

HOLNE VILLAGE HALL Policy **SAFEGUARDING**

Version	Date	Author/reviewer	Notes
Version 1	Jan 2024	Rebecca Scott	First issue
V1.1	March 2025	Tim Crook-Giles	Updates to formatting

Developing a safeguarding policy and procedure

1) What it's all about

Safeguarding is the action taken to promote the welfare of children or other vulnerable groups and protect them from harm. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Hall management committees have a duty of care as trustees of the charity to all those using the village hall. This includes all volunteers, staff and contractors undertaking work etc. All reasonable steps need to be taken to prevent harm and to respond appropriately when harm does occur. Safeguarding policies and procedures that everyone has read and understood must be in place and used in the day-to-day operation of the hall.

2) What the Charity Commission expects of us

The Charity Commission expects that safeguarding should be a key governance priority for all charities, village halls included. They have produced detailed guidance on Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees. There are 9 actions for charities operating in the UK recommended by the Charity Commission that trustees need to take to ensure good safeguarding governance. These are:

1. Ensure your charity has an adequate safeguarding policy, code of conduct and any other safeguarding procedures. Regularly review and update the policy and procedures to ensure they are fit for purpose.
2. Identify possible risks, including risks to your beneficiaries or to anyone else connected to your charity and any emerging risks on the horizon.
3. Consider how to improve the safeguarding culture within your charity.
4. Ensure that everyone involved with the charity knows how to recognise, respond to, report, and record a safeguarding concern.
5. Ensure people know how to raise a safeguarding concern.
6. Regularly evaluate any safeguarding training provided, ensuring it is current and relevant.
7. Review which posts within the charity can and must have a DBS check from the Disclosure and Barring Service.

8. Have a risk assessment process in place for posts which do not qualify for a DBS check, but which still have contact with children or adults at risk (You will know which posts these are having carried out 7. above)
9. Periodically review your safeguarding policy and procedures, learning from any serious incident or 'near miss'.

Obviously different charities will have different priorities within the list above, commensurate with the size, type and nature of the charity.

3) What the committee has to do

The committee itself may not work directly with children or adults at risk but it is responsible for the contracts it makes with hirers, and is expected to understand what the relevant safeguarding law is and how it applies to their building and users of the hall (volunteers, staff, contractors and people running activities).

There are a range of hirers using village and community halls. Some will have their own governing bodies with specific requirements and expectations for safeguarding, e.g., OFSTED, The Scout Association, Age UK etc. Other local groups and individual hirers may not have their own policies, in which case they must be made aware of the hall's policies and procedures and understand that by hiring the hall they are agreeing to adhere to the hall's safeguarding principles and procedures.

Of key importance to both smooth operations, and to meeting any challenges, is good communication between the activity providers and the village hall management committee.

3a All the committee should be aware of:

- The legal responsibilities of the committee in relation to safeguarding;
- Charity Commission expectations;
- The contact details of their local Safeguarding Board/Partnership and other local agencies that can offer support and advice on safeguarding in their respective County.

3b All members need to ensure their committee takes the following actions:

- Sign the hall's general Declaration of Acceptance of Office (see appendix later in document), which includes a declaration that they have no relevant convictions;
- Appoint a person (or two) to be the safeguarding lead(s) responsible for ensuring safeguarding practices and procedures are in place;

- Understand actions to be taken should it be necessary to report an incident and, most importantly;
- Support the responsible person(s) so they can carry out their duties. Appointing a lead person does not mean that committee members can abdicate their responsibility with regard to safeguarding at the village hall.

The lead person will be the main point of contact for hirers or anyone regarding safeguarding at the hall. They will ensure that safe recruiting practices are in place, that relevant DBS checks are carried out, that all trustees have signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and that the hall's Hiring Agreement is in line with safeguarding principles and procedures. The appointed person will also remind the committee about regular review of the hall's safeguarding policy.

3c Hiring Agreement

Whenever a village hall management committee hires out any part of its premises, a written hiring agreement should be in place so that both the management committee and the hirer know their rights and responsibilities. This hiring agreement ensures that both parties fully understand their responsibilities in relation to the hiring, establishing a clear contract between two parties which could be used as evidence should legal action become necessary.

It is a key document because it passes responsibility for the hall to the group or individual for the period of hire. This includes compliance with all the hall's principles and procedures for safeguarding. It is therefore reasonable for the committee to expect hirers be able to provide evidence of that compliance on request. The evidence could be a paper copy of a policy or the group may be able to share a link to their website for an online copy.

4) Disclosure and barring service (DBS)

The Disclosure and Barring Service helps employers to make safe appointments and not recruit unsuitable people to positions where they might be working with vulnerable adults or children. Holne Village Hall Management Committee does not directly employ anyone.

5) Developing your policies and procedures

The Charity Commission defines a safeguarding policy as being a 'statement of intent that demonstrates a commitment to safeguard children and adults at risk from harm'. Where small groups and individuals do not have a safeguarding policy, they are required to understand and adhere to the Hall's policy.

Appendix A –

Holne Village Hall Management Committee Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

1. Purpose

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk from abuse or neglect. This policy defines how Holne Village Hall operates to safeguard children, young people, and adults at risk of abuse or neglect. We have a duty of care and are committed to the protection and safety of everyone who enters our premises including children, young people and adults at risk involved as visitors and/or as participants in all activities and events. We also have a duty to safeguard and support our trustees, volunteers, and staff.

2. Definitions

Children and young people are defined as those persons aged under 18 years old. This policy will apply to all staff, contractors and volunteers and will be used to support their work. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health and development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Adult at risk of abuse or neglect - For the purposes of this policy, adult at risk refers to someone over 18 years old who, according to Section 42 of the Care Act 2014:

- has care and support needs
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
- as a result of their care and support needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it. If someone has care and support needs but is not currently receiving care or support from a health or care service, they may still be an adult at risk.

Persons affected

- All trustees, volunteers, and staff.
- All those attending any activity or service that is being delivered from the village hall charity property.
- All visitors, contractors and those leading/running activities

3. Policy principles

There can be no excuses for not taking all reasonable action to protect children and adults at risk from abuse or neglect. All citizens of the United Kingdom have their rights enshrined within the Human Rights Act 1998. People who are eligible to receive health and community care services may be additionally vulnerable to the violation of these rights by reason of disability, impairment, age, or illness.

- a) Holne Village Hall Management Committee has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse.
- b) Holne Village Hall Management Committee recognises that under the Care Act 2014, it has a duty for the care and protection of adults who are at risk of abuse. It also recognises its responsibilities for the safety and care of children under the Children Act 1989 and 2004.
- c) Holne Village Hall Management Committee is committed to promoting wellbeing, harm prevention and to responding effectively if concerns are raised.
- d) Holne Village Hall Management Committee is aware of the work of their local safeguarding Board/Partnership and other support organisations on the development and implementation of procedures for the protection of children and adults at risk. The policy is about stopping abuse where it is happening and preventing abuse where there is a risk that it may occur.
- e) Holne Village Hall Management Committee is committed to the following principles:
 - The welfare of the child, young person or adult at risk is paramount.
 - All children, young people and adults at risk have the right to protection from abuse.
 - Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part; and
 - All suspicions and allegations of abuse must be properly reported to the relevant internal and external authorities and dealt with swiftly and appropriately.

4. Procedures

- a) All members of the committee will sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office for trustees which includes a declaration that they have no convictions in relation to abuse.
- b) All members of the committee will familiarise themselves with safeguarding responsibilities, undertake training where appropriate on safeguarding issues including whistleblowing where it is available and offered by their local safeguarding board/partnership or other local support organisation and ensure that they understand the principles set out in this policy at 3 above.
- c) All members of the committee will work together to promote a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting welfare to be addressed.
- d) All members of the committee, helpers or other volunteers will not have unsupervised access to children or adults at risk unless appropriately vetted.
- e) The hall committee will follow safe recruitment practices.
- f) A member of the committee will be appointed to be responsible for child and adult at risk safeguarding matters. This person will have responsibility for reporting concerns that arise, as a matter of urgency, to the relevant safeguarding agency.
- g) The named person is
.....until
.....
- h) All suspicions or allegations of abuse against a child or adult at risk will be taken seriously and dealt with speedily and appropriately. The appointed person will know who to contact and where to go for support and advice in relation to an allegation, a concern about the quality of care or practice or a complaint. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children or adults at risk who has:
 - Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or adult at risk or may have harmed a child or adult at risk.
 - Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child or adult at risk; or
 - Behaved towards a child (or children) or adult at risk in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children or adults at risk.
- i) The hall committee will ensure that all hirers of the hall have signed a hiring agreement. This will require all hirers who wish to use the hall for activities

which include children and adults at risk, other than for hire for private parties arranged for invited friends and family, to either produce a copy of their Safeguarding Policy and evidence that they have carried out relevant checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) when requested to do so or, confirm that they have understood and will adhere to the hall's principles and procedures with regard to safeguarding.

- j) The village hall management committee will carry out an annual review of this policy.

Appendix B

Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Trustee Statement of Eligibility and responsibility

Name of Charity: Holne Village Hall Management Committee

Charity Registration No:

Declaration by Charity Trustees

I have received and studied the governing document of the charity and support its purposes.

I realise that as a member of the Holne Village Hall Management Committee I am one of the organisation's managing or charity trustees, and I understand the duties and responsibilities as explained to me and indicated in the Charity Commission Leaflet CC3a: Responsibilities of Charity Trustees.

I am not under 18 years of age and am not disqualified from serving as a member of the committee, and in the event of my becoming disqualified, will take no further part in the affairs of the charity whilst such disqualification lasts.

Trustee eligibility and responsibility

By completing and signing this form, you declare that you:

- are willing to act as a trustee of the organisation named above
- understand your organisation's purposes (objects) and rules set out in its governing document
- are not prevented from acting as a trustee because you:
 - have an unspent conviction for one or more of the listed offences,
 - have an IVA, debt relief order and/or a bankruptcy order,
 - have been removed as a trustee in England, Scotland, or Wales (by the Charity Commission or Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator)
 - have been removed from being in the management or control of a body in Scotland (under relevant legislation)
 - have been disqualified by the Charity Commission or are a disqualified company director,
 - are a designated person for the purposes of anti-terrorism legislation,
 - are on the sex offenders register or have been found in contempt of court for making (or causing to be made) a false statement,
 - have been found guilty of disobedience to an order or direction of the Charity Commission.

Name (please Print), Home Address, Date of Birth, Date, Signature.