



Hampshire & Isle of Wight Amphibian & Reptile Group



Safeguarding Policy and Protocols

The Hampshire & Isle of Wight Amphibian & Reptile Group (hereafter referred to as HIWARG) are a voluntary group committed to the conservation of native amphibians and reptiles and their natural environment by working with a range of Land Managers, organisations and community groups and settings.

Our safeguarding protocols apply equally to our Committee, group members, non-member volunteers and the wider public attending our events, activities and training days. We want all of our members and volunteers including children and vulnerable and protected adults to enjoy their involvement with HIWARG. To engender this we commit to operating safely, with safeguarding as the top priority, and to act and be seen to act appropriately at all times.

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- To set out the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection.
- To protect all of those associated with HIWARG from harm, and provide a safe and welcoming environment for all.
- To protect children and vulnerable and protected adults who participate in activities organised by HIWARG UK from harm.
- This policy applies to anyone involved with HIWARG UK, including our Committee/Panel, members and nonmember volunteers participating in associated activities.

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England. A summary of the key legislation is available from www.nspcc.org.uk/learning.

Supporting documents

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents, including:

- Volunteer working agreement
- Health and Safety documents including the generic risk assessment, lone working procedures, etc

Statement of Rights

- Children and vulnerable and protected adults should never experience abuse of any kind
- HIWARG have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, protected and vulnerable adults, to keep them from harm and to allow them to operate in a safe and protective environment.
- All volunteers have the right to a safe and protective environment

Definitions

The terms “children” or “child” refer to all children and young people up to the age of 18 years. The fact that a child has become sixteen years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is in the armed forces, in hospital, or in prison or a young offender’s institution, does not change their status or their entitlement to services or their protection under the Children Act 1989.

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A vulnerable or protected adult, also sometimes referred to as an “Adult at Risk”, is defined as any person aged 18 years and over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental health issues, learning or physical disability, sensory impairment, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him/herself or unable to protect him/herself against significant harm or serious exploitation.

We recognise that

- the welfare of children and vulnerable and protected adults is paramount.
- all children and vulnerable and protected adults, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, ex-offender status or socioeconomic background have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse and will have a positive, enjoyable and safe experience with HIWARG.
- some children and vulnerable and protected adults are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- working in partnership with children, young people, vulnerable and protected adults, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting welfare.
- all allegations, suspicions of harm or abuse and concerns will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly, fairly and appropriately
- our safeguarding practice reflects our responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and regulatory requirements wherever we operate as a voluntary organisation.

We aim to keep children and vulnerable and protected adults safe by:

- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- appointing a Safeguarding Team with a designated Safeguarding Officer, supported by individuals with experience of working in the education, welfare and prison sectors (ARG UK).
- adopting safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for all members and volunteers.
- providing effective management for members and volunteers through supervision, support and training so that all members and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently.
- recording, storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance.
- making sure that all of our volunteers including children and their families, and vulnerable and protected adults and their carers know where to go for help if they have a concern.
- using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families, and vulnerable and protected adults and carers appropriately.
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against members or volunteers appropriately.
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for children, vulnerable and protected adults, members and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.
- building a safeguarding culture where members and volunteers, children, vulnerable and protected adults their families and carers, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.
- If as a volunteer, participant or HIWARG, you have any concerns about your well-being or safety or if you have concerns about the safety of any child or adult at risk attending a ARG UK or ARG project or concerns about the conduct of ARG UK or ARG staff/volunteers then you should contact our safeguarding team.

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Safeguarding Protocols

The named responsible person for safeguarding duties for HIWARG is **Peter West**, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), supported by **Peter Gillatt**, Chairman and **Sheila Dyason**, Secretary.

All members and volunteers should contact the HIWARG DSL, **Peter West**, with any concerns/queries they have regarding safeguarding adults or children. A log of the concern must be kept and **Angela Julian**, Coordinator/DSL of Amphibian & Reptile Groups of UK (ARG UK), a registered charity (number 1165504) should be notified. If the allegation is about the Designated Safeguarding Lead, seek further assistance from **Angela Julian**.

The designated safeguarding leads are responsible for providing acknowledgement of the referral and feedback to the person raising the original concern. Feedback should be given in a way that will not make the situation worse or breach the Data Protection Act. If the police are involved, they should be consulted prior to giving feedback to the referrer to ensure any criminal investigation is not affected.

HIWARG's Panel and DSL will also ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and up to date. They will ensure a safe environment is promoted for all HIWARG members, volunteers and members of the public working with HIWARG or attending their events.

Contact Details for HIWARG Safeguarding Team

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Peter West Email: pete.west.hiwarg@gmail.com
Chairman	Peter Gillatt Email: chair@hiwarg.org.uk
Secretary	Sheila Dyason Email: sheiladyason2007@yahoo.co.uk

Contact Details for ARG UK Safeguarding Team

Safeguarding Officer	Dr Angela Julian Contact: 07891 633692 Email: angela.julian@arguk.org
Lead Safeguarding Trustee	Nicola Morris Email: nicola.morris@arguk.org
Safeguarding (offenders/ex offenders)	David Willis Email: davewillisbhs@yahoo.co.uk

Other Contact Numbers

Police/Emergency services	999
Police/No immediate risk	101
NSPCC Helpline	0808 800 5000

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Recording and Reporting

HIWARG's DSL will retain any correspondence, notes (preferably written contemporaneously, dated and signed) and any other alleged evidence and will ensure they are kept in a confidential manner and location.

In making a decision whether to refer or not, the designated safeguarding lead should take into account:

- the adult's wishes and preferred outcome
- whether the adult has mental capacity to make an informed decision about their own and others' safety
- the safety or wellbeing of children or other adults with care and support needs
- whether there is a person in a position of trust involved
- whether a crime has been committed

This should inform the decision whether to notify the concern to the following people:

- the police if a crime has been committed;
- family/relatives as appropriate (seek advice from the Police or other relevant agencies);
- ARG UK Safeguarding Officer/Safeguarding Team (in most cases, it is advisable to notify ARG UK

The designated safeguarding lead should keep a record of the reasons for referring the concern or reasons for not referring.

Confidentiality and information sharing

HIWARG expect all members and volunteers to maintain confidentiality at all times. In line with Data Protection law, this information should not be shared with other people or agencies, unless there is sufficiently good reason to do so, such as to aid a criminal investigation. All data sharing activities will only be permitted under HIWARGs Data Protection Policy

It should however be noted that information will be shared with authorities if a person is deemed to be at risk of immediate harm. Sharing the right information, at the right time, with the right people can make all the difference to preventing harm. For further guidance on information sharing and safeguarding see: <https://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults/practice/sharing-information>

This policy statement came into force in **June 2020**

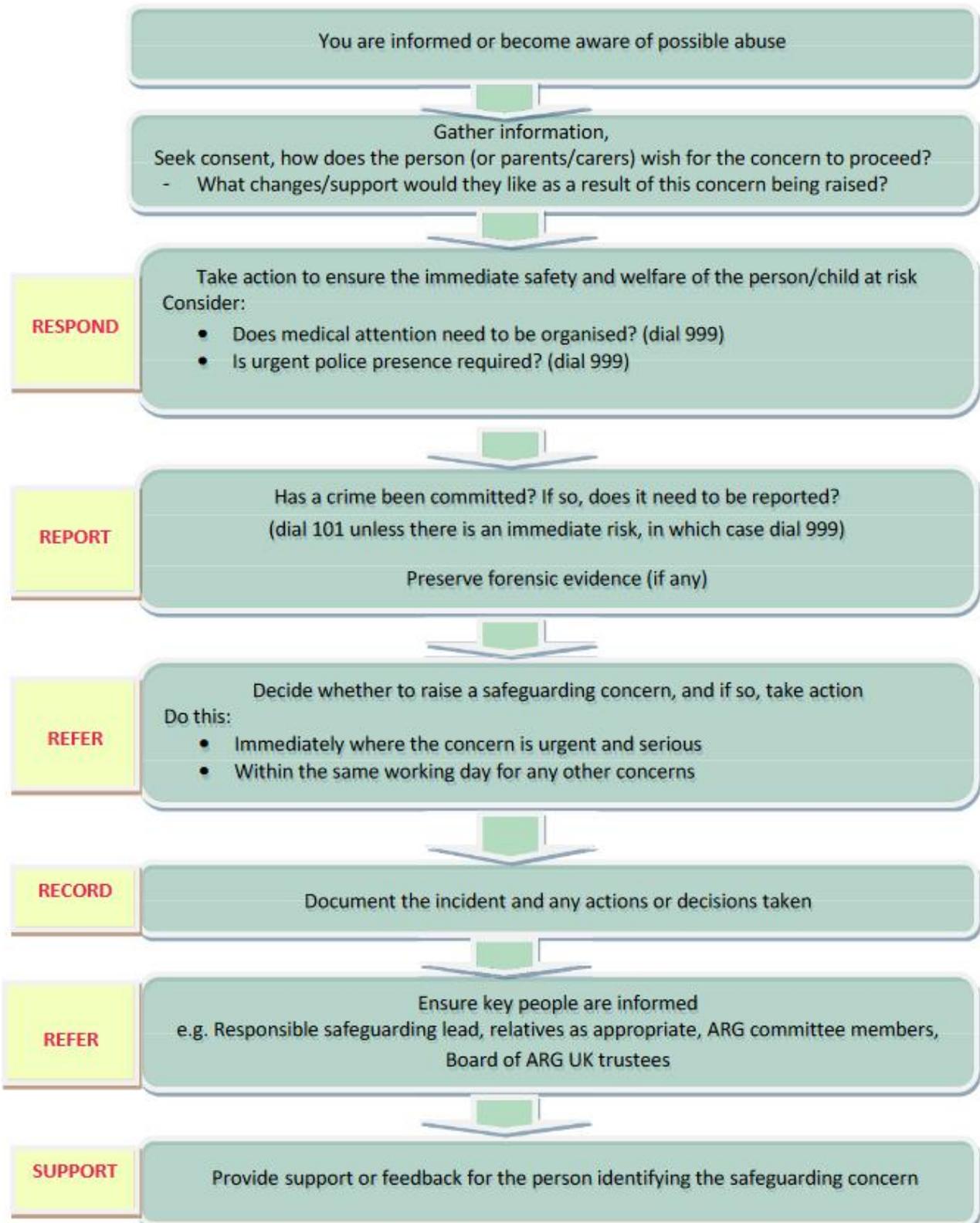
We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice **every two years**.

This policy statement and accompanying procedures were last reviewed in **June 2020**

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What should I do if I am concerned?

Raising a safeguarding concern



NOTE: Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple and may affect one person or more. Members and volunteers should look beyond single incidents to identify patterns of harm. Accurate recording of information will also assist in recognising any patterns.

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