



SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

1. AIMS

1.1 The Isle of Thanet Photographic Society (known as “the Society”) recognises that in its activities it has a responsibility towards others, especially any minor or vulnerable adult, to prevent any form of abuse.

The aim of the Policy is

- i) to assist members in carrying out their responsibilities
- ii) to provide guidance to members on adopting behaviours to protect minors, vulnerable adults and themselves under different circumstances that might arise in the Society
- iii) to have a process in place for reporting allegations or suspicions of abuse

2 . T H E S O C I E T Y

The Society exists to encourage members to practice, discuss, and enjoy their photography, and to improve their skills. The Society aims to be as inclusive as possible to all members of the community, including members who are under the age of 18 or who are vulnerable adults.

The Society values all members, but recognises its particular responsibility to individual members who are minors or vulnerable adults. All members, especially minors and vulnerable adults, must be treated with respect and dignity, recognising any unique personal needs.

For the purposes of this Policy, the term “minor” is used to mean any Society member or visitor under the age of 18. The term “vulnerable adult” is defined in Appendix A.

Adherence to the Policy is a condition of membership of the Society (and members’ attention is drawn to the Policy on the application form), along with the Society’s Constitution and any other policies and rules. In the case of minors their parent or guardian must countersign the application form as acceptance of the Policy. The Policy is available to consult on the Society’s website and a hard copy will be provided upon request from a member.

This Policy will be reviewed before each Annual General Meeting by the Society’s Executive Committee and any changes will be notified to members at the AGM or via email and posted on the Society’s website.

3. SOCIETY ACTIVITIES with SAFEGUARDING GUIDELINES for each:-

Activity 1: *Presentations, lectures, competitions and social evenings open to all members held in an appropriate-sized meeting room or via on-line video-conferencing. These meetings are the main Society activities.*

Risk: Meetings are low risk environments for minors or vulnerable adults. Committee members take responsibility for welcoming members and taking account of any special personal needs of members - for example, the siting of wheelchairs.

Activity 2: *Occasional outings for which members arrange their own transport. These involve small numbers meeting, usually in public places. Occasional workshops, sometimes at other Societies, in which members work in small groups.*

Risk: Members are advised not to offer lifts to minors unless accompanied or authorised by a parent or guardian. Members should not work on their own with a minor or vulnerable adult. Members should make sure they can be observed by others, and preferably that the parent, guardian or carer is present.

Activity 3: *Photography of community events such as drama productions, races etc. Members of the Society are sometimes invited by organisers of such events to take photographs. The Society encourages individual members to respond to such invitations as it supports the community and also gives members wider photographic experiences. Community events may include ones in which minors or vulnerable adults are taking part.*

Risk: If members are photographing these events by invitation then it is the responsibility of the inviting organisation to get permission for the photography from parents, guardians or carers if required. Asking permission from all parents, guardians or carers may not be possible and it is sufficient to have notices at the event that photography has been arranged. These could give a contact point for people who do not want photographs taken at the event. The member dealing with the initial request should ask the organisers to ensure that such arrangements are in place. This should be done such that the request and reply are on record, for example by e-mail.

Activity 4: *Mentoring requested by members who need help with aspects of their photography. Responding to this might involve visits to private homes. Informal mentoring is important to the Society so that more experienced members can pass on expertise to others if requested.*

Risk: Mentoring of minors or vulnerable adults is only allowed with the explicit agreement of their parent, guardian or carer, and should take place only if the parent, guardian or carer, is present.

Activity 5: *Internet discussion groups and photo-sharing. The Society has a Website, a Facebook discussion group and a Flickr site, all of which members can participate in. On all sites members can post their pictures and also make comments or discuss with others. These forums have two officers* of the Society who control access and can remove material, should anything that was unacceptable be posted.*

Risk: Members are required to treat others with respect and politeness in their comments, even if their opinions differ. Material that is deemed offensive will be removed and may result in the member being excluded from the Society.

**The responsible officers will be appointed from within the Executive Committee at the first meeting after each Annual General Meeting.*

4. DISCLOSURE

If a minor or vulnerable adult were to disclose abuse to a member of the Society in the course of the Society's Activities, then the Society member must take such a disclosure seriously and follow the procedures set out in Appendix B and Appendix C.

A form for recording their actions is provided in Appendix E.

If a member has any safeguarding concerns then they should contact the designated Safeguarding Officer.* If the Safeguarding Officer is not available then the Chairman or Secretary should be contacted.

5. PHOTOGRAPHY and MEDIA protection policy:

5.1 No photographs may be taken of minors or vulnerable adults who are undressed or inappropriately clothed for the activity taking place. The business of the Society is to encourage photography and to help its members improve their skills. However, issues can arise from the photography of minors or vulnerable adults and it is important that all necessary precautions are taken to protect them from exploitation.

5.2 If a minor or vulnerable adult is a member of the Society, written permission must be gained from their parent/guardian or carer if photographs of them as the subject or model are to be taken.

5.3 Separate written permission has to be sought if such photographs of a minor or vulnerable adult as the subject are to be published in any form, for example on the website, on social media, e-mailed to others, or used in any competition. However, if a minor or vulnerable adult were to appear peripherally in photographs taken as part of a Society activity then permission would be held to have been given when the parent, guardian or carer countersigns the form on joining the Society.

**The Safeguarding Officer will be appointed by the Executive Committee after each AGM*

5.4 No personal details of a member of the Society such as their address, email address or telephone number, must be revealed without permission. In the case of a minor or vulnerable adult this permission should be given by the parent, guardian or carer. Committee members need details such as the Society's membership list, and permission for these to be shared as necessary with any member of the committee is held to have been given when signing the application form.

(See separate Data Protection Policy that explains how personal data is managed).

5.5 When taking photographs or video recordings at an event that involves minors or vulnerable adults it is good practice to ask the permission of the organisers or persons in charge and for the photographer be able to identify themselves if requested during the course of the event.

5.6 It is noted that there are no legal restrictions on photographing people in public places, and it often may not be practicable to ask permission. If Society members have been invited to photograph an event, the Society's policy is set out in Section 3.

5.7 Mobile and on-line communication:

There are many ways for people to communicate. It is recommended that Society members should not communicate with a minor or vulnerable adult by text or on-line, unless in a general communication to all members, or to avoid immediate risk to the minor or vulnerable adult. When using phone or e-mail they should communicate with the Parent, Guardian or carer, rather than having direct contact with the minor or vulnerable adult.

END OF POLICY

Approved by the Society's Executive Committee on 24 February 2021

February 2021

APPENDICES FOLLOW

APPENDIX A: Definition of “Vulnerable Adult”

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 or over who “is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and 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”.

Some people are always vulnerable, such as those mentioned above who are in need of community care services, but any person may be vulnerable at times. This Policy could therefore be relevant to the treatment of any Society member.

More information: *No secrets: guidance on protecting vulnerable adults in care*, Department of Health, 2000, available at www.gov.uk/government/publications/search-on-vulnerable-adults.

APPENDIX B: Definitions of Abuse or Neglect of a Child

B.1 Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a **child:**

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

B.2 The *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013* guidance published by the Government defines four categories of abuse as follows:

B.2.1 Physical Abuse

This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child

B.2.2 Emotional Abuse

This is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

B.2.3 Sexual Abuse

This type of abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Examples of physical contact include penetrative acts (rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts kissing, fondling, masturbation. It may include non-contact activities involving children in looking at or be involved in sexual online images and/or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

B.2.4 Neglect

This is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment to the child's health and development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or care failing to:

- > provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- > protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- > ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- > ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

PROCEDURE IN THE EVENT OF A DISCLOSURE

B3.1 It is important that children are protected from abuse. All complaints, allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously. Responsibility for making enquiries and investigating allegations rests with children's social services along with other relevant agencies.

B3.2 This procedure must be followed whenever an allegation is made that a child has been abused or when there is a suspicion that a child has been abused

B3.3 Promises of confidentiality must not be given as this may conflict with the need to ensure the safety and welfare of the child.

B3.4 If the complainant is the child, questions must be kept to the minimum necessary to understand what is being alleged and leading questions must be avoided. The use of leading questions can cause problems for the subsequent investigation and any court proceedings.

B3.5 A full record shall be made as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and any other relevant information. This must include information in relation to the date, the time, the place where the alleged abuse happened, your name and the names of others present, the name of the complainant and, where different, the name of the child who has allegedly been abused, the nature of the alleged abuse, a description of any injuries observed, the account which has been given of the allegation.

RESPONDING TO AN ALLEGATION

B4.1 Any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer or if he/she is unavailable to the Chairman or Secretary.

RESPONDING APPROPRIATELY TO A CHILD MAKING AN ALLEGATION OF ABUSE

- > Listen to the child. Stay calm. Listen carefully to what is said.
- > Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep secrets.
- > Tell the child that the matter will only be disclosed to those who need to know about it.
- > If the child can understand the significance and consequences of making a referral to social services she/he must be asked his or her view.
- > Regardless of the child's view it remains the responsibility of the member to take whatever action is required to ensure the safety of that child.
- > Allow the child to continue at her/his own pace.
- > Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
- > Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you. Tell them what you will do next, and with whom the information will be shared. Record in writing what was said, using the child's own words as soon as possible – note the date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated. Also record what the member said.

There is a form that can be used to record any allegation provided in Appendix E.

It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional child protection agencies, following a referral from the designated child protection officer.

B5. Abuse of a child may be suspected by a member of the Society in the context of contact through the Society, without disclosure from the child. If this were to occur then such suspicions and the evidence for these should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer as in Section B4.1. The Designated Officer should then refer this to the Kent Social Services Department. (Section B6 below).

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B6. THE ROLE OF KEY INDIVIDUAL AGENCIES

Social Services

The Children's Act 1989 gives Local Authority Social Services the primary responsibility for the care and protection of abused children and children at risk of abuse. It is their statutory duty to ensure that there is an investigation in cases of suspected abuse or significant harm, to take action to protect the child and to promote the welfare of the child.

Social Services also convene Child Protection conferences and manage the children who are subject to a child protection plan.

In the event of any disclosure or complaint by a child, the Society's Safeguarding Officer will contact Kent Social Services Department at www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/report-abuse

or e-mail: social.services@kent.gov.uk.

Phone: working hours: 03000 41 11 11; Out of hours: 03000 41 91 91

APPENDIX C: Definitions in respect of the abuse or neglect of a Vulnerable Adult

The Care Act 2014 came into effect in April 2015. This imposes a duty on Local Authorities to set up Safeguarding Adults Boards. These have a duty to assess the risk to any adult referred to them.

C.1 Categories of Abuse

The main forms of abuse of vulnerable adults are set out by the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board as:

- > Physical abuse including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions
- > Sexual abuse including rape and sexual assault or acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressurised into consenting
- > Psychological abuse, including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks
- > Financial or material abuse, including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits

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- > Neglect or acts of omission, including medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition

and heating.

> Discriminatory abuse, including racist, sexist, that is based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment

C.2 If any such abuse were to be suspected by a member of the Society in the context of their membership, or were to be disclosed to a member during Society activities, the procedure to be followed is the same as for abuse of a minor, and is set out in Sections B3 and B4.

The Safeguarding Policy Form in Appendix E can be used for vulnerable adults as well as children.

Any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse in the context of Society membership must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer or if s/he is unavailable to the Chairman or Secretary.

Suspensions of abuse can be reported online at:

www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/report-abuse or

e-mail: social.services@kent.gov.uk

Phone: Working hours: 03000 41 61 61

Out of hours: 03000 41 91 91

**APPENDIX E Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy:
Initial cause for concern form, which must be taken to the Society
Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible, preferably within 24 – 48 hours**

Name of individual cause for concern is about

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Age (if known).....

Address (if known).....

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Contact details (phone or email) (if provided).....

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Describe your concern and action taken

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Date.....

Observations to support cause for concern

Description and location of any visible marks, bruising etc

Name of alleged abuser, relationship with child (if known)

Name of person completing form:

Signature

Date:

Name of Society Safeguarding Officer:

Signature

Date:

Name of Social Services Officer

Signature

Date: