

British Plant Gall Society

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

The Society

The British Plant Gall Society (hereafter BPGS) is an adult and family membership organisation. Its principal aims are to promote the study and recording of Plant Galls. The Society is entirely run by volunteers and employs no staff. It does not provide activities designed exclusively for children and young people. However, it may organise activities that may be attended by individuals aged under 18 as well as adults regarded to be at risk.

Our safeguarding commitment

The Society believes that nobody (a child, young person, adult at risk or any other person) should ever experience abuse of any kind. The Society recognises that it has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all regardless of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation who partake in its activities. Accordingly, the Society is committed to safeguarding all such groups that it comes into contact with and to protect them from harm during its activities.

The Policy

This Policy applies to all BPGS members and anyone participating in the Society's activities. It aims to provide the principles that guide its approach to protecting vulnerable people and the practical steps it takes when concerns are raised about abuse and mistreatment.

The Policy recognises vulnerable people as:

- Children and young people up to the age of 18;
- Adults aged over 18 "at risk" – anyone with social care needs. This includes adults with learning or physical disability, a physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise (including addictions) or reduced physical and mental capacity. The Society recognises that the "risk" may be temporary and determined by the activity an adult is taking part in and not solely on their personal characteristics or circumstances.

The Policy aims to:

- Ensure that those who are and who are not members of the BPGS are protected from abuse or other mistreatment when participating in its activities;
- Ensure that BPGS members working with children, young people and adults at risk, understand and accept responsibility for helping to safeguard those vulnerable individuals they are interacting with;
- Ensure that such safeguarding is a primary consideration when the Society plans any activity, event or project.

Importantly, the Society recognises that life choices are a matter for the individual and will be respected by the BPGS.

Legal framework

This Policy has been drawn up with due consideration of legislation regarding safeguarding of these vulnerable groups, including safeguarding guidance provided by such organisations as the Charity Commission for England & Wales.

Policy review

The Policy will be reviewed and amended as necessary on an annual basis by the BPGS Management Committee and any alterations will be brought to the attention of Society members at the Annual General Meeting (or otherwise as needed).

Level of involvement

The Society's current assessment of its involvement with children, young people and adults at risk is "infrequent", defined as participation in activities with minimal physical contact where no intimate care is provided and no child is permitted to take part unless accompanied or supervised by a parent or guardian.

Photography

Photography of people as well as wildlife is an integral part of the BPGS's activities and it reserves the right to publish images of its events. It is policy to obtain parental permission before taking and/or publishing images of children under 18.

Safeguarding procedures

Concerns relating to safeguarding and queries regarding the BPGS Policy should be referred in the first instance to the Secretary of the Society. All such communications will be treated in strictest confidence.

The Society seeks to keep all safe during its activities by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting participants;
- To regularly review safeguarding approach and best procedures that reflect best practice of the BPGS;
- If necessary, to ensure that any concerns and relevant information which may lead to further action is referred to relevant agencies;
- Not tolerating bullying;
- Using indoor venues that conform to current Health & Safety standards for such places;
- Ensure that proper risk assessment has been conducted when arranging field visits;
- Recording and storing information, in a confidential manner, that relates to safeguarding issues;
- Remind all members of their responsibilities in ensuring the Society Safeguarding Policy is adhered to;
- Ensuring that any member not respecting the BPGS Policy will have membership withdrawn.