



Mid Somerset Camera Club

Safeguarding Policy

Aims:

The Club aims to be as inclusive as possible to all members of the community, including children, young people and adults who are at risk. The Club recognises that it has a responsibility to prevent any form of abuse to anyone, but especially to any child, young person or vulnerable adult. Such individuals are collectively referred to in this document as vulnerable individuals.

The aim of the Policy is to:

- assist members by setting out their responsibilities to safeguard vulnerable individuals
- provide guidance to members on adopting correct behaviours to protect vulnerable individuals and themselves under different circumstances that might arise in the Club.
- have a process in place for reporting allegations or suspicions of abuse.

All members, visitors and the public, especially vulnerable individuals, must be treated with respect and dignity, recognising any unique personal needs.

Adherence to the Policy is a condition of all grades of membership of the Club – a member's attention is drawn to the Policy on the joining form, along with other Club policies and rules.

In the case of children, their parent or guardian must countersign the form as acceptance of the Policy.

The Policy is available on the Club website.

Safeguarding procedures for children, young person and vulnerable adults:

In general, Club activities are relatively low risk in the context of safeguarding and accompanied vulnerable individuals are welcome.

Care should be taken to ensure that vulnerable individuals remain supervised by their appropriate person – the child's guardian or the vulnerable adult's carer.

Members should avoid lone contact with vulnerable individuals. Members should be aware that communication needs to be clear, unambiguous and appropriate.

When working with or alongside vulnerable individuals, members should make sure they can be observed by others, and preferably that the parent, guardian or carer is close by.



Members should not offer lifts to vulnerable individuals unless accompanied or authorised by a parent, guardian, or carer.

Outside events:

Members of the Club are sometimes invited by organisers of events to take photographs, give talks, or judge competitions. The Club encourages individual members to respond to such invitations.

Such events may bring members into contact with vulnerable individuals. If members are photographing these events by invitation, then it is the responsibility of the inviting organisation to get permission for the photography from parents, guardians or carers if required. Asking permission from all parents, guardians or carers may not be possible and it is sufficient to have notices at the event that photography has been arranged. These could give a contact point for people who do not want photographs taken at the event. The member dealing with the initial request should ask the organisers to ensure that such arrangements are in place. This should be done such that the request and reply are on record, for example by e-mail.

Disclosure:

Abuse is any behaviour towards a person that deliberately or unknowingly causes them harm, endangers life, or violates their rights. Abuse may be:

- Physical,
- Sexual,
- Psychological - repeatedly being made to feel unhappy, humiliated, afraid or devalued by others,
- Financial or material - stealing or denying access to money or possessions,
- Neglect,
- Discriminatory - abuse motivated by discriminatory attitudes on any unlawful ground.

If a vulnerable individual were to disclose abuse to a member, that member should take such a disclosure seriously. It is important that the complainant feels believed and supported no matter what is said and the member should

- assure the vulnerable individual that their concerns are being taken seriously and will be dealt with,
- take appropriate steps to remove the vulnerable individual from any immediate harm,
- make a written note of the conversation,
- inform the Club Chair and Club Secretary

The Club Chair and Secretary should then take immediate steps as appropriate. These may vary depending on the gravity of the disclosure but must include informing the vulnerable individual's guardian, parent, or carer. If what is notified appears potentially criminal, the police should be informed. In which case the Club Chair should let the parent, guardian or carer know that this is the Club's response.



Portrait / Model nights

Portrait / Model nights are a potential risk due to the interaction between Club members and models, who are typically from outside the Club. Some basic rules which will ensure that no issues arise are:

- Models should be treated with respect at all times,
- It is better not to use the imperative when asking for pose changes. “Will you...could you...I wonder if you would...” are all preferred to direct instructions – “move your head...turn to me etc.”
- Nobody should touch the model. Any adjustment to hair, clothing etc. should be done by the model and never by the photographer.
- No risqué shots should be requested or taken at club events, no matter how willing the model is.
- All contact after the event will continue to be through the member who introduced the model. If any member wishes to ask the model to work with them subsequently, they must make any such request through the introducing member. Models should not be directly asked for their contact details.

Definition of Vulnerable adults;

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 or over who “is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or themselves, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation”.

ref: No secrets: guidance on protecting vulnerable adults in care, Department of Health, 2000, available at www.gov.uk/government/publications search on ‘vulnerable adults’. This reference may need to be updated as the Care Act 2014 redefined the definition of vulnerability.

Some people are always vulnerable, such as those mentioned above who are in need of community care services, but any person may be vulnerable at times. This Policy could therefore be relevant to the treatment of any Club member.