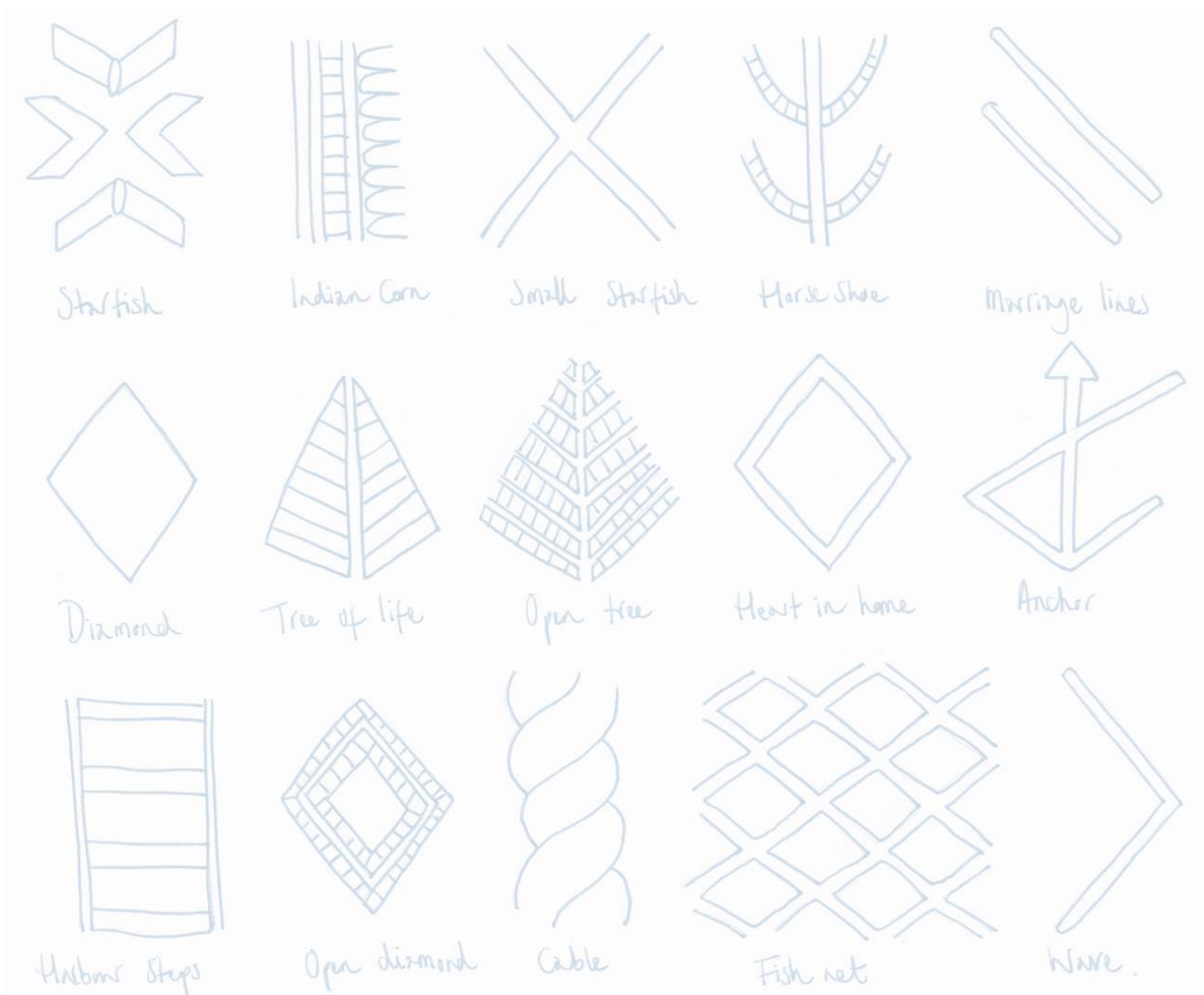




# Comann Eachdraidh Eirisgeidh

## Vulnerable Adult and Child Protection Policy

February 2024



Eriskay Jersey Patterns



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# 1. Introduction

1.1 Comann Eachdraidh Eirisgeidh is committed to ensuring a safe and supportive environment for our participants. This policy sets out Comann Eachdraidh Eirisgeidh responsibilities and approach to protecting children and adults at risk of harm as defined in the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 and the Protection of Vulnerable groups (Scotland) Act 2007.

1.2 Where it is known or believed by a member of staff or volunteer at Comann Eachdraidh Eirisgeidh that someone is a child or adult at risk of harm, Comann Eachdraidh Eirisgeidh has a responsibility to act to protect that person by reporting facts and circumstances of the concern to Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and to assist with any adult protection inquiries or investigations undertaken by local authority officers.

1.3 All staff and volunteers have an obligation to act in accordance with this policy if they know or believe that a person is a child or adult at risk of harm.

1.4 This policy sets out the procedures to be followed when such concerns arise or when an adult at risk discloses that they are being harmed.

# 2. A child or adult at risk of harm

2.1 A child or adult at risk is a person who:

- is unable to safeguard themselves, their property, their rights or other interests;
- is at risk of harm; and
- because of their age or they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, are more vulnerable to being harmed than others who are not so affected.

2.2 All three elements of this definition must be met for a person to be considered an adult at risk and for action to be taken under the Vulnerable Adult and Child Protection Policy

2.3 It is important to note that:

- Where an adult is unwilling rather than unable to safeguard themselves, they may not be considered an adult at risk. This does not apply for people under the age of 16 who are considered at risk due to their age.
- The presence of a particular condition does not automatically mean that an adult is an adult at risk.

A person's abilities can fluctuate and change over time and it is the whole of a person's particular circumstances which can combine to make them more open to harm than others. People should not therefore be subject to 'once and for all' categorisation as adults at risk.

## 3. Harm

3.1 Harm includes all harmful conduct and in particular:

- Conduct which causes physical harm
- Conduct which causes psychological harm (e.g., by causing fear, alarm, or distress)
- Unlawful conduct which appropriates or adversely affects property, rights or interests (e.g., theft or fraud)
- Conduct which causes self-harm

3.2 Conduct includes neglect and other failures to act and actions which are not planned or deliberate but have harmful consequences.

3.3 Comann Eachdraidh Eirisgeidh will provide guidance on their Vulnerable Adult and Child Protection Policy and will provide further information for staff and volunteers on recognising harm.

## 4. Risk

4.1 Risk refers to a situation or behaviours that present a real or potential threat of harm to a person's health, development, safety, or wellbeing. This can be where another person's conduct is causing or is likely to cause harm, or where an adult at risk is engaging in, or is likely to engage in, conduct which causes, or is likely to cause, self-harm.

## 5. Key principles in Vulnerable Adult and Child Protection

5.1 Any action taken by Comann Eachdraidh Eirisgeidh in relation to adults at risk of harm will be guided by the overarching principle that any intervention should provide benefit to the individual. Comann Eachdraidh Eirisgeidh will ensure that:

- The wishes and feelings of the child or adult at risk are taken into account.
- The child or adult at risk is provided with relevant information and support to enable them to participate as fully as possible in any referral process.
- The child or adult at risk is not treated less favourably than another adult in a comparable situation.
- The abilities, background, and characteristics (including their age, sex, sexual orientation, religious or philosophical belief, race, ethnicity, and cultural and linguistic heritage) are taken into account.

## 6. Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme

6.1 In line with the Scottish Government's Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme, the management team must ensure that disclosure at the appropriate level is sought and obtained for all staff and individuals who have regular, workplace contact with vulnerable groups, including adults or children at risk, in order to ensure they do not have a history of harmful behaviour.

## 7. Disclosure and concerns

7.1 In all cases the person with reason for concern about a child or adult at risk, or to whom a disclosure of harm is made, must adhere to the following procedure:

- Report their concern as soon as possible to their manager.
- Deliver a report within twenty-four hours of the disclosure or concern arising or earlier if the risk of harm is immediate.

7.2 Everyone has a responsibility to report safeguarding concerns.

7.3 Where there is uncertainty regarding the relevance of this policy to the child or adult concerned the management team should seek advice from the charitable board.

## 8. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

8.1 Sharing information appropriately is an essential aspect of supporting and protecting children or adults at risk and must be relevant, necessary, and proportionate to the circumstances at all times.

8.2 All information relating to the support and protection of children or adults at risk will be stored and shared securely in line with data protection legislation.

## 9. Allegations against a member of Comann Eachdraidh Eirisgeidh staff or volunteer

9.1 If a child or an adult at risk alleges that a member of staff has caused them harm the procedure set out in this policy must be followed immediately.

9.2 Where an allegation is made about a management team member a report should be hand delivered directly to the charitable board.

## 10. Review of policy

This Policy and these Procedures will be regularly reviewed:

- In accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on the protection of children or vulnerable adults at risk or following any changes within Comann Eachdraidh Eirisgeidh
- Following any issues or concerns raised about the protection of vulnerable adults within Comann Eachdraidh Eirisgeidh.
- In all other circumstances, at least every year.