Safeguarding Policy

Adopted by Trustees on: 21st November 2025

Reviewed on:

Next review due November 2026

1. Purpose

This policy outlines how Axminster and Lyme Cancer Support (ALCS) protects adults and children from harm, abuse, neglect, or exploitation while engaging with our services, events, and community activities. ALCS provides emotional, practical, and wellbeing support to people affected by cancer - including patients, families, carers, and the wider community.

2. Policy Statement

ALCS believes that everyone has the right to live free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. We are committed to creating and maintaining a safe and welcoming environment for all who come into contact with the charity.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, trustees, and volunteers of ALCS, as well as any contractors or partners representing the charity.

4. Legal and Regulatory Framework

ALCS safeguarding practices align with the following:

- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Care Act 2014
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Charity Commission Safeguarding Guidance (CC30)
- Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR

5. Definitions

Child: Anyone under the age of 18.
Adult at risk: A person aged 18 or over who has care or support needs and may be unable to protect themselves from harm, abuse, or exploitation.
Abuse: May include physical, emotional, sexual, financial, discriminatory, organisational, modern slavery, or neglect.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Trustees: Hold ultimate responsibility for safeguarding across ALCS, ensuring policies, procedures, and training are up to date.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Mary Kahn, CEO and Founder
Phone: 01297 816559 | Email: support@axminsterandlymecancersupport.co.uk

Deputy DSL: Donna Drew, Client Support Manager
Phone: 01297 816559

Chair of Trustees: David Elliott

All staff and volunteers must read and follow this policy, report any safeguarding concerns immediately to the DSL, and complete safeguarding training appropriate to their role.

7. Recognising and Responding to Concerns

If you suspect abuse or harm:
i) Record what you have seen, heard, or been told - stick to facts.
ii). Report the concern immediately to the DSL (or Deputy DSL if unavailable).
iii). Do not promise confidentiality -explain that information may need to be shared for safety.
iv). The DSL will assess the concern and, if necessary, refer to:
- Devon County Council Safeguarding Adults Team (0345 1551 007)
- Devon Children's Services (0345 1551 071)
- Police (if someone is in immediate danger)

All incidents are logged and reviewed by the DSL and Trustees.

8. Safer Recruitment (refer to Appendix C)

ALCS is committed to safe recruitment practices has adopted a Safer Recruitment policy which:
- Requires applicants to complete application forms and provide references.
- Undertakes enhanced DBS checks for roles involving adults or children.
- Provides safeguarding induction and ongoing training.

9. Data Protection and Confidentiality

Information is stored securely and shared only when necessary, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR. Records of safeguarding concerns will be kept confidential and separate from other personal data.

10. Whistleblowing

We encourage anyone to report concerns about unsafe practice or misconduct. Reports can be made confidentially to:
- The DSL or Chair of Trustees
- Charity Commission

No one will be penalised for raising a genuine concern.

11. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if there is a significant safeguarding incident, a change in legislation or guidance, or organisational changes occur.

12. Key Contacts

Role	Name	Contact
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mary Kahn	01297 816559 mary@axminsterandlymecancersupport.co.uk
Deputy DSL	Donna Drew	01297 816559 donna@axminsterandlymecancersupport.co.uk
Chair of Trustees	David Elliott	07776 256537 trustee@axminsterandlymecancersupport.co.uk
Devon Safeguarding Adults Board		0345 1551 007
Devon Children's Services		0345 1551 071

Appendix A: Recognising Signs of Abuse

Type of Abuse Possible Indicators

Physical Unexplained bruises, burns, or fractures, fear of physical contact.

Domestic Withdrawal, anxiety, or signs of controlling or coercive behaviour by a partner/family member.

Sexual Fear of certain people, unexplained injuries, changes in behaviour or mood.

Psychological/Emotional Low self-esteem, withdrawal, fearfulness, sudden loss of confidence.

Financial/Material Unexplained loss of money or possessions, sudden changes to wills or financial documents.

Neglect/Acts of Omission Poor personal hygiene, malnutrition, untreated medical conditions.

Discriminatory Harassment or slurs relating to disability, race, gender, sexuality, or faith.

Organisational Poor care standards, lack of respect for dignity, unsafe or unhygienic environments.

Self-Neglect Hoarding, poor hygiene, refusal of essential care or services.

If you are unsure, always discuss your concern with the DSL — do not assume someone else will act.

Appendix B: Safeguarding Concern Reporting Form

All safeguarding concerns must be recorded promptly and passed to the DSL.

1. Your details Name: _____
   Role: _____
   Contact details: _____

2. Details of the person at risk Name: _____

Age (if known): _____

Address/Location: _____

Relationship to the charity: _____

3. Details of the concern Date and time of incident/disclosure:

_____

What happened? (Include factual details only; use the person's own words where possible): _____
_____

Who was present? _____

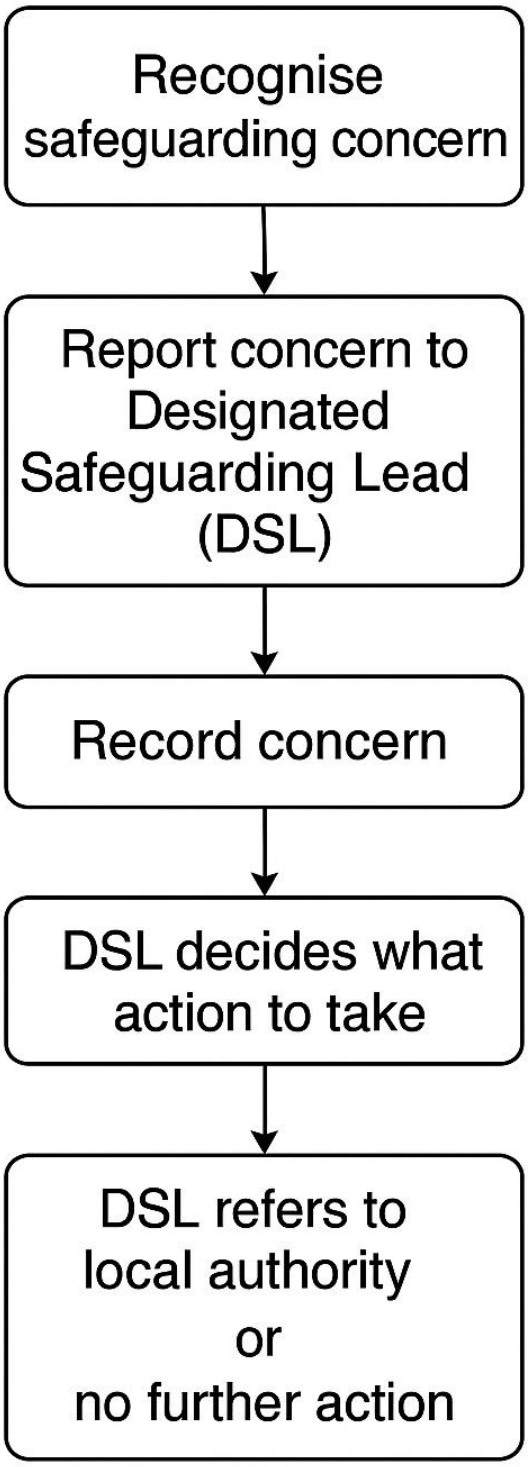
Has the person given consent to share this information? ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. Action taken Reported to DSL: ☐ Yes ☐ No Date/time reported:
_____ DSL name: _____

Any immediate actions taken (e.g., contacted emergency services):
_____

5. For DSL use only Date received: _____ Decision/action taken: _____ Referred to local authority? ☐ Yes ☐ No Reference/contact made with: _____

Outcome/follow-up: _____ Signature of DSL: _____ Date: ___


Recognise safeguarding concern
Report concern to Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
Record concern
DSL decides what action to take
DSL refers to local authority or no further action

Appendix C: Safer Recruitment Policy

Adopted by Trustees on: 21st November 2025

Reviewed on:

Next review due November 2026

Safer Recruitment Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Axminister and Lyme Cancer Support recruits staff, trustees, and volunteers in a way that safeguards and promotes the welfare of children, young people, and adults at risk. We are committed to creating a safe and supportive environment for all those who come into contact with our charity.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees (permanent, temporary, and casual)
- Trustees and board members
- Volunteers, and contractors working on behalf of the charity

3. Principles

- Safeguarding is at the heart of our recruitment processes.
- Recruitment decisions are made fairly, without unlawful discrimination.
- Roles are clearly defined and risk assessed.
- Appropriate checks (including references and criminal record checks, where required) are carried out proportionately.
- Everyone involved in recruitment understands their safeguarding responsibilities.

4. Recruitment Procedures

4.1 Planning and Advertising

- Job and volunteer role descriptions clearly outline safeguarding responsibilities.
- All adverts clearly state that Axminster and Lyme Cancer Support is committed to safeguarding and that appropriate background checks will be required.

4.2 Application Process

- All applicants must complete an application form
- Applicants must declare any gaps in employment/volunteering history.

4.3 Interview and Selection

- Interviews will include questions designed to assess an applicant's suitability to work with children and/or adults at risk.
- At least two people will be involved in the selection process where possible.

4.4 Pre-Appointment Checks

Before confirming an appointment, the following checks will be completed:

- At least two references, including the most recent employer (if applicable)
- Verification of identity and right to work in the UK (if relevant)
- Criminal record check (DBS Disclosure and Barring Service) where the role is eligible
- Verification of qualifications or professional registrations (where relevant)
- Confirmation that where appropriate personal experience will not impact a candidate in a negative way if volunteering.

4.5 Induction and Training

- All new staff and volunteers will receive an induction, including safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Ongoing safeguarding training will be provided proportionately to the role.
- Ensure all staff, trustees and volunteers are familiar with the charity's safeguarding policies.
- No volunteer will be left alone with a client until they feel, and the team feel they are ready.

5. Volunteers

- Volunteers are recruited with the same care as paid staff, proportionate to the role.
- Volunteers in regulated activity will undergo the same safeguarding checks as employees.

6. Trustees

- Trustees are subject to the same safer recruitment principles.
- They must declare any disqualification under charity or safeguarding law.

7. Record Keeping

- Recruitment records and checks will be securely stored in line with data protection requirements.
- A central record of staff, trustees, and volunteers, including completed checks, will be maintained.

8. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually (or sooner if safeguarding legislation or best practice changes).

Safer Recruitment – Summary Policy

We want Axminister and Lyme Cancer Support to be a safe and welcoming place for everyone. To help protect children, young people, and adults at risk, we follow these safer recruitment steps:

1. Before we Recruit

- Every role has a clear description, so people know what is expected.
- Adverts and recruitment packs state that safeguarding checks are required.

2. Applications and Interviews

- Applicants fill out a form
- We ask about gaps in employment/volunteering history.
- Interviews include questions about safeguarding attitudes and behaviour.

3. Checks Before Starting

- Identity and references are always checked.
- A criminal record (DBS) check is carried out if the role involves working with children or adults at risk.
- Qualifications are checked if relevant.

4. Starting the Role

- New staff, trustees, and volunteers get an induction including safeguarding training.
- Ongoing supervision and training are provided.

5. Trustees and Volunteers

- Trustees follow the same safer recruitment steps.
- Volunteers are recruited with the same care as staff, proportionate to their role.

6. Record Keeping

- We keep a secure record of recruitment checks in line with data protection rules.

7. Review

- This policy is reviewed every year or sooner if guidance changes.

Safer Recruitment Checklist

Step 1 – Recruitment preparation

☐ Draft/update job description (include safeguarding duties)
☐ Add safeguarding statement to advert

Step 2 – Applications

☐ Use ALCS application form
☐ Check for employment gaps in history

Step 3 – Interviews

☐ At least two interviewers where possible
☐ Ask safeguarding/based questions

Step 4 – Pre-Appointment Checks

☐ Identity verified
☐ Right to work (if to be employed)
☐ Two references, including most recent role
☐ DBS (if role is eligible)
☐ Qualifications (if required)

Step 5 – Induction

☐ Safeguarding training provided
☐ Code of conduct
☐ Mentor assigned

Step 6 – Ongoing

☐ Regular supervision/support
☐ Training refreshed as needed
☐ Record of checks kept securely

Golden Rule: *No one starts work (staff, trustee, or volunteer) until the essential checks are completed.*