



HEREFORD GUILD OF MAYOR'S GUIDES

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. Purpose of the policy

Hereford Guild of Mayor's Guides is committed to safeguarding practices that help ensure the safety of adults at risk whilst taking part in our group activities and in the wider community. This policy helps everyone involved in our group to:

- be aware of our legal responsibilities
- understand the safeguarding risks in Hereford Guild of Mayor's Guides
- know what to do if they have a concern about the wellbeing or welfare of any adult at risk who comes into contact with our group.

This safeguarding policy and associated procedures apply to all individuals involved in Hereford Guild of Mayor's Guides. The policy applies to all concerned about the safety of adults at risk while taking part in our group and the activities we run. It should be emphasised that the Hereford Guild of Mayor's Guides is in contact with walkers for a limited period of time, typically up to two hours, and extremely rarely more than once per annum. The Hereford Guild of Mayor's Guides does not keep records of those who participate in walks. The Hereford Guild of Mayor's Guides does not take unaccompanied children on its walks at any time.

2. Code of conduct

We recognise that keeping our group safe is everyone's responsibility, and we expect our guides to behave according to the following values:

- All adults at risk have an equal right to protection from abuse and to be kept safe from harm regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- We recognise some adults are vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- We listen to and respect everyone in the group.
- We use language that is appropriate for age and ability, and not offensive or discriminatory.
- We encourage a culture of honesty, where everyone feels comfortable to point out attitudes or behaviours they do not like.
- It is not always easy to be vocal about concerns – for ourselves or for other people.
- All allegations and suspicions of neglect and abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

This means when working with adults at risk, we will never:



HEREFORD GUILD OF MAYOR'S GUIDES

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

- Promise to keep secrets – safeguarding relies on sharing concerns appropriately
- Allow suspicions or allegations of abuse or neglect to go unreported
- Act in a way that is threatening, abusive or bullying
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts

3. Legislation

Hereford Guild of Mayor's Guides recognises that the local authority has the main legal duty to safeguard adults at risk, and we are committed to working with them and Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board.

This policy, and the practices within it, are based on the relevant legislation and government guidance, including:

- The Care Act 2014
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (which protects people's right to make their own decisions in any situation where they can do so).

4. Recognising safeguarding concerns

There are many signs and indicators that may suggest someone is experiencing abuse or neglect. There may be other explanations too, but Hereford Guild of Mayor's Guides will not ignore any of these signs if they are apparent.

An adult may confide (disclose) to any member of Hereford Guild of Mayor's Guides that they are experiencing abuse, inside or outside the activities of the group. Or someone else may notice signs in a particular individual. The signs we will look out for include:

- Unexplained bruises or injuries
- Belongings or money going missing from the person
- The person no longer attending or enjoying Hereford Guild of Mayor's Guides activities, or responding to contact from other members of the group
- A change in confidence or behaviour of a person e.g. if they are withdrawn and quiet around a particular person or people, when usually they are outgoing and confident.
- A change in appearance of the person e.g. losing or gaining weight, deterioration in personal hygiene or way of dressing.
- Someone else always speaking for the person and not allowing them to make their own choices



HEREFORD GUILD OF MAYOR'S GUIDES

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

- The person showing fear of, or not wanting to be around, a particular individual or group of people

5. Responding to concerns

Hereford Guild of Mayor's Guides has a Designated Safeguarding Lead whose contact details are in section 11. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will support the person raising the concerns, as well as the person being abused.

If anyone in the group notices any signs of abuse or neglect in another person, they should bring these concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If someone discloses to anyone else in the group that they are being abused, the response should be as follows:

- Always ensure that the person speaking up feels they are being listened to and supported
- Don't promise to keep information confidential between you and them
- Tell the Designated Safeguarding Lead about the concerns (unless the safeguarding lead is implicated in causing the harm or perpetrating the abuse. In this situation, information should be shared with a trusted committee member and they will be responsible for taking further action instead of the safeguarding lead)
- Ask for the person's consent to share the information. If they refuse and you are still worried that they or someone else is at immediate risk of harm, you cannot wait for this consent. You must share this information with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Write a clear, factual statement of what you have been told, seen, or heard. Quote directly anything said to you in the course of a disclosure.
- Don't attempt to investigate the matter yourself.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for taking further action once concerns have been raised with them. Throughout the process, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will record all the information they are given, the actions they take, and why. The procedures they will follow are:

5.1 Initial assessment

As soon as information is shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, they will make an initial assessment of the concern. They will, if possible, talk to the person reporting the concern and gather as much information as possible from them, such as:

- What type of concern has been reported? Different actions are required depending on what type of concern it is (see below)
- What action has already been taken?



HEREFORD GUILD OF MAYOR'S GUIDES

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

- Is anyone else in the organisation affected by this situation e.g. other volunteers? Are there any attitudes or emotions that you may have to be aware of?
- How might this concern affect what the organisation delivers in the short term?
- Who else might need to be informed?
- What other actions now need to be taken?

5.2 Immediate actions depending on what type of concern has been raised

(a) Emergency incidents: this is when there is a life-threatening situation where there is imminent danger and harm to anyone.

- Immediately contact the emergency services if they have not been called already.
- Make sure the current situation is safe.
- Establish how others are coping – do they need any immediate support?
- Inform the Committee, as appropriate.

(b) Allegations concerning volunteers: this is when someone has alleged that a guide has harmed or abused an adult.

- Contact the local authority safeguarding team as soon as possible within 24 hours.
- Be guided by them on any further actions required of you.

(c) Concerns about other organisations: this is a situation where the safeguarding concern is about another organisation, their staff, volunteers or the people they work with.

- As soon as possible within 24 hours contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead of the organisation in question and pass on your concerns, if this has not already happened.
- In some circumstances you may decide to follow up with the organisation to confirm they have acted on the issue.
- If at any point you think the organisation has not acted and someone is at risk, you should contact the local safeguarding team yourself.

(d) Responding to historic or non-recent concerns: You may become aware about a concern relating to an incident which took place in the past, including when the adult was a child. Historical allegations of abuse should be taken as seriously as contemporary allegations.

- Remember that it is never too late to report abuse. An individual can make a formal complaint to the police about non-recent abuse, ideally in the geographic area in which the abuse is reported to have taken place.
- Establish if the person alleged to have caused the harm works with children or adults at risk. Try to find out their recent or current whereabouts and any contact they have with



HEREFORD GUILD OF MAYOR'S GUIDES

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

children or adults at risk. A referral should be made to social services, with the consent of the person who experienced the abuse if possible.

- Consider what consent the person has given for information to be shared. How, when and to whom they share this information should usually be with their consent.
- Signpost the person who experienced the abuse to relevant support groups for help.

(e) Supporting those who share a concern with you: Your primary concern should be the best interests of the person who is at risk of harm. However, the person sharing this concern with you may also be distressed by the situation, even if they are reporting on behalf of someone else. Everyone can respond to worries about another differently. If someone has previously experienced trauma they can find it especially upsetting.

- Thank them for bringing this concern to your attention and that they have fulfilled their key responsibility
- Explain that you will now take responsibility in leading management of this concern and any contact with statutory agencies
- Highlight that there may be limited updates that you have or can give them on the situation; that does not mean that it was not important for them to share their concern
- Remind them of the importance of confidentiality and not sharing this information
- Ensure they have your contact details in case they think of anything else they have not yet shared that they think may be relevant
- Discuss with them what additional support they may require. Consider contacting them later to check in on how they are doing

6. Keeping records

Hereford Guild of Mayor's Guides recognises that it is vital to record and store details about any safeguarding concerns that arise. We will record information, even if the concerns have not been shared with the police or the local authority safeguarding team. These records are extremely sensitive and will be kept in a locked place.

It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that the following information is recorded about every safeguarding concern:

- The date and time of the incident/disclosure/concern
- The date and time of the report
- The name and role of the person to whom the concern was originally reported and their contact details



HEREFORD GUILD OF MAYOR'S GUIDES

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

- The name and role of the person making the report (if this is different to the above) and their contact details
- The names of all parties who were involved in the incident, including any witnesses
- The name and any other relevant information about the adult who is the subject of the concern (including information about their care and support needs)
- What was said or done and by whom
- Any action taken to look into the matter
- Any further action taken (such as a referral being made)
- The reasons why the organisation decided not to refer those concerns to a statutory agency (if relevant)

Each record will be signed and dated by the person making the report.

7. Confidentiality, consent and information sharing

Timely information sharing is key to keeping people safe and responding appropriately to concerns about their welfare. Hereford Guild of Mayor's Guides expects all members to maintain confidentiality and comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

We will share information within the group (e.g. with other volunteers) in situations where this is necessary to deal effectively with safeguarding concerns or to provide continuity of support. We will share information with other organisations to keep a person safe.

Whenever confidential information is shared, we will follow the principles below. We will:

- Have a clear and legitimate purpose
- Keep clear records of why we chose to share the information
- Ensure we are not putting the person at risk by sharing information
- Be as factual as possible
- Seek consent. If the adult refuses consent, we may share information **only** if:
 - We think they are at serious risk of harm or abuse, including harming themselves (preservation of life) or other people are being put at risk;
 - Information indicates that a serious crime has been or will be committed;
 - We think the person lacks the mental capacity to decide for themselves and we believe it would be in the individual's best interest;
 - A child (including unborn baby) is involved;



HEREFORD GUILD OF MAYOR'S GUIDES

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

- Members of the Guild are implicated;
- Coercion is involved;
- We are required by law, e.g. a possible terrorist threat.

8. Recruiting and training volunteers

Hereford Guild of Mayor's Guides' volunteers will be given an induction which covers the safeguarding policy and procedures of the group. They will be trained in our code of conduct; definitions of abuse and harm; recognising signs of abuse; and how to respond to concerns and disclosures. All volunteers will know who the Designated Safeguarding Lead is, and that they should go to them with any concerns.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has undertaken further training to ensure they are clear about their role, and what action to take in response to different concerns.

9. Reviewing policy and procedures

This policy and its procedures will be reviewed every two years. They were last reviewed and updated on 12th February 2026.

10. Key contacts

Hereford Guild of Mayor's Guides' Designated Safeguarding Lead (trained at Level 3)

Name: Stephen Pugh

Contact details: safeguarding@herefordguidedwalks.org.uk

Telephone: 07947 924494

Hereford Guild of Mayor's Guides' Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (trained at Level 3)

Name: Denise North

Contact details: safeguarding@herefordguidedwalks.org.uk

Telephone: 07947 924494

Herefordshire Council Safeguarding Hub

This is the safeguarding team to contact to make a referral about an adult at risk, 9am-5pm
Monday-Friday: phone 01432 260101 or email safeguarding@herefordshire.gov.uk

If your concern is about a child or a young person, contact the Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 01432 260800.