

# Bath Natural History Society Safeguarding Policy

To protect children, young people and adults at risk of harm

## Principles

**1** This policy is a written commitment by the Bath Natural History Society (BathNats), including all trustees and volunteers, to the safety of children, young people and adults at risk of harm (CYPARH).

**2** The key principles of the safeguarding policy are that:

- The CYPARH's welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration.
- All CYPARHs have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of age, ethnic origin, gender, special needs, disability, class or social background, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, colour or political persuasion.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse or poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

**3** We acknowledge that every child or young person or adult at risk of harm who engages with BathNats should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from poor practice and abuse, physical, sexual or emotional harm and from neglect or bullying. This is the responsibility of every adult involved in our organisation.

**4** BathNats will expect all trustees, and voluntary organisers and leaders of indoor and outdoor activities, to subscribe personally to this safeguarding policy.

**5** BathNats will nominate one person from committee (the Nominated Person) who will stay familiar with local authority reporting policies and deal with any allegations or suspicions of abuse that arise during or in connection with our activities.

## Prevention

**6** Everyone acting on behalf of BathNats should:

- subscribe to this policy
- treat all CYPARHs with respect, and take notice of their response to our own behaviour
- use only language which is appropriate, at all times
- avoid any physical contact with CYPARHs except in emergencies
- avoid spending undue time alone with CYPARHs
- follow up any allegations or suspicions through the Nominated Person
- check with parents or responsible adults if we need to use more contact than normal with a CYPARH
- ensure colleagues and helpers are all aware of these guidelines.

**7** Everyone acting on behalf of BathNats should **NOT**:

- Touch any CYPARH except in emergencies
- Physically restrain a CYPARH other than in exceptional circumstances (e.g. to prevent injury or damage to the environment or living creatures) and even then care must be taken to use only the minimum restraint necessary
- Make sexually suggestive comments to any participant
- Use foul or abusive language to any participant and especially not to or within earshot of a CYPARH

- Physically assault or abuse anyone and especially not a CYPARH
- Do things of a personal nature for CYPARH that they can do for themselves or that a parent/guardian can do for them.

Volunteers must not, except in emergencies:

- go into the toilet with a CYPARH
- spend time alone with a CYPARH. If unavoidably alone with a CYPARH make sure to be clearly observed or seen by others, i.e. leave doors open.

### **Response Procedure**

**8** Any adult or young person with concerns about safeguarding can contact any member of council who will, as soon as practicable, refer the issue to the Nominated Person.

**9** All reported or suspected incidents should be brought immediately to the attention of the Nominated Person

The Nominated Person should record all allegations. These records should be kept for at least 6 years after the last contact with the CYPARH.

If a CYPARH connected to a BathNats activity discloses alleged abuse by anyone, whether associated with BathNats or not:

- Listen carefully and let the CYPARH tell you what happened at their own pace, only asking questions for clarification
- Remain calm and caring and avoid interpreting information
- Do not conduct an inquiry into what has happened
- Avoid cross-questioning or leading questions
- Do not promise to keep it a 'secret' and tell the CYPARH you need to share this information with others but make it clear that you will only tell people who need to know and who can help
- Reassure the CYPARH that they did the right thing in telling you.
- Speak immediately to the Nominated Person
- Make a note of what was said, using the CYPARH's own words as soon as possible after the disclosing conversation and sign and date your record.

**10** This policy will be reviewed annually. This will be an agenda item in the first meeting of each year, and be accompanied by open discussion about the types of abuse or harm that could be encountered in the organisation, including noting any change in the scope of activities that would mean that BathNats should consider DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) checks for volunteers.

Further assistance is available from:

- Bath and North East Somerset Children and Families Assessment and Intervention Team on 01225 396312 or 01225 396313. .See also [www.safeguarding-bathnes.org.uk](http://www.safeguarding-bathnes.org.uk).
- B&NES Virgin Care Adult Safeguarding Team 0300 247 0201
- The NSPCC Child Protection 24 hour Helpline 0808 800 5000