

## **BRISTOL ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB**

### **POLICY ON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE, AND ADULTS AT RISK**

#### **Our commitment to safeguarding**

Bristol Ornithological Club (referred to as 'BOC' or 'the Club') recognises that a child, young person, or adult at risk should never experience abuse of any kind, and that we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk.

#### **About this policy**

This policy applies to all members and anyone working on behalf of BOC. The purpose of the policy is to inform BOC members and all who participate in our activities about the principles that guide our approach to protecting vulnerable people and the practical steps we will take when concerns are raised about abuse and mistreatment. This policy recognises vulnerable people as:

- Children up to the age of 16 or young people aged 16-18.
- Adults aged over 18 'at risk' – defined as anyone with social care needs. This includes adults with a learning or physical disability, a physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs, or reduced physical or mental capacity.

#### **The policy aims to ensure that:**

- Children, young people and adults at risk who are members of BOC or are taking part in events organised by the Club are protected from abuse or other mistreatment when participating in its activities.
- BOC members working with children, young people and adults at risk understand and accept responsibility for helping to safeguard those vulnerable individuals they are interacting with.

#### **Legal framework**

This policy is informed by legislation and policy and guidance on the protection of children, young people, and at-risk adults, including safeguarding, provided by the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

#### **Policy review**

The policy will be reviewed annually by the Club general committee.

#### **BOC and vulnerable people**

BOC is an organisation for adults, young people, and family members. Its principal aims are to promote the study of ornithology and conservation in Bristol and the surrounding area, to organise field trips, and to encourage those new to birdwatching. The Club is run entirely by volunteers and employs no staff. All BOC activities may be attended by children and Young people under 18 as well as adults whose social care needs define them as being "at risk". Some Club activities are organised primarily for children and young people, with the involvement of their families.

#### **Safeguarding leads**

BOC members with lead responsibility for safeguarding are Gareth Roberts and Mel Parker, contact details below. Any projects, events or other activities likely to involve children, young people or at-risk adults must be planned with the involvement of one of the safeguarding leads.

#### **Our approach to safeguarding**

The Club seeks to keep children, young people and vulnerable adults safe by:

1. Listening to their concerns.

2. Applying safeguarding procedures to ensure that concerns and relevant information are shared promptly with the relevant agencies.
3. Recording and storing information that relates to safeguarding concerns in a professional and secure manner.

### **BOC rules concerning the participation of children and young people**

Children of family members are welcome at BOC events and activities. Those aged under 16 must be accompanied throughout by a parent or other responsible adult. Young people aged 16 and 17 may attend the Club's events unaccompanied if they have provided the organiser with written consent, by letter or email to the Secretary, from a parent or guardian, who has also supplied a phone number where they can be contacted in an emergency, and provided that the event leader agrees.

If it is an activity specifically organised for children and young people with designated leaders, a parent or guardian must bring the child to the meeting and take them home again afterwards. They will need to give written consent (by letter or email to the Secretary, with contact phone number) for their child under 16 to attend, if they are not participating themselves.

### **Photography**

Photography of people as well as wildlife, is an integral part of the Club's activities and it reserves the right to publish images of its events. It is, nevertheless, policy to obtain parental permission before taking and/or publishing images of children or young people aged under 18.

### **General health and safety**

The BOC takes active steps to make its events safe for all participants by holding indoor meetings on premises that satisfy current fire regulations and other health and safety requirements. Field meetings and other outdoor activities are subject to prior risk assessment by the organisers, to ensure that physical injury and other health risks are recognised and minimised so far as possible.

### **Disclosure and barring certification**

Leaders of events for children and young people where parents may not be present shall have current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certification and have undertaken a basic child protection awareness course (NSPCC).

## **SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES**

### **1. Neglect and abuse**

Concerns about possible neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or other ill-treatment involving a child or at-risk adult taking part in BOC events will be treated with the utmost seriousness. Unless a direct report has already been made to the police or a social care agency, concerns should be communicated without delay to the Club's safeguarding leads. After listening to the concern and making a note of relevant information, they will make a report to the appropriate agency. Anyone attempting to contact the lead safeguarding persons with a concern who finds that they are both away or not available should not delay in approaching the relevant social care agency directly (contact information below). If they believe a child, young person or at-risk adult is in imminent danger, **they must not hesitate to contact the police 999**. Individuals who raise concerns have the right to expect that information shared with the safeguarding leads will be treated sensitively and in confidence – but only to an extent consistent with effective safeguarding. In particular, the lead safeguarding persons have a duty to share and refer concerns relating to the welfare of a child or adult at risk as soon as possible to someone qualified to assess the information and take appropriate action.

## **2. Bullying**

The BOC does not tolerate bullying at its events. Should an incident occur at an event, the organiser or leader should be informed as soon as possible. The parents or guardians of any children involved must be informed without delay. One of the safeguarding leads (see above) must also be informed. In addition to any action that may be taken by the relevant safeguarding authorities, the BOC committee will consider what action it should take against an individual found to have bullied or otherwise ill-treated children, at-risk adults, or other participants at its events.

## **3. Record keeping**

All notes, reports and other written materials relating to safeguarding concerns raised with the Club are kept secure. Electronic files are password-protected.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

**BOC Secretary email:** [bocsecretary@hotmail.com](mailto: bocsecretary@hotmail.com)

### **BOC safeguarding leads**

1. Gareth Roberts: **07785 573064**.
2. Mel Parker: **07811 732822**.

### **Bristol City Council Children Services**

Anyone concerned about the welfare of a child should contact the **First Response Team on 0117 903 6444, or out of office hours 01454 615 165**. If a child is at immediate risk call the **Police on 999**. The Bristol First Response Team can provide contact details for teams covering other local counties.

### **Bristol Adult Social Care**

For concerns regarding adults contact **Bristol Care Direct 0117 922 2700**.

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