

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

At the Culture, Heritage and Arts Assembly, Argyll and Isles (CHARTS), we believe that no-one should experience abuse of any kind. We want CHARTS to build an environment in which everyone is treated with dignity and respect, is protected from risk, is empowered and encouraged, and can raise any safeguarding concerns while at work or taking part in our workshops, projects, events and other CHARTS activities.

Risks include physical or emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual harassment, financial harm or coercion, exploitation and abuse of positions of trust, bullying and harassment, neglect, including self-neglect, extremism and radicalisation, and discrimination.

While this applies to all those taking part in a CHARTS activity or working for CHARTS, we recognise that we have a particular responsibility to safeguard children, young people up to 18 years old and adults who cannot safeguard their own wellbeing, property, rights or other interest, are at risk of harm or are more vulnerable to harm than other adults due to disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity.

In order to achieve the necessary safeguards, CHARTS requires all staff, including Trustees, paid staff, volunteers, and anyone working on behalf of CHARTS, to follow our Code of Good Practice set out below.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of our staff and participants is paramount. Everyone, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, has a right to equal protection from all types of harm and abuse.
- Some people are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- Working in partnership with participants, parents and carers and other agencies is essential in promoting everyone's welfare.



CHARTS is supported by Argyll and Bute Council and adheres to Council policy guidelines for managers on Safeguarding. Where a risk has been identified, CHARTS and Argyll and Bute Council will work co-operatively to ensure:

- *Prompt* response and at a pace of delivery which ensures the immediate and ongoing health and safety of the person involved.
- *Sensitivity* to the person involved, their representatives, parents and carers and to staff
- *Solutions* which are as simple and practical as possible.
- *That any intervention* in people's lives is justified, with the reasons being fully recorded; please see CHARTS' [Safeguarding Concern Recording Form](#).

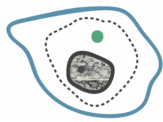
PVG policy and recruitment of ex-offenders

CHARTS requires that all its Trustees and staff, including volunteers recruited directly by CHARTS, and no matter the length of the appointment, hold certification from the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) membership scheme for their work with CHARTS. This helps to ensure high standards of care and practice. (We occasionally work with partner organisations who have recruited volunteers under their own arrangements, having confirmed that this is the case in advance of any collaboration.)

Prior to any offer of contract or beginning any work for CHARTS, applicants will discuss their PVG status with appropriate management and apply to the PVG Scheme, if they do not already have a certificate.

Please note that potential staff who do not already have suitable PVG certification are expected to meet their own costs of applying. Only in exceptional circumstances will they receive assistance from CHARTS.

We recognise that safeguarding vulnerable groups is paramount. However, we also recognise the right of individuals with convictions to be fairly considered for opportunities. All applicants to work with CHARTS will be asked to complete a confidential self-declaration form regarding convictions. PVG disclosures will be obtained through



Disclosure Scotland before any appointment is confirmed. Where concerns arise, applicants will be invited to discuss the information openly before decisions are made.

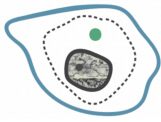
We actively support the rehabilitation and inclusion of people with criminal convictions. We will not unfairly discriminate against applicants on the basis of convictions. Each case will be considered individually, taking into account:

- The relevance of the offence to the role.
- The nature and seriousness of the offence.
- How long ago the offence occurred.
- Any pattern of offending.
- The individual's circumstances and evidence of change.

CODE OF GOOD SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE

Staff, including volunteers, working for CHARTS will:

- Be recruited using consistent best practices, including the seeking and taking up of references.
- Receive appropriate induction and regular training that covers safeguarding to reduce the risk of harm or abuse. Induction and training should cover what abuse and harm is, how to help prevent them, how to respond to any concerns and who to report concerns to.
- Be reminded of their safeguarding duties as part of their regular one-to-one discussions with the Director or other manager.
- Explicitly consider the safeguarding risks relevant to every project and event planned, and how to minimise these - e.g. plan activities to involve more than one person being present, or ensure that other adults are within sight or hearing whenever possible; explicitly consider what a minimum safe staff ratio would be for the specific project/event; explicitly consider whether photographs will be taken and how they will be used; consider context carefully, especially when using any material of a sexual or distressing nature.
- Explicitly consider and be ready to describe how each proposed event or activity benefits the participants, and be clear about how they are to be kept safe.



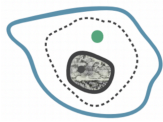
- Consider using consent forms and/or information sheets for each project - e.g. indicating whether photos will be taken, making it clear that participants can withdraw at any time.

Staff, volunteers and Trustees will:

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Promote the well-being and welfare of all the individuals they work with.
- Provide a good example of acceptable behaviour.
- Challenge poor behavioural choices - in private, where appropriate.
- Respect everyone's right to privacy.
- Be available to listen to the concerns of participants, and to refer them to other sources of help where appropriate.
- Try to ensure that their actions cannot be misunderstood or cause offence.
- Encourage people to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes and behaviour they do not like.
- Show understanding when dealing with sensitive issues and recognise that caution is required when discussing such issues.
- Be aware that even caring physical contact can be misinterpreted.

Staff, volunteers and Trustees should not:

- Permit abusive behaviour e.g. bullying, taunting, or racist behaviour.
- Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with anyone.
- Jump to conclusions about others without first checking the facts.
- Allow themselves to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour, such as crushes or tantrums.
- Show favouritism to an individual.
- Exaggerate or trivialise any abuse issues.
- Make suggestive remarks or actions, even in jest.
- Deliberately place themselves or others in potentially compromising situations.
- Believe it could never happen to them.



Safeguarding is as important when online as when delivering sessions in person. In addition to the points above, when working online with children, young people under 18 and vulnerable adults, tutors or mentors must:

- Agree in writing with the participant's parent, carer or representative to tutoring or mentoring online.
- Use the parent, carer or representative's own account rather than an account belonging to the participant to deliver sessions.
- Use a specific Zoom or equivalent account separate from the tutor or mentor's personal accounts for tutoring/mentoring for CHARTS.
- Set out a clear policy in writing for the participant and their parent, carer or representative, including telling people that the Zoom account used by the tutor or mentor will be used exclusively for the purpose of interaction with CHARTS and only during agreed session contacts.
- Select an appropriate image for profile pictures and use a neutral background for the sessions.
- Not share ANY personal information e.g., home phone number, home email address, or any social media profiles.
- Not record any session which involves engagement with a child, young person under 18 or vulnerable adult.
- Be professional when delivering sessions.
- Make sure that the participant is in a room with an open door and that the responsible person is in the same premises while the session takes place.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT ABUSE

If a member of staff, including Trustees and volunteers, has reason to suspect that anyone in a CHARTS workshop, event or other activity is being abused, they should:

- Urgently inform by telephone/email the CHARTS Director, or a Trustee if the Director is not available.
- Use the [Safeguarding Recording Form](#) to make a written record of all details of the facts known as soon as possible, and give a copy to the CHARTS Director or Trustee spoken to.



If anyone tells a member of staff about abuse by someone else, they should:

- Stay calm, not appear shocked, and try to act normally.
- Allow the individual to speak freely, without interruption, but not question them or investigate themselves.
- Offer support and reassurance; assure the person reporting abuse that they are believed.
- Explain that they cannot keep it a secret and that they will speak to a CHARTS staff member and/or Trustee about it – never promise anyone that it will be kept secret.
- Report the matter as detailed above.

In all cases, the matter must be referred to the CHARTS Executive Director, who will immediately refer to the designated Trustee – a member of staff must not try to deal with any possible cases of abuse on their own.

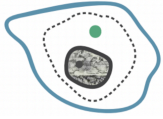
The CHARTS Executive Director or Trustee will report any suspected abuse to the designated officer in Argyll and Bute Council.

CHARTS SAFEGUARDING PROMISE

All of us at CHARTS promise to make sure that everyone has the best time possible while taking part in our activities. We all believe that everyone has the right to feel safe and comfortable while you are with us. We will do our very best to live up to the promises that we make to you.

We promise to:

- Create welcoming environments.
- Be aware of participant and staff needs.
- Treat all people fairly.
- Make sure that all our staff and volunteers know what they are supposed to be doing.
- Engage with partner agencies and venues that follow best policy practice.
- Make our activities as safe as possible.



Document Version Control

Any questions, contact info@chartsargyllandisles.org

Reviewed 31 October 2025