

SAFEGUARDING



Safeguarding policy for The Arts Society Bishop's Stortford

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Arts Society (registered charity number 1089743; registered company number 04307984) recognises that each individual has the right to be treated equitably and without prejudice. Every individual has a responsibility to respect and uphold that right. This means that all members of the Member Society, volunteers and any other stakeholders have the right to feel comfortable and to be safe and secure in a welcoming and inclusive environment and in particular when attending events or engaging in activities organised by its Member Societies.
- 1.2. This policy applies to all members of the Committee (as defined in 2. below) and any other persons volunteering or working within the Member Society and this policy should therefore be provided promptly to all such persons when they begin their involvement or work (whether paid or unpaid) with the Member Society.
- 1.3. This Policy to be reviewed annually by the Committee.
- 1.4. The purpose of this policy is to protect all those who are vulnerable who come to events organised by the Member Society [or are involved in any way with the services or activities it provides] but for the avoidance of doubt this document is not envisaged as normally including children because the Member Society's activities predominantly do not involve children; and to provide the Committee and any volunteers with the overarching principles and practical information which guides the Member Society's approach to safeguarding.

2. The Committee of The Arts Society Bishop's Stortford (TASBS)

The Committee is the group of persons which is appointed or elected to administer and govern the TASBS in accordance with its constitution.

3. Definition of Safeguarding

- 3.1. 'Safeguarding' is a term used to describe how we protect individuals from abuse or neglect. It is about protecting certain people who may be in vulnerable circumstances. These people may be at risk of abuse or neglect due to the action (or lack of action) of another person. The Arts Society recognises that individuals may feel vulnerable for a variety of reasons which may include:

Age

Gender

Disability

Sexual orientation

Religious beliefs

Race

Ill health (physical and/or mental)

- 3.2. A vulnerable person should never experience abuse of any kind. The Committee has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all such people who are involved in the work or activities of the Member Society and to keep them safe.
- 3.3. Those who raise safeguarding concerns should be treated with understanding and respect, as should the person(s), if any, against whom a complaint is made

4. Upholding of Principles

- 4.1. To ensure the principles outlined in clause 3 are upheld, the Committee or lead responsible person nominated by the Committee from time to time will adhere to the following procedures
- 4.1.1. Where a safeguarding concern exists, any member or other person may raise it directly either with any member of the Committee or the lead responsible person, and all members of the Committee shall then be notified on a strictly confidential basis, of such concern without delay subject to 4.1.2
- 4.1.2. If the complaint relates to a committee member, the other members (or secretary/lead responsible person) of the Committee may inform such Committee member that a complaint has been made but such Committee member must then be absented from any part of any Committee meeting at which the complaint is discussed and strict confidentiality should be observed at all times in the interests of a fair investigation of such complaint
- 4.1.3. In the event of a complaint being made to a member of the Committee, there is a responsibility on that Committee member to draw the

Committee's attention to the fact that a safeguarding concern has arisen and to explain how that was resolved. If the matter has not been resolved, the Committee will consider at the earliest opportunity how to resolve the matter appropriately.

- 4.1.4. If the Committee does not feel it has the necessary knowledge or skills appropriately to deal with the concern then they should contact the Chief Executive of The Arts Society immediately.
- 4.1.5. The complainant will be supported (unless they choose to decline such support) throughout the investigation of the complaint by a designated Committee member.

5. Action

- 5.1. Action relating to a safeguarding concern could include
 - 5.1.1. informal resolution of complaints between the parties
 - 5.1.2. formal warning from the Committee as to the conduct of the individual
 - 5.1.3. a request for the individual to resign from membership either from The Arts Society or from the Member Society
 - 5.1.4. such other action as may be agreed between the parties; and
- 5.2. If a crime is suspected either to have been or be likely to be committed then the matter must be reported to the police without delay
- 5.3. The Committee must pass on the reporting of the safeguarding incident to The Arts Society as soon as reasonably practicable to enable The Arts Society to fulfil its duty to report serious incidents (which include safeguarding incidents and reports) to the Charity Commission.

6. Sharing information

- 6.1. The Committee acknowledges that it and/or the Member Society may from time to time handle sensitive personal information about people including personal identity information and information about health and financial issues.
- 6.2. All members of the Committee and any volunteers must work together to ensure that there is no unauthorised access, loss, misuse, amendment or disclosure of this information.
- 6.3. When safeguarding individuals at risk, the Committee may be required to share personal or sensitive information with someone from another organisation. The Committee will only do this where the law requires it, or where sharing the information is in the complainant's best interests, including where it might prevent a crime taking place, subject always to the need to comply with all applicable data protection legislation.
- 6.4. Where a person's 'vital interests' (that is, a question of life or death) are involved, the Committee acknowledges that finding out facts through sharing information is of overriding importance.

- 6.5. Subject to 6.6, if the Committee (or any person or organisation to which it may delegate this role from time to time) intends to share personal or sensitive information, they will do it (wherever possible) with that person's agreement.
- 6.6. The Committee will always share information which safeguards vulnerable adults or on a 'need to know' basis. The Committee will take care to make sure any such shared information is correct.

7. Record Keeping and Confidentiality

- 7.1. All safeguarding complaints shall be treated as confidential, unless the Committee resolves that it is in the best interests of The Arts Society or the Member Society, or it has a legal obligation to do otherwise, **subject always** to the need to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation and other relevant data protection legislation from time to time.
- 7.2. This policy document should be easily accessible whenever required. A copy of this document should be kept in the documents file held by the Secretary with the Constitution..
- 7.3. Any written records of safeguarding matters must be kept securely by the Committee and destroyed securely when no longer required.

8. Further Information

Further information around safeguarding as available from the Charity Commission and is regularly updated

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategy-for-dealing-with-safeguarding-issues-in-charities>