

CONFIDENTIALITY - General Statement of Policy



SDCC recognises that volunteers, and trustees gain information about individuals and Organisations during the associated operations and activities. In most cases such information will not be stated as confidential, and volunteers may have to exercise common sense and discretion in identifying whether information is expected to be confidential.

This policy aims to give guidance but if in doubt, seek advice from a Trustee:- .

This policy is to be reviewed every two years.

SDCC Trustees and volunteers may gain information about SDCC Community Centre such as plans and finances. This information must not be shared with any parties outside the Organisation.

All visitors to the Centre are entitled to privacy and can specifically request to be seen in

private. Volunteers can share information with Trustees to discuss issues and seek advice. Volunteers should avoid exchanging personal information or comments (gossip) about individuals with whom they have a professional relationship.

As part of the SDCC Community Centre Equality Policy it is not appropriate to discuss a person's sexuality (i.e., 'outing' a gay person, disability, their gender reassignment) without their prior consent. Volunteers should avoid talking about the Organisation or individuals in social settings.

Information considered sensitive, personal, or private will not be shared with anyone other than the Trustees without the consent of the individual. Constructive liaison with other agencies is sometimes essential if individuals and groups are to be offered an effective service by SDCC. However, confidential matters must not be discussed outside of SDCC without the prior permission of the individual or Organisation.

Where there is a legal duty on SDCC to disclose information, the person to whom the confidentiality is owed will be informed that disclosure has or will be made.

Most information held by SDCC relates to voluntary and Community Organisations, self- help groups, volunteers, Trustees, or services which support or fund them.

Information may be kept enabling SDCC to understand the history and activities of Organisations to deliver the most appropriate services.

SDCC does need to share information where appropriate about the impact of our services. If one of our services has an outcome which would provide useful material for publicity, reporting or training purposes, then wherever possible the permission of the individual will be sought using a disclosure form before any action is taken. If permission cannot be obtained, then details must be amended to protect the identity of the individual.

Information about ethnicity and disability of users is only kept for the purposes of monitoring our equal opportunities policy and for reporting back to funders.

Information is confidential to SDCC as an organisation but may be passed to Trustees to ensure the best quality service. Where information is sensitive, i.e. it involves disputes or legal issues, it will be confidential. Such information should be clearly labelled 'Confidential'.

SDCC reserves the right to break confidentiality:-

- If it is believed an individual is a danger to themselves or others.
- If an employee or volunteer suspects abuse or has knowledge of abuse.
- If an individual gives information indicating that a crime has been committed.
- If a disclosure is required by Law.
- If it is felt an individual has the capacity to make a decision. Action will only be made in the best interests of the individual.

Breaking confidentiality will be done so on a case by case basis.

Individuals should be informed of disclosures.

There is a legal duty to disclose some information including:

- Child abuse will be reported to the Children, Schools and Families Department
- Drug trafficking, money laundering, acts of terrorism or treason will be disclosed to the police.

Service users should be informed of this disclosure.

SDCC complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice regarding the correct handling,

use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information. Disclosure information is always kept separately from an applicant's personnel file in secure storage with access limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties. It is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

Data Protection Act

Information about individuals, both paper and electronic must be done so in accordance with the SDCC Data Protection Policy which is based on the following data protection principles:

- Obtained and processed fairly and lawfully.
- Held only for specific purposes.
- Adequate relevant and not excessive.
- Accurate and up to date.
- Not kept longer than necessary.
- Kept secure and protected.
- Not transferred outside of Europe.

SDCC August 2024