

O2 Victoria Warehouse Welfare and Safeguarding Strategy October 2023

Introduction:

O2 Victoria Warehouse is committed to the safety and well-being of our customers, especially vulnerable groups such as children and individuals with varying disabilities. Our holistic welfare and safeguarding strategy, which is supported by W.E.L. Safe CIC, includes special provisions for vulnerable customers, such as safe spaces for those who feel overwhelmed and strategically placed security personnel and CCTV throughout the venue. We provide accessibility support, safeguard young employees, enforce policies to regulate the sale of alcohol and nicotine-based products, and have a robust procedure for sexual harassment, sexual assault, and spiking. By prioritising customer welfare and safety in all our event planning, our goal is to create a safe and inclusive environment for all our customers.

Event Management Plan (EMP)

At O2 Victoria Warehouse, it is our responsibility to ensure the welfare and safety of all attendees at our events. We believe that each event must be planned meticulously and assessed individually to identify and mitigate any potential risks. As a result, we have established a comprehensive Event Management Plan [EMP] to ensure that all necessary procedures and systems are in place to provide a secure and enjoyable event experience for all.

Our approach to managing events involves conducting individual risk assessments for each show or club to determine suitable security, medical, welfare, and other provisions needed. By doing so, we can identify potential issues, such as early queuing, and make adequate provisions, such as road closures, to ensure easy access and egress to and from the venue. We always strive to prepare for every circumstance we can foresee and maintain flexibility to adapt to unforeseen situations.

Our welfare and safeguarding strategy also forms an integral part of our Event Management Plan. We partner with W.E.L.Safe, a reputable not-for-profit organization, to deliver comprehensive welfare and safeguarding strategies for vulnerable adults, young people, and children. We recognize that everyone has the right to lead a safe and fulfilled life, free from harm and abuse, and we take every step to ensure that vulnerable individuals receive appropriate care and protection.

At O2 Victoria Warehouse, we are committed to providing an inclusive and safe environment for all attendees. Our EMP enables us to manage events efficiently and professionally, ultimately resulting in an enjoyable and secure experience for everyone.

Wayfinding & Public Transport

In addition to the physical resources provided at the venue, our website also offers valuable information regarding public transportation options. We encourage visitors to consult our

website before attending an event, as it offers up-to-date guidance on how to access the venue using public transport.

Through our website, visitors can learn about local transport links, including bus, train, and tram services. We provide information on the nearest transport hubs and stations.

At O2 Victoria Warehouse, we are dedicated to making our events accessible to all attendees. Through our comprehensive wayfinding system, digital screen displays, and website resources, we strive to provide visitors with clear and concise information to make their journey to and from the venue as smooth as possible.

This approach also ties into our welfare and safeguarding strategy, as it helps to reduce the risk of visitors becoming lost or stranded in unfamiliar surroundings. By providing comprehensive information on transportation options, we can help ensure that visitors arrive and depart from our events safely and with ease. At O2 Victoria Warehouse, we are committed to the wellbeing of our guests and believe that the provision of clear, accessible information is an essential part of our safeguarding measures.

Security Placement: Compact Security Services [CSS]

We prioritise safety and security by strategically placing security personnel both externally along the perimeter of the venue and throughout the venue, including outside temporary toilets. Regular patrols are carried out by our trained professionals, which are designed to identify and respond to any potential hazards or concerns, ensuring the safety and well-being of all customers. We also have CCTV coverage across all parts of the venue and highly trained SIA security CCTV operators who monitor all activity in real-time. This level of coverage enables us to detect potential incidents and act before they escalate, providing customers with a secure and reassuring environment.

CSS provide a mixture of SIA registered staff, Scan trained SIA licensed CCTV operators and SIA registered Controllers as well as Stewarding staff to support the overall security and stewarding of the venue. CSS promote Welfare And Vulnerability Engagement [WAVE] training to all their key staff.

Medical Provision: Northwest Event Medical Solutions [NWEMS]

We work closely with Northwest Event Medical Solutions, our medical provider, to ensure immediate medical attention is available to all attendees at all times. Our medical staff is expanded as necessary to meet the specific needs at each event, allowing us to provide comprehensive support to customers who may require assistance. Working with our welfare team, we are committed to prioritising the safety and well-being of our customers at all times, and we continue to enhance our provision of welfare and safeguarding support. North West Event Medical Solutions are specialists in providing medical cover for live music events and festivals throughout the UK and are responsible for providing an Event Medical Plan for each show, based on the Venue's Show Specific Risk Assessment and their own knowledge from

reports of working at events where the bands have previously played. They also provide staff to assist our Welfare partners W.E.L.Sec CIC on those shows where the Event Specific Risk Assessment has identified a specific risk assessment.

Welfare Provision: W.E.L.Safe

We partner with W.E.L.Safe, a not-for-profit organisation specialising in delivering welfare and safeguarding for vulnerable adults, young people, and children. Their professionals provide health promotion advice and mental health support, ensuring vulnerable individuals receive the necessary care and protection.

W.E.L.Safe adheres to strict safeguarding policies tailored to protect vulnerable individuals from emotional, physical, and sexual harm, exploitation, and abuse. These policies apply to everyone working for W.E.L.Safe, including employees, volunteers, and consultants. The organisation adopts best practices in recruitment, training, and subscribes to relevant legislation, ensuring confidentiality and information sharing.

W.E.L.Safe operates on the principle that everyone has the right to live a healthy and fulfilled life, free from harm and oppression. It provides a safe, non-judgmental environment for vulnerable individuals requiring a safe place for recovery.

We engage W.E.L.Safe to provide a range of services at O2 Victoria Warehouse's events, including health promotion, emotional and psychological support. W.E.L.Safe provides volunteers who serve incapacitated customers and doubles up as safeguarding experts who can assist with cases of sexual harassment or assault. They will also provide a member of their team to take on the role of the responsible adult where a minor is being held by our security or during a search or ejection from the premises. Their main responsibility on such occasion would be ensuring that the minor is safe and protected during the entire process. Coordinating with security personnel to understand the situation and find a resolution for it. Keeping calm and composed throughout the situation to prevent any escalation of the problems, providing emotional support to the minor and helping them understand the reason behind their detention or ejection. Ensuring the minor understands the importance of behaving responsibly in public places. Working with the management team to improve processes around such incidents.

O2 Victoria Warehouse recognises W.E.L.Safe's value in safeguarding vulnerable individuals, including children, young people, and vulnerable adults. Our partnership with W.E.L.Safe reinforces our commitment to customer welfare and safety, ensuring attendees feel welcome and supported at our events from the moment they arrive to the moment they leave the venue.

Early Queuing: Proactive Measures for Customer Welfare and Comfort:

When the show specific risk assessment identifies the potential of early queuing, to ensure customer comfort and convenience, the venue provides outside toilets for daytime queuing and places them in a convenient location for customers queuing outside the venue, allowing them to access essential amenities. We also position a small welfare tent in our E3 car park for customers who arrive early. The welfare tent provides a secure, safe, and supportive

environment for customers waiting in line or queuing to enter the venue. Our dedicated team of professionals offers practical assistance, moral support, and guidance to help create a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere for all attendees.

Early Security Measures for Customer Safety and Comfort:

We have implemented early security measures to provide customers with a safe and secure environment from the moment they arrive at our venue. Our security team is on-site around the clock, ready to assist and ensure that our customers' needs are met. Upon arrival, our customers are subjected to a soft ticket check [STC] to ensure that they are not carrying any prohibited items that could be harmful to themselves or others. Our security patrols monitor the car park and the venue's surroundings, ensuring that all areas are monitored, and any suspicious activity is promptly attended to.

Accessibility Team:

We strive to make our facilities accessible to everyone, including customers with hidden disabilities and mobility issues. Our Access Team aids these patrons in navigating the venue, accommodating individuals' specific requirements where possible. We have trained our team in everything from accompanying the customer to our new viewing platform to manoeuvring wheelchairs through crowded areas. We ensure all areas of the venue are accessible and have recently installed a lift to the upper floor. We also provide accessible toilets for customers with disabilities. We have also provided a designated viewing area on the balcony that is accessed via a lift to the first floor, catering to wheelchair users, PA's, and customers who are ambulant with access needs. Our goal is to create an inclusive customer service experience that everyone can enjoy.

Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, and Spiking Procedure:

We have a robust procedure for reporting, responding to, and preventing sexual harassment, sexual assault, and spiking. Our management team working alongside our welfare and medical providers are trained to offer support and assistance to victims of sexual assault and harassment. Alongside this team, we work with local authorities to ensure the alleged perpetrator is identified and brought to justice, providing a safe and inclusive environment for all our customers.

In addition to our comprehensive Sexual harassment, sexual assault, and spiking procedure, we actively promote the Ask Angela campaign via posters in our washrooms. This helps to ensure that anyone who feels uncomfortable or unsafe can discreetly ask for assistance without drawing attention to themselves. Moreover, all staff members are trained to respond to such requests and provide the necessary support. We believe that taking such proactive measures is crucial in creating a safe and inclusive atmosphere for everyone who visits our venue.

Sale of Alcohol and Nicotine-Based Products:

We have an alcohol management plan in place to regulate and ensure the responsible and safe sale of alcohol, reducing the risk of alcohol-related harm within this plan we operate a challenge 25 policy to prevent underage drinking. Our staff are trained to recognise the signs

of overconsumption and take appropriate action to prevent issues. We also monitor and review our policies regularly to maintain the standards of alcohol management within the venue.

Free Drinking Water Available Throughout the Venue:

To keep customers hydrated and prevent dehydration, we provide free drinking water on all bars and throughout the venue at various stations. Signage is in place to promote this service. This is also referred to in our alcohol management plan.

Safeguarding of Minors:

At O2 Victoria Warehouse, the welfare and safety of all attendees at our events, particularly those under the age of 18, is of utmost importance. To ensure a secure and enjoyable event experience for minors, we have a safeguarding strategy firmly in place, supported by W.E.L.Safe personnel and qualified medical staff.

Our trained staff members are vigilant in identifying any signs of vulnerability in minors, such as discomfort, distress, or unaccompanied minors. In case of any such incidents, they promptly notify the Event Controller, who will ensure that the welfare and medic teams are informed and dispatched to deal with the situation.

Our welfare team is well-equipped to provide support to any affected children, including contacting their parents or guardians, if necessary. We have partnered with W.E.L.Safe, a reputable not-for-profit organisation, to deliver comprehensive welfare package to under 18s, ensuring that we maintain an appropriate environment at all times.

We recognise the importance of early identification and intervention when it comes to safeguarding minors. Our proactive approach towards safeguarding and our well-trained staff members ensure that minors can enjoy the event experience in a safe and secure manner, giving parents and guardians peace of mind.

Young Persons Working at O2 Victoria Warehouse:

We are committed to safeguarding our young employees under the age of 18 and have proactive measures in place to ensure their safety and well-being.

Should any 16-17-year olds wish to work at O2 Victoria Warehouse then a Risk Assessment shall be undertaken and the risk factors to the young person arising from this work will be analysed and controls implemented. Competent management and supervision shall always be provided.

We ensure young workers are given appropriate tasks and are not exposed to any risks or unsafe working conditions, and we offer training on alcohol-serving laws, provide a designated area for workers under 18, and ensure adequate supervision at all times.

Our managers are available to offer guidance and support, creating a safe and enjoyable working environment for young staff and helping them develop skills that benefit them in their future careers.

Child Performers:

We ensure child performers are always accompanied by licensed chaperones to ensure their welfare and well-being, and we follow all UK regulations and local council conditions regarding child performers including the Child Performance license legislation which sets out the arrangements that must be made to safeguard children when they take part in certain types of performances.

Emergency Operating Plan:

Additionally, we have partnered with professional medical services to provide first aid and medical support at all our events. Through our partnership with medical providers, we can ensure that visitors receive prompt and efficient medical attention in the event of an emergency. Our team of trained and experienced medical professionals are equipped to deal with a range of emergencies, from minor injuries to more serious incidents.

We also have a comprehensive Emergency Operating Plan in place, which outlines the process for responding to any incidents that may occur at the venue. This plan includes procedures for evacuating the venue in the event of an emergency, as well as protocols for communicating with emergency services and liaising with relevant authorities.

At O2 Victoria Warehouse, we recognise the importance of providing a safe and secure environment for our guests. By partnering with medical professionals and developing comprehensive safeguarding measures, we can ensure that visitors can enjoy our events with confidence, safe in the knowledge that their welfare is our priority.

Conclusion:

At O2 Victoria Warehouse, we are committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all customers, ensuring that their welfare and safety are prioritised in all our event planning. Our holistic welfare and safeguarding strategy, supported by W.E.L.Safe includes welfare provision, medical support, security placement, accessibility support, and safeguarding of vulnerable groups, such as under 18s and individuals with disabilities. We have proactive measures in place to ensure early security and customer comfort, providing early queuing facilities and outside toilets for daytime queuing, and are committed to safeguarding young staff. We work closely with Northwest Event Medical Solutions to provide immediate medical attention, and our Access Team is available to assist individuals with specific needs. Our dedicated welfare teams and welfare facility offer specialised support, and our staff are trained to identify and respond to potential safeguarding concerns promptly. We have an established procedure for reporting, responding to, and preventing sexual harassment, sexual assault, and spiking and a strict policy to protect children at our events. By prioritising customer welfare and safety, we continue to provide a safe environment for all our customers.