



Safeguarding Policy

TOTNES TOWN COUNCIL

AGREED JANUARY 2024

NEXT REVIEW JANUARY 2026

Everyone has a duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults. This Policy outlines the principles of good practice in safeguarding those using Town Council facilities or attending Town Council events.

1. Introduction

1.1 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all Councillors and Council Officers who during the course of their employment have direct or indirect contact with children and vulnerable adults, or who have access to information about them, have a responsibility to safeguard and promote their welfare. There is a duty on the Town Council (and through organisations that it contracts to deliver services) to make and ensure appropriate arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults are in place in the delivery of public events.

1.2 Definitions are as follows:

- a. Children and young people – anyone under the age of 18 years.
- b. Vulnerable Adult – anyone over 18 who is:
 - Unable to care for themselves
 - Unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation
 - Or may be in need of community care services

1.3 Legislative background - Totnes Town Council does not have a legislative role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as defined in Chapter 3 of the statutory guidance to the Children Act 2004, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65803fe31c0c2a000d18cf40/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023_-_statutory_guidance.pdf) . However, Totnes Town Council recognises it is a local organisation that works alongside children and families, particularly in the facilitation of public events, and can therefore play an important role when it comes to safeguarding children.

2. To Whom This Policy Applies

2.1 This policy applies to anyone working for or on behalf of Totnes Town Council whether in a paid, voluntary or commissioned capacity, for example contracted to do a piece of work.

2.2 It also applies to any individual or organisation using Totnes Town Council facilities for the purpose of delivering any service to children, young people or vulnerable adults.

2.3 The Town Clerk is the designated person with overall responsibility for safeguarding within the Council. Any concerns or disclosures should be raised with the Clerk, or in their absence a member of the management team.

3. Promoting A Safe Environment

3.1 In order to promote a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults, Totnes Town Council will:

- a. Provide safe facilities and do regular safety assessments.

- b. Ensure that employees, councillors and leaders of activities in/on Town Council facilities, are aware of the safeguarding expectations.
- c. Ensure that the policy for users of Town Council facilities includes a requirement that they are safe to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults (e.g. any adults who have regular unsupervised contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults during the course of their duties should undergo appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service checks).
- d. Ensure that attendees at functions are aware that parents are responsible for their children's safety and the location of a dedicated safe place for lost children is clear.

4. Safe Working Practice

4.1 All users of Town Council facilities or deliverer of Town Council events must follow the Town Council Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adult's Policy and procedures at all times. For example, they should:

- a. Plan activities to involve more than one person being present or at least in sight or hearing of others. Alternatively, record, or inform others of their whereabouts and intended action.
- b. Where possible, have male and female leaders working with a mixed group.
- c. Ensure that photos or videos of individuals are not taken without written permission from parents/carers.
- d. Ensure they have access to a first aid kit and telephone. Ensure that where a child, young person or vulnerable adult needs assistance with toilet trips and when first aid is required, that this is carried out in pairs or in the latter case, that it is carried out where they can be seen.
- e. When working outside, ensure activities, breaks and clothing are suitable for the weather conditions and that shelter is available where possible.

5. Expectations Of Behaviour

5.1 All users of Town Council facilities or delivery of Town Council events should:

- a. Ensure that communications, behaviour and interaction with users should be appropriate and professional.
- b. Treat each other with respect and show consideration for other groups using the facilities.
- c. Refrain from any behaviour that involves racism, sexism and bullying and in addition to report any instances of such behaviour to group leaders, Town Councillors, the Town Clerk or parents and carers, as appropriate.

6. Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers

6.1 All staff and volunteers should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child or vulnerable adult. If an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Town Clerk of Totnes Town Council.

6.2 Totnes Town Council should consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) authorities before attempting to investigate or take action.

7. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

7.1 Confidentiality needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those persons who come into contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults, particularly in the context of child protection. No adult must ever guarantee confidentiality to any individual including parents, children and colleagues. If a Council officer becomes concerned that a child/young person may be at risk of significant harm, then the Council has a duty to refer their concerns to the relevant agencies / Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (contact details below). Officers should always make children aware that if they disclose information that may be harmful to themselves or others, then certain actions will need to be taken. Wherever possible, consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties.

8. Useful Contacts

Torbay and Devon Safeguarding Adults Partnership -

www.devonsafeguardingadultspartnership.org.uk/

Devon Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) - www.dcfp.org.uk/ or telephone 0345 155 1071 or email mashsecure@devon.gov.uk