

Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland Safeguarding Adults Policy

Prepared by and date:	Reviewed by Julia Hanmer, December 2024
Approved by and date:	Board of Trustees, 10 December 2024
Next review date:	December 2025
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The Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland (known as BSBI) is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (8553976) and a charity registered in England and Wales (1152954) and in Scotland (SC038675). Registered office: Moore Kingston Smith LLP, 4 Beaconsfield Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL1 3RD, UK.	

Introduction

We believe that adults, particularly those who are vulnerable, should never experience abuse of any kind and that we have a responsibility to promote their welfare, to keep them safe and to behave in a way that protects them. Safeguarding adults is everyone's responsibility.

1. Context and Risk Management

- a. It is a requirement that all charities have a safeguarding policy together with processes and procedures to ensure that it is followed
- b. The public is increasingly subjected to stories related to a lack of appropriate safeguards, particularly where vulnerable adults are concerned
- c. The public's perception of a charity and its moral and ethical behaviour is critical to its reputation and ability to operate and fundraise successfully
- d. This Policy sets out how BSBI handles safeguarding adults. A separate policy sets out how BSBI handles safeguarding children and young people.
- e. Safeguarding Adults, especially Vulnerable Adults is everyone's responsibility.

2. Definitions

- a. Vulnerable Adult - anyone over 18 who could be or is unable to take care of themselves against significant harm or exploitation. They may be old or frail, or have needs for care and support (whether or not a local authority is meeting any of those needs) and be experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect and as a result be unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect. They may have a mental health problem, a disability, a sensory impairment, have some form of illness, or may

- suffer from drug or alcohol problems. They may be particularly vulnerable because of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- b. Volunteer – anyone leading or participating in an activity on behalf of BSBI. This could include, but is not limited to Vice-County Recorders, field, indoor or online meeting or training course leaders, trustees, members of BSBI committees or working groups
 - c. BSBI members – all members of whatever category
 - d. Other individuals – anyone engaged in BSBI activity or in contact with such
 - e. Serious breach – any incident which breaks the law in the country in which it occurred (UK, Ireland or elsewhere)
 - f. Safeguarding means taking all reasonable steps to:
 - prevent harm, particularly sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment from occurring
 - protect people, especially Vulnerable Adults, from that harm
 - to respond appropriately when harm does occur.

3. Policy and Application

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, trustees and members of BSBI and other individuals engaged with or affected by BSBI activity, in person or online.

4. Aim and Purpose

- a. All Adults, including Vulnerable Adults, should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a statutory responsibility to promote their welfare, to keep them safe and to behave in a way that protects them
- b. The purpose of this policy is to protect all adults who come into contact with BSBI, including those who work in and for it, from abuse
- c. It is to protect individuals who engage with Vulnerable Adults on behalf of the BSBI from unfounded allegations of abuse.

5. Legal and advisory framework

This policy has been drawn up having regard to:

- a. Care Act 2014
- b. Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- c. Mental Capacity Act 2005
- d. Disclosure and Barring checks for working with adults at risk
- e. Data Protection Act 1998
- f. Sexual Offences Act 2003
- g. Equality Act 2010
- h. Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- i. Relevant government guidance on safeguarding
- j. Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees (Charity Commission England and Wales).

Application of this policy must be adapted to meet current legislation and guidance applying to each country that BSBI is active in, as available online:

England & Wales	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-duties-for-charity-trustees
England & Wales	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-for-charities-and-trustees
Scotland	https://www.oscr.org.uk/guidance-and-forms/safeguarding-guidance-keeping-vulnerable-beneficiaries-safe/
Northern Ireland	https://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/charity-essentials/safeguarding-resources/
Republic of Ireland	https://www.charitiesregulator.ie/en/information-for-the-public/our-news/2020/february/charities-regulator-publishes-safeguarding-guidance-for-charities
Isle of Man	https://www.gov.im/categories/caring-and-support/safeguarding/
Guernsey	https://www.gov.gg/Adult-Safeguarding
Jersey	https://safeguarding.je/policies-strategies/

The policy is underpinned by the Six Principles of Adult Safeguarding set out by the Care Act, namely:

Empowerment: people are supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.

Prevention: it is better to take action before harm occurs.

Proportionality: the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.

Protection: support and representation for those in greatest need.

Partnership: services offer local solutions through working closely with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.

Accountability: accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

6. We recognise that:

- a. We have a duty to provide a safe and trusted environment for all adults who come in to contact with any BSBI activity, in person or online
- b. We have a particular duty to promote the welfare of Vulnerable Adults who may be more susceptible than others (see definition of a Vulnerable Adult)

- c. All adults, regardless of age, ability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have an equal right to protection from harm or abuse
- d. When working with children, young people or Vulnerable Adults, effective partnership with parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting their welfare and avoiding potential abuse or allegations of such. (See also BSBI Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy).

7. We will seek to keep adults safe by:

- a. Adopting a Safeguarding Adults Code of Conduct for staff, volunteers and members (see below) and consistently applying it
- b. Valuing, listening to and respecting all those who we work with, particularly Vulnerable Adults, and putting them and affected individuals at the centre of all that BSBI does
- c. Communicating regularly with staff, volunteers and members who work or engage with other adults, and in particular with Vulnerable Adults, at field or indoor meetings or through other means (e.g. online, email, social media), and advising them of this Policy, Code of Conduct and of good practice
- d. Providing opportunities for relevant learning and training
- e. Appointing two designated leads for Safeguarding and a Trustee to have oversight. NCVO provides [resources](#) and [referral guidance](#) (including for online harm) for these designated leads.
- f. Seeking to identify where and when we work with Vulnerable Adults and ensuring that staff and volunteers are suitable and legally able to act in their positions
- g. Ensuring we do not work regularly with Vulnerable Adults (defined as once a week or more on 4 or more days in 30, or overnight) unless a special risk assessment has been made and approved
- h. Publishing an effective online safety policy and related procedure
- i. Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff or volunteers appropriately
- j. Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- k. Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- l. Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for all our participants, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- m. Building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers and participants treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns
- n. Recording, storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance
- o. Sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, involving Vulnerable Adults as appropriate
- p. Recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- q. Having mature, accountable and transparent systems for response, reporting and learning when risks materialise
- r. Keeping our policies and procedures under review.

8. Confidentiality

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding matters. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need to know basis only, and should be kept secure at all times (password protected if kept electronically or in a locked file if hard copy).

9. Related Policies and Documents

- a. [Instructions for Leaders and Organisers of Field Meetings](#)
- b. [Privacy policy](#)
- c. Safeguarding policy for [Children and Young people](#)
- d. [Data handling policy](#)
- e. [Online Safety and Social Media policy](#)
- f. BSBI Governance Handbook
- g. BSBI Employee Handbook, including: Recruitment and Pre-Employment checks, Health and Safety Policy, Anti Bullying and Harassment policy, Whistleblowing procedure.
- h. BSBI Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy

10. Appendices

Appendix 1	BSBI Safeguarding Adults Code of Conduct
Appendix 2	BSBI Safeguarding Procedures - In case of safeguarding concern or incident
Appendix 3	BSBI Safeguarding reporting form
Further appendices to be added in due course:	
Appendix 4	Role of the Safeguarding Leads
Appendix 5	Permission form for taking images and sharing information

Appendix 1

BSBI Safeguarding Adults Code of Conduct

We believe that adults should never experience abuse of any kind and that we have a responsibility to promote their welfare, to keep them safe and to behave in a way that protects them. Safeguarding adults is everyone's responsibility.

This Code of Conduct aims to create a safe and trusted environment for all adults who come into contact with BSBI activity. It is to help to protect adults, particularly Vulnerable Adults, from abuse and inappropriate behaviour. It is also to protect staff and volunteers from unfounded allegations of abuse of children.

1. Applicability and enforcement

- a. This Safeguarding Adults Code of Conduct applies to all members of staff, volunteers and trustees operating on behalf of BSBI and BSBI members or other individuals engaged in BSBI activity. Any breaches of this Code of Conduct must be reported to the BSBI Safeguarding Leads, both of whom are DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checked:
Julia Hanmer tel: 07757 244651 email: julia.hanmer@bsbi.org
Jonathan Shanklin tel: 01223 571250 or 0758 648 6338 email: jdsh@bas.ac.uk
- b. Serious breaches (see definition in section 2 above) by any staff member, volunteer, BSBI member or other will result in a referral to a statutory agency, which may include the police or An Garda Síochána (Ireland), Local Authority social care department, the Independent Safeguarding Authority, the Charity Commission (England and Wales) or OSCR (Scotland) and the Health Service Executive.
- c. A breach of this Code of Conduct by staff may be regarded as a disciplinary offence under BSBI Staff Disciplinary Procedures.

2. What to do: staff, volunteers, BSBI members and others involved in BSBI activities must:

- a. observe this Safeguarding Adults Code of Conduct
- b. seek to promote a safe, trusted and respectful environment for all adults by:
 - treating all fairly, avoiding favouritism, being a good role model
 - ensuring language used is appropriate, is not deliberately offensive or discriminatory
 - ensuring the right to privacy is respected
 - following online safety guidelines
- c. ensure that any risk assessment for an activity takes Vulnerable Adults appropriately into account and that any contact with Vulnerable Adults is appropriate for the activity
- d. ensure that Vulnerable Adults feel safe and secure with other adults with whom they are in contact and agree to any sharing of information and images
- e. ensure that there is more than one adult present (within sight or hearing) during activities with Vulnerable Adults
- f. keep a tally of how frequently they work with Vulnerable Adults and if this approaches regular contact (defined as once a week or more, or on 4 or more days in 30, or overnight), report it to the BSBI Safeguarding Leads for advice
- g. report all concerns or allegations of breach of the Safeguarding Adults Policy and Code of Conduct to the **BSBI's Safeguarding Leads**, as soon as possible after the concern or allegation has been raised.

3. What not to do: staff, volunteers BSBI members and others involved in BSBI activities must not:

- a. subject an adult (vulnerable or not) to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect
- b. develop inappropriate relationships, sexually abuse or exploit individuals
- c. make promises not to report disclosures of abuse
- d. put themselves or others in a potentially vulnerable or compromising situation or behave in a way that may be open to misinterpretation by anyone
- e. allow concerns or allegations of abuse to go unreported
- f. work regularly with Vulnerable Adults (defined as once a week or more, or on 4 or more days in 30, or overnight) unless a special risk assessment has been made and approved.

Appendix 2

BSBI Safeguarding Procedures In case of safeguarding concern or incident

Roles:

DSL – Designated safeguarding leads:

Julia Hanmer

tel: +44 7757 244651

email: julia.hanmer@bsbi.org

Jonathan Shanklin

tel: +44 1223 571250/+44 758 648 6338

email: jdsh@bas.ac.uk

Safeguarding Trustee: Nicola Tainton

Timeline	If concern or incident is at a BSBI delivered event or activity	If concern or incident is when BSBI is delivering in partnership with another organisation, where the partner organisation are the safeguarding lead partner (e.g. their venue).
Immediate – if vulnerable adult is at imminent risk	<p>If an emergency call 999</p> <p>If not an emergency, make a written record (record your concerns or observations and sign and date these)</p>	<p>If an emergency call 999</p> <p>If not an emergency, make a written record (record your concerns or observations and sign and date these)</p>
Within 24 hours if incident ongoing or likely to happen again	<p>Call BSBI DSL</p> <p>Back at home/office – provide written copy of record to DSL</p> <p>DSL consult with Safeguarding Trustee and</p>	<p>Inform DSL of Partner organisation</p> <p>Call BSBI DSL</p> <p>Back at home/office – provide written copy of record to BSBI DSL</p> <p>BSBI DSL follow up with partner organisation’s DSL</p> <p>If appropriate, BSBI DSL consult with Safeguarding Trustee</p>

	Competent Authority/Local Authority Safeguarding Team*	
Within 7 days if general concern, no immediate harm	BSBI to make or NOT make a referral	If unhappy, BSBI DSL to follow up with Competent Authority/Local Authority Safeguarding Team
	DSL inform person reporting disclosure of action taken	DSL inform person reporting disclosure of action taken

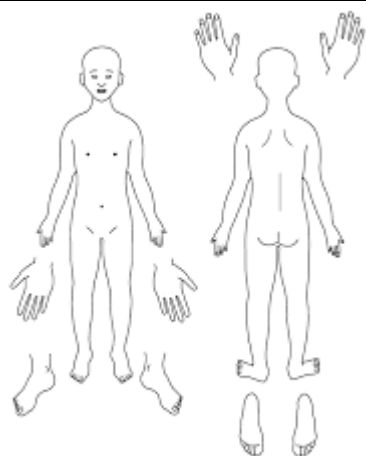
*Refer to the Local Authority for the location the BSBI event or activity, unless the concern relates to the child or young person's home life, in which case refer to the Local authority in which the child or young person is resident. Ann Craft Trust lists UK [Adult Safeguarding Boards](#) (note these are not always up to date – Social Services can always provide the latest contact)

Appendix 3 **BSBI Safeguarding Incident or Concern Reporting Form: PART 1**

Your name:	Your contact details (phone or email):
Who else was present during the incident or concern?	Today's date:
Name of BSBI event or activity at which incident or concern occurred	Name and contact details for Partner organisation(s) if co-delivered
Location of incident or concern:	Date and time of disclosure:
Name of child/children or young person/s or vulnerable adult(s) concerned (full name if possible)	Name and contact details of parent/carer of child, young person or vulnerable adult (if appropriate)

Please complete only relevant boxes
What was said by the child, young person or vulnerable adult or by the person alleging or suspecting abuse? <i>(Try and record the exact words said)</i>

Describe their emotional condition (your observations e.g. concern, worry, upset, crying) and physical condition (please use the diagram below to mark on the location of any injuries that you have seen, if relevant):



N.B. please DO NOT take any photos

Why were you concerned? Please say what it was that concerned you.
If you include your opinion here, please make sure it is substantiated

What did you say back to the child, young person or vulnerable adult?
(Try and record the exact words you used)

Your signature:

Date and time:

If Partner organisation is safeguarding lead:

Name, job title and contact details of Partner Organisation's Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Date and Time that the documents were handed over:

Where were you when you handed the document to the Partner's DSL?

Feedback / information provided by the Partner's Designated Safeguarding Lead when handover took place?

BSBI meeting/activity leader actions

NOW

1. If you believe the child or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger, you must contact 999 straight away (police/ambulance depending on help required)
2. Notify the BSBI DSL by phone, to inform them of the situation.
3. If Partner organisation is the Safeguarding lead – find the Partner Organisation's DSL (unless the DSL is the person against whom the allegation has been made, if that is the case find another senior member of staff) and pass this document to them (ideally physically in person, or failing that by phone or email) and verbalise your concerns. Make a photocopy or take a picture of your report and keep this.
4. Give this report (or your copy of the report, if the partner organisation is the lead) to the BSBI DSL as soon as practicable.

PART 2: Record for Concerns or Incidents of Abuse **(TO BE COMPLETED BY BSBI's DSL)**

DSL responsibilities and actions

BSBI's DSL/deputy is responsible for:

- completing Part 1 if information is not complete
- completing Part 2 of the Report (see information required below) and keeping it updated
- notifying the Trustee with safeguarding responsibility within 1 working day, that an incident has been reported and keeping the Trustee updated on progress
- if Partner organisation was safeguarding lead, following up the incident notification with the DSL of the partner
- establishing what (if any) action has been taken by the DSL of the partner and other agencies and noting this; there may be multiple entries, each separate entry should be dated
- reporting the incident to the next Board of Trustees meeting
- carrying out any actions which the Board of Trustees may advise
- maintaining a secure record of the incident for future reference (password protected if digital or locked file if hard copy).

Information required for completion of Part 2:

- confirmation that the named DSL responsible for ongoing action has been notified
- date of follow-up enquiry to partner organisation (if appropriate)
- action taken by partner organisation (if appropriate), date of follow-up enquiry establishing this information; may be multiple entries, each should be initialled by the DSL
- any other action, notes, concerns; to be updated as necessary.

For office use only			
Address of child, young person or vulnerable adult:	Parent/ guardian /carer name	Address of parent/guardian/carers (if different from address of child, young person or vulnerable adult):	
For children under 18: Date of birth of the child or young person:	Are there other agencies involved with this family? E.g. social services	Have the parents/guardians agreed to be referred?	
Actions taken	By who?	Date	Initials of DSL

Concern or Incident followed up on _____(date) with _____ (competent authority)

What action has been reported by others following BSBI's report?

BSBI actions complete:

DSL/Deputy signature: _____ Date: _____

Guidance Notes

Responding to a Concern or Incident

If someone tells you that they, or someone they know, are being abused:

- Believe what the person is saying and take it seriously
- Reassure the person who has made the disclosure to you that they have done the right thing.
- Give the person time to talk and do not probe or ask leading questions. Investigation is not your responsibility
- Do not promise to keep secrets. All allegations of harm or potential harm must be acted upon.

- Explain to the person that you will share this information with a senior member of BSBI who will ensure the appropriate procedures will be followed
- E-mails or text messages received giving details of suspected abuse should be immediately responded to within 24 hours (usually by contacting the person by phone or face-to-face to obtain further information)
- Record the event in accordance with BSBI's Safeguarding Policy.

Reporting Procedures – DO NOT DELAY

It is vitally important that any disclosure made in confidence is recorded factually as soon as possible; this is whether or not the matter is taken to another authority.

An accurate account should be made of:

- Date and time of what has occurred and the time the disclosure was made
- Names of people who were involved
- What was said or done by whom
- Names of person reporting and to whom reported

Remember...

The interests of the child or vulnerable adult are paramount

- In cases of suspected abuse all staff and volunteers have a responsibility to take action in the ways set out in BSBI's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy or BSBI's Safeguarding Adults Policy
- Immediate action, to refer or consult, is required where there is suspicion of abuse
- Investigation is the responsibility of the relevant Competent Authority's Children's Social Care Department and the Police. These agencies have to balance the necessity for action to protect the child or vulnerable adult with the potential adverse effects of an investigation on the family and/or others
- Record keeping is essential at each stage and all documents should be kept to the standards outlined in the policy.