



SAFEGUARDING POLICY – PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

This document forms part of the Letchworth Arts and Leisure Group's (LALG) Safeguarding policy and should be read in conjunction with the policy.

This document includes:

- Recruitment practices around safeguarding
- Ground rules and ways for working regarding safeguarding of people at risk
- Procedures for raising safeguarding concerns and incidents of abuse
- Procedures for dealing with concerns and incident of abuse

Recruitment practices around safeguarding

If an existing or potential new Member or volunteer will be working, as part of any LALG activity or event, with people at risk who will not be accompanied by a responsible adult, they will be required to have a check processed by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) before that work is undertaken. The DBS includes a criminal record check. The check may also include information held on the DBS children's and adults' barred lists, alongside any information held by local police forces that is considered to be relevant to the application. When a check has been processed by the DBS and completed, the applicant will receive a DBS certificate.

The level of DBS check required will be in line with DBS rules regarding regulated activity. The results of any individual's check will be stored and used confidentially and in line with LALG's Equality policy.

Ground rules and ways for working regarding safeguarding of people at risk

When LALG organises an activity or event where it will be responsible for people at risk it will ensure:

- Planning is carried out in line with LALG's Safeguarding policy and procedures.
- The event is attended by an appropriate number of DBS checked adults – this will be a minimum of one but more where practically possible.
- There is a main contact for safeguarding on the day who will be an adult who has been DBS checked.
- The main contact has access to emergency contact details and other relevant details (e.g. information about picking up arrangements for vulnerable people).
- If people at risk of different gender will be taking part in activities adults of different gender will also be in attendance.
- A person at risk is not left alone with just one adult, unless that adult is DBS checked and carrying out regulated activity.

- Two adults (one DBS checked) should be the last to leave a venue once the activity or event has finished and will be responsible for ensuring people at risk get home safely.

Working with partners/guardians

If a person at risk wishes to take part in a LALG activity or event, written permission (by email is acceptable) should be obtained from partners/carers where appropriate, and before the activity or event takes place. Written permission should include emergency contact details and any relevant pick-up arrangements, including permission for another adult to pick up the person at risk after the activity or event has finished.

Procedures for raising safeguarding concerns and incidents of abuse

- If any Member or volunteer witnesses, suspects or is informed of a witnessed or suspected incident of abuse they should immediately report it to the Named Safeguarding Person.
- If the Named Safeguarding Person is not available, or is involved in or connected to the incident of abuse, it should be reported to the Chair or Secretary of the Committee.
- If an individual wishes to report an incident of abuse against themselves they should also report it to the Named Safeguarding Person or the Chair or Secretary of the Committee. If for any reason this is not possible, then they should report it to an individual they trust and ask them to pass on details of the incident to the Named Safeguarding Person or the Chair or Secretary of the Committee.

Procedures for dealing with concerns and incidents of abuse

- The Named Safeguarding Person (or person reported to in their absence) will first make a decision based on the immediacy of the concern and the following two factors:
 1. If the person at risk is in immediate danger or needs emergency medical attention, they will call the police and/or ambulance service.
 2. If the person at the centre of the allegation is working with a person or persons at risk at the time, the Named Safeguarding Person (or person reported to in their absence) will remove that person, in a sensitive manner, from direct contact with the person or persons at risk as a matter of urgency and then follow the procedures below.
- If none of the above applies the Named Safeguarding Person will:
 - Make a note of the concerns reported to them.
 - Discuss with the Chair of the Committee, or the Secretary or another Officer of the Committee if raising it with the Chair is inappropriate, how to handle the reported abuse.
- The Chair of the Committee or other Officer will either escalate the matter or instigate an internal investigation depending on the seriousness of the incident.
- The matter will be escalated by:
 - Raising concerns with the police if the incident is serious or a possible criminal offence has been committed.
 - Requesting an assessment by the Local Authority Social Care service about whether a person at risk is in need of protection.

If an incident is escalated the Committee will cooperate fully with the police or Local Authority in dealing with.

If there is any doubt about the seriousness of an incident the Chair or other Officer will report it as a matter of course.

- An internal investigation will be instigated for less serious incidents where it is felt that internal mediation would be appropriate. Where an internal investigation takes place the Chair or other Officer will:
 - Inform all parties involved, including the family/carers of the person reported as being abused, of the incident as soon as possible.
 - Arrange separate meetings with all parties, within 10 days of the reported incident. If this time frame cannot be met for some reason, all the parties will be informed and informed of a revised date.
 - A joint meeting of all parties may be arranged if appropriate and with the agreement of all parties.
 - All parties should be given the opportunity to bring a friend or representative to the meeting.
 - Meetings will be attended by the Named Safeguarding Person and at least one other Committee member, who will be the Committee's representatives.
 - All parties will also be invited to submit a written statement in advance of the meetings.
 - Once the meetings have taken place the Committee's representatives will decide on next steps and communicate them to all parties in writing, normally within 5 days. The decision of the Committee's representatives will be either:
 - A decision or resolution
 - Further investigation, with an agreed process and timetable to work towards a resolution
 - To escalate the incident to the relevant authority
- The Chair or Secretary should also inform LALG's insurers of any reported incidents to protect LALG's position.

Resolution and disciplinary action

- If abuse is found to have taken place any final resolution or decision will be taken in the best interests of the person who has suffered the abuse and those of LALG.
- Any disciplinary action against a Member will be taken in accordance with LALG's constitution and any other agreed procedures.

These procedures and guidelines were amended and then affirmed by the Committee at its meeting on 20 September 2023