



Safeguarding Policy

1. Introduction

Upton Parish Council recognises its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all individuals who may come into contact with the Council through its activities, services, decisions, and communications.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. This policy sets out how the Council will fulfil its safeguarding duties, particularly in relation to children, young people, and vulnerable adults, and how councillors, staff, and contractors are expected to behave to minimise risk and respond appropriately to concerns.

The Council is committed to working in a way that protects individuals from harm, abuse, neglect, or exploitation, while respecting their dignity, rights, and wellbeing.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All **Parish Councillors**
- All **employees**, including the Clerk
- **Contractors and suppliers** engaged by the Council
- Any individual acting on behalf of the Council

This policy applies whenever Council business is being conducted, including:

- Council meetings and committee meetings
- Council-organised events and activities
- Site visits, inspections, and community engagement
- Communications (written, verbal, and digital)

This policy does not replace statutory safeguarding responsibilities held by other organisations but sets out how the Parish Council will act within its role and limitations.

3. Safeguarding Principles

Upton Parish Council follows these key safeguarding principles:

- Safeguarding is **everyone's responsibility**
- The welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount
- Individuals have the right to be protected from harm
- Concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon promptly
- Information will be handled sensitively and lawfully
- The Council will work with appropriate authorities where required

4. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

- **Child or young person:** Anyone under the age of 18
- **Vulnerable adult:** A person aged 18 or over who may be unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation due to care needs, disability, illness, or circumstances
- **Safeguarding:** Protecting individuals from abuse, neglect, harm, and exploitation

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The Council

The Parish Council has overall responsibility for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are in place and that this policy is implemented, reviewed, and followed.

The Clerk

The Clerk is the Council's **Safeguarding Lead** and is responsible for:

- Receiving and recording safeguarding concerns
- Taking appropriate action in line with this policy
- Liaising with safeguarding authorities where necessary
- Maintaining confidential safeguarding records
- Ensuring councillors and staff are aware of safeguarding responsibilities

Councillors, Staff, and Contractors

All councillors, staff, and contractors must:

- Act in a way that promotes safety and wellbeing
- Be alert to potential safeguarding concerns

- Report concerns promptly to the Clerk
- Follow this policy at all times

6. Code of Conduct and Expected Behaviour

When carrying out Council business, individuals must:

- Treat everyone with respect, dignity, and courtesy
- Avoid behaviour that could be misinterpreted or place themselves or others at risk
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times
- Avoid being alone with a child or vulnerable adult where possible
- Avoid physical contact unless it is appropriate, necessary, and proportionate

Councillors and staff must not:

- Engage in inappropriate personal relationships linked to Council activities
- Use their position to exert pressure or influence
- Ignore or dismiss safeguarding concerns

7. Use of Digital Communication and Social Media

The Council does not use informal messaging platforms (such as WhatsApp or Messenger) to conduct official business.

When communicating digitally:

- Council email accounts must be used for official matters
- Communications must remain professional and appropriate
- Personal contact details of children or vulnerable adults must not be shared without lawful reason
- Images or recordings must not be taken or shared without appropriate consent

8. Managing and Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Recognising a Concern

A safeguarding concern may arise from:

- A disclosure made by an individual
- Observed behaviour or signs of distress
- Information received from a third party

- Online or written communications

Immediate Risk

If someone is in immediate danger:

- Contact emergency services by calling 999
- Inform the Clerk as soon as possible

Reporting a Concern

All safeguarding concerns must be reported promptly to the Clerk.

Concerns must not be investigated by councillors or staff.

The Clerk will:

- Record the concern accurately and confidentially
- Assess the need for referral to appropriate authorities
- Follow relevant local authority safeguarding procedures

9. Confidentiality and Data Protection

Safeguarding information is highly sensitive and will be handled in accordance with:

- The Council's Data Protection Policy
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- UK GDPR principles

Information will only be shared where necessary and lawful, and only with those who need to know.

10. Training and Awareness

- Councillors and staff will receive appropriate safeguarding awareness training
- Safeguarding responsibilities will be refreshed periodically
- New councillors and staff will be made aware of this policy upon appointment

Adopted: April 2026

Review date: