

## **Safeguarding Information for village and community halls**

The following links will be useful for village halls and community buildings that are considering developing safeguarding policies and procedures.

### **NCVO Safeguarding Information** <https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/safeguarding>

Keeping people safe is important. All organisations need to do safeguarding well. Everyone needs to be involved. These resources will help you make plans and carry them out.

Creating a safe and welcoming environment, where everyone is respected and valued, is at the heart of safeguarding. It's about making sure your organisation is run in a way that actively prevents harm, harassment, bullying, abuse and neglect. It's also about being ready to respond safely and well if there is a problem. Everyone in the organisation has a role to play in safeguarding. It should become part of your day to day activities.

Every organisation that delivers charitable activities has a duty to safeguard volunteers, staff members, participants and donors.

What is Safeguarding?

This page <https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/safeguarding/what-is-safeguarding> has an example of a village hall. Even if you don't interact with people directly, you still need to think about your safeguarding responsibilities and how you respond to them.

### **NSPCC Child Protection Guidance** <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/voluntary-community-groups>

We all have a responsibility to help keep children safe. Organisations working with children and young people must have safeguarding policies and procedures in place and be able to respond to child protection concerns. It's not always easy to know exactly what you need to do. That's why the NSPCC has produced a range of resources for voluntary and community groups.

### **Safeguarding concerns: practice example – hiring out space**

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/safeguarding-examples-issues-concerns>

This example guides village hall management committees through the things they need to consider when they hire out space groups. If your organisation allows others to use your premises for activities or events, you have a responsibility to make sure they are taking the right steps to keep children safe. This applies regardless of the size of the room(s) people are using and whether they are paying you to use the venue.

### **Guidance on handling safeguarding allegations in a charity**

The portal at <https://safeguarding.culture.gov.uk/> offers a step-by-step guide to help charities correctly manage their concerns, identify the right people to contact if needed and access helpful resources and advice. Every organisation that delivers charitable activities has a responsibility to safeguard people from harm or abuse, whether they are staff members, volunteers, or other people who encounter your charity through its work. This tool will help

charities in England to handle the reporting of safeguarding allegations about the behaviour or actions of a person in their charity.

### **Safeguarding guidance for disabled children and adults at risk**

<https://www.anncrafttrust.org/resources/>

The Ann Craft Trust has a host of resources available to assist you in achieving best practice in safeguarding young people and adults at risk. <https://www.anncrafttrust.org/resources/a-guide-to-safeguarding-adults/>

### **Hiring Agreements**

Whenever a village hall management committee hires out any part of its premises, a written hiring agreement should be in place so that both the management committee and the hirer know their rights and responsibilities. This hiring agreement ensures that both parties fully understand their responsibilities in relation to the hiring, establishing a clear contract between two parties which could be used as evidence should legal action become necessary. It is a key document because it passes responsibility for the hall to the group or individual for the period of hire. This includes compliance with all the hall's principles and procedures for safeguarding. It is therefore reasonable for the committee to expect hirers be able to provide evidence of that compliance on request. The evidence could be a paper copy of a policy or the group may be able to share a link to their website for an online copy.

A Model Hiring Agreement is available from your local ACRE Network member. See **Appendix D of ACRE Safeguarding Information Sheet 5** for the safeguarding clause in the Standard Conditions.

### **Charity Commission**

The Charity Commission expects that safeguarding should be a key governance priority for all charities, village halls included. They have produced detailed guidance on [Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees](#)

They expect all trustees to make sure their charity:

- has appropriate policies and procedures in place, which are followed by all trustees, volunteers and beneficiaries
- checks that people are suitable to act in their roles
- knows how to spot and handle concerns in a full and open manner
- has a clear system of referring or reporting to relevant agencies as soon as concerns are suspected or identified
- sets out risks and how they will be managed in a risk register which is regularly reviewed
- follows statutory guidance, good practice guidance and legislation relevant to their charity: this guidance links to the main sources of information
- is quick to respond to concerns and carry out appropriate investigations
- does not ignore harm or downplays failures
- has a balanced trustee board and does not let one trustee dominate its work – trustees should work together
- makes sure protecting people from harm is central to its culture

- has enough resources, including trained staff/volunteers/trustees for safeguarding and protecting people
- conducts periodic reviews of safeguarding policies, procedures and practice

**10 actions trustee boards need to take to ensure good safeguarding governance**  
Safeguarding should be a key governance priority for all charities

Ensure your charity has an adequate safeguarding policy, code of conduct and any other safeguarding procedures. Regularly review and update the policy and procedures to ensure they are fit for purpose	Identify possible risks, including risks to your beneficiaries or to anyone else connected to your charity and any emerging risks on the horizon	Consider how to improve the safeguarding culture within your charity	Ensure that everyone involved with the charity knows how to recognise, respond to, report and record a safeguarding concern	Ensure people know how to raise a safeguarding concern
Regularly evaluate any safeguarding training provided, ensuring it is current and relevant	Review which posts within the charity can and must have a DBS check from the Disclosure and Barring Service	Have a risk assessment process in place for posts which do not qualify for a DBS check, but which still have contact with children or adults at risk	Periodically review your safeguarding policy and procedures, learning from any serious incident or 'near miss'	If you work overseas, find out what different checks and due diligence you need to carry out in different geographical areas of operation

 **CHARITY COMMISSION**  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

