



## **SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

### **Topsham Museum Society**

Governing body: **The Council of Topsham Museum Society**

Date policy was approved by the Council: **January 2013**

**Policy review procedure:** The Policy will be reviewed at least once every five years.

Next review: **November 2023**

#### **Stating Our Intent**

We welcome vulnerable groups of people into the Museum and aim to ensure their well-being. Everyone concerned with running the Museum has a responsibility towards keeping them safe. This policy is intended to protect both children and vulnerable adults who visit the Museum and to safeguard volunteer adults who work with them.

For the purposes of this policy we define a child as any young person under 18. Children under the age of 12 must be accompanied by an adult when visiting the Museum.

We define a vulnerable adult as someone over the age of 18 whose difficulties are known to us and who may have a physical, sensory or learning disability, a mental health problem, a serious illness or is a frail, older person. To support vulnerable people, we have improved physical access to the building and our collections by installing a portable ramp at the outside door to the ground floor of the Period House. We provide a lift between the ground floor Reception Area and the Sail Loft Gallery, where we have a touch screen, virtual tour of the first floor of the Period House. A plinth in the Sail Loft gives wheelchair room for a child to access handling displays. We allow support dogs to accompany their owners into the Museum.

#### **Our Legal Responsibilities**

The Protection of Freedoms Act (2012) established the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), through which varying levels of criminal record checks can be made. Checks are needed for specific establishments, which do not include museums. Checks are also required if regulated activities are undertaken. The only activities we run are organised for children. Regulated activities relating to children include

- activities run by the same person frequently, defined as once week or more often
- activities run by the same person on 4 or more days in a 30 day period

Our children's activities are all family events and are held on single days a few times a year, generally during school holidays. Children are accompanied by adults when they visit the Museum during usual opening hours. Visits by schools and youth groups are all supervised by adults from the organisations concerned.

We do not need any DBS checking of volunteers involved in the above, because they do not fall into the legal category of regulated activities.

#### **Suggested Code of Conduct**

All public-facing volunteers have contact with children and vulnerable adults and the following are practical, common-sense guidelines on dealing with them.

- do not work in the Museum with visiting children or vulnerable adults unless other volunteers or accompanying carers are present in the near vicinity
- do not work alone with individual children or vulnerable adults
- work respectfully and sensitively with children and vulnerable adults visiting the Museum
- if you are concerned about children's behaviour advise parents and carers about safe conduct in the Museum, rather than speaking to the children yourself, whenever possible

### **Implementing the Policy**

- induction and training sessions will include safeguarding awareness and information on the code of conduct
- the Volunteers' Handbook will include the above guidance
- the Museum may 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
- all parents and carers will be asked to state in writing if they give permission for children or vulnerable adults to be photographed. No photographs of children or vulnerable adults will be published on the internet, without written consent
- if a volunteer is concerned about any incident, they should report it to the Head Steward or their Team Leader
- if an accompanying adult makes a complaint or reports an incident which concerns them, and the Head Steward wishes to speak to the child or vulnerable adult, it should be done in the presence of the carer
- if an unaccompanied child between 12 and 18 makes a complaint or is in difficulties they should talk with the Head Steward, in another steward's presence
- the Head Steward or Team Leader should discuss the incident with the Chair of Trustees as soon as possible
- Council will designate a Trustee to have a responsibility for safeguarding
- the Chair of Trustees and the designated Trustee will make decisions about contacting outside agencies and ensuring future risks are minimised

### **Distribution**

This policy will be distributed to the council of trustees and all volunteers. It will be available to visitors at the Reception Desk.

Signed:

29 November 2018

Chris Miller

Chairman Topsham Museum Society