



POLICY AND PROCEDURE:

**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS
AT RISK**

1. General Statement of Policy

This policy is intended to protect children and vulnerable adults, (i.e. adults with care and support needs who may be unable to protect themselves) who come into contact with Barley Parish Council or premises and facilities for which the council is responsible – The Town House, Plaistow, Allotments and 'Lock up'. This policy will be shared with tenants and other organisations who make use of BPC premises.

As an organisation, BPC believes that no child, young person or vulnerable adult should experience abuse or harm. This policy is intended to provide guidance and overarching principles to strengthen our approach to safeguarding of vulnerable groups. Barley Parish Council recognises the importance of making every effort to secure the welfare of its community.

As Barley Parish Council does not directly provide care or supervision services to children, young people or vulnerable adults, it expects all children, young people or vulnerable adults using its facilities to do so with the consent and the necessary supervision of a responsible parent or other responsible adult.

Types of abuse can take many forms such as physical, psychological or emotional, domestic violence, financial, sexual, institutional abuse, including neglect, exploitation or grooming, bullying (including cyber bullying) or harassment which does not need to be physical, but includes emotional or verbal.

2. Purpose

2.1. The purpose of this policy is to outline the duties and responsibilities of Barley Parish Council in respect to Safeguarding.

2.2. The key objectives of this policy are to:

2.2.1. To enable Parish Councillors and Proper Officers who receive disclosures of, witness, or suspect abuse to make informed responses.

2.2.2. To ensure that information relating to safeguarding is kept securely and only shared with appropriate agencies, e.g. social services and the police.

3. Scope, Principles & Definitions

- 3.1. Safeguarding is about protecting the safety, independence and wellbeing of people at risk of abuse, and is everybody's responsibility.
- 3.2. This policy relates to all children and vulnerable adults who become known to Barley Parish Council through the course of our work and who may be at risk of abuse.
- 3.3. Assessing whether children or adults are experiencing abuse is the responsibility of professionals within North Hertfordshire Council and/or Hertfordshire County Council and/or The Police, or other social and welfare services (the local authority). The role of Barley Parish Council is therefore not to assess whether abuse has taken place, but to safeguard individuals by informing the local authority if information becomes known to us that could indicate that abuse **may** have taken place, or that a child or adult may be at risk of abuse.
- 3.4. For the purpose of this policy, a child is defined as a person under the age of 18 and an adult is defined as a person aged 18 years or over.
- 3.5. For the purpose of this policy an adult at risk of abuse is defined as "someone who has care and support needs and is therefore unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect".

4. Responsibilities

4.1. Parish Councillors and Proper Officers of the Council

All Parish Councillors and Proper Officers of the Council have a duty to promote the welfare of children and adults at risk. All Councillors and Proper Officers have an individual responsibility for dealing with any incidents or concerns that arise, by reporting any incidents or concerns immediately to the Safeguarding Officer and appropriate authorities – Herts County Council Social Services and where necessary the police if immediate action to prevent harm is required,

4.2. Workers (Volunteers, contractors or members of the public co-opted to assist the Barley Parish Council)

All those defined in 4.2 have the same duty to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. It is their responsibility to report any incidents or concerns relating to safeguarding immediately to the Safeguarding Officer or the police if immediate action is required.

4.4 Safeguarding Officer

The Clerk, as a Proper Officer of the Council, will undertake the role of Safeguarding Officer.

Responsibilities will include being the first point of contact for safeguarding concerns submitted to the council, taking a full account of concerns as they arise and taking appropriate steps to swiftly escalate the concerns to a suitable authority – Social Services or the Police.

The Safeguarding Officer will document all Safeguarding issues and receive written statements if appropriate to share with suitable authorities

The Safeguarding officer will act as resource for signposting members of the public or councillors to support as required,

The Safeguarding officer will undertake appropriate training for the role

5. Information

5.1. All Parish Councillors and workers will be informed on induction and reminded on an annual basis of their responsibility to be vigilant and how and where to report any concerns.

5.2. Councillors and proper officers of the council, will be supported to access safeguarding training appropriate to their role,

6. Safeguarding within the context of Barley Parish Council Activities

The majority of contact with the public is done either in the context of public meetings and events or through visits to Parish Councillors for advice.

6.2 Barley Parish Council Councillors and workers do not fall within the legally defined eligibility criteria for requesting Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks (as outlined in the [DBS eligibility guidance](#)). The Council does not, therefore, request Enhanced DBS disclosures for Parish Councillors and workers.

6.3 In cases where contact is not on Barley Parish Council premises safeguarding principles should be applied.

7. Confidentiality and information sharing

7.1 If a disclosure is made to a Parish Councillor or worker, or where a Parish Councillor or worker has a concern about the welfare of a child or adult at risk, they should follow the procedure set out in Appendix 1. This includes ensuring that the person making a disclosure is aware that the Safeguarding Officer, Parish Councillor or worker may need to share the information, and cannot promise to keep it secret.

7.2 Information should only be shared with the Safeguarding Officer, Herts County Council Social Services and the Police. In the event that the concern is regarding the Safeguarding Officer, the Chair or Vice Chair should assume the role.

7.3 **Contact details for Herts County Council Social Services - see Appendix 2**

8. Record keeping

In the event of a disclosure or safeguarding concern, an incident/concern form/minute of any meeting must be raised by the person who receives the information as soon as possible, and where ever possible, on the same day.

It may be appropriate to obtain a written statement from the individual raising a concern, depending on their age and or ability to do this. A written statement is not required to escalation of the concern to the appropriate authorities

These records must be stored by the Safeguarding Officer securely, in a locked drawer or password protected file, indefinitely.

9. Safeguarding Officer

The Safeguarding Officer for Barley Parish Council is:

The Parish Clerk: Mrs Alison Gibson, clerk@barleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

Document Approval:

Chair of Barley Parish Council

Date of Parish Council meeting: 05/10/2026

Review Policy: Every 24 months

Appendix 1. Procedure in the event of a disclosure or safeguarding concern

It is important that children, young people and adults at risk are protected from abuse. All complaints, allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously, including those received anonymously. This procedure must be followed whenever a disclosure of abuse is made or when there is a suspicion of abuse.

1. In the event of a disclosure

- Reassure the person concerned.
- Listen to what they are saying.
- Record what you have been told/witnessed as soon as possible.
- Remain calm and do not show shock or disbelief.
- Tell the person that the information will be treated seriously.
- Do not start to investigate or ask detailed or probing questions. Only ask questions to clarify the basic facts of what they are already telling you. Do not promise to keep it a secret and explain that you may have to inform the appropriate authorities of the information given.

2. Make sure the individual is safe

If the person is in immediate danger, the police and if necessary, the ambulance service must be called straight away via 999. Ensure prompt action is taken to minimise the risk of harm from any further abuse, maltreatment or neglect. This is particularly important if:

- the person remains in or is about to return to the place where the alleged abuse occurred;
- the alleged abuser is likely to have access to the person or others who might be at risk.

3. Record the information

Make a full record of the disclosure, allegation or incident as soon as possible and at the latest within one working day and ensure it is recorded in the speaker's words as an accurate record of the complaint/concern. In some circumstances it may be appropriate to ask the person to submit a written statement. In the case of a child they should be accompanied by a parent or other trusted friend as appropriate.

Refer to Appendix 3 'Concern Form'.

4. Report

Report the disclosure or concern to the appropriate authority immediately or as soon as possible within one working day. The police should be informed immediately if there is a concern for the safety of an individual. In the first instance this may need to be done verbally but a concern/incident form should also be completed – Appendix 3.

5. Dealing with allegations made against a worker or Councillor

Anyone wishing to make an allegation about a Parish Council worker, a Proper Officer of the Council or a Parish Councillor, either in relation to any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse or non-adherence to these procedures should report the concern to the Safeguarding officer or Chair of the Parish Council; or the police

Appendix 2

Important Contacts and Further Information

Herefordshire County Council

Call 999 if someone is in immediate danger

- [Herts County Council – Report Concerns About a Child or Request Support](#)
Phone 0300 123 4043
- [Herts County Council – Report a Concern About an Adult](#)
- Phone 0300 123 4042
- Always report suspicions or concerns even if unsure or all the details are not available, please use above links to make contact.

Hertfordshire Police via 999 or 101

Local Government Association – [Safeguarding](#)

Appendix 3

BARLEY PARISH COUNCIL INCIDENT / CONCERN FORM

Name of person completing this form:	
Date and time of incident:	
Incident/concern (who, what, where):	
Any other information (witnesses, action taken):	
Signature and role of person filling in form:	
Action taken:	