

HUMLEDON OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION

POLICY & PROCEDURES FOR PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE PEOPLE

Assisting with *HOAA* activities may involve substantial contact with young and vulnerable people. *HOAA* is committed to the safety and welfare of people with special needs and is anxious to follow good practice in relation to protection procedures and to comply with all relevant guidance and legislation as it emerges in order to protect young or vulnerable people from the threat of abuse.

The *HOAA* Committee has now adopted the following protection procedure, which applies to all its adult helpers.

1. All new helpers aged eighteen or over, including members of the committee, are required to reassure the Association that they pose no threat to the vulnerable members whom they will be assisting. This reassurance must be given in writing, using the *HOAA* Personal Disclosure Form PD2. Whilst aware that all methods are imperfect, as information can be falsified or may be inadequate, the *HOAA* committee believes that the ability to take up references and to make checks will deter any potential abusers.
2. In addition, all activity leaders, committee members, drivers, helpers involved with swimming or residential activities and all who may be left alone in a supervisory role with a *HOAA* member are required to provide an enhanced DBS disclosure. This disclosure is free of charge to the volunteer.
3. Volunteers who assist only on an occasional basis and who do not have frequent or close contact with vulnerable adults or children will not be required to complete either a Personal Disclosure or a DBS application.
4. The Association will abide by the guidance currently provided by the Disclosure and Barring Service.
5. Those waiting for a disclosure or not requested to provide one may help with activities but cannot be an activity leader. If you are in that position both you and we have a responsibility to ensure that you are not left alone with a vulnerable person at any time.
6. It is the responsibility of *HOAA* under the above guidance to report to the DBS **any** worker or volunteer who is removed because they pose a threat to children or vulnerable adults or indeed who leaves whilst under investigation for allegedly causing harm or posing a risk and to refer to the DBS any individual whose conduct is of concern. (The DBS has the responsibility of assessing the risk.)
7. It is an offence to engage in regulated activity when barred by the DBS.
8. Any information declared or coming to the attention of *HOAA* through the procedures outlined in this policy document will be treated as strictly confidential with the exception of any information concerned with convictions, allegations or disciplinary action relating to the abuse of children or vulnerable adults. Such details must be made available to other appropriate individuals, organisations and authorities.
9. A criminal record unrelated to matters of safeguarding will not necessarily prevent a person working with *HOAA* as a volunteer but may need to be discussed.
10. *HOAA* has two Association Protection Officers (APOs) who may ask individuals to complete PD2 or to apply for a disclosure. They will provide advice on all protection issues and answer any questions on the completion of the required forms. Those required to apply for DBS clearance must show their DBS Disclosure when received to one of the APOs who will then act upon the information as outlined in this policy maintaining personal confidentiality so far as it is permitted.

Association Protection Officers

- 1) Chris May Tel: 0191 548 3715
52 Shields Road, Seaburn Dene, Sunderland.
- 2) Phil Puckrin Tel: 01904 654 302
55 Jamieson Terrace, South Bank, York

11. A DBS Disclosure is the property of the person concerned but the APOs jointly will need to maintain a record of DBS Disclosure numbers and dates together with relevant outcome information. Other information may be retained with the subject's permission for a period when there is purpose in doing so. Such information, its manner of storage and location will remain confidential to each APO. Any information obtained from a DBS Disclosure alone will be destroyed when a member resigns from the Association but see paragraph 13 below.

12. It is the responsibility of all members and helpers to remain vigilant to any possible abuse and report any incidents of concern as follows:-

Procedure to be followed in case of an incident

1 If you suspect a person is being abused or if you receive an allegation about yourself or another person:-

- a) Immediately tell either Protection Officer (or committee member or activity leader if these are not available).
- b) Record the facts and give a copy to the person you have reported to.
- c) Ensure that the person has access to an independent adult.
- d) Take precautions to ensure that the situation cannot continue.

2 If a member reports to you that they have been the subject of abuse:-

- b) Allow them to speak without interruption.
- c) Offer support but do not promise to keep what is said confidential.
- d) No investigation or questioning is to be undertaken.
- e) Continue as in 1 a-d

13. Following any allegation a clear and comprehensive summary must be kept by the Association Protection Officer and all others involved of the allegations made, details of how they were followed up and resolved, and details of any action taken and decisions reached. A copy should be given to the individual against whom the allegation was made and the original will be retained on file even if the individual leaves the Association, at least until the person reaches normal retirement age or for 10 years if that will be longer. Alternatively, should it be more practicable, the information may be passed to a competent authority for similar safekeeping. The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference. It will provide clarification in cases where a future DBS Disclosure reveals information from the police that an allegation was made but did not result in a prosecution or a conviction and it will prevent unnecessary re-investigation if, as sometimes happens, allegations re-surface after a period of time.