

HAMPSHIRE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY SAFEGUARDING POLICY



Introduction:

Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

For the purposes of this policy:

- A person under the age of 18 is considered a 'child'. Whilst we do not offer membership to persons under the age of 18 years, they may well attend meetings and open days or visit our office or our event stand at family history fairs, when accompanying an adult, and are thus covered by this policy.
- A 'vulnerable adult' may be elderly, frail, have mental health issues, a physical disability or learning difficulties.

Our Policy Statement:

The Society recognises that all persons, but especially children and vulnerable adults, irrespective of their age, race, religion, belief, sex, sexual gender identity or social status, have a right to protection from discrimination and abuse.

The Society believes that all people should be able, and where necessary enabled, to live in an environment which is safe. The Society will not tolerate any exploitative or abusive behaviour.

The Society is committed to safeguarding our Volunteers, Members and persons visiting or taking part in HGS activities, from:

- damage to health
- physical, sexual, or emotional harm
- neglect, bullying or discrimination

The Society aims to ensure good practice in order to minimise situations, where an individual who comes into contact with the Society can be put at risk, and to follow a course of action should it become necessary.

Good Practice:

- HGS Officers and Trustees, Group Organisers, other Post-holders and Volunteers should read, understand and abide by this policy
- All members should be advised, via our website and quarterly journal, that such a policy exists
- The policy will be made available on our website or a hard copy may be requested

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- The design and implementation of our activities must mitigate against any harm or discomfort being caused to others
- Young persons may attend meetings or visit our premises but only in the company of a parent or adult guardian
- Our volunteers must have regard for the difficulties that some people experience and treat them accordingly
- All persons must be treated with dignity and respect
- Reports of safeguarding concerns must be followed up promptly and according to due process [see Procedures, below]

Minimising Risk:

- Volunteers and Members who are unwell [e.g. suffering from a contagion or infection] should follow public health guidance and consider the welfare of others before attending meetings or visiting the office. This may require the wearing of masks, for instance, as a sign of courtesy and demonstration that other people's health is being considered
- Any visiting child or vulnerable adult must not be left, in isolation, with just one volunteer
- Children or vulnerable adults should never be left completely alone
- Children and vulnerable adults should always be accompanied by their responsible adult
- There must be no physical contact with visitors
- All Society members should be helpful, understanding and inclusive
- The Society's webmaster will regularly monitor our website for signs of inappropriate content
- Our social media outlets will be monitored by their administrators for signs of inappropriate content

Procedures:

The Society recognises that abuse and neglect can be perpetrated by Members, Volunteers, visitors or other users of our services. Where abuse or neglect is suspected, the Society will aim to respond to the situation in a way which is caring, effective and enabling.


If an HGS member becomes aware of any safeguarding issue, they should:

- Not ignore it!
- Ensure that the safety and comfort of the person at risk is secured as a first priority
- Record the details of the incident on the Safeguarding Report Form [attached]
- As a matter of urgency, forward the report form to the Chairman, or Vice-Chair, who will advise the Executive Committee
- Maintain confidentiality at all times – information should be shared, only with the above, on a 'need to know' basis

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The Committee should then:

- Satisfy themselves that the person at risk is safe, and that the alleged perpetrator, if known, does not pose a threat to any other person at risk
- Decide on a course of action, which may require the support of Hampshire County Council <https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth> or even involve the police.
- Continue to maintain confidentiality

	Prepared by:	Approved by:
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Position:	VICE - CHAIR	Chairman
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