



# **SWANSEA RAILWAY MODELLERS' GROUP**

## Child and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Document and Policy

*It is not a statutory requirement for CRB checks to be undertaken on volunteers working in hobby groups. However, good practice encourages that a policy document and practice advice are at least the minimum requirements for organisations such as SRMG to ensure that the safety and best interests of children and young people / vulnerable adults are promoted at all times.*

### **1 Introduction**

The Club Committee has an overall responsibility for monitoring membership applications, maintaining an overview of safeguarding issues and reviewing those and any policies which govern them as necessary.

### **Equal Opportunities Statement**

Swansea Railway Modellers' Group [SRMG] is open to all. Club membership is based on a hobby interest, and membership is not restricted except in that the applicant has professed an interest in joining the club and agrees to meet a requirement to comply with the rules and constitution of the club. The application and confirmation of membership process does not lend itself to any formal vetting process.

The club recognises that there is a need to ensure that no individual, adult or child, is treated any less favourably than others. The club recognises that all people, **without exception**, have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, ability, religious beliefs or sexual identity.

### **General principles**

SRMG recognises that all organisations which make provision for children, young people and vulnerable adults must ensure that:

- The welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount
- All, whatever their gender, ethnicity, ability, religious beliefs or sexual identity, have the right to protection from abuse
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately

- All members of SRMG have a responsibility to report any concerns regarding abuse or poor practice to either the Club's Chair or Secretary for appropriate action to follow

## **2 Policy Statement and aims**

- A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989)
- A vulnerable person may be defined as one who by reason of disability, age or illness may be unable to take care of or unable to protect him or herself against harm or exploitation
- **Every** person has a duty of care to safeguard all children or other vulnerable persons involved in the club activities from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may also be vulnerable must be taken into account
- SRMG will ensure the safety and protection of both groups within the club and for children under the age of 16 there is a requirement for them to be accompanied by an appropriate adult at all times
- The aim of SRMG is to promote good and safe practice by providing children, young people and vulnerable adults with appropriate safety and protection whilst using the facilities in or participating in the activities of the club.

## **3 Promoting Good Practice**

- The abuse of children or vulnerable adults can arouse strong emotions in those facing such situations. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with an individual's judgement about the appropriate action to take. All concerns or allegations of abuse must be taken seriously and reported to the Chair or Secretary of the Club's Committee. They are required to fully record such reports and take such action as is appropriate. This may include involving the police or other appropriate body.
- Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and club environment. It is recognised that some individuals will actively seek voluntary work or other contacts with young people in order to harm them.
- The club rules require that any child under the age of 16 years is accompanied at all times by a parent or nominated guardian and that person will be responsible for the child's welfare whilst at the club.

## **4 Good Practice Guidelines**

All club members are required to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to promote the welfare of all and reduce the likelihood of allegations being made. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture within the club:

- Always working in an open environment [eg. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets]
- Treating all young people/vulnerable adults equally, with respect and dignity
- Always putting the welfare of each young person first
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance at all times
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust
- Making club membership fun and enjoyable, promoting the hobby at all times
- Ensuring that if **any** form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided by the attending parent or guardian in the first instance and only in an emergency will another club member intervene
- Involving parents/carers through encouraging and requiring them to take responsibility for their children and ensuring that their child is supervised at all times on club premises and during club activities in accordance with the club rules
- Being a role model – this includes not smoking whilst on Club premises
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- Recognising the developmental needs and abilities of young people and disabled adults – avoiding competition and not pushing them against their will
- Securing parental consent in writing as part of the membership application process to ensure that the parent knows and will comply with the club rules for protection of children
- If the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment, to keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given and the circumstances leading to any injury
- If any activity requires transport for young people in a member's car, that will **only** be when the child or young person is accompanied by the parent or guardian in the vehicle.
- Should there ever be any need to transport a child home from the Club [or a Club activity] and their parent or guardian not be available or able to give consent for some reason, this should only be undertaken with two Club members present at all times.

### **Practices to be avoided**

- Spending time alone with children away from others should be avoided except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable, it should be with the full knowledge and consent of the child's parents.

However, if the club rules on parent/guardian supervision are followed, this should not occur.

### **Practices never to be sanctioned**

No club member or visitor should ever :

- Make discriminatory remarks or prejudicial comments about, for eg., ethnicity, physical ability, gender or sexual orientation
- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- Fail to act upon and record any allegations made by a child
- Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults
- Invite or allow children to stay anywhere unsupervised

### **N.B.**

- In the event of the parent or guardian of the child becoming incapacitated, it may be necessary for someone to provide support, particularly if they are disabled. Anything done during such times should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parent/guardian where this is possible, otherwise no less than two members should be present
- However, members or visitors should avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which they are not appropriately trained.
- The child or young person should be made aware what you are doing and given choices where possible
- Contact with another relative or appropriate authority should be made as soon as possible in such circumstances

### **Incidents that must be reported/recorded**

If any of the following occurs within the club or its outside activities, members should report this immediately to a Committee Member who will record the incident and ensure that appropriate action follows

- If the child is hurt

- If he/she seems distressed in any manner
- If a child misunderstands or misinterprets something that has been done

Whilst the club's rules should ensure that parent/guardian is aware of the above, if for any reason this is not the case, a Committee Member will ensure that the parent/guardian of the child is made aware.

Similarly, should a vulnerable adult become hurt, appear distressed or misunderstand / misinterpret something that has been done, the matter should be reported to the Chair or Deputy Chair for appropriate action to follow.

### ***5 Use of photographic / filming equipment***

There is evidence that *some* people use clubs and social events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled people.

There is no intention of preventing club members from using video and photographic equipment for recording club activities. However, parents/guardians should be made aware if a child or young person is to be part of that record and their consent obtained. It is particularly important that such consent also considers the possibility of the use of that film or picture on social or other public media.