



**CROXLEY GREEN PARISH COUNCIL**

Safeguarding Children, Young people and  
Vulnerable Adults Policy

Updated – 10/01/2025

*Croxley Green Parish Council is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults. This policy outlines our approach to ensuring their protection from harm, abuse, and neglect.*

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# 1. Introduction

In the interests of child protection and the welfare and protection of vulnerable adults, Croxley Green Parish Council is committed to ensuring that children and vulnerable adults are protected and kept safe from harm whilst they are engaged in any activity associated with the Parish Council.

The Children Act 2004 and the Care Act 2014 place a duty on key statutory agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people, and adults at risk. In practical terms, this means that the Parish Council has a responsibility to provide a safe environment for these individuals, ensuring their welfare is of paramount importance.

Safeguarding is the process of protecting individuals' health, well-being, and human rights, enabling them to live free from harm, abuse, and neglect.

This policy applies to all employees, councillors, volunteers, contractors, and anyone working on behalf of Croxley Green Parish Council. Additionally, and where appropriate, this policy applies to contractors involved in regulated activity on behalf of the Parish Council. The Parish Council will follow local safeguarding procedures in circumstances where information is shared with other agencies in the interest of a child, young person, or adult at risk.

Croxley Green Parish Council believes that everyone has the right to live free from abuse and neglect. We are committed to promoting a safe environment and ensuring our practices reflect statutory responsibilities, government guidance, and best practices.

## 2. Definitions

- **Children and Young People:** Individuals under 18 years of age.
- **Vulnerable Adults:** Individuals aged 18 or over who are unable to care for themselves, protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation, or may be in need of community care services.
- **Regulated Activity:** Work which involves close and unsupervised contact with vulnerable groups, including children.

## 3. Principles of Safeguarding

The Parish Council is committed to the safeguarding principles outlined in the Care Act 2014, which form the basis of our approach to protecting children, young people, and vulnerable adults. These principles guide all safeguarding actions and ensure that we prioritise the well-being and rights of individuals:

### **Empowerment**

“Presumption of person-led decisions and informed consent.”

- Individuals are supported and encouraged to make their own decisions, with their voices at the centre of all safeguarding actions. We aim to promote independence, choice, and control.

### **Prevention**

“It is better to take action before harm occurs.”

- We will actively work to identify and mitigate risks to vulnerable individuals, creating an environment that prioritises safety and reduces the likelihood of harm. Prevention is a key focus of all safeguarding activities.

### **Proportionality**

“The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.”

- Safeguarding responses will be proportionate to the level of risk, ensuring actions respect the individual’s rights and dignity while addressing concerns effectively.

### **Protection**

“Support and representation for those in greatest need.”

- The Parish Council will act to protect individuals who are unable to safeguard themselves, providing appropriate interventions and support to ensure their safety and well-being.

### **Partnership**

“Local solutions through services working with their communities.”

- Effective safeguarding requires collaboration with statutory agencies, local safeguarding boards, community organisations, and other stakeholders. The Parish Council will foster strong partnerships to ensure joined-up support for vulnerable individuals.

### **Accountability**

“Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.”

- The Parish Council will be transparent in its safeguarding processes and ensure all actions are clearly documented and justifiable. Staff, councillors, and volunteers are accountable for maintaining safeguarding standards and addressing concerns appropriately.

### **Equality and Inclusivity**

“Ensuring fairness and equity in safeguarding practices.”

- Safeguarding measures will be inclusive and non-discriminatory, ensuring all individuals—regardless of age, gender, race, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic—are treated with fairness and respect.

### **Confidentiality**

“Appropriate information sharing for safeguarding purposes.”

- The Parish Council will handle safeguarding information sensitively and share it only with relevant parties to protect the individual. This will be done in line with data protection regulations and safeguarding best practices.

By embedding these principles from the Care Act 2014 into our safeguarding approach, the Parish Council ensures that all safeguarding actions prioritise the well-being, dignity, and rights of vulnerable individuals, creating a safe and supportive environment for everyone.

## **4. Types of abuse**

Croxley Green Parish Council recognises that abuse can take many forms and that individuals may be at risk of more than one type. Below is an overview of the main categories of abuse, which apply to children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

- **Physical Abuse**

The intentional infliction of physical harm or injury. Examples include:

- Hitting, slapping, or punching
- Burning or scalding
- Shaking or suffocating
- Misuse of medication, restraint, or physical punishment

- **Emotional or Psychological Abuse**

The persistent emotional maltreatment of an individual, causing severe and adverse effects on their emotional development or mental health. Examples include:

- Threats, intimidation, or humiliation
- Controlling or coercive behaviour
- Isolation or withdrawal from social interaction
- Verbal abuse or name-calling

- **Sexual Abuse**

Forcing or enticing an individual to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. Examples include:

- Sexual assault or rape
- Indecent exposure
- Forcing someone to watch or engage in sexual acts

- Exploitation through online activities

- **Neglect and Acts of Omission**

The persistent failure to meet an individual's basic physical or emotional needs, leading to harm or distress. Examples include:

- Failure to provide adequate food, clothing, or shelter
- Ignoring medical, emotional, or social care needs
- Leaving someone at risk by failing to provide supervision or safety measures

- **Financial or Material Abuse**

The unauthorised use of an individual's funds, property, or assets. Examples include:

- Theft, fraud, or coercion related to financial matters
- Misuse of power of attorney or other financial controls
- Exploiting someone for financial gain

- **Discriminatory Abuse**

Abuse motivated by prejudice or discrimination based on an individual's race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, or religion. Examples include:

- Harassment, slurs, or similar treatment
- Denying someone access to services based on prejudice

- **Modern Slavery**

Exploitation of individuals through forced labour, human trafficking, or servitude. Examples include:

- Forced domestic work or agricultural labour
- Coercion into criminal activities
- Sexual exploitation

- **Domestic Abuse**

Any incident or pattern of controlling, coercive, threatening, or violent behaviour between individuals in an intimate or family relationship. This includes:

- Physical violence
- Emotional manipulation
- Financial control
- Stalking or harassment

- **Self-Neglect**

When an individual fails to attend to their basic needs, impacting their health and well-being. Examples include:

- Refusing personal hygiene or medical treatment
- Hoarding behaviour

- Poor nutrition or living conditions
- **Online Abuse**

The use of technology to harm, harass, or exploit individuals. Examples include:

  - Cyberbullying
  - Grooming
  - Sharing inappropriate or harmful content
- **Organisational or Institutional Abuse**

Abuse that occurs within institutions or care settings, such as hospitals, care homes, or schools. This can involve:

  - Rigid routines or poor care standards
  - Neglect of personal needs due to systemic failures
  - A culture of bullying or discrimination within the organisation
- **Exploitation (including County Lines)**

Exploitation refers to taking advantage of someone for personal gain, which may include:

  - **Criminal Exploitation:** Forcing individuals to engage in illegal activities, such as drug trafficking (often linked to "County Lines").
  - **Sexual Exploitation:** Forcing or coercing individuals into sexual acts in exchange for something, often money, goods, or status.
- **Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII)**

Where a caregiver exaggerates or fabricates symptoms of illness in a child or dependent, leading to unnecessary medical interventions or harm.
- **Radicalisation and Extremism**

The process by which individuals are encouraged or coerced into adopting extremist views or engaging in terrorist activities.
- **Trafficking and Exploitation**

Separate from modern slavery, trafficking involves the movement of individuals for exploitation, such as forced labour, organ harvesting, or sexual exploitation.
- **Cultural or Faith-Based Abuse**

Harmful practices linked to cultural or religious beliefs, such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, or "honour-based" violence.

Croxley Green Parish Council is committed to recognising, responding to, and addressing all forms of abuse. If any type of abuse is suspected or disclosed, it must be reported immediately in line with the safeguarding procedures.

## 5. Aims and Objectives

This policy aims to establish clear procedures for safeguarding children, young people, and adults at risk, protecting them from abuse and ensuring their well-being. The Parish Council will achieve this by adhering to the following aims and objectives:

### Aims

#### Promote Safety and Well-being

Create a safe environment where children, young people, and vulnerable adults feel secure, valued, and respected, while respecting and promoting their rights, wishes, and feelings.

#### Prevent Harm

Protect individuals from harm, abuse, and neglect by implementing robust safeguarding practices and promoting good practice that:

- Encourages a safe environment for all.
- Protects all parties involved.
- Avoids mistaken allegations of abuse.

#### Raise Awareness

Ensure all staff, councillors, volunteers, and contractors understand their responsibilities in identifying and reporting safeguarding concerns by providing:

- Instruction, training, and information to recognise abuse and mistreatment.
- Clear guidance on reporting and recording concerns.
- Support to seek specialist advice when necessary.
- Strategies to minimise the risk of accusations of abuse.

#### Foster a Culture of Safeguarding

Embed safeguarding as a core responsibility across all Council activities, facilities, and services, ensuring all suspicions or allegations are dealt with efficiently and effectively through appropriate criminal, disciplinary, and appeals procedures.

### Objectives

#### Develop Clear Procedures

Establish and maintain clear reporting and response procedures for safeguarding concerns, ensuring accessibility and compliance by all.



### **Ensure Safe Recruitment**

Apply rigorous recruitment practices, including Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks or satisfactory disclosures for employees, volunteers, and councillors, as well as contractors undertaking regulated activities on behalf of the Parish Council.

### **Provide Training**

Equip employees, volunteers, and councillors with the necessary knowledge and skills to:

- Recognise, prevent, and respond to safeguarding issues.
- Work in ways that protect themselves from accusations of abuse.

### **Promote Collaboration**

Work effectively with local safeguarding partnerships, including the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board.

### **Review and Improve**

Review this policy at least once every three years or following major changes in legislation or the organisation. Continuously update procedures to reflect best practices and new guidance.

### **Engage the Community**

Ensure users of Council facilities and services are aware of safeguarding standards and expectations.

### **Support Victims and Whistleblowers**

Provide appropriate support for individuals who disclose concerns or are impacted by safeguarding incidents.

### **Contractor Compliance**

Require contractors and their employees undertaking regulated activities to adopt and adhere to the Parish Council's safeguarding processes.

## **6. Legal Framework**

This Policy and its associated procedures will ensure that the Parish Council is compliant with the responsibilities and expectations laid out in the following legislation, guidance and local procedures;

- [The Children Act 1989](#)
- [The Children Act 2004](#)
- [‘Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023’](#)
- [The Care Act 2014](#)

- [Care and Support Statutory Guidance](#)
- Better Care, Higher Standards charter
- [Making Safeguarding Personal](#)
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- [The Human Rights Act 1998.](#)
- [Mental Capacity Act 2019](#)
- [Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003](#)
- [Forced Marriage \(Civil Protection\) Act 2023](#)
- [The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004.](#)
- [The Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#)
- [The Modern Slavery Act 2015.](#)
- [The National Prevent Strategy](#)
- [Criminal Exploitation of Children and Vulnerable Adults: County Lines \(September 2018\)](#)
- [Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements \(MAPPA\).](#)
- Safeguarding Adults at Risk
- [Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures Manual.](#)

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities

Croxley Green Parish Council is committed to ensuring that safeguarding responsibilities are understood and implemented across all levels of the organisation. This section outlines the specific roles and responsibilities for all staff, elected members, and key individuals involved in safeguarding.

### All Staff and Elected Members of the Council

All staff and elected members of the Council have a responsibility to:

- Familiarise themselves with the Council's safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Be vigilant and report any concerns about the safety or well-being of children, young people, or vulnerable adults.
- Recognise signs of abuse and understand the process for reporting concerns.
- Participate in safeguarding training as required.
- Promote a safe environment for all individuals accessing Council services or facilities.
- Uphold the values of respect, inclusivity, and dignity in all interactions.

### Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)

The Designated Safeguarding Leads are responsible for:

- Acting as the main point of contact for safeguarding concerns within the Council.
- Receiving and responding to safeguarding concerns, ensuring they are handled in line with local authority protocols.
- Liaising with external safeguarding bodies, such as Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board.

- Ensuring accurate and confidential records are maintained for all safeguarding incidents and concerns.
- Supporting staff, councillors, and volunteers in understanding their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Keeping up-to-date with safeguarding legislation and guidance and sharing relevant updates with the Council.
- Ensuring that safeguarding training is provided and remains current for all staff and elected members.

### **The Parish Clerk**

As the senior officer of the Parish Council, the Parish Clerk plays a vital role in safeguarding oversight. Their responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that the Council complies with its legal safeguarding duties.
- Acting as a support and escalation point for the Designated Safeguarding Leads.
- Ensuring safeguarding policies are regularly reviewed and adopted by the Council.
- Providing updates to elected members on safeguarding matters and compliance.

### **Managers**

Managers play a key role in ensuring the effective implementation of safeguarding practices. Their responsibilities include:

- Promoting a safeguarding culture within their teams and ensuring that staff understand their roles in safeguarding.
- Monitoring staff adherence to safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Supporting staff in recognising and responding to safeguarding concerns.
- Escalating safeguarding issues to the Designated Safeguarding Leads when necessary.
- Ensuring all team members complete required safeguarding training.
- Supporting safe recruitment practices within their areas of responsibility.

### **Human Resources (HR)**

The HR function is essential in ensuring that safeguarding is embedded in recruitment and personnel practices. HR responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that all recruitment processes adhere to safer recruitment guidelines, including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks where required.
- Maintaining accurate and up-to-date records of safeguarding checks and training for all staff and volunteers.
- Supporting the induction process to ensure all new employees and councillors are familiar with safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Addressing any safeguarding concerns raised during employment and ensuring appropriate action is taken in line with Council procedures.
- Providing advice and guidance to employees on safeguarding-related matters, including performance and disciplinary issues.

- Ensuring policies are reviewed regularly and remain compliant with safeguarding legislation.

### **Volunteers**

Volunteers often work closely with the community and should be included in the safeguarding framework. Their responsibilities include:

- Understanding and following the Council's safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Reporting any concerns or suspicions of abuse to the Designated Safeguarding Leads.
- Participating in safeguarding training as required.
- Maintaining professional boundaries when interacting with children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

### **Contractors and Service Providers**

Any contractors or service providers working on behalf of the Council must adhere to safeguarding standards. Their responsibilities include:

- Ensuring all staff involved in regulated activities are appropriately trained and vetted, including DBS checks where applicable.
- Following the Council's safeguarding policies and reporting procedures.
- Cooperating with the Council in any safeguarding investigations or actions.

### **Members of the Public**

Although not formally part of the Council, members of the public can play a key role in safeguarding by being vigilant and reporting concerns. Their responsibilities include:

- Reporting any safeguarding concerns to the Parish Council or appropriate authority.
- Engaging with Council-led safeguarding initiatives, such as community awareness programs.

### **External Safeguarding Bodies and Partners**

While not part of the Council, it's important to acknowledge the role of external agencies that collaborate with the Council on safeguarding matters. This may include:

- Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership
- Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board
- Local police, health services, and social care providers

Their role includes providing advice, training, and support to the Council and handling referrals of safeguarding concerns.

By clearly defining these roles and responsibilities, Croxley Green Parish Council ensures a coordinated and effective approach to safeguarding, prioritising the safety and well-being of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults in the community.

## **8. Promoting a Safe Environment**

Croxley Green Parish Council is committed to fostering a secure and supportive environment for all users of its facilities, ensuring that safeguarding remains a top priority.

**To achieve this, the Council will:**

### **Provide Safe Facilities and Conduct Regular Safety Assessments**

- Ensure that all facilities are maintained to high safety standards, including compliance with fire safety, accessibility, and hygiene regulations.
- Conduct regular risk assessments to identify and mitigate potential hazards in Council premises and during activities.
- Take prompt action to address any identified risks or issues that may compromise the safety or well-being of vulnerable individuals.

### **Raise Awareness Among Employees, Councillors, and Activity Leaders**

- Provide safeguarding training to all employees, councillors, and activity leaders to ensure they understand their roles and responsibilities.
- Share clear guidance on identifying, responding to, and reporting safeguarding concerns.
- Promote a culture of accountability and vigilance, where safeguarding is a shared responsibility.

### **Require Adherence to Safeguarding Policies**

- Ensure that all users of Council facilities, including external organisations and community groups, comply with safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Provide copies of the Council's safeguarding policy to facility users and make adherence a condition of use.

### **Display Relevant Safeguarding Contacts**

- Prominently display safeguarding contact details, including local safeguarding boards, helplines, and emergency numbers, in all Council facilities.
- Ensure that safeguarding information is accessible to all, including individuals with disabilities or language barriers, through visual aids or translated materials where needed.

## 9. Safe Working Practices

To uphold safeguarding standards, all individuals using Council facilities must adhere to the following safe working practices:

### Avoid Unsupervised Situations

- Never leave children, young people, or vulnerable adults unattended with adults who have not undergone appropriate safeguarding checks, such as enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.
- Always ensure that adults working with vulnerable individuals have the appropriate training and clearance.

### Plan Activities to Minimise Risk

- Organise activities to include at least two responsible adults or ensure they take place in accessible spaces where others can observe or hear interactions.
- Avoid one-on-one situations unless they are unavoidable and properly documented with prior consent from guardians or supervisors.

### Maintain Accurate Attendance Records

- Keep complete and up-to-date registers for all activities, ensuring that participants are signed in and out by responsible adults.
- Verify the identity of individuals collecting children, young people, or vulnerable adults to ensure they are authorised to do so.

### Obtain Consent for Photography and Filming

- Always seek written permission from parents, guardians, or the individuals themselves (if appropriate) before taking photographs or videos.
- Clearly explain how the images will be used and ensure that individuals understand their right to refuse consent.
- Store and use images in accordance with data protection regulations.

### Access to First Aid and Emergency Procedures

- Ensure that a well-stocked first aid kit is readily available at all times during activities.
- Designate a trained first aider for each activity or event.
- Familiarise all staff and volunteers with emergency procedures, including fire evacuation plans, and ensure that participants are aware of these procedures.

### Promote a Culture of Respect and Inclusivity

- Encourage positive and respectful interactions between all individuals using Council facilities.
- Address inappropriate behaviour or language immediately and in accordance with the Council's code of conduct.

By implementing these practices, the Council aims to create a safe and welcoming environment that prioritises the welfare of all individuals, particularly those who are vulnerable.

## **10. Training and Recruitment**

Croxley Green Parish Council take it responsibility to ensure that all staff, volunteers, and contractors have the necessary skills, knowledge, and understanding to uphold the safeguarding principles outlined in this policy. Effective recruitment and ongoing training are critical in establishing a safe environment for vulnerable individuals. All records and updated check follow recommended practice by Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and Hertfordshire's Safeguarding Adults Board.

### **Recruitment Practices**

Croxley Green Parish Council is committed to ensuring that all individuals working with vulnerable people are appropriately vetted to ensure their suitability. The following recruitment procedures will be adhered to:

#### **Pre-Employment Checks**

- All prospective employees, volunteers, and contractors must undergo a comprehensive background check, including an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check where applicable.
- References will be requested from previous employers, with particular emphasis on safeguarding-related matters.
- Applicants will be required to disclose any criminal convictions, particularly those related to abuse or violence, that could affect their suitability to work with vulnerable individuals.

#### **Safer Recruitment Process**

- All job descriptions and person specifications will include clear safeguarding responsibilities, ensuring that candidates are aware of their obligations to protect vulnerable individuals.
- During the interview process, candidates will be assessed on their understanding of safeguarding, their ability to handle safeguarding concerns, and their ethical approach to working with vulnerable individuals.
- At least one panel member in every recruitment process will have safeguarding expertise to ensure proper evaluation of candidates.

## **Induction and Safeguarding Awareness**

- All new staff, volunteers, and contractors will undergo a safeguarding induction that covers the organisation's Safeguarding Policy, procedures for reporting concerns, and the roles and responsibilities associated with safeguarding.
- The induction will ensure that new personnel understand the importance of safeguarding and are equipped to act in accordance with the policy from the outset.

## **Training**

Ongoing safeguarding training is essential to maintain high standards of care and protection for vulnerable individuals. The following training provisions will be made:

### **Initial Training**

All new employees, volunteers, and contractors will receive mandatory safeguarding training as part of their induction. This training will include, but not be limited to:

- Recognising signs of abuse, neglect, and exploitation
- Reporting concerns and following safeguarding procedures
- Understanding the roles and responsibilities in safeguarding
- Handling disclosures of abuse in a safe and appropriate manner

### **Ongoing Training and Refresher Courses**

- Safeguarding training will be provided regularly, with mandatory refresher courses for all staff at least annually.
- Training will include updates on new legislation, best practices, and emerging issues in safeguarding, ensuring that all personnel remain current in their knowledge and responsibilities.
- Additional specialised training will be available based on the specific roles and needs of staff (e.g., child protection, adult safeguarding, domestic violence, mental health awareness).

### **Evaluation and Monitoring**

- The effectiveness of safeguarding training will be evaluated through feedback from staff and monitoring of how well safeguarding procedures are implemented in practice.
- The safeguarding lead will review training records annually to ensure all staff have completed the required training and that it remains up-to-date.
- Regular audits will be conducted to assess the overall impact of training and recruitment practices in safeguarding and to identify areas for improvement.



The recruitment and training processes outlined in this section ensure that all staff are well-equipped to safeguard vulnerable individuals and to create a culture of protection and respect within the organisation. By investing in rigorous recruitment practices and continuous training, we uphold our commitment to safeguarding and ensure that everyone within our care is supported and protected.

## **11. Use of Facilities by Third Parties**

The Parish Council is committed to ensuring that all activities taking place on its premises are conducted in a safe and secure environment. Third-party organisations or individuals using Council facilities must adhere to the following safeguarding requirements:

### **Compliance with Safeguarding Policies**

- All third parties must comply with the Parish Council's safeguarding policy or demonstrate that they have their own robust safeguarding policies in place.
- Copies of safeguarding policies must be provided to the Parish Council upon request.

### **Responsibilities of Third-Party Users**

- Third-party users are responsible for ensuring the safety and well-being of all individuals, particularly children, young people, and vulnerable adults, during their activities.
- Appropriate supervision must be in place at all times, with adequate adult-to-child ratios and staff or volunteers who have undergone relevant safeguarding checks, such as enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

### **Safeguarding Training**

- All third-party staff, volunteers, or activity leaders must have received safeguarding training appropriate to their role.
- Evidence of training completion may be requested by the Parish Council.

### **Incident Reporting**

- Any safeguarding concerns or incidents that occur on Council premises must be reported to the Parish Council and the appropriate safeguarding authority immediately.
- Third parties must provide a written report of any incidents and outline the actions taken in response.

### **Risk Assessments**

- Third parties must conduct and provide a risk assessment for their activities, identifying potential risks and outlining measures to mitigate them.
- Risk assessments must be submitted to the Parish Council for review prior to the activity taking place.

### **Photography and Media Consent**

- Written consent must be obtained from parents, guardians, or individuals (if appropriate) before taking photographs or videos during activities.
- Images and recordings must be stored and used in compliance with data protection regulations.

### **Insurance and Legal Compliance**

- Third parties must have appropriate public liability insurance and ensure their activities comply with relevant legislation and safeguarding regulations. Proof of insurance must be provided upon request.

### **Termination of Use**

- The Parish Council reserves the right to terminate the use of its facilities if third-party users fail to comply with safeguarding requirements or if their actions put individuals at risk.

By adhering to these safeguarding requirements, third parties contribute to creating a safe, secure, and supportive environment for all users of Parish Council facilities.

## **12. Information Sharing and Confidentiality**

The Parish Council recognises that effective safeguarding depends on the appropriate sharing of information. Information sharing must balance the need to protect individuals with respect for confidentiality and compliance with data protection regulations.

### **Principles of Information Sharing**

When sharing safeguarding information, the Parish Council will adhere to the following principles:

- **Necessity and Proportionality**
  - Information will only be shared when it is necessary to protect a child, young person, or vulnerable adult from harm or abuse.
  - The information shared will be proportionate to the level of risk and the need for action.

- **Lawfulness**

Information sharing will comply with relevant legislation, including:

- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Human Rights Act 1998

The Council will ensure that information is shared lawfully and in line with statutory safeguarding duties.

- **Transparency**

- Wherever possible, individuals will be informed about how their information is used, stored, and shared.
- In situations where informing an individual may increase the risk of harm, the Council may act without prior notification, in line with safeguarding best practices.

- **Accountability**

- The Council will keep clear records of any information shared, including the decision-making process and the parties involved.

### **When Information May Be Shared**

The Parish Council will share safeguarding information:

- To prevent significant harm to a child, young person, or vulnerable adult.
- To protect the public from harm or crime.
- When required by law or court order.
- With statutory agencies, such as social services, the police, or local safeguarding boards, when concerns are raised.

### **Confidentiality**

The Parish Council is committed to maintaining confidentiality wherever possible. However, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if:

- There is a safeguarding concern that requires reporting to statutory agencies.
- Sharing information is necessary to prevent harm to an individual or others.

### **Information Storage and Security**

- All safeguarding records will be stored securely, with access restricted to authorised personnel only.

- Records will be retained and disposed of in line with the Council's data protection and record retention policies.

### **Guidance for Employees, Councillors, and Volunteers**

- The Parish Council cannot promise absolute confidentiality when a safeguarding concern is raised, namely when the information may need to be shared with relevant authorities to ensure safety.
- Must report safeguarding concerns immediately to the Parish Council's designated safeguarding officer.
- Only share information with authorised parties on a need-to-know basis.

By following these guidelines, the Parish Council ensures that information is shared responsibly and effectively, contributing to the safety and well-being of children, young people, and vulnerable adults while respecting individuals' rights to privacy.

## **13. Whistleblowing**

The Parish Council is committed to fostering an open and supportive environment where employees, councillors, volunteers, and members of the public feel confident in raising concerns about safeguarding or other misconduct without fear of reprisal. Whistleblowing plays a vital role in safeguarding children, young people, and vulnerable adults by ensuring concerns are reported and addressed promptly.

### **What is Whistleblowing?**

Whistleblowing is the act of reporting concerns about wrongdoing, malpractice, or the risk of harm within the Parish Council or in relation to activities involving its services or facilities. This includes concerns about:

- The safety and well-being of children, young people, or vulnerable adults.
- Failure to comply with safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Criminal activities, such as abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- Mismanagement or misconduct that puts individuals at risk.

### **Who Can Raise a Concern?**

Concerns can be raised by:

- Employees, councillors, and volunteers.
- Contractors or third-party users of Parish Council facilities.
- Members of the public.

## **How to Raise a Concern**

### **Internal Reporting**

Concerns should be reported to the Parish Council's designated safeguarding officer (DSO) in the first instance.

If the concern involves the DSO or there is a conflict of interest, the concern should be reported to the Chair of the Parish Council.

### **External Reporting**

If the concern cannot be addressed internally or if it involves serious misconduct, whistleblowers can contact external agencies, including:

- Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP)
- Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (HSAB)
- The police or other statutory agencies in emergencies.

### **Protection for Whistleblowers**

- Whistleblowers are protected under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which ensures that individuals raising concerns in good faith are safeguarded against retaliation or unfair treatment.
- The Parish Council will not tolerate harassment, victimisation, or discrimination against whistleblowers and will take disciplinary action against anyone who engages in such behaviour.

### **Confidentiality**

- The Parish Council will treat all whistleblowing concerns with the utmost confidentiality.
- The identity of the whistleblower will not be disclosed without their consent unless required by law or to protect others from harm.

### **Follow-Up and Feedback**

- All concerns raised through whistleblowing will be taken seriously and investigated promptly.
- The whistleblower will be informed of the outcome of the investigation, where appropriate, while respecting confidentiality and data protection laws.

By providing a clear and supportive whistleblowing process, the Parish Council ensures that safeguarding concerns are identified and addressed effectively, contributing to a culture of transparency and accountability.

## 14. Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Clear guidance is to be given to all relevant persons on how to report safeguarding concerns, ensuring that all staff, volunteers, and contractors know how to act swiftly and appropriately when they suspect or are informed of potential harm to a vulnerable individual.

The reporting process follows the principles of the 5 R's to ensure consistency, clarity, and proper action.

### The 5 R's of Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

When a safeguarding concern arises, it is essential that the following steps are followed:

#### Recognise

- Be alert to the signs of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. These may include physical, emotional, or behavioural indicators, or changes in a person's demeanour or health. It is important to trust your instincts and recognise when something feels wrong, even if you are unsure of the exact nature of the concern.

#### Respond

- If an individual discloses abuse or you suspect abuse, respond calmly and with care. Reassure the individual that they are being taken seriously, and that their safety is the priority. Avoid probing for details or making judgments; instead, listen attentively and allow them to share what they feel comfortable with.
- Ensure that the person feels supported and safe and make it clear that you will need to pass on the information to the appropriate authorities to protect them.

#### Record

Record all information regarding the concern accurately, objectively, and as soon as possible after the disclosure or observation. Ensure that your record includes:

- The date, time, and location of the incident or concern
- Details of the disclosure or observation, including what was said or what you witnessed
- Any actions you took in response
- Your name and position, and the name of the person raising the concern
- These records should be factual and not include any opinions or assumptions. Keep the information confidential and stored securely.

## Report

Immediately report the concern to the appropriate safeguarding contact. The following contacts are available for reporting safeguarding concerns:

### Parish Council Safeguarding Lead

For concerns involving children or vulnerable adults, you should report the concern to the Croxley Green Parish Council Safeguarding Lead. contacted using the following details:

The Parish Clerk - -----

Website: [Croxleygreen-pc.gov.uk](http://Croxleygreen-pc.gov.uk)

Phone: 01923 710250 (during office hours) or the out of hours service on -----

Email: [clerk@croxleygreen-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@croxleygreen-pc.gov.uk)

**Safeguarding concerns must be reported promptly to the appropriate safeguarding authority. Depending on the nature of the concern (whether it involves a child or an adult), the following contact details should be used:**

### For Concerns Involving Children

Report any safeguarding concerns regarding children to the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP). The team can be contacted as follows:

Website: [Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership](http://Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership)

Phone: 0300 123 4043 (Hertfordshire Children's Services)

Email: [hsab@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:hsab@hertfordshire.gov.uk) for general inquiries

### For Concerns Involving Adults

Report any safeguarding concerns regarding vulnerable adults to the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (HSAB). The team can be contacted as follows:

Website: [Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board](http://Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board)

Phone: 0300 123 4042 (Hertfordshire Adult Services)

Email: [adults@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:adults@hertfordshire.gov.uk) for concerns about adults at risk

### Emergency Services

In cases where immediate protection is required, contact emergency services immediately by calling 999.

**For Concerns involving a potential victim of Modern slavery or Human Trafficking**

[Modern Slavery Helpline](tel:08000121700): 08000121700

**For concerns involving a child or adult at risk of radicalisation**

Email: [prevent@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:prevent@hertfordshire.gov.uk) for advice

Call: 0800 789 321 (anti-terrorist hotline)

Or contact Crime Stoppers on 0900 555111.

**For concerns involving mental health referrals**

Call [Single Point Access](tel:08006444101) on: 0800 6444 101

## **Refer**

Where appropriate, it is the responsibility for the designated safeguarding lead to refer the concern to the relevant safeguarding authorities or professionals for further investigation or intervention. This may include the police, social services, or other relevant agencies. Follow up is to be carried out to ensure that the referral has been made and that appropriate actions are taken.

## **Confidentiality**

While it is important to keep the details of the concern confidential, it is equally important to ensure that the appropriate people are informed to protect the individual. Do not discuss the concern with anyone who is not directly involved in the safeguarding process.

Following the 5 R's—Recognise, Respond, Record, Report, and Refer—ensures that safeguarding concerns are handled consistently and effectively. Reporting any concern promptly is vital in protecting vulnerable individuals from harm and ensuring that they receive the necessary support and intervention. Always follow the reporting channels outlined above and act in the best interest of those at risk.



## 15. Monitoring and Review

The Parish Council is committed to ensuring its safeguarding policy and procedures remain effective, up-to-date, and aligned with best practices. Regular monitoring and review of safeguarding practices are essential to maintaining a safe and supportive environment for children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

### Purpose of Monitoring and Review

The monitoring and review process aims to:

- Ensure the safeguarding policy is implemented effectively.
- Identify and address any gaps or weaknesses in safeguarding practices.
- Respond to changes in legislation, guidance, or local safeguarding requirements.
- Foster a culture of continuous improvement in safeguarding.

### Responsibilities

- The designated safeguarding officer (DSO) will oversee the monitoring and review process, ensuring compliance with safeguarding policies and procedures.
- The Parish Council will review safeguarding practices in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, including employees, councillors, volunteers, and external agencies where appropriate.

### Monitoring Activities

To monitor safeguarding effectively, the Parish Council will:

- **Review Incident Reports:** Regularly review safeguarding concerns and incidents to identify trends, risks, or areas for improvement.
- **Evaluate Training Compliance:** Ensure all employees, councillors, and volunteers complete safeguarding training and maintain up-to-date knowledge.
- **Audit Procedures:** Conduct periodic audits of safeguarding procedures to ensure they are followed consistently and effectively.
- **Engage Stakeholders:** Seek feedback from employees, service users, and third parties to assess the safeguarding environment and address concerns.

### Review Schedule

- The safeguarding policy will be reviewed every 3 years to ensure it reflects current legislation, guidance, and best practices.
- Interim reviews may be conducted if significant changes occur, such as updates to safeguarding laws, the introduction of new activities, or feedback indicating a need for improvement.

### **Updating the Policy**

- Any changes to the safeguarding policy will be approved by the Parish Council.
- Updated policies will be communicated to all employees, councillors, volunteers, and third-party users of Council facilities.

### **Reporting**

- Findings from the monitoring and review process will be documented and reported to the Parish Council.
- Recommendations for improvement will be implemented promptly, with progress monitored by the DSO.

By committing to regular monitoring and review, the Parish Council ensures that safeguarding remains a priority, fostering a culture of accountability and continuous improvement to protect all individuals within its community.

## **CHECKLIST DRAFT**

### **Appendices**

The following appendices provide essential documents, templates, and references to support the implementation of this safeguarding policy. These documents are designed to ensure compliance with safeguarding standards and assist in maintaining a safe environment for all.

#### **Appendix 1: Safeguarding Contacts**

- Contact details for the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).
- Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP)
- Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (HSAB)
- Emergency contacts (e.g., Police, NHS, Local Authority Designated Officer [LADO]).

#### **Appendix 2: Reporting Templates**

- Safeguarding Incident Report Form.
- Whistleblowing Report Form.
- Consent Form for Photography and Media.

#### **Appendix 3: Policies and Procedures**

- Code of Conduct for Employees, Councillors, and Volunteers.
- Data Protection Policy and Guidelines for Handling Confidential Information.
- Health and Safety Policy.

#### **Appendix 4: Training and Induction Materials**

- Safeguarding Training Requirements Checklist.
- Induction Pack for New Staff and Volunteers (including safeguarding roles and responsibilities).

#### **Appendix 5: Risk Assessment Templates**

- Activity Risk Assessment Template (specific to safeguarding considerations).
- Facility Usage Risk Assessment Template.

#### **Appendix 6: Relevant Legislation and Guidance**

- Care Act 2014.
- Children Act 1989 and 2004.
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (for whistleblowing).

#### **Appendix 7: External Resources**

- Links to key safeguarding resources and guidance, including:
- NSPCC safeguarding advice.
- Government safeguarding guidelines.
- Local safeguarding boards' resources and toolkits.

**Appendix 8: Monitoring and Review Tools**

- Safeguarding Policy Review Checklist.
- Incident Monitoring and Analysis Template.

**Appendix 9: First Aid and Emergency Procedures**

- Emergency Contact Sheet.
- Location of First Aid Kits and Procedures.

These appendices provide the necessary resources and tools to support the Parish Council in fulfilling its safeguarding responsibilities effectively and comprehensively.