Safeguarding Policy Statement

Citizens UK is the home of community organising in the UK. Community Organising is based on the principle that when people work together, they have the power to change their neighbourhoods, cities, and ultimately society for the better. We work with leaders from our member organisations and teach them a method of community organising so they can take power and achieve change on the issues that matter to them. We also work with a wide cross section of organisations through our Living Wage Foundation work. At Citizens UK our 'volunteers' are our Chapter Leaders and parents that help deliver initiatives for our PACT project (Parents and the Community Together).

Our responsibility

At Citizens UK we believe that everyone has the right to be kept safe from harm, exploitation and abuse. We recognise that:

• Everyone, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, has a right to equal protection from all types of harm, exploitation, and abuse.

• Some of the people we work with or come into contact with may be in more vulnerable circumstances and less able to protect themselves, because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency on others, physical or mental ill health, communication needs or because they are children.

• We have a responsibility to ensure our people and activities do no harm to others, and that they do not expose them to the risk of harm, exploitation and abuse.

Our safeguarding commitment

We are committed to building strong and safe communities and we believe that all Citizen UK employees and volunteers play an active part in keeping themselves and those they work with safe.

We do this by:

• Valuing, listening to and respecting those we work with.

• Encouraging the active participation of our employees and volunteers and those we work with in keeping themselves and others safe, ensuring they have a voice and a choice and know how to seek help if they need it.

• Carrying out appropriate risk assessments for all our activities to ensure the safety of those present.

• Recruiting employees and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made to assess their suitability.

• Ensuring all employees and volunteers are made aware of this policy and have access to appropriate training to understand their responsibilities.

• Having effective procedures in place for responding to safeguarding concerns and designated staff to respond to them.

• Monitoring the implementation of our safeguarding policy and taking any measures required to strengthen and improve existing practice.

Responding to safeguarding concerns

A safeguarding concern is any worry or concern about the safety or well-being of a person because of something seen or heard, or information which has been received. This includes any concerns about the behaviour of Citizens UK employees or volunteers which is harmful or puts others at risk. E.g., someone may tell you they, or someone they know, has been harmed, exploited, or abused or you might witness a situation where a person is putting the safety of an adult or child at risk.

What will we do when we have a safeguarding concern?

At Citizens UK we will:

- Act quickly and appropriately when a safeguarding concern is reported to us.
- Treat all safeguarding concerns in a professional, confidential and sensitive way.
- Always act in the best interests of people, respecting and involving them, giving them a choice over decision making which impacts them, unless they lack the capacity to do so or it would put them at serious risk of harm, exploitation, abuse or neglect.
- Provide people with safe and appropriate advice, signposting and referring them to services that meet their needs.
- Work in partnership with other organisations, including statutory services like the police and social care to make sure people get the help they need.
- Refer concerns where a child or adult at risk has been or is at significant risk of harm, exploitation, abuse and neglect to local authority social care or the police.
- Protect confidential information except where the wider duty of care or the public interest might justify making it known.

How to report a safeguarding concern

Anyone can report a safeguarding concern. You can:

- Speak to a Citizens UK employee if you are attending one of our activities.
- Speak to a manager or Safeguarding Lead person if you are Citizens UK employee or volunteer.
- Anyone can contact the Safeguarding Officer directly on whistleblowing@citizensuk.org

What if the concern is not related to Citizens UK?

The Safeguarding Officer can still give advice and guidance, but they cannot take action on your behalf.

- If you are worried about the safety or welfare of an adult, call the NSPCC Adult Helpline for confidential advice on 0808 800 5000.
- If you are worried about the safety or welfare of a child call the police. **999** for an emergency. **101** for a non-emergency.

Our Safeguarding Standards

To meet our safeguarding commitments, we have developed 5 key standards. Each standard has a range of policies, procedures, guidance and activities which are designed to help us implement this policy.

Prevention

Standard	Aim	Specific policy, procedure or areas of activity
1. **Awareness and training**	All employees and volunteers are made aware of this policy and have access to appropriate training to understand their responsibilities.	**The Safeguarding Policy** • All employees and volunteers are introduced to the Safeguarding Policy\Statement as part of their induction. • The policy is communicated to the public through the CUK website. • All partner and member organisations receive a copy of the **Safeguarding Policy Statement** and **Safeguarding Reporting Procedures** and safeguarding is discussed and included as part of their contract or Memorandum of Understanding. • All employees and volunteers receive appropriate training, guidance and support to ensure effective implementation of the policy, its associated procedures and guidance.
2. **Project and programme design and delivery**	All our projects, programmes and activities are designed and delivered in a way that protects people from the risk of harm that may arise from us.	• **Safer Working Practices** outlines how employees should keep themselves and others safe. • **CUK Values** outline how we expect employees and volunteers to behave. • All employees are introduced to the Safer Working Practices and CUK Values at induction. • Risk assessments are undertaken in projects, programmes and activities, to ensure the safety of those present. • We ensure any partner organisations hosting or running an activity involving CUK have the appropriate risk assessments and safeguarding measures in place to ensure the safety of those present.
3. **Recruitment**	All employees and volunteers are recruited safely, and all necessary checks are made to assess their suitability	• Safeguarding responsibilities are included in job descriptions as appropriate. • Recruitment processes cover questions on safeguarding, verified references from employers and when necessary, criminal background checks in line with our **Safer Recruitment Guidance.**
4. **Governance and Accountability**	People and processes are in place to monitor and improve the implementation of the safeguarding policy and our practice	• There is Lead Safeguarding Trustee and safeguarding is a standing item on the Trustee Board's agenda. • The Personnel & Safeguarding Committee oversees Safeguarding and reports to the Board of Trustees. • There is a Safeguarding Officer appointed as part of the Executive Team, who is the main source of support, advice and expertise for safeguarding and managing any safeguarding concerns. • There are Safeguarding Leads in place on all our projects, programmes and in our Chapters. • The Safeguarding Policy and all associated procedures and guidance are regularly monitored and audited to ensure they are effective and to identify and share any lessons learned within CUK. • A **Safeguarding Risk Register** is maintained by the Safeguarding Officer, which sets out our approach, and the assessment and mitigation of any safeguarding risks.

Protection

Standard	Aim	Specific policy, procedure or areas of activity
5. Reporting and Responding to Concerns	Reporting procedures are in place to enable an appropriate and timely response to any safeguarding concerns and designated staff feel equipped and confident to respond to safeguarding concerns.	• There are reporting and incident management procedures in place, communicated to employees, chapter leaders and those involved in our programmes. Other supporting policies and guidance include: • **Safeguarding Reporting Procedures** • **Equal Opportunity Policy, Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy** for employees. • **Whistleblowing Policy** • Safeguarding Leads and the Safeguarding Officer will have the capacity and capability to fulfil their roles. We ensure this through training, support and the revision of any roles and responsibilities.