

Wilderness Trust

Safeguarding Operating Procedures

1. Safeguarding Officer – Role description

There will be a named person for safeguarding young people who will be responsible for dealing with any concerns about the safeguarding of young people or adults at risk. This person is currently **Frances Blockley, Chairman**.

The role of the designated person is to:

- Ensure that The Wilderness Trust Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are followed.
- Ensure every staff members and volunteers know how to make contact with social care and police staff responsible for dealing with safeguarding children concerns.
- Act as a source of advice on safeguarding young people and adults at risk matters within The Wilderness Trust, and seek further advice and guidance from Powys Local Safeguarding Children Board as appropriate.
- Ensure that a record is kept of any concerns about a young person or adult and of any conversation or referrals to statutory agencies.
- Ensure that any such record is kept safely and securely.

2. Staff and volunteer recruitment and selection

THE WILDERNESS TRUST recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse young people in some way and that all necessary steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with them.

Therefore, all staff and volunteer applicants for positions within THE WILDERNESS TRUST will follow these recruitment procedures. Any information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence.

1. All potential candidates for both paid and voluntary positions within THE WILDERNESS TRUST will be asked to complete a THE WILDERNESS TRUST application form.
2. All potential candidates will be interviewed by a panel consisting of a minimum of two THE WILDERNESS TRUST staff members and/or directors.
3. If a person is thought to be suitable for a role, a minimum of two written references will be taken up and may be confirmed by telephone.
4. All staff, volunteers and trustees offered a role within THE WILDERNESS TRUST in key position working with children or adults at risk, will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. If staff, volunteers and trustees are in possession of a clear DBS check that was carried out in the 6-months prior to their appointment with THE WILDERNESS TRUST and are willing and able to present the original disclosure certificate, THE WILDERNESS TRUST will allow them to begin work, whilst another check is carried out.

5. If a DBS disclosure reveals a criminal record, this will not automatically ban the person from working at THE WILDERNESS TRUST. THE WILDERNESS TRUST will discuss the offence with the applicant and take into consideration the circumstances of the offence, the type of offence, when committed, etc. and assess fairly to ensure fair appointment and selection.
6. All paid positions are subject to a probationary period within which time the effectiveness of the delivery, performance and suitability for the post shall be monitored by THE WILDERNESS TRUST.

3. Staff and volunteer training

All staff and volunteers working within THE WILDERNESS TRUST will receive information and basic training in safe conduct and what to do if they have concerns about a young person or adult at risk. This will include information on recognising where there are concerns about a young person, and where to get advice.

Training levels should be appropriate to the employee and volunteer's contact with young people and adults at risk, and their responsibilities for child welfare within THE WILDERNESS TRUST:

- Employees working directly with young people and adults at risk must attend recognised safeguarding children awareness training (e.g. training run by the local Safeguarding Children Board) as soon as this can be arranged following their appointment.
- Employees who may have indirect contact with young people during the course of their work e.g. Project Manager must receive advisory information and Safeguarding Children awareness training from the Safeguarding Officer.
- For volunteers, safeguarding children will be part of their induction training.

4. Staff and Volunteer Code of Conduct

Always remember that while you are caring for young people you are in a position of trust and your responsibilities to them, and the organisation must be uppermost in your mind at all times.

Do Not:

- Use any kind of physical punishment or chastisement such as smacking or hitting.
- Give lifts in your own car, unless prior arrangements have been made with all relevant people, i.e. parents/carers, your line manager, and there is appropriate business insurance on the car.
- Use non-prescribed drugs or be under the influence of alcohol.
- Allow a young person to use discriminatory, demeaning or offensive language unchallenged.
- Behave in a way that frightens or demeans any young person.
- Use racist, sexist, discriminatory, demeaning or offensive language.

- Disclose your personal address, personal email address or telephone number to a young person
- Engage in a sexual relationship with a young person.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a young person.
- Engage in rough or physical games, including horseplay.
- Let allegations a young person makes go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Rely upon your good name to protect you or believe “it could never happen to me.”
- Give young people presents or personal items. Any gift should come from THE WILDERNESS TRUST and be given in a professional capacity and be agreed with a senior staff member. Similarly do not accept gifts yourself other than small tokens for appropriate celebrations (e.g. birthdays, Christmas), which you should mention to your line manager.

Do:

- Exercise caution about being alone with a young person. In situations where this is unavoidable, ensure another worker or volunteer knows what you are doing and where you are.
- Ensure that any physical contact is open and initiated by the young person’s needs, e.g. for help with personal care. Always prompt young people to carry out personal care themselves and if they cannot manage ask if they would like help.
- Talk explicitly to young people about their right to be kept safe from harm.
- Listen to young people about their right to be kept safe from harm.
- Listen to young people and take every opportunity to raise their self-esteem.
- Make sure you have read the Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and that you feel confident that you know how to recognise when a young person may be suffering harm, how to handle any disclosure and how to report any concerns.
- Where possible encourage parents/carers to take responsibility for their own children.

5. What you should do if a young person or adult at risk makes a disclosure

1. Stay calm. Do not let your shock show.
2. Explain to the young person that you will have to share the information, that you cannot keep it secret.
3. Listen very carefully to what is being said without interrupting and allow the young person to speak at his or her own pace.
4. Make it clear to the person that you are taking what they say seriously.
5. Do not press the person, ask leading questions or probe for information.
6. Reassure the person that they were right to tell and recognise that it is difficult to talk about these things.
7. Let the person know what will happen next, who you will report the information to, and what will happen once it has been reported.
8. Do not make any promises to the person.
9. Act immediately – do not delay.

10. Do not take sole responsibility – seek advice as soon as possible.
11. Keep a detailed record of the incident and your concerns by completing an Incident Report Form (see **Annex 3**). Make sure that you record exactly what happened and what was said in the person's own words, without interpreting it into your own words.

6. Procedures to follow when making a referral

It is important that all THE WILDERNESS TRUST staff and volunteers are aware of the reporting procedures if they have a concern about child protection or adult at risk welfare.

They should:

1. Refer their concerns to the Safeguarding Officer.
2. In the absence of this officer, then refer their concerns to the most senior employee available, who will be responsible for making the phone call to children's social care.
3. If no THE WILDERNESS TRUST staff members are available, the person discovering or being informed of the abuse should immediately inform children's social care, or the local safeguarding co-ordinator.

(see useful contacts list, **Annex 4**).

When contacting children's social care or safeguarding co-ordinator:

1. Make it clear you are making a referral about child protection/adult at risk.
2. Make a record of:
 - The name and position of the member of staff in children's social care / safeguarding coordinator / or police officer to whom the concerns were passed
 - The time and date of the call, in case any follow-up is needed.

Referrals made by telephone to social care must be followed up in writing within 24 hours.

See Annex 1 – A Quick Guide to Procedures

When you are making a referral regarding child protection concerns, it is important to have the following information wherever possible readily available for the duty social worker:

- Name, date of birth, ethnic origin, gender of the person, address and telephone numbers;
- The reasons for your concern;
- Injuries and/or other indicators observed;
- The young person's first language;
- Details of any specific needs of the person e.g. disability;
- Details of family members, if known;
- Other agencies, professionals involved;
- Family doctor

Lack of any of the above should not delay referral if concerns are immediate.

The Incident Report Form can be found in **Annex 3**. This form will enable employees to record the important information as highlighted above.

Not all young people / adults at risk are able to express themselves verbally. In this instance, where there are concerns, an Incident Report Form (**Annex 3**) should be completed and the same procedures for making a referral followed.

7. If in doubt

If you are not sure what to do, contact the THE WILDERNESS TRUST' Safeguarding Officer or another THE WILDERNESS TRUST senior staff member.

In addition there are several sources of advice available. These are:

- The duty social worker of the relevant social care service (see **Annex 4**).
- The NSPCC 24-hour free phone Helpline on 0808 800 5000

8. Confidentiality

Confidentiality should be maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a “*need to know basis*” only. This includes to the following people:

- The Safeguarding Officer.
- Social care/police.
- The young person making the allegation's parents/carers.
- The parents or carers of the young person who is alleged to have been abused.
- The person making the allegation.
- The alleged abuser (and their parents/carers if the abuser is a child)*.

**Where there is any possibility that a criminal act may have been committed, e.g. physical or sexual abuse, do not pass on any information before contacting the police and/or children's social care. Care should be taken not to take any action that may jeopardise any subsequent criminal investigation, this includes contacting the alleged perpetrator.*

Information should be stored in a secure place with access limited to designated people.

9. Support

For the reporting of suspected abuse

It is acknowledged that feelings generated by the discovery that a member of staff or volunteer is, or may be, abusing a young person, will raise concerns among other staff or volunteers. This includes the difficulties inherent in reporting such matters.

THE WILDERNESS TRUST assures all staff and volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith (without malicious intent), reports his or her concern about a colleague's practice or the possibility that a child or vulnerable adult may be being abused.

For the person against whom an allegation is made*

To be the subject of an allegation can be very stressful. While THE WILDERNESS TRUST has a duty to ensure that all allegations are thoroughly investigated it also has a duty to its staff and volunteers. While an investigation is being carried out, it is important that there is a senior member of staff who is tasked to maintain contact with the person (whether suspended or not) and keep them informed of the progress of the allegation and what steps are being taken. No information should be given about the detail of the allegation without careful consultation with the investigating agencies.

*(*only if this person is a staff member, trustee or volunteer of THE WILDERNESS TRUST)*

10. Types of Investigation

Where there is a complaint of abuse against a member of staff, there may be three types of investigation:

- A criminal investigation (undertaken by the police)
- A child or adult protection investigation (undertaken by social care/police)
- A disciplinary investigation (undertaken by THE WILDERNESS TRUST)

Civil proceedings may also be initiated by the person/family of the person who alleged the abuse.

11. Internal Enquires and Suspension

THE WILDERNESS TRUST can and will make immediate decisions on whether or not any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended from duty.

If an allegation or suspicion of abuse is made or exists about a staff member or volunteer, they will be asked, without prejudice, to leave the project if young people are still present.

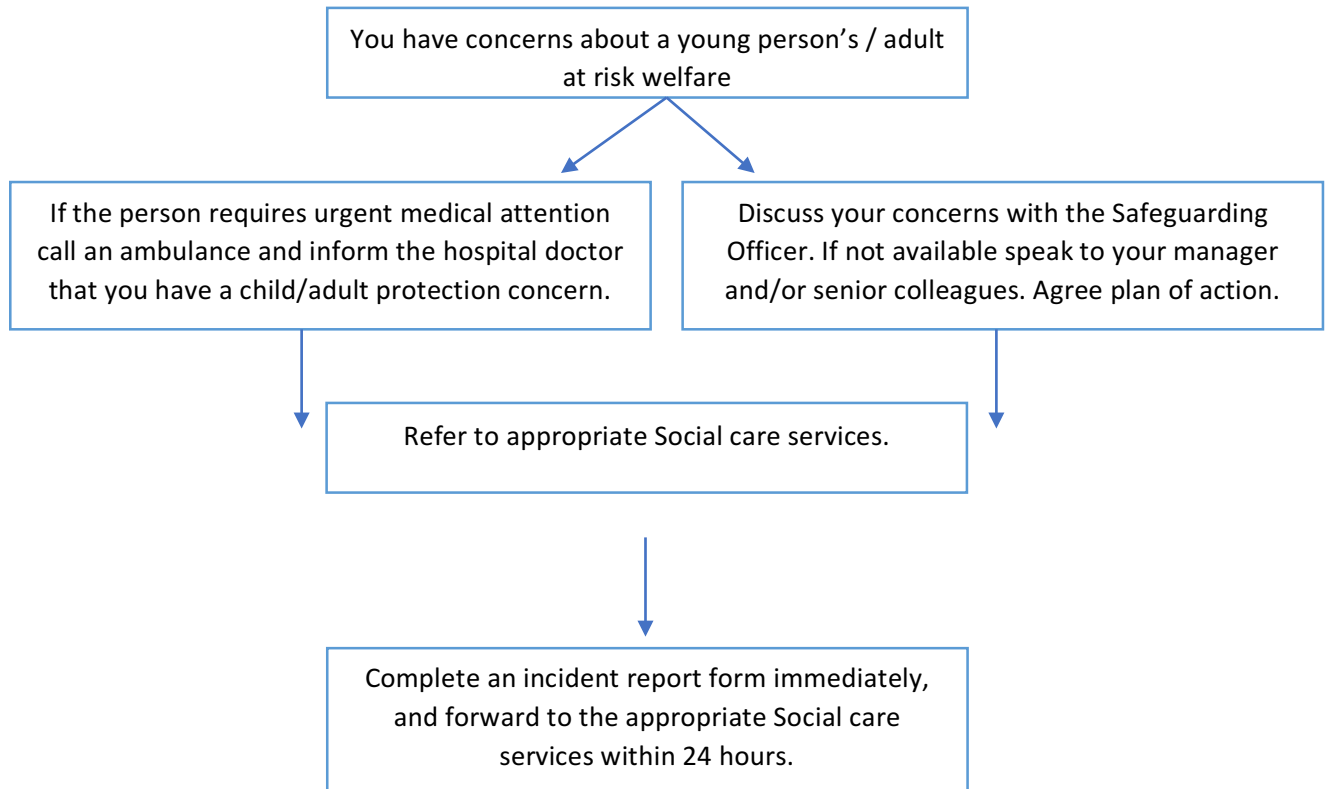
Irrespective of the findings of the relevant Local Safeguarding Children Board or Police enquiries, THE WILDERNESS TRUST will assess all individual cases under its misconduct/disciplinary procedures, to decide whether or not a member of staff can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled with other staff or volunteers.

This may be a difficult decision, particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, THE WILDERNESS TRUST will make an informed decision based on available information that could suggest, on a balance probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of all young people participating in all THE WILDERNESS TRUST activities or services is and will always remain paramount.

ANNEXES

Annex 1 – A Quick Guide to Procedures

Action to take when concerns about a young person or adult at risk are raised through direct disclosure or observation.



Annex 3 – Incident Report Form

All accidents, complaints, misunderstandings, or allegations or suspicions of abuse should be recorded as close as possible to the time of the incident. Details of incidents should be recorded in as much detail and as accurately as possible. Any disclosures of abuse being made by young people or adult at risk should be a reflection of what was actually said. Do not try and interpret any of the information, just record what was said or witnessed.

1. YOUR DETAILS

Your name:

Your Position:

Contact No:

2. PERSON DETAILS

Person's name:

Date of birth:

Person's address:

What is the ethnic origin?

Has the person got any special needs, e.g. a disability? If yes, please give details:

3. PARENT/CARERS DETAILS

Parent/Carers name:

Contact no:

Parent/Carers address:

Relationship to person:

4. DETAILS OF THE INCIDENT / DISCLOSURE OR SUSPICION OF ABUSE

Name of person disclosing information:

Time and date of incident / disclosure:

Name of person about whom allegation has been made (if given):

Details of the incident, allegation or disclosure.

Please ensure the account is factual; DO NOT include opinions/assumptions of either yourself or others. Include dates, times, incidents and any other potentially useful information. If the disclosure has come from a young person, use their words. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

5. ACTION TAKEN

Details of actions taken so far:

Details of actions you intend to take:

Name and contact details for witnesses to the incident:

6. DETAILS OF WHOM THIS INFORMATION HAS BEEN PASSED TO

Name:

Position:

Organisation:

Contact no:

Date and time that the information was forwarded:

Agreed action:

Name:

Position:

Organisation:

Contact no:

Date and time that the information was forwarded:

Agreed action:

Your signature:

Date:

Annex 4 – Useful contacts

If you do make the decision to contact Children's Social Care, you will need to know in which area he/she lives.

Powys social care and support **Report Child and Adult Abuse**

Office hours	01597 827666
Out of hours	0845 054 4847
Adult at risk multi-agency referral form	https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/3306/Adults-at-risk-multi-agency-referral-form-MARF
Children Safeguarding multi-agency referral form	https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/8063/Childrens-Safeguarding-Multi-Agency-Referral-Form-MARF

Adult Services Information Support Team	assist@powys.gov.uk
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0345 602 7050

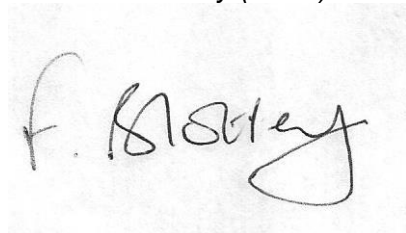
Powys County Hall, Spa Road East,
Llandrindod Wells, Powys, LD1 5LG

Police

Llanidloes Police Station	01267 222020
Non-emergency	101
Emergency	999

Signed on behalf of the Wilderness Trust:

Frances Blockley (Chair)



Dr Kevin Blockley (Treasurer)

