be undertaken following consultation with and approval from the Committee.

Our concerns

The Trustees consider that the most likely concern will be if someone at an external body contacted by THSG feels intimidated, hurt or humiliated as a result of that contact.

Responding appropriately

The Safeguarding Officer should be the first port of call for anything relating to an external contact deemed a safeguarding risk and may be able to help to calm the situation and resolve misunderstandings that might have occurred, perhaps by helping those involved to understand what has happened.

Alternatively, if a more formal approach is needed, they can facilitate meetings with the originators of the contact. These might take the form of a single meeting at which concerns can be aired, or as separate meetings with each of the people involved, where the issues can be discussed. In either case, the aim will be to reconcile any differences in a discrete, confidential and sympathetic way.

More affirmative action

If these simple measures prove ineffective or are thought to be inappropriate, the Safeguarding Officer is able to report the matter to the local Safeguarding Team employed by the Local Authority who have the appropriate training and experience to decide how best to respond to the particular situation and will take matters forward as they see fit.

The Safeguarding Officer has undergone the necessary training to enable them to report an incident in the proper way, using the online forms published by the local Safeguarding Team.

In extreme circumstances, where immediate action is needed to protect someone, the Safeguarding Officer, or a Tutor or Trustee acting on their behalf, is able to ask the Police to intervene, but clearly this is a 'last resort'.

Seeking help and support

The Trustees of THSG are pleased that Sue Moseley has agreed to be our Safeguarding Officer, and are confident that she has the skills and experience needed to perform the duties ascribed under the Care Act 2014 to the 'Designated Person for Safeguarding.'

In taking on this important role, Sue has undertaken to:

- Take note of allegations or concerns
- Listen, observe and act appropriately to everyone involved in an incident, having taken advice from relevant sources
- Inform the Safeguarding Team at the Local Authority when appropriate, to secure their advice and action
- In the case of an emergency, to call the Police

Contacting Individuals

Sue Moseley (Safeguarding Officer) can be contacted in person at the Wednesday morning class at Coulby Newham, by calling 07817 429443 or by emailing sue.moseley@gmail.com

The Chair of Trustees of THSG can be contacted by calling 07977 201457 or by emailing chair@thsg.org.uk

The Secretary of THSG can be contacted by calling 07514 656130 or by emailing secretary@thsg.org.uk

The THSG Administrator can be contacted by emailing admin@thsg.org.uk