

Safeguarding Policy of Cwmbach Community Wetlands			
Date drafted	16.11.22	Date of review	16/11/23
Date approved by board	21/11/2023		
Signature of Chair	_____		

Safeguarding concerns in RCT must be reported using the required referral forms to the Multi-agency Safeguarding (MASH) arrangements as follows:

- To report concerns about a child in RCT contact: 01443 425 006 childrens.mash@rctcbc.gcsx.gov.uk
- To report concerns about an adult at risk in RCT call: 01443 425 003
- Emergency Out of hours contact number:

01443 743 665

For more information, please visit:

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Council/Partnerships/Workingwithothers/CwmTafMultiAgencySafeguardingHubMASH.aspx>

Mission Statement

In our work with children / young people / adults who may be at risk due to age, illness or disability, **Cwmbach Community Wetlands** will endeavour at all times to provide services and activities which minimise risk and are as safe as we can make them.

We aim to protect our service users from harm or maltreatment, prevent the impairment of health or development, ensure the provision of safe and effective care, promote people's life chances and ensure children enter adulthood successfully.

We will work in partnership with local / national agencies to put in place appropriate procedures for reporting, making referrals, accessing training and specialist support, as and when required.

Safer Recruitment

To do so, **Cwmbach Community Wetlands** will seek to recruit using appropriate procedures, safeguards and checks.

We will take up references for all posts and volunteer roles prior to appointment. We will use Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks to help us to assess suitability and where there is eligibility to do so by determining which roles are in regulated activity and therefore subject to a barring list check and those roles eligible for enhanced DBS checks only. We will assess any criminal record information that is disclosed in line with our data protection and equalities (treating ex-offenders fairly) policies.

We will provide an induction programme for all new volunteers and staff, appropriate training to enable all personnel to undertake their roles safely and confidently, and ongoing training as benefits the personal and professional development of individuals and of our organisation.

We will regularly review our recruitment procedures in response to changes in legislation and systems external to our organisation e.g. DBS and barring list checks

Volunteers

All volunteer roles will be supported by a Volunteer Co-ordinator /Supporter.

Volunteers will be treated equally alongside any paid staff, and all volunteers will be offered the same opportunities for advancement, responsibility, training and gaining qualifications and acknowledgement for their contribution to our organisation. In turn, our volunteers will adhere to the Code of Conduct/Practice at all times as a representative of our organisation.

Any volunteer roles, which would be regulated activity if unsupervised, will be appropriately supervised in accordance with statutory guidance.

Safeguarding Officer

Our appointed Safeguarding Officer is (*Jayne Palmer*) from 16/11/22 and supported by Bethan Jenkins as deputy, who will be available to all staff, volunteers and service users to speak to when they have any concerns, issues or complaints regarding the safety, well-being or conduct of service users, volunteers and staff.

The Safeguarding Officer and deputy will have access to appropriate training to support them in these roles. They will liaise with appropriate local and national agencies, contribute to appropriate policies, maintain records and keep Confidentiality, adhere to and promote this policy within the organisation, and support or provide access to support for individuals suffering harm or abuse.

Awareness of Harm and Abuse in our Organisation

Harm is caused by accidents, deliberate abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, financial), neglect (deliberate or not) or factors such as bullying, prejudicial attitudes or a failure to enable *a person* to participate in activities that are open to most of their peers.

All incidents of harm to anyone involved in our service will require an appropriate response to reduce risks and improve our service.

Deliberate acts of harm (sexual, physical, emotional and financial) and neglect are abuses against the person and will incur disciplinary proceedings and require reports and referrals to social services, the police, other professional bodies and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if in regulated activity.

Significant Harm

Where there is risk of significant harm to our service users, volunteers or staff, the Safeguarding Officer and deputy are empowered to act accordingly.

- To log all conversations regarding the issue
- To sign and request signatures on reports and statements
- Confidentially seek advice from expert sources
- Share concerns (with consent where required and appropriate) internally with senior staff / Chair of the Board
- Share concerns and make referrals to external agencies such as Social Services, the Police or NSPCC as appropriate to the circumstances
- Make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service regarding staff or volunteers in regulated activity whose conduct is harmful to service users and when they are removed from regulated activity

Confidentiality

All reports and logs (including personnel records) will be kept securely and confidentially according our data protection policy and confidentiality statement, or in line with DBS Code of Practice if appropriate, until or unless it is necessary to share this material with the agencies named above. Information will be shared on a “need-to-know” basis only.

Communication

We will communicate this policy to all staff, volunteers, service users and their families / carers, using appropriate methods, formats and language to get the essence across.

We support and encourage all service users, volunteers and staff to speak up and contact the named Safeguarding Officer or deputy where there is:

- A *concern* (a worry, issue or doubt about practice or treatment of a service user or colleague, or their circumstances), *or*
- A *disclosure* (information about a person at risk of or suffering from significant harm) *or*
- An *allegation* (the possibility that a volunteer or staff member could cause harm to a person in their care)

Staff or volunteers can report things that aren't right, are illegal or if anyone at work is neglecting their duties, putting someone's health and safety in danger or covering up wrongdoing. In the first instance they should speak with the Safeguarding Officer, their deputy or the trustee with appropriate responsibility Kath Reeves.

We would prefer our members and personnel to use internal processes whenever possible to make a report as above, but this does not prevent them from making a report or referral to statutory agencies such as Social Services or the Police, in their own right as a private individual. We also support our staff or volunteers to raise concerns or to disclose information, which they believe shows malpractice - whistle-blowing (disclosure in the public interest).

To encourage everyone involved in our organisation to understand that safeguarding is everybody's business, we will: hold forums / agenda trustees meetings / provide opportunities for discussions about issues and concerns, policy and procedures to reflect, review and to continue to learn and improve in our safeguarding responsibilities.

Role of the Board of Trustees

Trustees' reporting responsibilities

The Commission strategy on safeguarding in charities, reminded trustees that they should proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of their charity's beneficiaries and take reasonable steps to ensure that their beneficiaries or others who come into contact with their charity do not, as a result, come to harm. The Commission requires charities to report serious incidents.

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

- Loss of your charity's money or assets
- Damage to your charity's property
- Harm to your charity's work, beneficiaries or reputation

The most common type of incidents are frauds, thefts, significant financial losses, criminal breaches, terrorism or extremism allegations, and safeguarding issues. If a serious incident takes place, you need to report what happened and explain how you are dealing with it, even if you have reported it to the police, donors or another regulator.

Who should report?

The responsibility for reporting serious incidents rests with the charity's trustees. In practice, this may be delegated to someone else within the charity, such as an employee or the charity's professional advisers. However, all trustees hold ultimate responsibility for ensuring their charity makes a report, and does so in a timely manner. If you're reporting the incident as a trustee, you need to confirm that you have authority to report on behalf of the trustee body. If it's someone other than a trustee, they should declare who they are, their relationship with the charity and confirm that they have the authority of trustees to report it.

Whistleblowing

The serious incident reporting framework and this guidance is for trustees. If you are an employee of a charity and you suspect serious wrongdoing within the organisation, for example criminal offences or health and safety breaches, or you discover that the charity has deliberately hidden serious incidents, you can speak out safely and report this to the Commission.

To find out more, go to [whistleblowing: guidance for charity employees](#).

(If Registered with the Charities Commission:

Why must you tell the Charity Commission?

Given the challenging nature of the work undertaken and the difficult context faced by many charities, it is likely that serious incidents will occur. Where this is the case, it is the Commission's regulatory role to ensure that trustees comply with their legal duties and that the charity manages the incident responsibly, taking steps to limit its immediate impact and where possible, prevent it from happening again.

Most problems can be resolved by trustees themselves, in some cases with timely advice from professional advisers. Taking action quickly will help protect your charity

from further harm and ensure that confidence is maintained in it, as well as benefiting other charities by improving public confidence in the sector as a whole.

By reporting a serious incident, you demonstrate that you have identified a risk to the charity and that the trustees are taking appropriate action to deal with it. This is very important because protecting the assets, reputation and beneficiaries of the charity are essential trustee responsibilities. The potential for reputational damage can be lessened, however, if you can show that the incident has been handled well; this will also allow the Commission, if asked by the media, Parliament or the public, to state that the trustees acted responsibly. Trustees should always put appropriate safeguards in place and take reasonable steps to ensure their charity is not exposed to undue risk. Otherwise it can be vulnerable to fraud, theft or other kinds of abuse and trustees may be in breach of their duties.

Timely reporting allows the Commission to identify problems in charities at an early stage, and where appropriate, to provide regulatory advice and guidance to trustees to ensure they meet their legal duties. In more serious cases, where charities' assets, reputation, services or beneficiaries have been harmed, or are at significant risk, the Commission may need to intervene by using its temporary or protective powers in order to safeguard charity assets and put it back on track.

When to report

You should report an actual or suspected incident promptly. This means as soon as is reasonably possible after it happens, or immediately after you become aware of it).

References and links

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

Safeguarding Work in Wales Legislation:

https://socialcare.wales/cms_assets/file-uploads/7-All-Wales-Basic-Safeguarding-Awareness-Training-Legislation-and-guidance-summary.pdf

Safeguarding People:

<https://www.safeguarding.wales/>

Legislation which is specific to your area of work e.g. for social care - Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (including voluntary adoption societies and adoption support agencies, fostering services, adult placement (shared lives) services, and certain advocacy services: [Phase 3](#)

<https://socialcare.wales/hub/regulations-phase-3>

Volunteering Code of Practice:

<https://wcva.cymru/i-work-with-volunteers/>