


Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy (HR_P2)

Document version:	V4
Policy owner:	Head of Business Support
Next policy review date:	February 2026
<hr/>	
Approved by HMWT Council on:	20 February 2025
Signed:	
Print name:	Peter Tallantire
Position:	Chair
<hr/>	
Reviewed:	August 2024
Amendments:	Updated in line with RSWT Safeguarding review

1. Named Safeguarding Leads

Designated Safeguarding Lead – Becky Vernon-Clinch

Deputy Safeguarding Lead – Lea Ellis

Trustee Lead for Safeguarding – Jackie Hunter

2. Accompanying Documents

HMWT Safeguarding Procedure

The Wildlife Trusts Safeguarding Commitment Statement

Online Safety Guidance

Safer Recruitment Policy

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

3. Introduction

This policy outlines Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust’s (“the Trust”) commitment to Safeguarding Adults at Risk from abuse and neglect. The Trust is committed to enabling safe and supported access for a range of audiences to our sites, and activities in a range of settings including nature reserves, community areas and on private land.

The Wildlife Trusts movement believe that everyone has a responsibility to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk. As a movement we are committed to ensuring their safety and wellbeing is at the heart of our engagement with people. Please refer to The Wildlife Trusts Safeguarding Commitment.

4. Definition of an adult at risk

In England, an adult at risk is an individual aged 18 years and over who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) **and;**
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, **and;**
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

5. Purpose

The purpose of this policy and the associated *Safeguarding Procedure* is to provide clarity to all staff, trustees, volunteers and members of the public on the Trust's approach to Safeguarding Adults at Risk.

The Trust is committed to the highest standards of charity governance for safeguarding and this policy is the foundation of a universal approach across the organisation that puts safeguarding at the heart of the Trust's engagement with adults at risk.

The Trust has a duty of care to adults at risk, carers and/or families that take part in our activities. We endeavour to provide a safe, friendly and inclusive environment that celebrates all achievements. We will achieve this by ensuring that employees, volunteers and trustees comply with all legal, contractual and professional standards and responsibilities in their work with adults at risk – whether within a group situation or one to one.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and trustees working on behalf of Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust. Where the Trust undertakes activities with third parties, staff shall have due regard to the safeguarding policies of the third-party provider, and the third-party provider will meet our minimum standards.

This policy will be reviewed annually or in line with key legislation updates or changes and will be promoted through induction, training and ongoing supervision and support.

6. Context

The Care Act 2014 (England) sets out a clear legal framework for how local authorities and organisations such as charities should protect adults at risk from abuse or neglect.

This means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances (Care Act Guidance 2014).

The Care Act (2014)'s principles are:

- **Empowerment** - People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
- **Prevention** – It is better to take action before harm occurs.
- **Proportionality** – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- **Protection** – Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- **Partnership** – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse
- **Accountability** – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

Outlined in the Care Act (2014), 'Making Safeguarding Personal' is an approach to working with adults which supports a person-centred, outcome-focus to Safeguarding. In practice this means talking to the adult about what they want to happen and understanding their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs before any actions are decided. Working in this way helps to ensure the adult is happy with the outcome from a safeguarding enquiry. Upon contacting a local authority to raise a concern, it is likely that we will be asked what the adult wants to happen as a result of the referral; so it is important, where possible to have a conversation and understand the wishes and feelings of the adult.

At Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust we may engage with adults at risk in the following situations:

- Events
- Work Parties
- Work placements / work experience
- Community engagement

In line with the purpose of this policy we are committed to providing a safe and friendly environment that protects adults at risk. Each activity is carefully planned and risk assessed to consider both the safety of our beneficiaries as well as our staff and volunteers.

Some of these activities are supported by external support staff. Those activities whereby the Trust has direct supervision of an adult at risk require completion of thorough risk assessments.

7. Safer Recruitment

The Trust want to ensure that we choose the best people for our roles and our *Safer Recruitment Policy* helps us to ensure we recruit like-minded people who care for wildlife and nature as well as being committed to protecting children and adults at risk from harm. Please refer to the Trust's *Safer Recruitment Policy*.

8. Recognising the signs of abuse and neglect in adults at risk

It is important to be alert to the signs of abuse and neglect. The Trust supports a culture whereby if anyone feels something isn't right, or they question the behaviour of adults at risk, staff, volunteers, trustees or carers, they are encouraged and supported to speak up and discuss concerns with the Trust's safeguarding lead or their Primary Contact.

Further details regarding recognising the signs of abuse and neglect in adults at risk can be found in the *Safeguarding Procedure*.

9. Terrorism and Radicalisation

The Prevent Duty was created under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and requires certain organisations 'to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. Whilst the Trust are not bound by the Prevent duty legislation, partner agencies such as Local Authority, Health and Social Care will carry this responsibility and we must be in a position to recognise warning signs in adults at risk and notify the appropriate agencies if we have concerns regarding terrorism or extremism.

10. Bullying

The Trust will not tolerate any form of bullying between adults at risk and adults or children who are part of our organisation or access our sites to take part in groups or activities. Bullying can become serious enough to be an adults at risk protection issue and, if so, it should be dealt with under the Trust's *Safeguarding Procedure*.

11. Online Safety

Just as the Trust take the safety of adults at risk face to face extremely seriously, we also consider how to keep them safe engaging online too. Please refer to Trust's *Online Safety Guidance* and *Safeguarding Procedure* for more information and guidance regarding online safety.

12. Duty to Refer

The Charity Commission are very clear that as an organisation working with adults at risk we have a responsibility to recognise and refer any concerns or disclosures of abuse and neglect, as well as put in place the correct supportive frameworks and recruitment processes to enable this.

Further details on making a referral and the information required can be found in the Trust's *Safeguarding Procedure*.

13. Allegations against a staff member, volunteer or trustee working with adults at risk

The Trust has a responsibility to respond to allegations or concerns raised about a person, whether an employee, volunteer or student (paid or unpaid) who works with adults at risk as part of their role. These

individuals are known as People in a Position of Trust (PiPoT). Please refer to the *Safeguarding Procedure* for further information and guidance.

14. Supporting adults with mental health difficulties

Many people with mental health problems do not receive support services and when 'well' would consider themselves able to take care of themselves independently. This means if the Trust has concerns about individuals experiencing mental health difficulties, they may not be eligible for a safeguarding adult's referral and we need to be aware of other pathways for support. These may include encouraging them to talk to their GP, local support services in your area, attending A&E in an emergency or accessing support through MIND or Samaritans. Please refer to the Trust's *Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy* or a member of the Wellbeing Team.

15. Serious Incidents and Charity Regulators

In England and Wales the Charity Commission requires charities to report serious incidents. The responsibility for this lies with the Trustees, however operationally this may be delegated to the Chief Executive. The Safeguarding Lead must also be notified before any incident is reported.

Please refer to the *Safeguarding Procedure* for more information and guidance.

16. Roles and Responsibilities for Safeguarding within the Trust

Role	Responsibilities
Trustee lead for Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking an overall lead in this area on behalf of the Board of Trustees. • Challenging any strategic decisions which adversely affect anyone's wellbeing. • With the CEO, reporting serious incidents as necessary to the Charity Commission.
All Trustees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the lead trustee in creating a positive safeguarding culture that works to protect children and adults at risk within the wildlife trusts • Approve safeguarding policy and procedures and ensure that safeguarding is considered at every stage of decision making within the movement
CEO of The Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that safeguarding is embedded within all decisions made by the Senior Management Team by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - maintaining a clear strategic and operational focus on safeguarding children and adults at risk

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust meet the required legislative standards - making sure everyone in the organisation is aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and knows how to respond to concerns - reporting serious incidents as necessary to the Charity Commission
Senior Management Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets weekly where safeguarding concerns and incidents can be reported, and outcomes tracked
Designated Safeguarding Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding subject expert and the point of advice throughout the Trust • Responsible for developing policy, procedure, training and reporting mechanisms as well as being a support for the safeguarding point of contacts • Responsible for ensuring that staff complete regular training appropriate to their roles • Responsible for making referrals and overall safeguarding case management
Safeguarding point of contacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They will be the point of contact for concerns for all staff and trustees and will be responsible for liaising with the local authority when referrals are necessary • They will offer support and advice
All Trust staff, volunteers and trustees	Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Everyone has a duty to understand and act upon any concerns they may have regarding children and adults at risk

The Health, Safety & Personnel Committee, and the Board of the Trust, meet quarterly where Safeguarding is a standing agenda item. The Head of Business Support and Designated Trustee take an annual review of Safeguarding to the Committee and to the Board.