



Safeguarding and Welfare Policy

Date on which this policy was approved by the Committee 5 November 2024

Date on which this policy was reviewed and amended i)

Date at which this policy is due for next review November 2026

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INTRODUCTION

Safeguarding and welfare is everyone's responsibility!

Everyone deserves to be happy and secure when attending events at Aultbea Hall so this policy is intended to promote the health, safety and wellbeing of all, whatever their age or interest. Over and above this, there are specific responsibilities with respect to children, young people and vulnerable adults, based on guidance developed by NHS Highland Health Improvement and the Highland Child Protection Committee, in order to ensure potential harms have been considered and that practices have been put in place to ameliorate risks so that parents and carers can be confident that those responsible for Aultbea Hall and the organisers of events held there are trustworthy, caring and will do everything they can to keep a child, young person or vulnerable adult safe from harm.

A. RESPONSIBILITIES

- i. **Everyone** organising and attending events and activities in Aultbea Hall is responsible, as an individual and/or as part of a group, for engaging with others in a safe way and treating people with respect and dignity.
- ii. **Aultbea Hall's Management Committee** recognises their individual and collective responsibility to provide a healthy and safe environment for all engaged in Hall events and activities. In that role, Committee members should be prepared to set the example that we wish others to follow and challenge inappropriate behaviour if witnessed.

The Committee accepts particular responsibility to ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults experience a safe environment. Several Committee members have considerable experience and training with respect to involvement with child-specific activities and are on the PVG register.

Note: the Management Committee does not routinely or directly organise regular group activities / events such as Scouts, Youth Club, or school parties, though individual members may be involved in their own right. However, it will, on occasion, organise and host fund-raising and/or social events such as dances, ceilidhs and community gatherings and, in such cases, will take on the responsibilities required of all external organisers.

- iii. **A nominated member of the Committee** will advise to ensure that appropriate procedures and practices are in place to ensure the welfare of everyone and the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults engaged in events and activities at Aultbea Hall.
(See Appendix 2 for names and contact details)
- iv. **The Safeguarding Lead** is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Safeguarding and Welfare policy and practices. (See Appendix 2 for the name and contact details)
- v. **All event and activity organisers** are required to make themselves aware of Aultbea Hall Risk Assessments, as relevant, (file in hallway), and to ensure that any necessary additional event-specific Risk Assessments have been prepared and submitted to the Hall Committee (via the Booking Clerk) at least three days in advance of the booked activity.
- vi. **All event and activity organisers** should make themselves aware as to the location of First Aid boxes and the nearest defibrillator (which is on the wall of the Aultbea Nursery, just across the road from the Hall).
- vii. **Groups responsible for events and activities that involve children, young people and vulnerable adults** will be required to have in place a Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy and to nominate a named individual who should be PVG checked through Disclosure Scotland. This person should be clear as to safeguarding and welfare issues and where to source appropriate help and advice. Aultbea Hall has its own Safeguarding and Welfare policy and procedures and can provide Highland Council's guidance for reference.

B. EXPECTATIONS WITH RESPECT TO GENERAL WELFARE ISSUES

- i. Organisers of events generally intended for adults shall be responsible for ensuring the care of any children attending. No unaccompanied persons under the age of 16 should be admitted to any such event, with the expectation that the parent/carer will supervise those attending aged under 16.
- ii. Our *Conditions of Let* (point 11) stipulate 'No Smoking', 'No Vaping', and 'No Drugs' and these requirements must be enforced.
- iii. Alcohol can only be sold according to the *Conditions of Let* which require the event organisers to obtain and abide by all necessary licences. Should alcohol be available for an event, then it is the responsibility of the organiser to ensure that
 - those serving the alcohol have been appropriately trained/advised with respect to measures, alcohol strengths, how to encourage responsible drinking (including driving-related advice, both immediate and next-day) and what to do if under-age attendees are attempting to acquire alcoholic drinks
 - children are not present in the bar area
 - as advised under 'Challenge 25', require appropriate ID to be shown whenever there is doubt as to age
 - alcohol is not made available to anyone whose behaviour suggests they have consumed in excess
 - drinking water is always available
 - a quiet, safe space is made available for those who require support following excessive alcohol consumption.
- iv. The organisers of events and activities should do their utmost to promote a culture that does not permit of gender or sexual-based violence, harassment or abuse. This includes being aware that well-intentioned behaviours and actions (e.g. hugs, jokes, horseplay) can be misinterpreted. Organisers should have in place strategies/measures to address any related situations that might arise, including a 'safe space' and supportive listener(s).

Note: template risk assessments are available to support those organising large scale public events, including where alcohol is available.

C. AWARENESS, REPORTING AND MONITORING OF SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

- i. As stipulated in the *Conditions of Let* (point 10) all user groups involving children must have a child protection/safeguarding policy in place and at least one of the activity leaders must have been PVG checked via Disclosure Scotland.
It is expected that the organisation's policy for Child Protection will cover:
 - that any disclosures, allegations or concerns about abuse or risk of abuse (see Appendix for Definitions) with respect to a young person should be accepted at face value by whoever receives it and be reported as soon as reasonably possible to the organising group's safeguarding lead in the relevant school/group, or to Highland Council Social Services or police
 - that any disclosures, allegations or concerns about abuse or risk of abuse (see Appendix 1 for Definitions) with respect to a vulnerable adult should be accepted by whoever receives it at face

value and be reported as soon as reasonably possible to the organising group's Safeguarding Lead who will liaise with Highland Council Social Services or police

- that, if there is an immediate danger to an individual child, young person or vulnerable adult and the safeguarding lead is not available, police or social services should be contacted immediately.

- ii. Any general concerns about safeguarding/child protection during an event or activity should be raised with the organiser as soon as possible. More broadly, concerns about a child or young person should be shared with a professional as soon as possible for advice and support. This might be a Head Teacher, Health Visitor or Youth Worker. They will know how to respond to concerns about a child's wellbeing and advise of the next steps. Concerns that a child may be at risk of harm from abuse or neglect should be referred to one of the Highland Council's Social Work Department's Family Teams. Concerns that a child is at immediate risk of harm should be referred to the Police without delay.
- iii. Whilst it is likely that children will attend events and activities in Aultbea Hall accompanied by, or organised by, responsible adults (be it parent/carer/teacher/youth group leader), we must recognise that there may be occasion for other adults to have unsupervised contact with children. It is also possible that vulnerable adults will participate in Hall activities. So there is always the potential of unacceptable behaviour and everyone should be alert to this.
- iv. Should any young person or vulnerable adult engaged in activities in Aultbea Hall choose to disclose abuse to a representative of Aultbea Hall, immediate reference should be made, via the Safeguarding Lead (or a Committee Officer if the Safeguarding Lead is unavailable) to the Highland Council Social Services Department or to the named person or safeguarding lead in the relevant organisation. Confidentiality must not, and cannot, be promised. Any disclosure should not be discussed with other Hall representatives, family members, or people in the community.

Notes: Any disclosure should be regarded as a plea for help with a problem that needs to be taken further. It is not the role of anyone in the Aultbea Hall organisation to come to any conclusion as to whether or not abuse has taken place and certainly not to investigate any allegations. The individual making a disclosure should be given a safe space, listened to, preferably with a witness agreed by that individual, but not questioned. Making assumptions should be avoided where possible. Notes should be made of the conversation, taking care to record the timing, setting and who was present, as well as what was said.

D. PHOTOGRAPHING, VIDEOING AND FILMING

Facebook and websites are a great way to promote events and activities. However, everyone has a right to privacy and there is evidence that some people have used activities as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of children. We therefore advise event organisers to adopt the following good practice, as recommended in the Child and Adult Protection Guidance for Community Groups in the Highlands (March 2012).

- i. Consent should be obtained from the parent or carer of a child or from any adult whose picture may be taken or used and, in the case of adults who lack capacity to consent, the guardian or carer
- ii. No unsupervised access or one-to-one sessions will be permitted unless this is absolutely necessary and has been approved by the child, or vulnerable adult and their parent/ guardian/carer.
- iii. No personal information that could identify a child or adult or place them at risk e.g. full name, home and/or, e-mail address, telephone number, dates, place/times activities take place, will be recorded.
- iv. Children or vulnerable adults will not be depicted in a provocative, demeaning or tasteless manner.
- v. The right is reserved at all times to prohibit the use of photography, film or video at any event or activity with which the Hall is associated.
- vi. Any concerns about the use of photographs and films should be reported to the Safeguarding Lead.

APPENDIX 1

Definitions

These lists are not definitive but are provided as guidance

a) Abuse

Abuse is the violation of an individual's human rights, be it a single act or repeated acts.

For children it might be

- ❖ inflicting physical harm such as hitting
- ❖ sexual (rape, sexual assault)
- ❖ emotional/psychological, such as threats, humiliation and harassment
- ❖ neglect, such as withholding food or heating
- ❖ an omission to act to safeguard welfare

For vulnerable adults it might also be

- ❖ being manipulated financially
- ❖ misusing medication
- ❖ exposure to sexual acts without informed consent
- ❖ exploitation
- ❖ being discriminated against.

b) Vulnerable adults

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 or over who

- ❖ is living in residential accommodation, such as a care home or a residential special school
- ❖ is living in sheltered housing or receiving domiciliary care in their own home
- ❖ is receiving any form of healthcare
- ❖ is detained in lawful custody or under the supervision of the probation services
- ❖ is receiving support, assistance or advice by any person, the purpose of which is to develop an individual's capacity to live independently in accommodation or support their capacity to do so
- ❖ is receiving a service or participating in an activity for people who have particular needs because of their age or who have any form of disability requires assistance in the conduct of their own affairs.

APPENDIX 2

Key contacts

Safeguarding Lead	Jean Ross	01445 731277 (H)
Nominated advisers (with PVG registration)	Jean Ross Kerry Ann Darlington Fiona Mackenzie	
Gairloch Police Station		101 / 999
Gairloch Medical Centre		01445 712229
Social Services for our area	(Claire Ross)	01478 613825
	Practice Lead (Care and Protection)	

Further information about Child Protection training and guidance can be found at www.hcpc.scot