

Operational Policy

September 2023

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1. Introduction

1. ADCA was established in 2010 to take over the Thornton House Day Club for older people from Age Concern and ensure its continuation and development. ADCA's overall objective was agreed to be:

To provide welfare support to vulnerable and socially isolated adults and older people within Audlem and District in the County of Cheshire promoting social inclusion, community participation and independence.

2. It was further agreed that ADCA would be run by representatives of local interest groups, including local parish councils, churches, members, voluntary helpers, carers, the local GP practice and other community representatives.
3. ADCA has since expanded to now provide services to over 160 members and carers in 7 different day and lunch clubs across the area, with 7 part time staff, 10 trustees and over 50 volunteers.

2. Core purpose and objectives

1. In 2017 ADCA updated our overall objectives and agreed a new **Core Purpose**:

ADCA aims to address the specific individual needs of adults and older people who may be vulnerable and who may not have easy access to transport.

We believe that every one of our members, carers, volunteers, staff and trustees has the potential to make a valuable individual contribution to meeting the needs of others, both within ADCA and in the wider community, and we aim to facilitate this wherever possible.

We believe that all of us can be vulnerable at times, and we aim to protect and safeguard each other by working together with mutual respect and kindness.

2. The original **Objectives**, which still apply today, are to:
 - ensure the **sustainability** of the day club by maintaining and increasing membership and extending activities on other days
 - achieve **full participation** in running the day club by the members, families, volunteers and staff
 - ensure that **local needs and wishes** drive the development of services
 - promote **independence, dignity and respect** and improve overall **health and wellbeing**
 - provide more **choice, control and individual approaches** for older people and their families
 - add value to the service by **maximising local community effort**, skills and experience
 - be a **responsive provider** with Cheshire East Council and other grant making bodies by returning monitoring information, including activities and the achievement of positive outcomes
 - work closely with **all referrers** – local families, Audlem GP Practice, social workers and churches – who refer people to our services
 - promote the **social inclusion**, access and participation of older people in other community groups and clubs in Audlem and District
 - provide support and **respite** to carers.
3. These original objectives are still key to ADCA's operational approach and are fully reflected in how we have developed our services.

ADCA Development Plan 2022

3. Meeting individual needs

General guidelines

1. ADCA will always aim to meet people's individual needs and wishes. This is particularly important for people with a higher level of needs. The Community Services Manager and other staff will undertake a needs assessment at referral to ensure that ADCA can meet that person's needs within our **Audlem Tuesday Club**, or our **Audlem Thursday Club** (where we have a higher level of staff and volunteer support).
2. This confidential assessment will usually include a home visit and a meeting with the person's main carer or next-of-kin where possible, with the aim of agreeing whether and how ADCA can meet that person's needs. The assessment will include
 - identification of any risks potentially posed to ADCA staff, members or volunteers in providing a service and how these can be managed
 - offering suitable support (for example, club attendance, befriending, carer support, advice on other services, including welfare benefits)
 - onward referral to an appropriate agency where financial advice is required (for example, Citizens Advice Bureau, Age UK Financial Advice Service)
 - (with the person's permission), liaison with GPs, Community Nurses or Social Workers as needed, so as to ensure that ADCA is working effectively with the wider health and social care team.
3. ADCA's other clubs operate on a drop-in basis but staff will still maintain core information on people's needs (e.g. contact details for next-of-kin and GPs). Staff will monitor all club attendances to ensure that numbers do not exceed what ADCA can safely provide in terms of meeting needs. This may include operating a waiting list for attendance.
4. It is important to note that ADCA does **not** provide 'personal care', including moving and handling, toileting or feeding.

When needs can no longer be met

5. ADCA aims to support people with more complex needs where possible, including where the physical or mental health needs of existing members increase. However, there will be some situations in which ADCA can no longer meet individual needs within our clubs, for example, when a member's mental and/or physical health has deteriorated to the extent that they need dedicated one-to-one supervision, or specialist professional care.
6. In such circumstances, the Community Services Manager will explain and discuss the situation with the member and/or carer. Alternative support at home will continue to be offered, along with advice on other services that may be more appropriate to their needs.
7. Where members or carers do not agree with the decision, they can appeal to the ADCA Chair (or a delegated Trustee) for further discussion.

ADCA Complaints and Appeals Policy

4. Running ADCA services

Confidentiality

1. All information about members' and carers' circumstances or personal details is **CONFIDENTIAL**. Staff and volunteers **MUST NOT** divulge any of this information outside of ADCA.
2. The only exception is where a safeguarding concern has been reported to staff or volunteers (see **Section 5** below).

ADCA Code of Conduct

Club Leaders and staffing

3. All ADCA clubs will have a 'Club Leader' – a designated staff member or experienced and trained volunteer – in overall charge.
4. Club Leaders are responsible for liaising with members and voluntary drivers on the day the club meets to ensure good communication. Club Leaders are responsible for seeing that a stranded member gets home safely if transport arrangements go awry.
5. Club Leaders will have confidential access to key information about members and carers, including dietary and mobility needs.
6. The number of staff and volunteers deployed at each club will depend on the needs and numbers of members and carers attending.

Accidents and health emergencies

7. A **minimum of two** staff/volunteers will be present in each club on the day to provide mutual support and ensure that any accident or health emergency can be dealt with appropriately. At least one person will have an up-to-date first aid training certificate.
8. In the case of ill-health or accident while a member is using one of ADCA's services, the Club Leader is responsible for calling, or arranging for another staff member or volunteer to (as necessary):
 - call the next-of-kin or nominated carer, or
 - call an ambulance, or
 - make a GP appointment.

The Community Services Manager or ADCA Chair must be notified as soon as practicable.

Responsibility for health and safety

9. Everyone is responsible for ensuring the health and safety of everyone running or using ADCA's services.
10. Club Leaders will routinely check each club before members arrive for
 - trip and fall hazards
 - functionality and accessibility of fire exits and fire alarms
 - food hygiene compliance.

ADCA Health & Safety Policy; ADCA Food Hygiene Policy

Member involvement

11. Our day, lunch and coffee clubs offer a range of stimulating activities, support, meals, friendship and practical help and advice. Club members and carers are routinely involved in making decisions on club activities and outings.
12. Staff will arrange and record quarterly discussions on these topics with members and carers, and ask for specific feedback on
 - how ADCA services are meeting individual needs, and
 - what measurable outcomes have been achieved in meeting ADCA's overall objectives (see *Section 2 – Core purpose and objectives*, above).
13. Specific comments from members and carers on how the service best supports them individually will be confidentially and anonymously recorded for the purposes of reporting service outcomes to our grant making bodies.

Member contributions

14. Members and carers make a voluntary contribution to ADCA for each club session they attend. The suggested level of contribution is reviewed annually with all involved, and a recommendation is made to the ADCA Trustees if the contribution is to change.
15. Each contribution will be recorded on the club attendance list. The Club Leader, with the help of a staff member or volunteer, collects and tallies all cash contributions, signs off the total, and ensures that the cash and the tally record are passed to the Vice-Treasurer for checking.

5. Safeguarding everyone

1. All children and adults have the right to be safe from harm and should be able to live free from fear of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
2. ADCA has an overriding duty of care to all its members and carers and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults, and any children who may attend our services, across the whole range of its activities.
3. ADCA will explain their safeguarding responsibilities to Trustees, staff and volunteers at the time of their induction and through regular training. We will make clear that the procedures laid down in ADCA's Safeguarding Policy must be meticulously followed, and that all safeguarding concerns must be immediately reported to the Community Services Manager or ADCA Chair for assessment and action.

ADCA Safeguarding Policy

6. Acting in 'best interest'

1. An increasing number people who may have memory difficulties, or a diagnosed condition such as dementia, are using ADCA's services. All staff and volunteers must ensure that we always try to act in an individual's best interests at all times.
2. ADCA will ensure that, where there are concerns that a member or carer may lack mental capacity in a specific area, or generally, an appropriate member of staff will discuss the matter with them and their next-of-kin (where appropriate) and recommend that they consult their GP for advice.
3. ADCA follows the key principles underpinning the **2005 Mental Capacity Act**, as follows:
 - Every adult has the right to make their own decisions and must be assumed to have capacity to do so unless it is shown otherwise following a medical assessment.
 - Individuals who have capacity must be given all practicable help to make decisions.
 - Just because an individual appears to make what might be seen as an unwise decision, they should not be treated as lacking capacity to make that decision.

- If someone has been assessed as lacking mental capacity in some or all areas of decision-making, then the duty of staff and volunteers is to always act in a person's best interests.
- What are someone's best interests is decided in consultation with next-of-kin or with medical advice and should be informed by what that person would have chosen to do given their past life choices and preferences.
- Any decisions made on a person's best interests who lacks capacity should be the least restrictive of their basic rights and freedoms and should be recorded confidentially on their ADCA record.

7. Staffing

Recruitment

1. Our staff play a crucial part in how ADCA achieves its objectives. ADCA aims to attract and retain a diverse mix of suitably qualified applicants and permanent staff.

ADCA Recruitment Policy

2. ADCA will comply with all relevant employment law and maintain a comprehensive set of staffing policies.
3. ADCA's recruitment process aims to ensure that we identify the best candidates and comply with the **Equality Act 2010**.

ADCA Equal Opportunities Policy

Training and support

4. All staff will be fully involved in the running and development of ADCA and will receive regular supervision, training and support, including annual staff appraisal.
5. Regular staff meetings will be held with the Community Services Manager, supported by Trustees involved in the day-to-day running of ADCA.
6. Staff meetings will always include confidentially recorded discussion of any members or carers that staff have concerns about. If risks to the individual (or others) are identified, a plan of action will be put in place to manage these where possible, or external intervention will be sought.

ADCA Safeguarding Policy

7. The Community Services Manager will represent staff at ADCA Committee meetings, and all staff will attend the AGM to report on services.

Conduct

8. ADCA requires all staff and volunteers to uphold ADCA's reputation and behave courteously and respectfully towards everyone with whom they come into contact, and to abide by the detailed guidance given in the Code of Conduct.

ADCA Code of Conduct

8. Volunteering

1. Volunteers are vital in helping to maintain and develop ADCA services. We aim to recruit a good number of active volunteers so we can effectively help our members to
 - be socially active and keep their independence
 - maintain and improve their health and well-being
 - participate in wider community activity and social events.

Volunteers also help members who are carers find support and get a break from caring.

2. ADCA seeks to recruit a diverse range of volunteers who
 - are friendly and outgoing
 - are interested in helping people share interests and experiences
 - have practical skills or knowledge to support the services ADCA provides.
3. ADCA seeks to recruit voluntary drivers to take members who have no transport to ADCA clubs and activities, and to medical appointments.

Drivers must be

- in good health
 - confident driving a vehicle with an older or disabled person as a passenger.
4. All volunteers will receive a full induction and continued support from staff (including training in first aid, safeguarding and best interests)

ADCA Volunteer Policy; ADCA Voluntary Drivers' Policy

5. Following induction, volunteers are required to sign the Volunteer Induction Form to confirm they have read and agree to comply with all ADCA policies and procedures.

Approved by the Trustees on 1 September 2023