

FRIENDS OF HADLOW ROAD STATION

1. Introduction

Friends of Hadlow Road Station is a community group which aims to enhance and develop Hadlow Road Station and its environments as a resource for all. Activities include:

- Community events e.g. Santa visits, 150th opening of Hadlow Road Station.
- Planning and fund raising for the opening of a small station café.
- Regular “Tidy Up Days” of garden borders and enhancement of the station platform infrastructure and memorabilia.

The Friends group is keen to ensure that all members of our community are able to be involved in the events that we put on and that all community members can play an active role consistent with their abilities. This means that at times we work with vulnerable adults such as elderly residents in the village’s sheltered housing or those villagers who live in the Home Farm Trust houses. We recognise our responsibility to these people and are committed to ensure their safety when attending events organised by the Friends Group.

2. Policy Statement

Friends of Hadlow Road Station work with Cheshire West and Chester Council if there are any concerns about vulnerable adults’ safety. In particular, we recognise the importance of the document ‘*Adult Protection in Cheshire*’. This identifies the following guiding principles to safeguard the basic human rights of individuals which we support:

Privacy	The right of individuals to be left alone or undisturbed and free from intrusion or public attention to their affairs.
Dignity	Recognition of the intrinsic value of people regardless of circumstances by respecting their uniqueness and their personal needs; treating people with respect.
Independence	Opportunities to act and think without reference to another person, including a willingness to incur a degree of calculated risk.
Choice	The opportunity to select independently from a range of options.
Rights	The maintenance of entitlements associated with citizenship in a free society.
Fulfilment	The realisation of personal aspirations and abilities in all aspects of daily life.

We believe that no form of abuse is acceptable, that all vulnerable adults should be protected from abuse and will be supported in seeking treatment and redress in the

event that they have suffered at the hands of an abuser. Necessary and appropriate action will be taken by the Friends Group against anyone engaged in the deliberate and systematic abuse of vulnerable adults at any of the organised events.

We recognise that there are a range of forms of abuse which may include:

Sexual, including rape and sexual or sexual acts to which the person has not consented to or was pressured into consenting;

Psychological, including emotional abuse, threats, humiliation, intimidation, verbal abuse;

Financial or material, including theft, fraud, exploitation, the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits;

Neglect, including ignoring medical or physical care needs, the withholding of adequate food, heat, clothing and medication;

Discriminatory, including racist, sexist, that are based on a person's disability or other forms of similar treatment;

Institutional abuse or mistreatment by a regime or by any individual within any building where care is provided.

Although this list is fairly comprehensive, it is not exhaustive.

3. Actions if abuse is discovered

Any member of the Friends of Hadlow Road Station (FHRS) may encounter an example of abuse. They may witness an abusive event taking place or they may be told about something that has happened to an individual. If this happens, the following steps should be taken:

1. Ensure that the person involved is safe – this may involve calling emergency services if the person is in immediate danger or needs medical treatment.
2. Inform the Chair of FHRS as soon as possible, or in his absence, the Vice-Chair.
3. Record what has happened, using the person's own words where appropriate and dating and timing the recording.
4. Preserve any evidence.

The Chair or Vice-Chair will then make a referral to Cheshire West and Chester Council's Community Services Access Team by ringing 01244 973400 or 01606 76611 for out of hours. If a crime may have been committed he/she will also contact the Police. This will ensure that the relevant agencies will work with the person who may have been abused to establish what has happened and what action the person wants to be taken next. Work will also be done with the alleged abuser and multi-disciplinary options will be created by the relevant agencies to prevent, reduce or stop further abuse from happening.

FHRS undertakes to play a full part in any subsequent investigation and to support any person who has been involved in a suspected abusive event.

4. Guidelines

4.1 Good Practice Guidelines

If someone discloses abuse to you

DO:

- (a) Stay calm and try not show shock.
- (b) **Listen** carefully rather than question directly.
- (c) Be sympathetic.
- (d) Be aware of the possibility that medical evidence might be needed.
- (e) Tell the person that:
 - They did right to tell you;
 - You are treating this information seriously;
 - It was not their fault;
 - You must inform the appropriate manager.
 - With their consent the manager will contact Social Services.
 - The manager will contact social services without their consent in certain circumstances but that their wishes will be made clear throughout.
 - If a referral is made and they are reluctant to have the incidents investigated, this fact will be recorded and brought to the attention of the relevant Social Work Team Manager.
 - (If appropriate) the service/agency will take steps to protect and support them.
- (f) Report the disclosure to the Chair or Vice-Chair.
- (g) Write down, as soon as possible and as far as you are able, what the person disclosing said (see later for guidelines on how to record what was said).
- (h) Where appropriate record, on a body map, the location of any bruises, cuts and/or abrasions (see below).

DO NOT:

- (a) Press the person for more details, although you will need enough information for an initial report and assessment.
- (b) Stop someone who is freely recalling significant events, as they may not tell you again.

- (c) Promise to keep **secrets**; explain that the information will be kept confidential, i.e. information will only be passed to those people who have a "need to know".
- (d) Make promises that you cannot keep (such as "this will not happen to you again").
- (e) Contact the alleged abuser.
- (f) Be judgemental (e.g. "why didn't you run away?").
- (g) Pass on information to anyone who doesn't have a "need to know" i.e. do not gossip.

Usually you will have to write up your notes **after** you have responded to a disclosure. A disclosure may only provide part of the picture. However confused the details may seem, they may provide a key to the full story.

4.2 Preserving Evidence Guidelines

Your first concern is the safety and welfare of the abused person. However, your efforts to preserve evidence may be vital. When Police involvement is required they are likely to be on the scene quickly. Preservation of evidence is crucial if the Police investigation is to be effective. What you do or do not do in the time whilst you are waiting for the Police to arrive may make all the difference.

The following checklist aims to help you to ensure that vital evidence is not destroyed.

(A) In situations of physical and/or sexual assault:

- (a) If the abused person has a physical injury and it is appropriate for you to examine, always obtain their consent first.
- (b) Do not touch what you do not have to. Wherever possible leave things as they are. Do not clean up, do not wash anything or in any way remove fibres, blood, etc. If you do have to handle anything at the scene keep this to a minimum.
- (c) Do not touch any weapons unless they are handed directly to you. If this happens, as before, keep handling to a minimum. Place the items/weapons in a clean, dry paper bag.
- (d) Preserve the abused person's clothing and footwear, do not wash or wipe them. Handle them as little as possible.
- (e) Preserve anything that was used to comfort the abused person, for example, a blanket.
- (f) Secure the room, do not allow anyone to enter unless strictly necessary to support you or the abused person and/or the alleged perpetrator, until the Police arrive.

Following allegations of physical and/or sexual assault, consideration will be given to organising a medical examination of the abused person and the alleged perpetrator. The decision to carry out an examination will be taken during a strategy discussion/meeting. Any examination will be carried out by a Forensic Medical Examiner who will be contacted by the Police.

If a medical examination is required:

(a) Ensure that no one has physical contact with **both** the abused person and the alleged perpetrator as cross-contamination can destroy evidence. You may have to comfort both the abused person and the alleged perpetrator, e.g. if the alleged perpetrator is a service user. You need to be aware that cross-contamination can easily occur:

(b) Where appropriate, protect bedding and do not wash it.

(c) Preserve any bloodied items.

(d) Preserve any used condoms.

(B) In situations of theft/financial abuse:

(a) Ensure that receipts, bank books, bank statements, benefit books are secured.

(C) Methods of preservation:

(a) For most things use clean brown paper, if available, or a clean brown paper bag or a clean envelope. If you use an envelope do not lick it to seal.

(b) For liquids use clean glassware.

(c) Do not handle items unless necessary to move and make safe.

It is acknowledged that completion of all of the above tasks may not be possible in a traumatic situation. You are urged to do the best that you can.

(D) Recording the Incident

You should make a written account of what has happened as soon as possible, including:

(a) What you saw/heard/were told.

(b) How the incident occurred – do not speculate.

(c) The time.

(d) The place.

(e) The names of the people involved, including other potential witnesses.

(f) Any obvious evidence, e.g. weapon, blood.

(g) The state of the clothing of the abused person and perpetrator.

(h) Any injuries that either the abused person or the alleged perpetrator have received.

(i) The behaviour and attitudes of the people involved in the incident.

Body Map

