



**TOPSHAM MUSEUM SOCIETY
SAFEGUARDING POLICY
FOR CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

Original Policy: January 2013
Reviewed: July 2015
Date of next Review: July 2018

Ensuring a Safe Environment

In designing our galleries and spaces due consideration has been given to the safety of our visitors and volunteer staff. When the Museum is open, areas of the building accessible to the public are supervised by volunteer stewards, under the guidance of a Head Steward.

Stating Our Intent

We regard the safety and well-being of children and vulnerable adults very seriously and everyone concerned with running the Museum has a responsibility to seek to eliminate the risk of abuse. This policy is intended to protect both children and vulnerable adults who visit the Museum and to safeguard volunteer adults who work with them. It applies to children and young adults up to the age of eighteen and to vulnerable adults where they have been identified to us. Children under the age of 12 must be accompanied by an adult when visiting the Museum.

If there is a suspicion or allegation of abuse it should be reported to the Head Steward or Team Leader immediately, who should log it as a complaint or incident in the Day Book. Date and names of those involved should be included but, in order to maintain confidentiality, exact details should not be recorded but should be discussed as soon as possible with the designated Trustee for Safeguarding, who may choose to undergo DBS checking when appointed. In conjunction with the Chair of Trustees, the designated Trustee will make decisions about contacting outside agencies and ensuring future risks are minimised.

Volunteer recruitment protocols will include the seeking and checking of references for any volunteers who are intending to work with children.

The Position in Law

For some years organisations were required to carry out checks with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), to ensure that paid and volunteer staff who were working with vulnerable groups did not have criminal convictions which would make them unsuitable for these positions of trust. In 2006 these arrangements were extended by law and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) was created to oversee the new regulations.

The coalition government agreed to simplify the system and did so through the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. This:

- merges the CRB and the ISA to form the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- scales back the range of Regulated Activity (RA), which requires extensive checks on people working with vulnerable groups. These checks may reveal circumstances which mean that they are barred from working with children or vulnerable adults.

An activity is regulated in relation to children if carried out:

- frequently (once a week or more often), or on 4 or more days in a 30 day period
- in a school, detention centre for children, home for children, children's centre or childcare premises
- by the same person

The advice from the Devon Museum Development Officer has been that, generally, museum activities do not fall into the category of RA and so would not require any checks through DBS. All children's events held by Topsham Museum Society are family-based, when children who attend are accompanied by adults. Other events may be hosted at Topsham Museum when youngsters are unaccompanied, providing that the organising body has taken responsibility for safeguarding issues. If any new activities are considered at Topsham Museum which would involve youngsters under 18, such as regular volunteering, the relevant Team Leader should consult the designated Trustee for Safeguarding to ensure that nothing falls into the category of RA. If so, the designated Trustee can judge whether new safeguards need to be put in place.

Securing Safety for Children, Vulnerable Adults and Volunteers

Wherever possible, it is good practice to eliminate the risk of abuse by volunteers or of false allegations against them. The following safeguards are used:

- no volunteer will work in the Museum with visiting children or vulnerable adults unless other volunteers are present in the near vicinity
- no volunteer will work on their own with individual children or vulnerable adults
- volunteers will work respectfully and sensitively with children and vulnerable adults visiting the Museum
- volunteers will advise parents and carers about safe conduct in the Museum
- Topsham Museum Society will ask for and check references from volunteers who wish to take part in running children's activities. At least one reference must be from someone who is not a personal friend or relative
- parents and carers will be asked to state in writing if they do not want children or vulnerable adults to be photographed. No photographs of children or vulnerable adults will be published on the internet.

Distribution

This policy will be distributed to the Council of Trustees, the Management Committee and Team Leaders. It will be available to visitors at the Reception Desk.

Signed:

7th July 2015

John Dunsford
Chairman of the Council and a Trustee of Topsham Museum Society

Topsham Museum Society
Safeguarding Policy
July 2015