

## A Focus On Nature

### The UK's Youth Nature Network

## Safeguarding Position Statement – 2017

Since its formation in 2011, A Focus on Nature has sought to encourage and connect young people aged 16 to 30 who share a passion for the natural world. Successfully utilising a combination of social media, events and mentorship, reaching over 1000 individuals. We recognise that these activities will result in incidental interaction with both children and potential vulnerable adults. It is therefore a top priority that safeguarding is embedded into all our actions, with a coherent and comprehensive policy that reduces the risk of our community members suffering physical, sexual or emotional harm.

### Background

Safeguarding is of course a highly important issue, ensuring the upmost is done to protect our children and vulnerable adults must always be a priority. Issues around safeguarding have recently attracted significant public attention, with a number of widely reported tragic incidents. As an organisation we must work to reduce the risks of such incidents taking place within our networks. This has therefore reinforced the need for a safeguarding policy which is currently being prepared, with help of the RSPB among other organisations.

### Main Points

- Though AFON is voluntary led organisation, this cannot compromise the safety of young people and vulnerable adults who engage with our networks.
- Three main areas have been identified which pose potential safeguarding risks;
  1. Our online presence with through our social media and web based platforms.
  2. Our mentoring programme which is currently available to people aged 18 -30.
  3. Our events programme, which welcomes young people to network with others and learn new skills which can benefit their career opportunities.
- The primary aim of our procedures will be to protect young people and vulnerable adults who engage with our opportunities. The procedures also safeguard our volunteers, mentors and committee members against false accusation.
- We will adopt procedures that appropriately manage all committee members, mentors and volunteers who have the potential to engage with our youth network. When required



disclosure checks, held by the Discloser and Barring Service will be attained.

- One of the Committee members, (currently the Creative Director) will be responsible to ensure that our safeguarding policy is adhered to, and take a lead if an incident were to occur.
- All committee members will undertake an induction to ensure they are aware of safeguarding issues.
- We will need to be aware of and satisfied by the safeguarding policy of any organisation that we collaborate with.
- Gather consent from individual or parent, if we are to photo members – especially if these photos will enter the public domain.
- While it is not possible to guarantee the safety of children or vulnerable adults, we aspire for our policy and procedures to be comprehensive, to ensure that we are at the forefront of voluntary conservation organisations, but never be complacent.
- We will review our procedures as our experience grows in this area, or if government advice changes.

We are currently finalising our official policy which will be released soon, if you have any questions regarding safeguarding please contact Elliot Newton AFON's Creative Director at

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