



Policy position Safeguarding

Overview	This policy offers a guide to any third party engaging with the National Trust to understand our safeguarding position, expectations, and compliance, and aims to support the creation of safe and trusted interactions. We recognise that the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk is paramount, and we are committed to ensuring that anyone who comes into contact with the National Trust today, and every day in the future, is safeguarded. This includes staff, volunteers, visitors, service users, partners, suppliers, contractors, freelance workers, and agencies.
Rationale	The Trust must be able to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns in a full and open manner and therefore staff, volunteers, leaders, managers, and our Board of Trustees, are expected to understand their responsibilities.
Implications	Safeguarding is the action taken to promote the welfare of children and adults at risk and prevent them from coming to harm. Where harm or abuse is recognised or disclosed at any of our sites or places, we take action to support and make the child or adult safe and follow our internal safeguarding procedures. This document sets out the Trust's commitment and approach to safeguarding, explaining the key responsibilities we have, to keep everyone safe from harm, abuse and exploitation.

The National Trust approach to safeguarding is informed by the following legislation:

- [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2024](#)
- [Children's Act 2004](#)
- [Care Act 2014](#)
- [Mental Capacity Act 2005](#)
- [Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales 2021](#)
- [Safeguarding Board Act](#) (Northern Ireland) 2011
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Modern Slavery Act 2015](#)

This policy document will cover:

1. Our safeguarding measures
2. Safer recruitment
3. Our response and reporting procedures
4. Safeguarding children and young people
5. Safeguarding adults at risk
6. Equality, diversity, and inclusion
7. Mental health, wellbeing, and safeguarding

Context

The National Trust exists to look after places of historic interest and natural beauty permanently for the benefit of the nation across England, Wales and Northern Ireland and be a place for people to visit, work and volunteer. We must ensure that whilst offering our places to all, we remain alert to the safeguarding of everyone engaging with the Trust.

Ethos

We promote a culture of listening, taking all information seriously, particularly through the voices of children, young people, and adults at risk. Our culture is about challenging where needed and being open and honest to recognise issues and respond accordingly.

1. Our safeguarding measures

- All our staff and volunteers are required to complete mandatory safeguarding training to ensure everyone has awareness around safeguarding. Completion of the training is required for ALL roles and completed on a biennial basis.
- We have an internal Safeguarding Instruction which acts as a guide for all staff and volunteer on how we recognise, respond, and report any safeguarding concerns in the Trust.
- We have a Safeguarding code of conduct for when engaging with vulnerable groups. This is available on our website.
- DBS or AccessNI checks are completed for staff and volunteers where the engagement of their role, meets the required criteria.
- In addition to internal guidance and resources, we have a 'Safe and Sound' leaflet, offering bite sized guidance to support engagement with children, young people, and adults at risk. This is available on our website.
- We have 'Local Designated Safeguarding Leads' (LDSL's) across the Trust who are available to all staff and volunteers to discuss a concern at any of our places.
- We have an internal safeguarding report process for all safeguarding incidents and concerns. Safeguarding reports are recorded on a secure system and managed by trained case managers.
- If any external partner or member of the public wishes to report a concern, this could be reported via their National Trust person of contact or our whistle blowing line 0800 069 8063.

2. Safer Recruitment

To ensure safeguarding throughout the National Trust we aim to bring the right people into role. We do this by:

- Being clear on our commitment to safeguarding at the point of advertising.
- People applying for a role will be made aware that any role could be subject to a DBS or AccessNI check where necessary.
- We ask for two references to gain further details about an individual's previous work or experience.
- We have a thorough induction process to ensure any new staff member or volunteer completes the required training and understands processes such as safeguarding.
- We have safeguarding training for all our people, to ensure safeguarding awareness and confidence.

3. Our response and reporting procedures

Listen and observe.

- We will always listen to the voices of the person involved, adult or child, and where appropriate, understand what has taken place from their point of view.
- If we witness or are made aware of a concern that someone is at risk of harm or abuse, we take safe steps to intervene.
- We will respect an adult's choice around the steps they want us to take unless they do not have the capacity to make safe decisions.
- If we are aware that a criminal offence has taken place, or there is an immediate risk of harm or abuse to an individual, we will contact the police.

Make Safe.

- If there is an immediate risk of harm or abuse to an adult or child, we will take whatever action is required to make them safe and minimise risk. This could include calling emergency services, removing the person causing the risk, taking the injured party to a place of safety, calling a responsible adult where appropriate, or putting measures in place such as additional supervision of an individual.
- If the situation cannot be made safe by staff and volunteers alone, the appropriate emergency service will be called immediately.
- Anyone reporting a concern will be treated with respect and will be supported.
- Referrals to social care will be made where required to share information where necessary.
- Information will only be shared with the relevant people, ensuring confidentiality.
- The National Trust will endeavour to respect the rights of the accused individual under the criminal and civil law of an accused person and will take responsibility for making sure we take steps to protect them and offer support where appropriate.

Record and review.

- Any reported safeguarding concern will be recorded on our confidential system only viewable by the assigned case managers.
- Any concerns regarding staff, volunteers or members of the public will be responded to.
- We will review all safeguarding cases for learning opportunities.
- Any safeguarding incident that has resulted in, or risk significant harm to beneficiaries or other people who come into contact with the Trust through its work will be reported to the Charity Commission.

4. Safeguarding Children and young people.

- It is the responsibility of adults to ensure their behaviour is always appropriate as per our Safeguarding code.
- Children rely on adults to meet their basic needs so we will always have an additional responsibility for children. If children engage with the Trust without a parent or carer, they are our responsibility, and we will take the necessary steps to keep them safe.
- DBS or AccessNI checks are sought where the engagement meets the required criteria.

- Safeguarding children and young people is about the safety and welfare of all children who come into contact with the Trust. Their wellbeing and mental health forms part of our care and we aim to ensure that any concerns about their wellbeing or mental health will be reported as a safeguarding concern.
- We will always ask parent or carers for any information that could assist us with ensuring the health and safety of the child.
- Any person with responsibility for a child, for whom we have concerns about their suitability to work with children or young people, will be referred to the relevant authority.
- Where necessary, we will follow the 'Working together to safeguard children' 2024 legislation and share information with other organisations. This may be without the child's or parents' consent if required.

5. Safeguarding Adults at risk.

- We do not assume or decide that an adult is an 'adult at risk' without information from the individual, a parent, carer, or local authority.
- As per the Mental Capacity Act 2005, we will always assume an adult has the mental capacity to make their own choices and decisions. Where there may be concerns around mental capacity, we will gain professional advice.
- When we have concerns for an adult, through face to face, phone, or written communication, we will aim to speak to them in the first instance before making any necessary referrals.
- Safeguarding adults includes their safety and welfare. Their wellbeing and mental health forms part of our care and we aim to ensure that any concerns about their wellbeing or mental health are explored with the adult by taking the time to speak with them.
- We gain expert advice around specific diagnosis such as mental health illness, and dementia to better understand individual needs.
- Safeguarding adults also includes domestic abuse. In the Trust we aim to create a safe supportive environment for people to be able to share any experience of domestic abuse. We will always take a disclosure seriously and speak to the individual to ask what support they require from the Trust, supporting them to remain in control.

6. Equality, diversity, and inclusion

- In line with our commitments to equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) we welcome everyone, and we are for everyone.
- We recognise that the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk is paramount regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. These are all defined as protected characteristics within the Equality Act 2010 and have the right to equal protection from all types of harm and abuse.
- Working together in partnership with our staff, volunteers, children, young people adults at risk and their support networks allows us to embed our EDI commitment and ensure we respond to safeguarding concerns equally and fairly.
- Where an individual may have diverse needs due to; being neurodiverse, having a learning difference, disability, or health need, we aim to remove barriers and increase access to support them, such as changes to the physical environment, the way things are done, or the support provided.

7. Mental health, wellbeing, and safeguarding

- The National Trust recognises that mental wellbeing is how an individual copes and manages the day-to-day stresses of life, and about being productive and making contributions to their community. Anyone can experience either good or poor mental wellbeing at any point in their life.
- Mental health issues may vary in terms of strength and frequency of reoccurrence, they can be occasional, or in a steady state over a period of time. Some individuals with mental health conditions or issues may be at higher risk due to the coping mechanism they adopt such as self-harm, anxiety attacks and suicide ideation.
- The Trust encourages any individual facing mental health challenges to speak to their GP. Staff and volunteers are encouraged to speak to their line manager, a Mental Health First Aider in the Trust or the People Service Centre, so we can support them through signposting.
- Where we believe that someone is struggling with their mental health and unable to get support themselves, make good and safe decisions and be at potential risk of harm or abuse, this will be managed as a safeguarding concern.

If you are a third party external to the Trust and have a safeguarding concern, please contact our whistleblowing line on 0800 069 8063.

For further information please email safeguarding@nationaltrust.org.uk.