



1. Policy Statement

The Ramblers is committed to safeguarding the well-being of children and vulnerable adults. We follow legislation and advice from various agencies to ensure that policies and procedures, based on best practice, are put in place for staff and volunteers to follow. It is recognised that the Ramblers is not a specialist organisation for working with children or vulnerable people, or offering direct support or care to individuals. We do provide activities in both rural and urban areas, where everybody is welcome to participate.

1.1 Introduction – The Role of the Ramblers

It is the role of the Ramblers to be responsible for responding actively and promptly to allegations of abuse that are brought to our attention, and to follow the procedures that are laid out in this document. It is not our role to deal with situations of abuse or decide if abuse has occurred.

1.2 The Ramblers will Safeguard Children and Vulnerable Adults by:

- Ensuring staff and volunteers, who work with children and vulnerable adults on a regular basis, are carefully selected and follow the recruitment procedure.
- Ensure our Equal Opportunities Policy is followed.
- Encouraging staff and volunteers to take responsibility and report any suspicions or allegations of abuse to us and relevant agencies, so that appropriate action is taken.
- Checking that activities which include children or vulnerable adults are suitable for their needs.
- Ensuring parents or carers are supervising children and vulnerable adults at all times, and relevant consent forms are completed.
- Adopting guidelines and procedures for staff and volunteers to follow.
- Providing staff and volunteers with support, training and awareness.

1.3 Agencies and Legislation

Social Services and the Police are the two main agencies that deal with safeguarding children. The Local Authority is responsible for co-ordinating cases that are reported to them and the Police are responsible for investigating criminal offences. In addition the NSPCC (in Scotland Children 1st) offer advice and the Capital Community Foundation, based in London, have provided the Ramblers with training and advice.

The Children's Act 1989 and 2004 (England) and the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003 is the current legislation for Safeguarding Children. Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 and The Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007.

The statutory guidance, "working together to safeguard children, 2006" states that safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility as 'every child matters'. The Care Standards Act 2000, Safety Vulnerable Groups' Act 2006, Mental Health Act 2007 is legislation that supports vulnerable adults. The government's 'no secrets' guidance, states that everybody has the ability to act intelligently in support of an adult at risk of abuse, where they cannot take action in their own defence.

Legislation also states that anybody who works or volunteers with children or vulnerable people on a regular basis should undergo a Criminal Records Bureau check. Rambler's current policy on this is that, at present, only staff-run projects which work specifically with community groups meet this criteria.

1.4 Definitions - Children and Vulnerable People

A Child is anyone under the age of 18. Aged range is from 0 -18 years.

A Vulnerable Adult is a Person who is 18 years of age or over and unable to care independently for themselves. This may be because they have a physical disability, experiencing mental health issues including dementia, have learning disabilities or due to illness, injury or have become severely frail, though old age. All which could be either a permanent or temporary state.