

Serious Incident Reporting Process

Organisation: Reuse Littleborough

Scope: Applies to all staff, volunteers, trustees, and contractors across all Reuse Littleborough premises, including the furniture warehouse and children's shop.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this process is to ensure that all serious incidents are identified, reported, managed, and recorded appropriately to safeguard the charity's people, assets, and reputation and to comply with legal and regulatory responsibilities, including the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

2. Definition of a Serious Incident

A serious incident is an adverse event, whether actual or alleged, which results in or risks significant:

- Harm to beneficiaries, staff, volunteers, or the public.
- Loss of charity money or assets.
- Damage to the charity's property, operations, or reputation.
- Breach of law or safeguarding policies.

Examples include:

- Theft or fraud.
 - Serious safeguarding breaches.
 - Fire, flood, or major damage to the warehouse or shops.
 - Serious health & safety incidents or accidents.
 - Data breaches involving sensitive personal data.
 - Serious complaints involving misconduct or abuse.
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3. Responsibilities

- **All staff and volunteers** must report serious incidents immediately.
 - **Managers** are responsible for ensuring incidents are investigated and documented.
 - **Trustees** must assess the situation and, if required, report the incident to the Charity Commission.
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4. Reporting Procedure

Step 1: Immediate Response

- **Ensure Safety** – Address any immediate risk (e.g., evacuate building, administer first aid, call emergency services).
- **Protect Evidence** – Secure any evidence (e.g., CCTV footage, incident site).
- **Record Initial Details** – Use the Serious Incident Report Form (Appendix A) to record who, what, where, and when.

Step 2: Internal Notification

- Notify the following people immediately:
 - **Warehouse/Shop Manager**
 - **Safeguarding Lead** (if children or vulnerable adults are involved)
 - **Chair of Trustees** or designated trustee responsible for risk and compliance

Step 3: Investigation

- The Manager or nominated lead will:
 - Conduct a fact-finding investigation.
 - Interview witnesses.
 - Gather and secure relevant documents.
- Complete the full Serious Incident Report within **48 hours** of the event.

Step 4: Trustee Review

- Trustees will review the report to determine:
 - Whether the incident meets the threshold for reporting to the **Charity Commission**.
 - Any legal obligations (e.g., RIDDOR, GDPR, Police).
 - Remedial actions or external communications required.
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5. External Reporting

Charity Commission

The trustees must report a serious incident to the Charity Commission using the online reporting tool if it has:

- Caused significant harm or risk of harm.
- Resulted in loss/damage to the charity.
- Called into question the charity's ability to operate.

See: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>

Other Agencies

Depending on the nature of the incident, reports may also need to be made to:

- Police
 - Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
 - Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
 - Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)
 - Insurers
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6. Record-Keeping

- All incident reports and related correspondence must be securely stored for **at least 7 years**.
 - A confidential register of all serious incidents shall be maintained by the charity's Designated Safeguarding Officer or Operations Lead.
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7. Review & Learning

- Each serious incident must be reviewed to identify lessons and implement changes.
 - Trustees will conduct an **annual review** of all incidents to improve risk management and safeguard procedures.
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Appendices

- **Appendix A:** Serious Incident Report Form
- **Appendix B:** Charity Commission Reporting Criteria
- **Appendix C:** Contact List for Emergency & External Agencies