



Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

This policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, at least once a year. UK Wild Otter Trust (UKWOT) will amend this policy, following consultation, where appropriate.

Written by Dave Webb (Founder, CEO and Registered Trustee) - 01/06/2022

For reviews please see end of document.

Introduction

UK Wild Otter Trust, also referred to as UKWOT, (the Charity) is a registered charity run for the following purpose:

- To raise awareness of the native, protected Eurasian Otter (*Lutra lutra*) by way of engagement, inclusion and education
- Promoting otter ecology, biology and conservation status through engagement, inclusion, education and actively promoting the establishment of links and networking with other countryside related groups and businesses.
- Conducting high standards of ethical and legal wildlife welfare throughout the whole rescue, rehabilitation and release of this native species – working within wildlife statutory guidelines, prominent UK Conservation bodies and NGO's.

The Charity is based at:

Address redacted for safety reasons – contact otters@ukwot.org

Charity Number: 1167746

Scope

The Charity has adopted this safeguarding children policy and procedure, and expects every adult working or helping at Charity to support it and comply with it. From herin, references to team members include all staff, volunteers, trustees, students or anyone working on behalf of Charity.

All contractors or anyone temporarily working on behalf of the charity, from herin referred to as clients, will be provided with this policy. UKWOT will ensure it is understood and will also explain the reporting process should they be concerned about a fellow client or team member.

Here at the UK Wild Otter Trust we believe:

“no child, young person or an adult at risk should experience **any form of** abuse or harm and we are committed to the safeguarding and protection of **all** who utilise our service”

Policy Statement

This policy is in place in order for team members to work to prevent abuse and know what to do should a concern arise. They will enable UKWOT to:

- Promote good practice and work in a way that can prevent harm and abuse occurring.
- Ensure that any allegations of abuse or suspicions are dealt with appropriately and the person experiencing abuse is supported.

Definitions

The policy and procedures relate to both the safeguarding of adults at risk and to children.

Adults

Adults at risk are defined in the Care Act 2014 as individuals aged over 18 who:

- “Have needs for care and support (whether or not the Local Authority is meeting any of those needs).
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect.
- As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.”

Children

A child is defined in the Children Act 1989 as:

“anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday even if they are living independently, are a member of the armed forces or are in hospital.”

Related Policies

This policy will need to be read in conjunction with the following UKWOT policies:

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Volunteer Privacy Policy
- Privacy Policy

Responsibilities of UKWOT

UKWOT will work to:

- a) Prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs and children.
- b) Promote the wellbeing of any adults and children at risk in safeguarding arrangements.
- c) Safeguard adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live.
- d) Promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults and children concerned.
- e) Raise awareness of safeguarding to ensure that everyone can play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect.
- f) Provide information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or well-being of an adult or child.
- g) Address what caused any abuse or neglect where appropriate if it occurred on UKWOT property or in an UKWOT workplace/office

UKWOT will:

- a) Ensure that all staff are familiar with this policy and associated procedures.
- b) Act within its confidentiality policy and will usually gain permission from adult clients before sharing information about them with another agency. The safeguarding of a child or an adult who is at risk or if a crime has been committed will override any need for consent (If a child has disclosed or if UKOWT staff have concerns about a child, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead judges that a referral to Social Care is needed, they will inform the child that they need to tell someone else but will not need to gain consent).
- c) Make a safeguarding referral to Customer First as appropriate. i.e. if there is an immediate danger or the child/adult is at risk of harm.
- d) Ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities to attend training and support staff in accessing training.
- e) Endeavour to keep up to date with national developments relating to preventing abuse and welfare of adults and children.
- f) UKWOT has a Designated Safeguarding Lead and ensures that the Designated Safeguarding Lead understands her/his responsibility to refer incidents of abuse to the relevant statutory agencies (Police/Social Care). The contact details of the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be posted on UKWOT notice boards.
- g) Respond appropriately when abuse has or is suspected to have occurred.
- h) Understand how diversity, beliefs and values of people who use services may influence the identification, prevention and response to safeguarding concerns.
- i) Ensure that all team members who come into contact with vulnerable adults and any children, have a DBS check in line with the requirements of the Independent Safeguarding Authority Vetting and Barring Scheme. This will include undertaking a DBS check on any potential trustee as well as all existing trustees.

Responsibilities of UKWOT Team Members

- a) To follow the safeguarding policy and procedures at all times, particularly if concerns arise about the safety or welfare of an adult at risk or a child.
- b) To participate in safeguarding training and maintain current working knowledge of safeguarding.
- c) Always discuss any concerns about the welfare of any client or child with their line manager. If the line manager is unavailable, staff and volunteers must go direct to the DSL.
- d) Work collaboratively with other agencies to safeguard and protect the welfare of people who use UKWOT services.
- e) Remain alert at all times to the possibility of abuse.
- f) Recognise the impact that diversity, beliefs and values of people who use services can have.

Responsibilities of Trustees

Trustees have a duty of care to prevent risks to UKWOT's reputation as well as the people it helps.

Responsibilities of Clients

UKWOT clients have a responsibility to act in accordance with the UKWOT Code of Conduct when on UKWOT premises and to be aware that they have a duty to report any abuse, neglect or risk to other clients seen on UKWOT premises and offices.

Recognising the Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

UKWOT is committed to ensuring that all team members undertake training to gain a basic awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse. UKWOT will ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Lead (s) and any other key

members of staff will have access to higher levels of safeguarding training. Abuse and neglect can take many forms and UKWOT will always consider the circumstances of an individual case.

Abuse in adults includes:

Discriminatory

Including forms of harassment, bullying, slurs, isolation, neglect, denial of access to services or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, religion or because someone is lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. This includes racism, sexism, ageism, homophobia or any other form of hate incident or crime.

Domestic Abuse or Violence

Including an incident or a pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse, by someone who is, or has been, an intimate partner or family member regardless of gender or sexual orientation. This includes psychological/emotional, physical, sexual, financial abuse; so, called 'honour' based violence, forced marriage or Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

Financial or Material

Including theft, fraud, internet scamming, exploitation, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits.

Modern Slavery

Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive, and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Neglect and acts of Omission

Includes ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to access appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

Organisational (sometimes referred to as Institutional)

Including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example in relation to care provided in a person's own home. This may range from one off incidents to

ongoing ill treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

Physical

Including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, burning, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.

Psychological (sometimes referred to as emotional)

Including threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyberbullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or support networks.

Sexual

Including rape, indecent exposure, sexual assault, sexual acts, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting. It also includes sexual exploitation which is exploitative, situations, contexts and relationships where the person receives 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, mobile phones, cigarettes, gifts, money) or perceived friendship/relationship as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing sexual acts.

Self-neglect

Includes a person neglecting to care for their personal hygiene, health or surroundings or an ability to provide essential food, clothing, shelter or medical care necessary to maintain their physical and mental health, emotional wellbeing and general safety. It includes behaviour such as hoarding.

Abuse in children includes:

Physical abuse: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

It is important to be aware of more specific types of abuse and exploitation that fall within these categories. They are child exploitation, cyberbullying and online abuse, criminal exploitation, County Lines, trafficking, modern slavery, domestic abuse, FGM, honour based abuse, grooming, missing.

Abuse may be carried out deliberately or unknowingly. Abuse may be a single act or repeated acts. People who behave abusively come from all backgrounds and walks of life. They may be people in positions of trust; they may also be relatives, friends, neighbours, or people who use the same services as the person experiencing abuse.

Designated Named Person for Safeguarding

UKWOT has an appointed Designated Safeguarding Lead who is responsible for leading safeguarding in the organisation. In their absence, UKWOT Trustees will be available for team members to consult with.

The roles and responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead is to:

- a) Ensure that all team members are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they have concerns that an adult or child at risk may be experiencing or has experienced abuse or neglect.
- b) Ensure that concerns are acted on, clearly recorded and referred to Customer First and/or the allocated social worker where necessary.
- c) Follow up any safeguarding referrals and ensure the issues have been addressed.
- d) Manage and have oversight over individual complex cases involving allegations against an employee, volunteer or Trustee, paid or unpaid.
- e) Consider any recommendations from the safeguarding process.
- f) Reinforce the need for confidentiality and to ensure that team members are adhering to good practice with regard to confidentiality and security.
- g) Ensure that team members working directly with clients who have experienced abuse, or who are experiencing abuse, are well supported and receive appropriate supervision.
- h) Ensure team members are given support and afforded protection, if necessary, under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998; they will be dealt with in a fair and equitable manner and they will be kept informed of any action that has been taken and its outcome.

Training

All team members should receive a basic safeguarding training at a level according to their role. This should be refreshed as a minimum every three years.

Responding to People who have Experienced or are Experiencing Abuse

UKWOT recognises that it has a duty to act on reports, or suspicions of abuse or neglect. It also acknowledges that taking action in cases of adult abuse is never easy.

Responding if **UKWOT** Receives an Allegation

- a) Reassure the person concerned.
- b) Listen to what they are saying.

- c) Record what you have been told/witnessed as soon as possible.
- d) Remain calm and do not show shock or disbelief.
- e) Tell them that the information will be treated seriously.
- f) Ask questions to ensure you gather the full facts but do not start to investigate or ask detailed or probing questions.
- g) Use the vulnerable adult/child's own words where possible.
- h) Do not promise to keep it a secret.
- i) Tell the child or vulnerable adult what you are going to do next and explain that you will need to get help to keep him/her safe.

If you witness abuse or abuse has just taken place, the priorities will be:

- a) To call an ambulance if required.
- b) To call the Police if a crime has been committed.
- c) To preserve evidence.
- d) To keep yourself and others safe.
- e) To inform the Designated Safeguarding Manager.
- f) To record what happened in the agreed place/file/log.

Allegations made against a Member of Staff

If a team member has information which suggests a team member has:

- a) Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a vulnerable adult/child.
- b) Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a vulnerable adult/child.
- c) Behaved towards a vulnerable adult/child in a way that has indicated she/he is unsuitable to work with vulnerable adults/children.

The member of staff should immediately report this to their line manager or

Designated Safeguarding Lead, in line with the UKWOT Whistleblowing & Sharing Concerns policy.

If appropriate, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (s) will consult with/make a referral to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer). Follow the procedures for LADO referrals on the Devon's LADO website. LADOs can be contacted via leaving a message on the telephone line 01392 384964 or emailing childsc.localauthoritydesignatedofficersecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk for a LADO contact form.

If the allegation is made about the Designated Safeguarding Lead, team members must inform an UKWOT trustee.

Recording and Managing Confidential Information

UKWOT is committed to maintaining confidentiality wherever possible and information regarding safeguarding issues should be shared only with those who need to know.

For further information, please see UKWOT's Confidentiality and Data Protection Policies.

All allegations/concerns should be recorded in the agreed place/file/log where safeguarding concerns are recorded. The information should be factual and not based on opinions.

Record what the person tells you, what you have seen and names of witnesses if appropriate.

The information that is recorded will be kept secure and will comply with UKWOT's Data Protection Policy.

Disseminating/Reviewing Policy and Procedures

This safeguarding policy and procedures will be clearly communicated to team members. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be responsible for ensuring that this is done.

The safeguarding policy and procedures will be reviewed annually by UKWOT. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be involved in this process and can recommend changes. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will also ensure that any changes are clearly communicated to team members. It may be appropriate to involve team members.

Making a Referral

Please dial 999 if the person is in immediate danger.

To discuss whether or not a referral is required, you can call the Professional Consultation Line on 0345 6061499 to speak with a MASH social worker.

For Concerns about a Child

If you have a concern about a child or a young person, you will need to complete and submit a Children's Front Door - Request for intervention or support form on the Devon County Council Website - <https://devoncountycouncil.outsystemsenterprise.com/MASH/homepage>

For Concerns about an Adult

If you have a concern about an adult and wish to make a safeguarding referral you will need to use the new Devon County Council website - <https://www.devon.gov.uk/adult-social-care/care-and-support/>

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Any question, report or concern in relation to the safeguarding of children should be shared with our Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Name: David Webb

Email: otters@ukwot.org

Telephone: +447866462820

Confidentiality and Data Protection

All personal information we may process relating to children, shall be processed and stored in accordance with our data protection privacy policy which can be located at: WWW.UKWILDOTTERTRUST.ORG.

Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk at Events and Activities

Responsibilities and planning

Typically, we may arrange the following types of events and/or activities which could involve children:
Educational visits; Fairs and markets; Otter rescues

The Designated Safeguarding Lead shall hold ultimate responsibility for the safety and appropriateness of the event. They may however appoint a delegate for some responsibilities the purpose of a specific event.

Although the Designated Safeguarding Lead and any appointed delegates will hold ultimate responsibility for overseeing the safety for events and activities, all individuals under this policy must also play an active role in ensuring the safety of children at all times.

For certain types of events or activities, we may issue an additional code of conduct, policy, or some specific other requirements which is specific to that occasion. Any such additional documentation will be made available to all those concerned (staff members, parents, guardians etc.) in advance. They should be read carefully and adhered to.

Venues

Any events or activities held by us will typically take place at:

Address redacted for safety reasons – contact otters@ukwot.org

We have carried out a health and safety risk assessment of this location in reference to its safety and suitability for children. Where any events or activities are held at any other location we shall also carry out a risk assessment.

The fire safety procedure at this location can be found in the following location: Staff canteen

First Aid

We have the following first aid procedure within the Charity: Staff canteen

Any accident or injury should be brought to the attention of the nearest first aider and should thereafter be formally reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Where we hold any events or activities whereby a child attends alongside their parent or guardian, parents and guardians should ensure that children are properly supervised.

Photography

We operate a strict no photo policy. We will not take any photographs and ask that members of the public, parents or guardians and children do not take any photographs when attending our premises, activities and/or events.

Contacts

Dave Webb – Founder, CEO and Registered Trustee and Designated Safeguarding Officer – otters@ukwot.org

Trustees – trustees@ukwot.org

Summer Hales – Volunteer, Recruiting & Policy Co-ordinator – summer@ukwot.org

Reviews

Date: 20th December 2023

By whom: Summer Hales - Volunteer, Recruiting & Policy Co-ordinator

Changes made: Whole document review

Approved by: Dave Webb - Founder, CEO and Registered Trustee

Date: January 2025

By whom: Summer Hales - Volunteer, Recruiting & Policy Co-ordinator

Changes made: Whole document review, to broaden scope to include vulnerable adults and others. Name changed from 'Safeguarding Children Policy' to 'Safeguarding Policy'.

Approved by: Dave Webb - Founder, CEO and Registered Trustee