

# Menston Area Nature Trust Safeguarding Policy



**Effective Date:** 17/04/2025

**Reviewed on:** 17/04/2025

**Review carried out by:** Emma Dalton & Francesca Bridgewater

**Next Review:** 17/04/2026

**Version:** 1.0

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## 1. Introduction

At Menston Area Nature Trust we are committed to ensuring the safety, wellbeing, and protection of all individuals, especially vulnerable persons, who engage with our services or participate in our nature restoration projects. This policy sets out our approach to safeguarding, outlining the responsibilities of trustees, staff, volunteers, and anyone involved in our activities to create a safe environment.

This policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children, young people and adults at risk are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, gender, sex, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or socioeconomic background, all children, young people and adults at risk can have a positive and enjoyable experience during independent visits or participation in our physical and digital learning and engagement activities and events.

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## 2. Purpose of the Policy

This Safeguarding Policy aims to:

- Protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults from harm while engaging in any activity related to our charity.
- Ensure that trustees, staff, volunteers, and anyone involved in the charity's activities understand their responsibilities in safeguarding.
- Comply with relevant safeguarding legislation and guidelines in the UK, ensuring that we maintain the highest standards of care.

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## 3. Definitions

- **Children and Young People:** Those under the age of 18.
  - **Vulnerable Adults:** Individuals who, due to age, illness, disability, or other circumstances, may be at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
  - **Abuse:** Includes physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, and financial abuse, as well as neglect. Abuse can occur in any context but **must** be reported to the appropriate authorities if suspected.
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## 4. Safeguarding Principles

The following principles guide our safeguarding approach:

- **Respect and Dignity:** All individuals, especially vulnerable persons, have the right to be treated with respect and dignity in every aspect of our work.
  - **Prevention:** We are committed to taking proactive measures to prevent abuse, neglect, or exploitation within our activities.
  - **Protection:** We take immediate action if we have concerns that a person may be at risk, ensuring their safety and well-being.
  - **Accountability:** We maintain clear processes for reporting concerns, and all trustees and staff and volunteers are held accountable for their actions and responsibilities.
  - **Transparency:** We maintain open communication with stakeholders and ensure that our safeguarding practices are visible and accessible.
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## 5. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all trustees and staff, volunteers and third-party contractors working with or for Menston Area Nature Trust. It also covers all activities where our charity interacts with children, young people, and vulnerable adults, whether they are direct beneficiaries or participants in nature restoration events, activities, or programs.

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## 6. Responsibilities and Procedures

### 6.1. Safeguarding Lead

- We appoint a Safeguarding Lead (typically a senior staff member or trustee) who is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding policies and procedures are followed and for providing guidance to trustees, staff and volunteers.
- The Safeguarding Lead will also be the first point of contact for any safeguarding concerns.

### 6.2. Recruitment and Training

- All trustees and staff and volunteers will undergo a recruitment process that includes appropriate background checks including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for those working with children or vulnerable adults where necessary.
- Training will be provided for all trustees and staff and volunteers on safeguarding principles, the charity's procedures, and how to identify and report concerns, as necessary.

### 6.3. Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

- Any trustee, staff member or volunteer who becomes aware of, suspects, or is informed about a safeguarding concern **must** report it immediately to the Safeguarding Lead.

- The Safeguarding Lead will review the concern, determine the level of risk, and decide on appropriate actions, which may include reporting the concern to external authorities such as the police, local safeguarding boards, or social services.
- In cases of immediate danger or emergency, trustees, staff and volunteers should contact the police or emergency services immediately.

#### 6.4. Confidentiality

- All safeguarding concerns and reports will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality.
- Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis, with individuals who are responsible for responding to the concern or to external authorities if required.
- *If a child, young person or adult discloses harm, we are beholden to report that harm and are unable to promise secrecy.*

#### 6.5. Risk Assessment

- For all activities involving children, young people, or vulnerable adults, a risk assessment must be conducted to identify and mitigate potential risks to their safety.
- The assessment will include considering the suitability of the environment, staffing levels, activities, and any special needs of the participants.
- Specific safeguards must be in place for outdoor activities, including supervision requirements and ensuring a safe and controlled environment.

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### 7. Code of Conduct for Trustees, staff and Volunteers

To ensure a safe environment for all involved, trustees, staff and volunteers are expected to adhere to the following Code of Conduct:

- **Respect Personal Boundaries:** Do not engage in physical contact unless necessary for safety or wellbeing. Be mindful of personal space and always respect the boundaries of others.
- **No Abuse of Any Kind:** Do not tolerate or engage in any form of abusive behaviour, including physical, emotional, verbal, or sexual abuse.
- **Maintain Professional Relationships:** Trustees and staff and volunteers should maintain appropriate, professional relationships with children, young people, and vulnerable adults, avoiding situations where the power dynamic could be exploited.
- **Avoid One-on-One Situations:** Whenever possible, avoid being alone with children, young people, or vulnerable adults in secluded or private areas. Always ensure that another trustee and staff member or volunteer is present or within sight if one-on-one interactions are necessary.
- **Report Any Concerns:** If trustees and staff or volunteers observe concerning behaviour or suspect any form of abuse or neglect, they must report it immediately according to the procedures outlined above.

- **Value, listen to and respect** all children & vulnerable adults.
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## 9. Dealing with Allegations and Concerns

If an allegation of abuse or harm is made:

- The allegation will be taken seriously and treated with respect.
  - The charity will not conduct its own investigation but will immediately inform the relevant authorities (such as social services or the police) to handle the matter appropriately.
  - Support will be provided to the person making the allegation and to anyone involved to ensure their safety and well-being during the process.
  - Confidential, detailed, and accurate records will be kept of all safeguarding concerns in a professional and secure manner, in line with all relevant data protection legislation and best-practice guidance.
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## 10. Monitoring and Review

We will review this policy annually or whenever there are significant changes in legislation or best practices. The Safeguarding Lead will ensure that the policy is communicated to all trustees, staff and volunteers and that appropriate training is provided.

Feedback and suggestions for improvement will be encouraged, and any incidents or near-misses will be reviewed as part of our ongoing commitment to safeguarding.

We will respond swiftly and appropriately to all complaints and concerns about poor practice or suspected or actual abuse.

We will have appropriate and clear policies and procedures that are fit for purpose, followed in practice and kept up to date.

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## 11. Contact Information

For any safeguarding concerns, please contact our Safeguarding Lead:

**Name:** Emma Dalton, Secretary and Trustee

Deputy Safeguarding Lead(DepSL): Alison Davies, Trustee

**Email:** [safeguarding@mant.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@mant.org.uk) – check email works and who gets it.

**Phone:** 07940917331

In case of an emergency or immediate danger, please contact local authorities:

**Police:** 999 (Emergency)

**Local Safeguarding Boards:**

**Bradford**

General safeguarding concerns:

<https://www.saferbradford.co.uk/report-a-concern>

Safeguarding Children

<https://www.saferbradford.co.uk/children/>

Safer Bradford - Adults

<http://www.saferbradford.co.uk/adults/>

## **Leeds**

Children:

<https://www.leedsscp.org.uk/concerned-about-a-child>

LSCP - Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership ([leedsscp.org.uk](http://leedsscp.org.uk))

<http://www.leedsscp.org.uk/Home>

Adults:

Home ([leedssafeguardingadults.org.uk](http://leedssafeguardingadults.org.uk)) <http://leedssafeguardingadults.org.uk>

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## **12. Acknowledgment**

All trustees, staff, volunteers, and contractors must read and acknowledge this Safeguarding Policy. By doing so, they agree to abide by the guidelines set out in this policy and to report any safeguarding concerns promptly.

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By adopting this Safeguarding Policy, Menston Area Nature Trust demonstrates its commitment to providing a safe, supportive environment for all those involved in its activities, particularly those who may be at risk.