

DOWNTON
PARISH COUNCIL



Safeguarding Policy

Adopted on 13th September 2021 Minute ?21

This policy will enable Downton Parish Council to demonstrate its commitment to keeping safe both adults who may be at risk and children and young people in the community.

Policy Statement

Downton Parish Council is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of children and adults at risk by protecting them from physical, sexual, emotional harm and neglect. The policy is in place in order for councillors, officers and volunteers to work to prevent abuse and to know what to do should a concern arise during their work. They will enable Downton Parish Council to:

- Promote good practice and work in a way which can prevent harm and abuse occurring.
- Ensure that any allegations of abuse or suspicions are dealt with appropriately and the person experiencing the abuse is supported.

Policy Objective:

- To ensure that where possible all facilities, events and activities organised by or on behalf of the Parish Council are designed and maintained to reduce the risk to vulnerable persons.
- To promote the general welfare, health and development of children by being aware of vulnerable persons' protection issues and to be able to respond where appropriate as a local government organisation.
- To develop procedures in recording and responding to accidents and complaints and to alleged or suspected incidents of abuse and neglect.
- As the Parish Council does not directly provide care or supervision services to vulnerable persons, it expects all vulnerable persons using its facilities to do so with the consent and the necessary supervision of a parent, carer or other responsible adult.

Definitions

Child

"Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday". *Children Act 1989*.

Adults at Risk

The adult safeguarding duties under the *Care Act 2014* apply to an adult, aged 18 or over, who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and;
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

Vulnerable Person – either a child or an Adult at Risk

Types of Abuse

There are four main types of abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. It is important to note that self-neglect is part of neglect. Adults may also experience financial abuse.

Responsibilities

The Clerk is the Parish Council's appointed Safeguarding Officer and their responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that before any Parish Council organised event with vulnerable persons, participants are briefed appropriately.
- Ensuring that members, officers and volunteers are aware of the risk they may face in certain circumstances whilst carrying out their duties.
- Ensuring that whilst Council members, officers and volunteers are unlikely to be involved with vulnerable persons during the performance of their duties, they are mindful of the risks they face.
- Ensure that facilities which are the responsibility of the Parish Council are to be inspected on a regular basis and at least twice annually by a representative of the Playground Inspection Company or similar organisation (with a specific focus on risks to vulnerable persons).
- Decisions on whether any person should be DBS checked will be made by the Council or the Chairman after consultation with the Clerk following a risk assessment.
- In the event of a contractor, working directly for the Parish Council, being deemed to be working in any area where vulnerable persons may be at risk, then the Clerk will ask that contractor to provide their Safeguarding Policy.
- Providing all Councillors with access to this Safeguarding Policy.

Councillors, Officers and volunteers are to:

- Read the Council's Safeguarding Policy and following its guidance.
- Take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a vulnerable person.
- Ensure that any organisation which may make contact with vulnerable persons shall be required to show proof of its own appropriate Safeguarding Policy before being allowed to participate in the use of any council facilities or managed events/activities.
- Keep records of any incidents or allegations a person may make to any councillor, officer or volunteer using the Incident Book.
- Be proactive in providing a safe environment for vulnerable persons who are involved in Parish Council activities.
- Adhere to the 'List of Recommended Behaviour' namely:
 - i. A minimum of two adults present when supervising vulnerable persons.
 - ii. Not to play physical contact games.
 - iii. Adults to wear appropriate clothing at all times.
 - iv. Ensure that accidents are recorded in the Incident book (held by the Clerk).
 - v. Never do anything of a personal nature for a vulnerable person.

Procedures

Responding to Abuse or an Allegation

- Reassure the person concerned.
- Listen to what they are saying.
- Remain calm and do not show shock or disbelief.

- Tell them that the information will be treated seriously.
- Ask questions to ensure you gather the full facts but do not start to investigate or ask detailed probing questions.
- Don't promise to keep it a secret.
- Tell the vulnerable person what you are going to do next to get help to keep him/her safe.
- Comply with the Parish Council's Data Protection Policy.

Recording an Allegation

- Use the vulnerable person's words where possible.
- Record what they are saying.
- Record what you have been told/witnessed as soon as possible using the Incident book

Reporting an Allegation

- If an allegation is made, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Parish Clerk and the Chair of the Council.
- The Parish Council shall immediately refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the appropriate organisation following guidance received from the Wiltshire Council Integrated Front Door (IFD) service on 0300 4560108, 8.45am-5pm, Monday-Thursday and 8.45am-4pm Friday; Out of Hours 0300 456 0100 and the Wiltshire Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership (SVPP) <https://www.wiltshirescb.org.uk/>
- If there is immediate danger, the police or emergency services should be called on 999.

Whistleblowing

All Councillors, officers and volunteers should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues and appropriate advice can be sought from the Wiltshire Council Integrated Front Door (IFD) service and the Wiltshire Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership (SVPP).