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# Old Bakehouse Millennium Green Trust

## Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

June 2025

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**Policy**

## **Statement of Intent**

The trustees of the OBMG value and encourage the involvement of people who may be vulnerable. Through our Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy we are committed to promoting their well-being and enjoyment and protecting their health, safety and general welfare while in the company or care of our volunteers.

Vulnerable people may be involved with Friends of OBHMG either as volunteers, as family members, as parents or carers and as participants in our community activities. In promoting this policy we are keen to take reasonable steps to:

- Provide a welcoming, secure and comfortable environment for the benefit of vulnerable people;
- Keep them safe from harm while participating in our activities;
- Comply with relevant statutory requirements;
- Support and protect the interests of volunteers who have contact with, or access to vulnerable people.

## **Children and vulnerable people affected**

In this policy where either 'children', 'young people' or 'vulnerable people' are mentioned all three are usually intended

In law a child is anyone under the age of 18.

A vulnerable adult is anyone aged 18 or over who is, or may be, unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation. They also need, or may be in need of, extra support because they are elderly and frail or have a physical or sensory impairment, learning disability or have a mental health problem.

**It should be recognised that people who are vulnerable are able to cope in many situations, so sensitivity and common sense should be exercised.**

## **Guiding principles**

In welcoming and working with people who are vulnerable trustees of OBHMG aim to:

- 1) Provide a friendly welcome for them and promote their general welfare;
- 2) Recognise their rights as individuals and treat them with dignity and respect;
- 3) Plan activities involving vulnerable people with care to minimise risks to their health and safety;
- 4) Raise awareness of the dangers to which vulnerable people may be susceptible;
- 5) Develop appropriate procedures for responding to accidents, incidents and alleged or suspected harm.

- 6) Promote good practice amongst all volunteers in relation to safeguarding vulnerable people
- 7) The safeguarding policy is to be reviewed and revised on an annual basis, or more frequently if needed, to remain up to date and compliant with current best practices.
- 8) Ensure that all volunteers receive the appropriate safeguarding training relevant to their role in the group. This training is to be reviewed on a yearly basis, or more frequently if needed, to remain up to date and compliant with current best practices.
- 9) Ensure volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently.

## **Guidelines**

### **Welfare paramount**

The fundamental principle, both in law and good practice, is that whenever the interests of a vulnerable person are involved, their welfare must always be paramount. Trustees of the OBHMG recognise this and all volunteers should seek to implement this principle.

### **People as individuals**

Trustees of OBHMG recognises the need to be aware of each person's needs and capabilities when working with vulnerable volunteers or other service users.

Where practical, time should be taken to get to know each person individually in order to make his or her experience with of the OBHMG more rewarding.

### **Disclosure and Barring Service checks (DBS)**

In accordance with Disclosure and Barring Service guidelines on Regulated Activity for safeguarding adults and children, volunteers will be DBS checked as necessary. Any volunteer without DBS check will always be supervised when working with vulnerable people.

### **Photographing and Videoing**

No photographs of children or vulnerable adults will be taken without the consent of a parent or guardian. When photographs are taken (with consent) they should not include any personal details of the subjects.

At events, visitors and participants should be made aware that photographs will be taken, and the purpose of the photographs. A notice stating the fact should be placed in a prominent place.

### **Planning and supervision**

In all of trustees of OBHMG activities appropriate planning and supervision needs to be observed to reduce the risk of harm.

- Activities involving vulnerable people should be carefully planned to ensure the maximum protection is provided at all times;
- A common-sense approach should be adopted regarding the supervision of vulnerable adults. Where deemed appropriate, vulnerable adults may be left unsupervised. However, each situation should be judged on its own merit.
- It is good practice to always have at least 2 volunteers, or other responsible adults, present in case of accident or incident, and in order to protect from allegations of abuse.

### **Code of conduct**

The following is a quick reference guide to appropriate behaviour when working with those who may be vulnerable.

#### **Volunteers should:**

- Remember they are a role model and provide an example for those they work with to follow.
- Bear in mind that some actions, no matter how well-intentioned, may be easily misinterpreted and so leave all parties vulnerable.
- **Be aware of relevant safety rules especially those that relate to movement of people around the ship. Speak to a trustee of OBHMG if you are unsure.**
- Be alert to any potential harm of inappropriate behaviour by people who are vulnerable themselves.
- Provide access for vulnerable people to discuss any concerns they may have.
- Speak to a trustee of the OBHMG if they have concerns about an individual's safety.
- Read and/or watch the safeguarding training material provided to them or such material recommended by the safeguarding representative. for example, the Online Basic Safeguarding training for volunteers produced by Community Action Northumberland. The safeguarding representative will review guidance annually, and ensure volunteers are kept abreast of any changes.

#### **Volunteers should not:**

- Arrange to see vulnerable people in circumstances unconnected with their work;
- Be left alone with anyone who is vulnerable.
- Permit abusive behaviour by others or engage in it themselves (e.g. ridiculing and bullying);
- Show favouritism to or become too closely associated with an individual. Nor should they get drawn into inappropriate behaviour
- Allow or engage in suggestive remarks, gestures or touching of a kind which could be misunderstood;
- Do anything which might undermine the Trustees of the OBHMG's good reputation for providing a safe environment;

- Hesitate to share concerns on any of these matters with the appropriate trustee of the OBHMG.

## **Raising awareness of dangers**

### **Types of harm**

- **Physical** – where vulnerable people receive physical hurt or injury.
- **Neglect** – where adults fail to care for vulnerable people and to protect them from danger, seriously impairing their health, well-being or development.
- **Emotional** – where vulnerable people are harmed by a constant lack of love and affection or intimidated by threats or taunts.
- **Sexual** – where vulnerable people are encouraged or forced to observe or participate in any form of sexual activity by adults or children. This also includes the use of sexualised language.
- **Financial** – where an individual funds or resources are being inappropriately used by a third person. This includes withholding money or inappropriate use of a person's money or property.

Common sense should be relied upon to recognise the warning signs. However, it is essential to rely on facts rather than opinions and not jump to conclusions.

## **Responding to accidents, incidents and harm**

### **Responding to accidents / incidents**

All accidents must be recorded in our accident book. Where appropriate the circumstances to the accident should be investigated to establish the cause and to identify what remedial action should be taken to minimise the possibility of a recurrence.

### **Responding to alleged or suspected harm**

If a vulnerable person wants to talk about harm, it is essential that the volunteer:

- Listens carefully to what the person says, keeping a calm attitude
- Lets them know that to help them someone else must be told;
- Reassures them that they are not to blame;
- Is aware that they may have been threatened;
- Does not ask leading or probing questions, or repeatedly question or ask individual to repeat the disclosure;
- Reassures them that they are right to talk about it and what they say is accepted;
- Lets them know what will happen next and undertakes to let them know the outcome;
- Does not discuss the disclosure with people who do not need to know;
- Does not investigate;
- Does not delay reporting to management team or, if urgent, to the relevant authority.

## **Dealing with alleged or suspected harm**

If a person who may be vulnerable has talked about harm, or harm is suspected, the volunteer **must** do two things:

- 1. Write down accurately what the person has said using the proforma for recording disclosures or signs of abuse witnessed**
- 2. Notify the appropriate trustee of the OBHMG, giving them the completed proforma/written information.**

It is vitally important that the volunteer notifies the appropriate trustee of the OBHMG, so that they can then inform and liaise with the relevant authorities where appropriate

Where a nominated representative is unavailable, and the vulnerable person is in imminent danger, the volunteer should contact the relevant authorities themselves. They should then inform the representative as soon as possible on their return.

Dealing with incidents of harm is difficult for any individual so volunteers **should not**:

- Act alone.
- Start to investigate or
- Make any assumptions about the persons involved.

## **Dealing with alleged or suspected harm involving OBHMG volunteers**

Where it is suspected that a OBHMG volunteer may be involved in the abuse, the appropriate OBHMG representative should be informed as soon as possible. Any volunteer involved in any allegations of abuse should be immediately removed from access to vulnerable people but be assured that no presumptions have been made and that the allegation will be fully investigated by the relevant authorities.

If gross misconduct is reasonably suspected, it may be appropriate to ask them not to attend any activities while the matter is under investigation. Once the relevant authorities enquiry has concluded, the trustees of the OBHMG should decide what further action is appropriate.

## **Confidentiality and sensitivity**

When dealing with personal and emotive details of this nature, confidentiality must be maintained at all times since the allegations or suspicions may prove to be unfounded. Notes and records should be kept in a secure place and shared only with those who need to know about the incident or allegation.

A sensitive approach should be taken with the individual concerned to explain why an investigation has to take place and to reassure them that the matter will be handled discreetly and even-handedly by trustee of the OBHMG.

No assumptions of guilt should be made unless and until an actual conviction has been obtained in the proceedings. The nominated trustee will maintain impartial contact during this process.

**Reporting Suspected Abuse to the Authorities**

It is not the responsibility of the trustees of the OBHMG to investigate any allegations of abuse, only to ensure that the appropriate agencies are informed.

The OBHMG nominated representative is responsible for alerting the duty officer at Childrens Services.

Childrens Services Emergency Duty Team      0845 600 5252

Police      01661 872555

**This policy was updated and adopted by the trustees of the OBHMG in June 2025**

A copy of this statement is issued to all volunteers and additional copies are available on request to all Friends of OBHMG.

Signed .....  
(On behalf of the trustees of the OBHMG)

Date .....

**Trustees of the OBHMG**  
**Pro forma for recording disclosures or signs of abuse witnessed**

**To be completed by person receiving disclosure or witnessing signs of abuse.**

Name of person disclosing or displaying signs of abuse:

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Date and time disclosure received / signs of abuse witnessed:

Day	Month	Year	Time
			: am/pm

Is the person disclosing...

Male   Female

What is their date of birth? (if known):

Day	Month	Year

What is their address? (if known):

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Please detail what the person said (word for word) or signs of abuse witnessed:

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Other observations / comments:

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Name of person completing this form:

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Signed:

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Dated:

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