



GREEN SHELTER SOCIETY UK

Safeguarding Policy

Document control

Field	Details
Organisation	Green Shelter Society UK
Charity registration number	1192803
Policy owner	Board of Trustees
Operational lead	Designated Safeguarding Lead
Version	1.0
Approval status	Broad approved
Effective date	4 th September 2026
Next review	12 months from approval, and after any serious incident or significant change in risk
Applies to	Trustees, staff, volunteers, sessional workers, contractors and relevant partners

Approval requirement The trustees must complete the safeguarding contacts and approval record before this policy takes effect or is published as an approved policy.

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1 Purpose

Green Shelter Society UK is committed to providing safe, inclusive and welcoming gardening and community activities. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. We will take reasonable steps to prevent abuse, neglect, exploitation, harassment and avoidable harm, and we will act promptly when a concern is raised.

This policy tells trustees, staff, volunteers and partners how to prevent harm, respond to concerns, report allegations and record decisions. It must be read alongside the local contact sheet and the activity risk assessment for each event or project.

2 Scope and definitions

This policy applies to everyone who represents Green Shelter Society UK and to all people who come into contact with the charity through its work, including beneficiaries, children, adults at risk, families, visitors and partner organisations. It covers face-to-face, outdoor, off-site, transport-related, telephone and online activity.

Child Anyone under 18 years old.

Adult at risk in England An adult aged 18 or over who has needs for care and support, is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and, because of those needs, is unable to protect themselves from that risk or experience.

Adult at risk in Wales An adult who is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, has needs for care and support, and, because of those needs, is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

Safeguarding concern Any information, observation, disclosure, allegation or pattern that suggests a person has been harmed, may be at risk of harm, or that safeguarding practice has failed.

3 Safeguarding principles

- Put people's safety, dignity and wellbeing first.
- Listen to concerns and take them seriously. Never assume someone else will act.
- Respect equality, culture, disability, identity, communication needs and individual choice.
- Use the least intrusive response that is safe and proportionate while acting decisively where harm may occur.
- Share information lawfully and only with those who need it. Safeguarding confidentiality is not absolute.
- Recruit, train and supervise people in a way that reflects the risk of their role.
- Learn from concerns, incidents and near misses and improve practice.

4 Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Board of Trustees	Owns safeguarding governance, approves this policy, provides resources, monitors assurance and decides whether serious incidents must be reported to the Charity Commission.
Chair of Trustees	Provides senior escalation when the DSL is unavailable or implicated. If the Chair is implicated, the concern must go to another uninvolved trustee or directly to the appropriate statutory agency.
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Receives concerns, protects people, maintains records, seeks statutory advice, coordinates referrals, tracks actions and reports safeguarding assurance to trustees.
Deputy DSL	Acts when the DSL is unavailable and maintains the training and access needed to perform the role.
Project and event leads	Complete risk assessments, confirm supervision, first aid, emergency and local referral arrangements, brief volunteers and partners, and report concerns immediately.
Staff volunteers and contractors	Follow this policy and the code of conduct, complete required training, maintain boundaries and report concerns promptly.
Partners	Agree in writing who leads safeguarding, share relevant procedures and contacts, vet their own people where responsible, and cooperate with referrals and incident reviews.

5 Risk assessment and partner working

Every organised activity must have a proportionate safeguarding and health and safety risk assessment. The assessment must consider the site, participants, staffing, supervision, accessibility, tools and equipment, travel, photography, online contact, emergencies and the needs of children or adults who require support. The project lead must review the assessment when the activity or circumstances change.

Before working with a library, school, place of worship, community group, contractor or another charity, Green Shelter Society UK must agree the safeguarding lead, reporting route, supervision

responsibilities, information-sharing arrangements and response to allegations. Green Shelter Society UK retains responsibility for safeguarding within its own work and must not assume that a partner will report a concern on its behalf.

6 Responding to a safeguarding concern

1. If someone is in immediate danger, needs urgent medical help or a crime is in progress, call 999. Take reasonable steps to protect the person without placing anyone else at risk.
2. Listen calmly. Do not promise secrecy, investigate, confront an alleged perpetrator or ask leading questions.
3. Explain that the information may need to be shared to keep people safe.
4. Record what was seen, heard or disclosed as soon as possible. Use the person's own words where practical, distinguish fact from opinion and sign and date the record.
5. Report the concern to the DSL or deputy without delay. Do not wait until the end of an event or for proof.
6. The DSL must consider immediate safety, the person's wishes and communication needs, local safeguarding procedures and whether a referral is required.

Direct and alternative reporting

Anyone may contact children's social care, adult safeguarding or the police directly if the DSL and deputy cannot be reached, if delay may increase risk, if the concern involves the DSL or senior leaders, or if they believe the charity has not acted appropriately. If the DSL is implicated, report to the Chair. If the Chair is implicated or there is no safe internal route, report to another uninvolved trustee or directly to the relevant statutory agency. Notify an uninvolved trustee as soon as it is safe to do so.

7 Allegations and concerns about representatives

Any allegation or concern that a trustee, worker, volunteer, contractor or partner representative has harmed a child or adult, may have committed a relevant offence, may pose a risk of harm, or may be unsuitable for a position of trust must be reported immediately. This includes conduct outside Green Shelter Society UK where it may indicate a safeguarding risk in the person's role.

- Protect the child or adult and preserve relevant records.
- Seek advice from the relevant Local Authority Designated Officer or equivalent children's service, adult safeguarding team, police or the Wales position-of-trust process as appropriate.
- Do not begin an internal fact-finding or disciplinary investigation until statutory agencies advise that it will not compromise their work.
- Consider temporary changes to duties, increased supervision or suspension as neutral protective measures. Record the reasons and review them regularly.
- Provide appropriate information and support to the person raising the concern, the person at risk and the person who is the subject of the allegation, subject to statutory advice and confidentiality.
- Record lower-level boundary concerns and review patterns, even where the statutory referral threshold is not met.
- Record the final outcome, employment or volunteering action, referrals, lessons and required changes to practice.

DBS barring referrals

Where Green Shelter Society UK is a regulated activity provider, it will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service when the legal conditions are met. This includes where a person is removed from regulated activity, or would have been removed had they not resigned, retired or otherwise left, because they harmed or posed a risk of harm to a child or adult. A DBS referral may still be required

when another agency has also received a referral. The DSL must obtain current guidance before deciding and must record the decision.

8 Information sharing and records

Safeguarding information will be accurate, relevant, limited to what is necessary and shared through secure channels. Consent should normally be sought where safe and appropriate. Information may be shared without consent where this is necessary to protect a child or adult, prevent or detect crime, comply with a legal duty or respond to a serious risk. The DSL should record what was shared, with whom, when and why.

- Safeguarding records must be stored separately from general volunteer, staff or participant files.
- Access is limited to the DSL, deputy and trustees or advisers who need the information for safeguarding or legal duties.
- Records must use a case reference where practical and include dates, decisions, advice, actions and outcomes.
- Corrections must preserve the original entry and show who made the correction and when.
- Records must be retained and securely destroyed in line with the charity's approved retention schedule and applicable law. The trustees must approve that schedule before this policy takes effect.
- Any loss, unauthorised disclosure or data breach must be handled under the charity's data protection and breach-response procedures.

9 Safer recruitment and DBS checks

Recruitment and vetting must reflect the actual duties and safeguarding risk of each role. Green Shelter Society UK will use role descriptions, applications, interviews or structured discussions, identity and right-to-work checks where applicable, references, consideration of relevant employment or volunteering gaps, and probation or supervision arrangements.

- Determine DBS eligibility from the role's actual duties and obtain only the lawful level of check.
- Do not treat a DBS certificate as a substitute for references, induction, conduct standards and supervision.
- Do not knowingly appoint a barred person to regulated activity.
- Complete a written risk assessment for roles that involve contact with children or adults at risk but do not qualify for a DBS check.
- Handle criminal-record information under an approved policy that identifies the lawful basis, access controls and retention arrangements.
- Repeat or update checks when required by law, the role risk assessment or the charity's approved recruitment procedure.

10 Working with children and young people

- Plan supervision according to age, need, activity, venue and current sector guidance. Record the agreed arrangements.
- Give parents and carers clear written information about responsibility, drop-off, collection and emergencies. At public events, state whether the parent or carer remains responsible for supervision.
- Avoid unnecessary one-to-one working. If it is necessary, use an open or observable setting and follow the risk assessment.
- Do not transport a child alone unless specifically authorised under a documented safeguarding arrangement with appropriate consent, insurance and journey details.

- Obtain appropriate consent and emergency information for organised children’s activities and keep it available to authorised leaders.
- Use accessible arrangements for children with additional needs and include the child’s voice in planning where appropriate.
- Have a clear procedure for a missing child, late collection, illness, accident or emergency.
- Do not undertake personal or intimate care unless the activity has a separate approved procedure, trained people and explicit arrangements.

11 Adults at risk and mental capacity

Green Shelter Society UK will support an adult’s voice, choices, rights and desired outcomes wherever safely possible. Staff and volunteers must not assume that age, disability, illness or communication difficulty means that an adult lacks capacity. Where capacity is in question, the DSL must seek appropriate professional advice and follow the Mental Capacity Act 2005 in England or the relevant legal framework in Wales.

Principle	How it guides our response
Empowerment	Support the adult to make informed decisions and state the outcome they want.
Prevention	Act early and provide clear information about risks and reporting.
Proportionality	Use the least intrusive response that is appropriate to the risk.
Protection	Offer support and representation to people at greatest risk.
Partnership	Work with the adult, community and relevant agencies.
Accountability	Record decisions, responsibilities and reasons clearly.

If an adult does not consent to a referral, the DSL must consider their wishes alongside the risk to them or others, coercion, mental capacity, crime and any legal duty to share information. The decision and reasons must be recorded. Communication support or advocacy should be offered where appropriate.

12 Safe activities and communication

Gardening and public events

- Control access to tools, machinery, chemicals, water features and other hazards and provide suitable instruction, protective equipment and supervision.
- Plan for weather, heat, cold, uneven ground, slips, manual handling, allergies, soil or compost exposure, food hygiene, first aid and accessibility.
- Do not permit threatening conduct, harassment, unsafe behaviour or work under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Make toilets, changing arrangements and private spaces safe and appropriate for the participants and venue.

Lone working home visits and transport

- Use a documented check-in and check-out system for lone working and home-garden visits.
- Do not arrange a lone home visit to a child. Visits involving an adult at risk require a recorded risk assessment and agreed contact arrangements.
- Use authorised drivers, suitable insurance, journey records and consent where Green Shelter Society UK arranges transport.
- Report missed check-ins, unexpected changes or concerns immediately to the project lead or DSL.

Online communication and photography

- Use approved organisational accounts and channels. Do not communicate privately with children through personal accounts.
- For online activities involving children, agree supervision, invitations, recording, chat and parent or carer arrangements in advance.
- Obtain the appropriate consent before taking or publishing photographs or recordings. Do not publish unnecessary names, personal details or precise location information.
- Report harmful, sexual, threatening or coercive online behaviour through the safeguarding procedure and preserve relevant evidence without redistributing it unnecessarily.

13 Code of conduct

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect and make reasonable adjustments where required.
- Maintain professional boundaries and do not form inappropriate personal, financial or sexual relationships with beneficiaries or people dependent on the charity.
- Do not use humiliating, discriminatory, sexualised, threatening or abusive language or behaviour.
- Do not give or receive inappropriate gifts, money or favours.
- Do not use personal information or images for private purposes.
- Do not work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Challenge and report boundary concerns, unsafe practice and safeguarding concerns without delay.

14 Complaints and whistleblowing

A complaint about service quality or conduct must follow the Complaints Policy. A concern that a person may be at risk of harm must follow this safeguarding policy immediately, even if it is also a complaint. Safeguarding action must not wait for the complaints process.

Anyone who reasonably believes that safeguarding is being ignored, concealed or mishandled may raise the matter with the Chair or another uninvolved trustee and may contact the appropriate statutory agency or regulator directly. Green Shelter Society UK will not penalise anyone for raising a genuine concern in good faith. Knowingly malicious allegations may be addressed under the relevant conduct procedure, but an allegation that is unsubstantiated is not, by itself, malicious.

15 Training monitoring and review

- All trustees, staff and regular volunteers must complete safeguarding induction before unsupervised or relevant activity.
- The DSL and deputy must complete role-specific children and adult safeguarding training and keep their knowledge of local referral routes current.
- People working regularly with children or adults at risk must receive training matched to their duties before beginning that work.
- The DSL must maintain training, DBS, induction and policy-acknowledgement records and arrange refresher training at intervals approved by the trustees and after material changes in guidance or role risk.
- Project leads must give a local safeguarding and emergency briefing before each new project or event series.
- Trustees must review safeguarding assurance at least annually, including concerns, near misses, recruitment checks, training, partner assurance and actions from previous reviews.

- This policy must be reviewed at least annually, after a serious incident or near miss, and when activities, law, guidance or risks change. The current approved version must be available to the public and communicated in accessible formats where reasonably required.

16 Serious incidents and external reporting

Trustees must assess actual or alleged safeguarding incidents against the Charity Commission's current serious-incident guidance. Where the threshold is met, the charity must report promptly, meaning as soon as reasonably possible after the incident or after the charity becomes aware of it. A report to the police, social care, DBS or another regulator does not remove the need to consider a Charity Commission report.

The immediate priorities are to prevent further harm, contact the appropriate safeguarding or law-enforcement agency, preserve records, manage communications and review what happened. Trustees retain ultimate responsibility even if they authorise the DSL or a professional adviser to submit a report. Incidents involving a delivery partner must also be considered where they materially affect the charity, its people, work, assets or reputation.

17 Procedures in England and Wales

England

For activities in England, Green Shelter Society UK will follow the current Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance, local safeguarding partner procedures, the Care Act 2014 and Care and Support Statutory Guidance, and the relevant local authority arrangements for allegations about people who work with children.

Wales

For activities in Wales, Green Shelter Society UK will follow the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, Working Together to Safeguard People, the current Wales Safeguarding Procedures and the relevant Regional Safeguarding Board arrangements, including procedures for allegations about practitioners and people in positions of trust.

The project lead must complete Appendix C for the town or venue before an activity starts. Where an activity crosses borders or involves participants who live elsewhere, the DSL must seek advice on which local authority should receive the referral and must not delay immediate protection while jurisdiction is clarified.

18 Safeguarding contacts

Complete every internal contact before trustee approval. Use Appendix C for local statutory contacts at each project location.

Role	Name	Telephone and email
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Iqbal Hussain	info@greenshelter.org.uk +447725986852
Deputy DSL	Shahana Hoque	info@greenshelter.org.uk +447846474632
Alternative uninvolved trustee	Nehlin Sayed	admin@greenshelter.org.uk +447412153708
General charity contact	Green Shelter Society UK	info@greenshelter.org.uk
Police emergency	Emergency services	999
Police non-emergency	Police	101

19 Trustee approval

The trustees must approve this policy, confirm the named safeguarding leads and local reporting arrangements, approve the records-retention schedule, and enter the policy in the charity's policy register.

Approval record	Details
Approved by	Board of Trustees
Date approved	04 th September 2026
Chair name and signature	MS Rahman, MS RAHMAN
Effective date	04 th September 2026
Next review date	04 th September 2027

Appendix A Incident response guide

Situation	Immediate action	Next action
Immediate danger or urgent medical need	Call 999 and take reasonable steps to protect the person.	Notify the DSL or an uninvolved trustee and record the facts.
Concern with no immediate danger	Listen, reassure, record and report without delay.	DSL assesses risk and seeks local safeguarding advice or makes a referral.
Allegation about a representative	Protect the person and preserve records. Do not investigate.	DSL or uninvolved trustee seeks LADO, position-of-trust, adult safeguarding or police advice.
DSL or Chair implicated	Use the alternative internal route or contact the statutory agency directly.	Notify an uninvolved trustee when safe and record the route used.
Serious harm or significant risk	Protect people and notify the relevant statutory authority.	Trustees assess and promptly complete any Charity Commission or other regulatory report.
Online harm or concerning content	Protect the person and preserve relevant evidence securely.	Report through safeguarding routes and to the platform or police where appropriate.

Remember : You do not need proof before reporting a concern. Do not delay a statutory referral while waiting for an internal meeting or a completed form.

Appendix B Safeguarding concern record

Complete this record as soon as possible. Use factual language and the person's own words where practical. Do not ask leading questions. Send the record securely to the DSL or the alternative reporting contact. Do not keep an unauthorised copy.

Case reference
Date time and location of concern
Person raising the concern and contact details
Child or adult at risk and relevant contact details
What happened or what was disclosed using factual wording
Immediate safety action taken
Witnesses and relevant evidence

Appendix B Safeguarding concern record continued

DSL or alternative contact notified including date time and method
Agency contacted advice received and reference number
Decisions actions owners and deadlines
Person's wishes communication needs consent and capacity considerations
Trustee or Chair informed where appropriate
Follow up outcome and review date
Record completed by signed and dated

Appendix C Local safeguarding contact sheet

The project lead must complete and brief this sheet before activity begins. Verify the details whenever the project location or local arrangements change.

Service or role	Name or area	Contact and availability
Project and venue	TO BE COMPLETED	TO BE COMPLETED
Project lead	TO BE COMPLETED	TO BE COMPLETED
Venue safeguarding lead	TO BE COMPLETED	TO BE COMPLETED
Local children's social care	TO BE COMPLETED	TO BE COMPLETED
Emergency duty children's service	TO BE COMPLETED	TO BE COMPLETED
Local adult safeguarding	TO BE COMPLETED	TO BE COMPLETED
Emergency duty adult service	TO BE COMPLETED	TO BE COMPLETED
Local Authority Designated Officer or equivalent	TO BE COMPLETED	TO BE COMPLETED
Wales position-of-trust contact if applicable	TO BE COMPLETED	TO BE COMPLETED
Regional Safeguarding Board if applicable	TO BE COMPLETED	TO BE COMPLETED
Nearest police service	TO BE COMPLETED	TO BE COMPLETED
Nearest urgent medical service	TO BE COMPLETED	TO BE COMPLETED
Other specialist service required by risk assessment	TO BE COMPLETED	TO BE COMPLETED

Confirmed by _____ Date _____

Appendix D Related policies and guidance

Related Green Shelter Society UK documents

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy and relevant activity risk assessments;
- Volunteer Policy;
- Complaints and Whistleblowing Procedure;
- Privacy, Data Protection and Records Retention arrangements;
- Photography, Social Media and Digital Safety arrangements; and any recruitment, disciplinary, grievance or reasonable-adjustment procedures that apply.

Legal and guidance framework

- Charity Commission safeguarding and protecting people guidance for charities and trustees
- Charity Commission guidance on reporting serious incidents
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 and local safeguarding partner procedures in England
- Care Act 2014 and Care and Support Statutory Guidance
- Mental Capacity Act 2005 and its Code of Practice
- Social Services and Well-being Wales Act 2014
- Working Together to Safeguard People and the Wales Safeguarding Procedures
- Disclosure and Barring Service eligibility barring and referral guidance
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- UK General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018
- Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974

The DSL must check that the versions relied on are current when the policy is reviewed and must update operational procedures when official guidance changes.