

Friends of Ridge Wood Safeguarding Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy

The Friends of Ridge Wood provide the following activities:

- Practical woodland workdays
- Public events with a focus on nature and conservation
- A forum for those interested in preserving the Ridge Wood local nature reserve, and safeguarding it for the future

Whilst these do not include direct services or support for children, young people and vulnerable adults, Friends of Ridge Wood recognises that safeguarding those members of society is everyone's business and that all may become vulnerable at many stages in their lives.

The Friends of Ridge Wood are committed therefore to ensure that the Management Committee, volunteers and those who participate in activities run by the organisation have an understanding of Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults and what forms abuse may take and that they know where to raise concerns if abuse is suspected or reported.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing the impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances

(Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013)

Abuse can take various forms:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Neglect
- Sexual

All Friends of Ridge Wood activities with children are run with the parents or carers of the children present. Volunteers and Management Committee members are not permitted at any time to be alone with children.

All Friends of Ridge Wood volunteers and Management Committee members and those who participate in activities run by the organisation are inducted into this policy

and procedure and have an understanding of what forms abuse can take and how to report any concerns.

The Friends of Ridge Wood will ensure all who are arranging events on their behalf are made aware of this policy.

Definition of Vulnerable Adults

Someone '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 protect themselves from harm'

(No Secrets: Department of Health, March 2000)

This means that not all adults are vulnerable, but some may be vulnerable at times and others will be vulnerable all the time. It is important to talk to the appropriate people (in South Gloucestershire this is the Adult Customer Service Desk in the Children, Adult and Health Department of the Council).

Definition of Abuse

"Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons"

(No Secrets: Department of Health, March 2000)

Abuse includes:

- physical abuse, hitting, slapping, punching, burning
- sexual abuse, rape, indecent assault, inappropriate touching
- emotional abuse, belittling, name calling,
- financial or material abuse, stealing, selling assets
- neglect and acts of omission, leaving in soiled clothes, failing to feed properly
- discriminatory abuse (including racist, sexist, based on a person's disability and other forms of harassment)
- institutional

Abuse may be carried out deliberately or unknowingly. Abuse may be a single act or repeated acts.

People may make the choice to remain in abusive situations and if they have the mental capacity to make that decision that may be appropriate, however the decision about mental capacity is a complex one and it is important that the correct assessment of capacity is undertaken within the safeguarding process.

Advice and information

South Gloucestershire Council Customer Service Desk Adult Care Team can be accessed for advice or information, contact 01454 868007

Reporting Concerns

If a crime may have been or is being committed contact the Police on 101 or 999

Volunteers and Management Committee members should report any concern that they have about a child or vulnerable adult to the Chair of the Management Committee unless the concern is about the Chair where it should be reported to the Vice Chair who will contact the SGC Team below.

Members of the public can follow the instructions below:

Children and Young people.

Contact South Gloucestershire Council's First Point Team on 01454 866000 or the Emergency Duty Team (out of hours and weekends) on 01454 615165.

Vulnerable Adults

To raise a concern, contact South Gloucestershire Council's Customer Adult Care Team service desk on 01454 868007.

Where possible, agreement should be obtained from the adult before sharing personal information with third parties.

Record Keeping

If a concern is raised this should be documented and sent through to the Chair of the Friends of Ridge Wood.

Managing allegations against group members or volunteers

Any allegation will be fully investigated and the Friends of Ridge Wood will support group members / volunteers during this process. It is important that allegations are thoroughly investigated through the Safeguarding process so that allegations can be either proved or disproved for the protection of the child(ren), vulnerable adult(s) and staff.

Any allegation related to staff and/or volunteers working with Children and Young People must be reported to the South Gloucestershire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 01454 868924.

It is important to remember that abuse is defined by the impact on the individual not the intention of the abuser; in other words, if someone does not have their needs cared for this can be just as damaging whether it is done deliberately or because a carer can no longer manage. Obviously the way of then supporting the situation would be likely to be different.

People who behave abusively come from all backgrounds and walks of life. They may be doctors, nurses, social workers, advocates, staff members, volunteers or others in a position of trust. They may also be relatives, friends, neighbours or people who use the same services as the person experiencing abuse.

Review of This Policy

The Friends of Ridge Wood will review this policy annually.

Adopted on 5th October 2015