

Code of Conduct Advice Note - Safeguarding (Draft 3Sept18)(COUNCIL 20/11/18-2)

1. Background Statement

The Society, which organises lectures and events to enhance our understanding of the natural world and scientific enquiry, is founded on trust and mutual respect. Its intention is to improve the intellectual and emotional well-being of both individuals and the community.

The Society does not provide any ‘service’, nor does it undertake regulated work with ‘vulnerable beneficiaries’⁽¹⁾ as defined in the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007. No interviews or checks, such as those undertaken by the Disclosure and Barring Service, are carried out as The Society has no employees or volunteers, only members. Consequently, the risk of harm being inflicted, within the terms of The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) published guidance, is considered to be low and a formal procedural policy not required.⁽¹⁾ However, the Trustees of the Society recognise that risk needs to be regularly reviewed and procedures modified accordingly if circumstances change.

The PSNS Council is responsible for upholding and maintaining this safeguarding advice. It will be reviewed annually by Council.

2. Code of Conduct

The Society welcomes members and guests from all backgrounds and recognises the need to keep all participants, including **children and protected adults**⁽²⁾ safe from harm.

It is the duty of all Members to be aware that adults (16 years and over) as well as children (18 years and under) may be at risk of harm arising from abuse or neglect by others, and due to their vulnerability arising from:

- mental illness,
- age,
- frailty or physical weakness,
- physical or learning disability,
- visual or hearing impairment

Harm may be physical, emotional, racial, cultural, sexual, financial or caused by neglect. Ideally, children and vulnerable adults will be accompanied to Society events by a responsible, informed and trusted friend or family member. However, this may not always be the case and Members, particularly PSNS Council and Section Committee Members, should ensure that the well-being of new and existing members and visitors is safeguarded.

Members should be cautious when assessing whether an adult is ‘vulnerable’ -

assumptions and questions may be well intentioned but patronising, invasive and insulting.

All members must understand that bullying and all forms of intimidation are unacceptable, whether face to face or via social networking etc.

3. Measures to Protect

- Annual membership enrolment forms will include a note⁽³⁾ covering data privacy, health and safety and safeguarding matters.
- Children and known 'protected adults' should be accompanied to Society events by a responsible, informed and trusted friend or family member.
- Assessment of 'risk to vulnerable participants' will be included as part of the Society's Health and Safety Risk Assessment procedures.
- Members will be made aware that societies and clubs, particularly with particular age demographics, can become 'targets' for persons wishing to exploit vulnerable persons.
- All members have a duty to report concerns, and to do so confidentially, as set out 4.1 below.

The President, Vice President, and Secretary of PSNS have a particular further duty to report as 4.2 below.

4. Reporting Concerns

No one in the Society is trained in dealing with vulnerable persons, abuse or intimidation, and it is inappropriate to ask them to pass judgement. Therefore, all concerns regarding these matters should be **confidentially** reported as follows:

4.1 If Members see and hear things that give concern about an adult's or child's welfare and safety, particularly during Society activities and events, they must report their concerns by contacting a 'qualified person' in confidence, either at Perth and Kinross Council on 0345 301 1120 (which is available 24 hours a day), or a social worker, home care worker, nurse, doctor or police officer. These persons are trained to deal with the matter appropriately and confidentially.

N.B. In order to maintain confidentiality, the member should avoid discussing their concerns with others. The member should keep a confidential record of his/her actions.

4.2 If any person finds themselves subjected to abuse or intimidation they should approach PKVAC. If they feel they are unable to do this, and can explain why, they may ask the President, or the Vice President, or the Secretary of PSNS to act on their behalf and they will act, using neither judgement nor personal or collective discretion regarding the appropriateness of doing so, in complete confidence and in accordance with 4.1 above.

5. PSNS Action

A Council or other member of the Society, upon being approached by 'the qualified person', will act thereafter in strict accordance with their recommendations whilst keeping a full and confidential record of proceedings.

Footnotes:

⁽¹⁾PKAVS Opinion

On Thu, 30 Aug 2018 11:14 Holly.Bryon-Staples, <Holly.Bryon-Staples@pkavs.org.uk> wrote:

Hi John,

Unless you are involved in work that relates to specific legislative requirements, for example in the care sector, there is nothing that explicitly requires you to 'have a policy'. The legislation that applies to you is Scottish charity law which is explicit about how Trustees are responsible for the charity's activities and for making decisions in the best interest of the charity, but beyond that is a grey area and allows you as Trustees to decide what that means logistically for your specific organisation. Without knowing the ins and outs of your work it could be the processes that you mention below. Other examples might be to have a code of conduct that everyone is aware of, considering when you need to complete risk assessments, being clear about reporting procedures for raising concerns etc.

You might find it helpful to have a [read of this post](#), which is how OSCR asked Trustees to consider 'safeguarding' at their next meeting. They also released [this guidance](#) specifically to support the process. The thing to remember is that you need to do what is best for your charity, and these pieces of communication are mainly written to support charities whose work is based around vulnerable people, so I don't mean to give emphasis to things that are not relevant to your work, but I think they're both helpful in terms of defining what to consider.

Holly

Holly Bryon-Staples

Development Officer

Third Sector Interface for Perth & Kinross

⁽²⁾Some Definitions:

'.....**vulnerable beneficiaries**' means children and vulnerable (or protected) adults.A **child** is anyone under 18 years of age.....A **vulnerable adult** is anyone over 16 years of age who is unable to safeguard themselves, their property and their rights.....' *Safeguarding Guidance: Keeping vulnerable beneficiaries safe Interim Guidance - May 2018 Scottish Charity Regulator*

Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 '.....Section 94 defines a protected adult for the purposes of the Act'.

'A **protected adult** is defined as an individual aged 16 or over who is provided with (and thus receives) a type of care, support, or welfare service as set out in this section.....'

Safeguarding Guidance: Keeping vulnerable beneficiaries safe Interim Guidance - May 2018 Scottish Charity Regulator

⁽³⁾ALL MEMBERS ADVISED ANNUALLY UPON ENROLMENT THAT ADVICE NOTE IS AVAILABLE ON PSNS WEBSITE