
Suffolk Tree Warden Network

Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk of Abuse

Policy & Procedure

June 2022

All adults and children have the right to be protected from abuse

**Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting,
and reporting neglect and abuse**

The Suffolk Tree Warden Network (STWN) is an unincorporated association made up entirely of volunteers, either as Tree Wardens and/or as Tree Nurses. STWN is an associated body of The Tree Council (TTC) and is supported by Suffolk County Council (SCC). Its purpose is to *'promote, for public benefit, the conservation, protection, and improvement of the environment through the planting, care, nurture and cultivation of trees, in the County of Suffolk'* (STWN Constitution).

The term 'Tree Warden' (TW) is a brand of TTC. The term 'Tree Nurse' (TN) relates to volunteers who have established tree nurseries in their gardens or on sites within the community.

1. Purpose

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk of abuse or neglect

This policy defines how Suffolk Tree Warden Network (STWN) seeks to safeguard children, young people, and adults at risk of abuse or neglect. We have a duty of care and are committed to the protection and safety of everyone who comes into contact with STWN including children, young people and adults at risk involved as visitors and as participants in all of our activities. We also have a duty to safeguard and support our volunteers.

Children, young people, and adults at risk of abuse or neglect may only be involved in STWN activities when accompanied and supervised by a responsible adult, however, STWN recognises that situations may still occur which raise concern. Since we are not directly involved with these groups of people, when we work alongside another organisation supporting such a group, STWN undertakes to collaborate with that organisation's policy and procedure as advised by their responsible event organiser.

Definitions

Children and young people are defined as those persons aged under 18 years old. This policy applies to all STWN volunteers and the occasional contractor and is in place to support their activities.

"Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children" is defined in Working Together 2018 as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health and development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Adult at risk of abuse or neglect. For the purposes of this policy, adult at risk refers to someone over 18 years old who, according to paragraph 42.1 of the Care Act 2014:

- has care and support needs
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
- because of their care and support needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it. However,
- if someone has care and support needs but is not currently receiving care or support from a health or care service, they may still be an adult at risk.

2. Persons affected:

- All STWN volunteers
- All participants in STWN activities
- All contractors commissioned to undertake work for STWN

3. Safeguarding policy

STWN has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse. It recognises that under the Care Act 2014 it has a duty for the care and protection of adults who are at risk of abuse. It also recognises its responsibilities for the safety and care of children under the Children Act 1989 and 2004.

It is committed to promoting wellbeing, harm prevention and to responding effectively if concerns are raised. The policy is about stopping abuse where it is happening and preventing abuse where there is a risk that it may occur.

There can be no excuses for not taking all reasonable action to protect adults at risk of abuse, exploitation, radicalisation, and mistreatment. All citizens of the United Kingdom have their rights enshrined within the Human Rights Act 1998. People who are eligible to receive health and community care services may be additionally vulnerable to the violation of these rights by reason of disability, impairment, age, or illness.

STWN is committed to the following principles:

- The welfare of the child, young person or adult at risk is paramount.
- All children, young people and adults at risk have the right to protection from abuse
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse must be properly reported to the STWN Safeguarding Officer, and if a partnership event, to the Event Organiser.
- Arrangements which set out clearly sharing information procedures with professionals and with the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)).

Volunteers must be clear on appropriate behaviour and responses. Where appropriate, failure by volunteers to maintain standards may be dealt with using STWN's resolution process.

All STWN volunteers are made aware of this policy and procedure

The Executive Committee has adopted Colin Lay as Safeguarding Officer on 31/08/22 to take responsibility for STWN's safeguarding process.

4 Revision history

This policy and related guidance will be monitored by the Executive Committee on a regular basis for compliance and will be reviewed at least annually.

Date approved or amended	Amendments	Signed (Chair STWN)
26/08/22	NONE	Richard Frost (interim Chair)