

# The Sanctuary Garden

## Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

### 1. Policy Statement

The Sanctuary Garden is committed to providing a safe, welcoming, and supportive environment for everyone who takes part in our activities. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of all children, young people, and adults at risk who engage with the garden.

We will take all reasonable steps to prevent harm, abuse, or neglect and to respond appropriately to any safeguarding concerns.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

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### 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Volunteers
- Committee members
- Staff (if applicable)
- Session leaders, facilitators, and contractors
- Anyone acting on behalf of The Sanctuary Garden

It covers safeguarding concerns relating to:

- Children and young people (under 18)
- Adults at risk (as defined by Scottish legislation)

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### 3. Legal and Policy Framework

This policy is informed by:

- **Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014**
- **Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007**
- **Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007**
- **Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)**
- **Scottish Government National Guidance for Child Protection**
- **UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018**

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## 4. Definitions

### 4.1 Child or Young Person

Anyone under the age of 18.

### 4.2 Adult at Risk

An adult (16+) who:

- Is unable to safeguard their own wellbeing, property, rights, or interests
- Is at risk of harm
- Is affected by disability, mental disorder, illness, or physical or mental infirmity

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## 5. Principles

The Sanctuary Garden will ensure that:

- Everyone is treated with dignity and respect
- Safeguarding concerns are taken seriously
- Action is taken promptly and proportionately
- Confidentiality is respected but **never promised**
- The welfare of the child or adult at risk is paramount

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## 6. Roles and Responsibilities

### 6.1 Management Committee

- Overall responsibility for safeguarding
- Ensures policies are in place, reviewed, and implemented
- Appoints a Safeguarding Lead

### 6.2 Safeguarding Lead

- Acts as the main point of contact for safeguarding concerns
- Decides on next steps and referrals
- Keeps secure records of concerns and actions
- Liaises with statutory agencies when required

A Deputy Safeguarding Lead should be appointed where possible.

### 6.3 Volunteers and Others

- Follow this policy and associated procedures
- Report concerns promptly

- Attend safeguarding training where required

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## 7. Safe Practice and Conduct

All those involved with The Sanctuary Garden should:

- Treat everyone with respect and kindness
- Maintain appropriate boundaries
- Avoid being alone with a child or adult at risk where possible
- Avoid physical contact unless necessary for safety or care, and only with consent
- Use inclusive and non-discriminatory language
- Never tolerate bullying, harassment, or abuse

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## 8. Recruitment and PVG

Where roles involve regulated work with children or protected adults:

- PVG membership will be required
- References may be requested
- Safeguarding responsibilities will be clearly explained

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## 9. Recognising Abuse

Abuse may be:

- Physical
- Emotional or psychological
- Sexual
- Neglect
- Financial (for adults at risk)
- Discriminatory or institutional

Abuse may be a single incident or a pattern of behaviour.

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## 10. Responding to a Safeguarding Concern

### 10.1 If Someone Discloses Abuse

- Listen calmly and take them seriously
- Reassure them they were right to speak up
- Do **not** promise confidentiality

- Do **not** investigate or ask leading questions
- Record what was said as soon as possible, using their own words

## 10.2 Immediate Danger

If someone is at immediate risk of harm:

- Call **999**
- Then inform the Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible

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## 11. Reporting Procedure

1. Concerns should be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Lead
2. If the concern involves the Safeguarding Lead, report to the Chair of the Committee
3. The Safeguarding Lead will assess the concern and decide next steps
4. Referrals may be made to:
  - Social Work Services (Fife Council)
  - Police Scotland
  - Other relevant agencies

The Sanctuary Garden will cooperate fully with statutory investigations.

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## 12. Recording and Confidentiality

- All safeguarding concerns will be recorded accurately and securely
- Records will be kept separately from other files
- Information will only be shared on a **need-to-know** basis
- Data will be handled in line with GDPR and data protection law

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## 13. Allegations Against Volunteers or Staff

If an allegation is made against someone acting on behalf of The Sanctuary Garden:

- The individual may be temporarily stood down while concerns are assessed
- Safeguarding procedures take precedence over disciplinary procedures
- External agencies will be consulted where required

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## 14. Whistleblowing

Anyone with concerns about unsafe or inappropriate behaviour by others is encouraged to report this without fear of reprisal. Concerns will be taken seriously and handled sensitively.

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## **15. Training and Awareness**

- Safeguarding training will be provided as appropriate
- This policy will be shared with all volunteers and committee members
- Safeguarding information will be visible and accessible

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## **16. Review of Policy**

This policy will be reviewed every **two years**, or sooner if:

- There is a safeguarding incident
- Legislation or guidance changes
- The nature of garden activities changes

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Approved by: The Sanctuary Garden Management Committee

Review Date: October 2026

Lead: Grant Stewart