

The Green Party of England & Wales

Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

This Safeguarding Policy was adopted by the Green Party Executive in March 2019. It is subject to regular review, based on best practice.

The policy was last reviewed in October 2022. The next review is due Autumn 2023.

For any safeguarding issues or concerns **contact:** safeguarding@greenparty.org.uk.

If you believe a child, young person or at-risk adult is at immediate risk of abuse or neglect, your first action should always be to report your concerns to the police by phoning 999 (in emergency) or 101 (if abuse or neglect suspected but it is not an emergency). You may also report your concerns to your local authority.

The Green Party's Safeguarding Team is made up of:

- Green Party Executive Lead for Safeguarding
- Safeguarding Officer: Chief Executive
- Safeguarding Assistant: Head of Governance

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1. Safeguarding Policy

1.1 Introduction and purpose of this document

No child, young person or at risk adult¹ should be harmed through their involvement with the Green Party or through contact with the Green Party and its members.

This policy puts in place systems, processes, and responsibilities across the Green Party for the protection and safeguarding of all children, young people and at risk adults, who come into contact with the Party.

The Green Party is committed to a Party culture where all Green Party members understand their responsibilities and act on them.

The Green Party understands that safeguarding is a process and that the party's approach is subject to ongoing refinement and improvement.

This Safeguarding Policy is delivered through the Green Party's [Safeguarding Procedures](#).

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An at risk adult is one who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs)
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect

1.2 How we define safeguarding

Safeguarding is the actions we take to protect children and adults at risk from actual or potential harm resulting from their contact with any part of the Party. Safeguarding includes recognising signs of physical or emotional abuse or neglect, or any circumstances that might facilitate these, reporting those concerns and acting appropriately to remove them.

The four types of abuse of children are defined as:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

<https://www.met.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/caa/child-abuse/what-is-child-abuse/>

The ten types of abuse of adults are defined as:

- Physical abuse
- Domestic violence or abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological or emotional abuse
- Finance or material abuse
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational or institutional abuse
- Neglect or acts of commission
- Self neglect

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance#safeguarding-1>

In the UK, the foundations of safeguarding legislation are held within the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) for children, and for adults, the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) as well as the [UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) (applicable to both adults and children).

The key legislative framework supporting this policy includes: the [Children Act 1989](#), the [Human Rights Act 1998](#), the [Children Act 2004](#), the [Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#), the [Mental Capacity Act 2005](#), the [Health and Social Care Act 2008](#), the [Care Act 2014](#), the [Care and Support Statutory Guidance \(Chapter 14\)](#), [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#), the [Equality Act 2010](#) and the policy document [Working together to safeguard children 2018](#).

1.3 Who this policy aims to protect

The policy applies to children, young people and adults at risk.

For the purpose of this policy, children are defined as anyone under the age of 14.

Department for Education guidance on safeguarding children can be found [here](#).

Young people are defined as people between the ages of 14 and 17.

An adult at risk is any person who is aged 18 years or over and at risk of abuse or neglect because of their needs for care and or support. Further NHS guidance of safeguarding at risk adults can be found [here](#).

The Green Party is committed to following the Six Principles set out by The Care Act 2014 to underpin the safeguarding of adults at risk:

Empowerment People are supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.

Prevention It is better to take action before harm occurs.

Proportionality The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.

Protection Support and representation for those in greatest need.

Partnership Services offer local solutions through working closely with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.

Accountability Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

1.4 Responsibilities

The Green Party's Safeguarding Policy is embedded at every level of the Green Party, through the following safeguarding procedures:

- All **Green Party members** agree to follow the Safeguarding Commitment, which sets out our individual safeguarding responsibilities including obligations to report concerns. Green Party staff members are also required to agree to the Safeguarding Commitment.
- All **Chairs of local Green Parties** are responsible for implementing the policy in their local party, maintaining safe boundaries for all children, young people and adults at risk involved in their local Party.
- Every Green Party **region** has a safeguarding champion, who supports local parties in the region to implement the safeguarding policy. The Young Greens also have a safeguarding champion.
- The **Chief Executive** of the Party serves as the Green Party's Safeguarding Officer and receives and acts upon all reports of concern about the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk: safeguarding@greenparty.org.uk;
- The **Green Party Executive** has an Executive Lead for Safeguarding who is responsible for offering advice and support on the development and implementation of the Policy: management@greenparty.org.uk;
- The Green Party Executive is responsible for overall implementation of the policy alongside **Green Party Regional Council**, who has responsibility for wider party welfare.

1.5 Information Sharing

Information shared with the Safeguarding Team will be subject to our [Data Protection Policy](#). We recognise that everyone has a right to know that information they share will be regarded as confidential but also to be informed about the circumstances, and reasons, when we are obliged to share information. For questions on this, please speak with your local safeguarding lead or email dataprotection@greenparty.org.uk.

We are also guided by the advice in [this document](#): *“Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers”* (HM Government, July 2018). We follow “the seven golden rules to sharing information” (from [this guide](#)):

1. Remember that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. Seek advice from other practitioners, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.
5. Consider safety and well-being: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and upto-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely (see principles).
7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

1.6 Relationships with other policies

The behaviour of our members is governed by the [Code of Conduct](#) and matters of dispute and complaint are dealt with through the [Complaints Procedure](#). Issues where members behaviour falls short of the Safeguarding commitment will be dealt with via the disciplinary process which is governed by [Standing Orders for Party Discipline](#).

In addition the Party has other policies which may well apply in circumstances where safeguarding is not appropriate e.g. when it concerns adults who are not at risk. This includes the [Member Whistleblowing \(Raising Concerns\) Procedure](#) and the Bullying & Harassment Policy (currently under review)

2. Safeguarding Procedures

2.1 Introduction

These procedures are part of the Safeguarding Policy and specify how the Green Party of England and Wales discharges its responsibilities contained within the Safeguarding Policy. It outlines the responsibilities, systems and processes for implementation of the Policy at all level of the Party.

2.2 Responsibilities

The Green Party's Safeguarding Policy is embedded at every level of the Green Party, through the following safeguarding procedures:

- All **Green Party members** agree to follow the Safeguarding Commitment, which sets out our individual safeguarding responsibilities including obligations to report concerns. Green Party staff members are also required to agree to the Safeguarding Commitment.
- All **Chairs of local Green Parties** are responsible for implementing the policy in their local party, maintaining safe boundaries for all children, young people and adults at risk involved in their local Party.
- Every Green Party **region** has a safeguarding champion, who supports local parties in the region to implement the safeguarding policy. The Young Greens also have a safeguarding champion.
- The **Chief Executive** of the Party serves as the Green Party's Safeguarding Officer and receives and acts upon all reports of concern about the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk: safeguarding@greenparty.org.uk;
- The **Green Party Executive** has an Executive Lead for Safeguarding who is responsible for offering advice and support on the development and implementation of the Policy: management@greenparty.org.uk;
- The Green Party Executive is responsible for overall implementation of the policy alongside **Green Party Regional Council**, who has responsibility for wider party welfare.

The Safeguarding Officer is assisted in their safeguarding duties by a wider safeguarding team, comprising the Safeguarding Lead on the Green Party Executive, Head of Governance and the Governance Team. Together these people form the Green Party's Central Safeguarding Team.

The Safeguarding Officer and their team can be contacted through safeguarding@greenparty.org.uk.

The duties of the Safeguarding Officer and their team are as follows:

- To receive, record and act (including contacting external authorities such as the police where required) on all safeguarding concerns reported to the Green Party, to ensure that the no child, young person or adult at risk is put at risk through their involvement with the Green Party.
- To ensure that safeguarding information about an individual safeguarding concern is shared appropriately within the Green Party, including local Parties and relevant Green Party groups.
- To embed a culture of safeguarding throughout the Green Party, through requiring every member to sign the Safeguarding Commitment and requiring local Party Chairs to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.
- To monitor the extent to which local Party Chairs are fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities.
- To keep up to date with legislation and best practice concerning safeguarding, and to update Green Party Safeguarding Policy as necessary.
- To participate in safeguarding training and maintain an up to date DBS Certificate.
- To regularly report on the application of the Green Party's Safeguarding Policy to the Green Party Executive, including the number of safeguarding concerns reported and recorded.

To regularly review Safeguarding Policy, in particular the extent to which it is understood and applied across the Green Party.

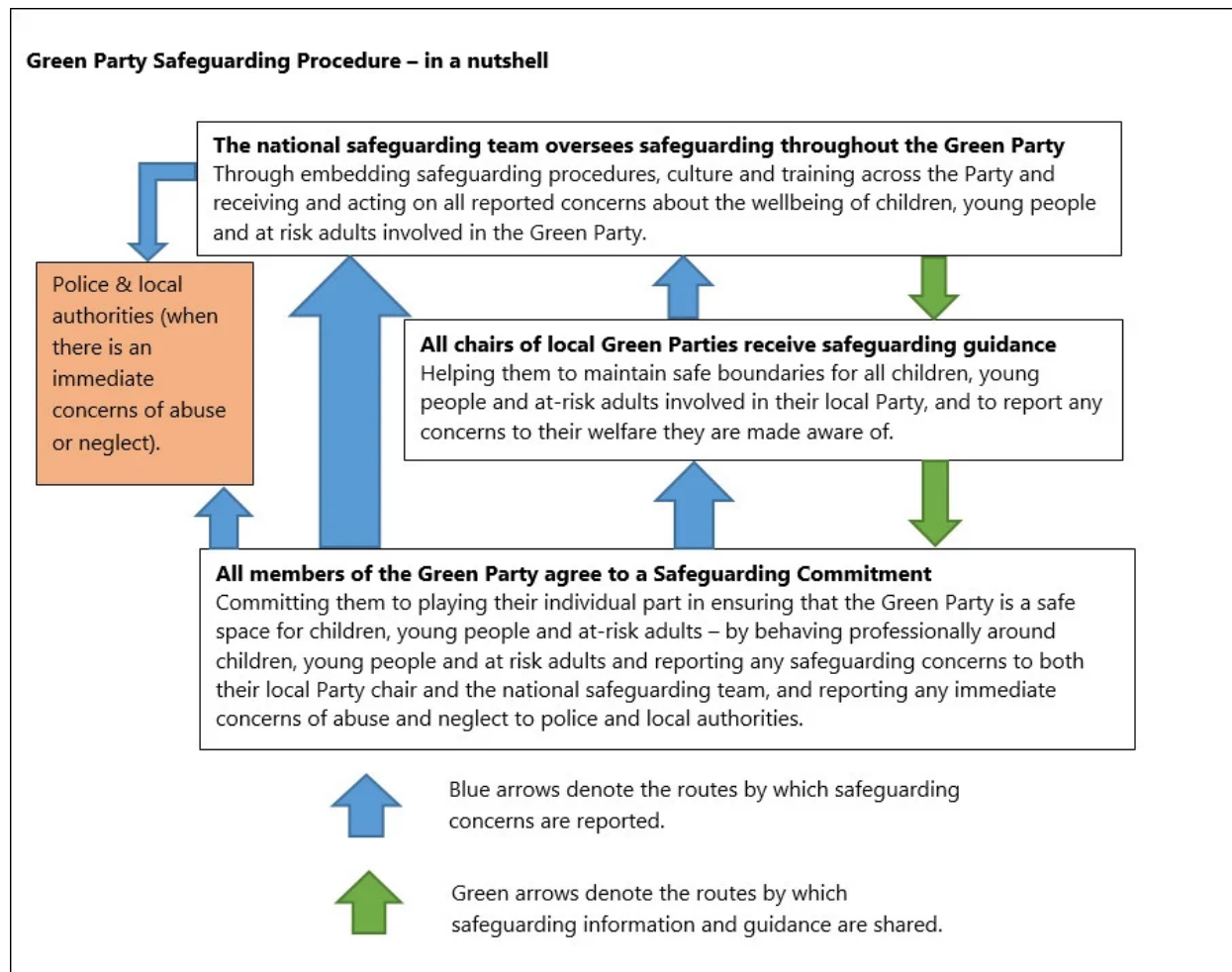
The Chairs of Local Green Parties have a responsibility to follow the guidance set out in the Green Party's [Safeguarding Guidance for Local Green Party Chairs](#). This guidance sets out how Chairs can maintain safe boundaries for all children, young people and adults at risk involved in their Local Party, and to report any concerns to their welfare they are made aware of.

Individual Green Party members have a responsibility to agree and adhere to the [Green Party Safeguarding Commitment](#). This commits members to playing their individual part in ensuring that the Green Party is a safe space for children, young people and adults at risk – by behaving professionally around children, young people and adults at risk and reporting any safeguarding concerns to both their local Party chair and the central safeguarding team, and reporting any immediate concerns of abuse and neglect to police and local authorities.

Every Green Party region has a safeguarding champion, who supports local parties in the region to implement the safeguarding policy. The Young Greens also have a safeguarding champion.

2.3 Safeguarding Procedures governing everyone

The below diagram sets out how all Green Party safeguarding responsibilities interact, to form a cohesive safeguarding procedure that allows safeguarding concerns to be reported and responded to.



3. Safeguarding Commitment for Green Party members and employees

The Green Party's Safeguarding Policy states that:

No child, young person or at risk adult should be harmed through their involvement with the Green Party or through contact with the Green Party and its members. The Green Party is committed to a Party culture where all Green Party members understand their responsibilities and act on them. The Green Party understands that safeguarding is a process and that the party's approach is subject to ongoing refinement and improvement.

Urgent Action

Whenever you believe that a child, young person or at risk adult is being abused or neglected, your first action should always be to report your concerns to the police by calling 999 (in emergency) or 101 (if abuse or neglect suspected but it is not an emergency situation) and following the instructions you receive. You can also contact your local authority to report your concerns.

If your concern relates to a child, young person or adult at risk suffering abuse or neglect as a result of contact with the Green Party, it will ultimately be important for the Green Party's Safeguarding Officer to be informed that a report has been made. However if you have reported a concern to the police or the local authority you must be guided by them about what information you can share and with whom.

By agreeing to and abiding by the Safeguarding Commitment you can help uphold this policy and help to make children, young people and adults at risk who have contact with the Green Party safer. The Safeguarding Commitment should be read and applied alongside the Code of Conduct that applies to all Green Party members. You can read more about Safeguarding, the definitions we use for children, young people and adults at risk, and our Safeguarding Procedures [here](#)

As a Green Party member/employee I agree:

- To report immediately to the police or the local authority any concerns that a child, young person or adult at risk is being abused or neglected – see the above urgent action paragraph for details onto how to do this.
- To report immediately to my local Party Chair and to the Green Party's National Safeguarding Officer any factors in my own circumstances or history which may make it unsafe for me to have contact with children and young people or adult at risk, including all charges and/or convictions of sexual abuse or neglect. This information will be recorded on a confidential basis by the national party, in line with

data protection regulations. We will notify you in advance if we feel that it is necessary to disclose this information to a third party.

- To report immediately to my local Party Chair and to the Green Party's Safeguarding Officer immediately any concerns of which I am aware about the behaviour or history of any other member of the Green Party which may place children, young people or adults at risk in danger of abuse and neglect, including all charges and/or convictions of sexual abuse or neglect. This information will be recorded on a confidential basis by the national party, in line with data protection regulations.
- To report immediately to my local Party Chair and to the Green Party's Safeguarding Officer any inappropriate behaviour I witness in the Green Party between adults and children, and/or young people/at-risk adults.
- In all my dealings with the Green Party, to be always open, frank and honest about matters concerning the health, welfare and safety of children, young people and adults at risk and never to seek to cover up, obscure or hide concerns of abuse or neglect or concerns about systems, people or working practices that could place children, young people and adults at risk in danger of abuse or neglect.
- To draw to the attention of my local Party Chair and to the Green Party's Safeguarding Officer any concerns I have that Green Party systems, people or working practices place children, young people or adults at risk in danger of abuse or neglect.
- In my own interactions with children, young people and adults at risk in the Green Party always to behave appropriately. This includes:
 - Always interact with a child in the company of at least one other adult, either the parent/guardian, or a person nominated by the parent/guardian. Do not spend time alone with a child.
 - Securing written consent from the parent/guardian before taking any photos/video footage of a child. Parents/guardians should be made aware of when, where and how the images/video footage may be used to give their informed consent.
 - Minimising any direct contact with a child on social media, and never exchanging personal email addresses and mobile phone numbers.
 - Not seeking to develop relationships outside of a Green Party context with children met as a result of Green Party activities
 - Ensuring that if any form of physical touching of a child, young person or adult at risk is required (e.g. picking up someone who has fallen), it should be kept to a minimum and involve communication with that person to ensure that I have received consent and am aware of their boundaries.
 - Ensuring that a child or young person has given their full and informed consent to interactions and activities with me, and that I am aware of their boundaries.
 - Ensuring that an adult at risk has given their full and informed consent to interactions and activities with me, and that I am aware of their boundaries.

- Seeking guidance from my Local Party Chair if I am unsure about how I should behave appropriately in particular circumstances with a child, young person or adult at risk.

I understand that I should report any safeguarding concerns to both my local Party Chair AND the Green Party's National Safeguarding Officer (safeguarding@greenparty.org.uk).

I understand that breaches of this Safeguarding Commitment on my part could result in disciplinary action from the Party.

I commit to bearing the Commitment closely in mind, and adhering to it, throughout my time as a Green Party member.

4. Safeguarding guidance for local Green Party Chairs

The following guidance has been developed to help you, as a local Green Party Chair, to help maintain safe boundaries for children, young people and adults at risk involved in your local Party, and to report any concerns about their welfare that you are made aware of.

The central Party is here to support you at all times with this. You can contact the central safeguarding team (safeguarding@greenparty.org.uk) to ask for advice. The central safeguarding team will also provide safeguarding training opportunities and guidance for Chairs, including training at Green Party Conferences.

You can read more about Safeguarding, the definitions we use for children, young people and adults at risk, and our [full Safeguarding Policy here](#).

Some Green Party Chairs may wish to delegate safeguarding responsibilities to another officer on the local Party Executive. This is permissible, as long as the decision is clearly recorded in Executive minutes. In such circumstances, the following advice applies to the designated safeguarding officer in the local Party.

4.1 Maintaining safe boundaries

As local Party Chair you can help maintain safe boundaries for all children, young people and at risk adults involved in your local Party by following the below guidance.

- A member under the age of 18 should only interact with the local Party after a parental consent form from their parents/guardians has been received. A new form should be completed every 12 months, until the member has reached the age of 18. [See form here](#).
- For every event, you must have a registration process that includes a way to find out if any under 18s or adults at risk are attending in advance so that you can gather a completed medical form and consent form from a parent, guardian or care giver.
- Should Party interactions require a member under the age of 18 to spend a night away from home on Green Party business (e.g Party Conference), a special parental/guardian form should be received before this can happen, confirming that the parent/guardian are happy with the proposed accommodation arrangements and outlining the arrangements under which the member aged under 18 is being accommodated, including emergency contacts. [See form here](#). A risk assessment should also be considered - the central Safeguarding team can assist you with this.
- Where possible, try to ensure that any contact between your local Party members (including yourself) and a child (someone under the age of 14) between Green Party events should be through official Green Party email channels or relayed through a parent/guardian. Direct contact from any members with a child through personal email addresses, mobile phone numbers and social media should be discouraged.
- Any event should have at least 1, or preferably 2, **designated people who are explicitly responsible for safeguarding**. You may refer to these people as

‘Safeguarding Officers’ and should be members of your Party who have completed Safeguarding training and been DBS checked.

- At the start of your events, you should highlight who these designated individuals are, and ensure that under 18s specifically know that they can go to these people with any issues/concerns.
- **Any person who is not DBS checked should not be alone with an under 18.** An under 18 must never be in a room with less than 3 people, unless at least one of those people are DBS checked.

Every member of your local Party has been asked to individually agree to the Safeguarding Commitment Green Party members. The Safeguarding Commitment requires members to report safeguarding concerns to you, as well as to the Green Party’s Safeguarding Officer. This Commitment has been created to help you to maintain safe boundaries for all children, young people and adults at risk involved in your local Party – [you can find it here](#).

The central Green Party safeguarding team will notify you of any members of your local Party who have refused to agree to the Safeguarding Commitment.

There are clear laws on offences and rehabilitation of offences. Should a member or officer become aware of offences which would be disclosable under a basic Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, please inform the Safeguarding team as a matter of urgency on Contact safeguarding@greenparty.org.uk.

The central Green Party safeguarding team *advise* that you print and ask members of your local Party to sign hard copies of the Commitment before they participate in action days and other forms of direct electoral campaigning for the Green Party. This is because there is a higher chance of unstructured contact between adults and children, young people and vulnerable adults in this Green Party context than at an ordinary meeting. You can maintain these additional paper records as Chair.

4.2 Responding to safeguarding concerns

If a child, young person or vulnerable adult raises a safeguarding concern with you, you must:

- Listen carefully. Avoid asking direct questions that may interrupt or influence their account.
- Give them time and attention
- Allow them to give a spontaneous account. Do not stop a person who is freely recalling significant events.
- Make an accurate record of the information you have been given. Record the timing, setting and people present, the person’s presentation as well as what was said. Keep this safe as this may be later needed as evidence.
- Use their words where possible.

- Explain that you cannot promise not to speak to others about the information they have shared.
- Reassure them that you are glad they have spoken with you; they have done nothing wrong and tell them what you are going to do next.
- Explain that you will need to get help to keep them safe.
- Do not ask them to repeat their accounts to anyone.

On receipt of a reported safeguarding concern, please take the following steps:

1. If you are concerned that there is an immediate and present risk to someone's health, safety or wellbeing, please first phone 999 and follow the instructions of the emergency services personnel.
3. Contact the Safeguarding Officer (safeguarding@greenparty.org.uk) to notify them of the reported concern.
4. The Safeguarding Officer will then liaise with you to decide on the appropriate response, which may also involve contacting the Police. The response may also involve contacting local area social services team (safeguarding team), this information can be found on the local council's website.
4. Maintain a record of all correspondence and documents that relate to the reported risk

4.3 Care and support for your members

As Local Party Chair, you will want to foster an environment whereby members feel comfortable in reporting any safeguarding concerns to you.

To assist in creating this environment, you may wish to ask an Executive Committee member of a different gender from you to assist you in your safeguarding duties. This will help ensure that concerned members have a choice of people and genders to report any concerns to.

It is also important to remember that members who are not children, young people or adults at risk also have a right to feel safe in all their Green Party interactions. You will want to create a safe and supportive local Party environment whereby all members feel enabled to discuss any concerns in confidence with you. Although this does not fall strictly into safeguarding duties, the Safeguarding Officer will be happy to help and advice on any such issues reported to you.

4.4 Behaviours of concern

As Local Party Chair, you are asked to report to the central safeguarding team any concerning behaviour towards children/at-risk adults in the Green Party that you witness/is reported to you.

Concerning behaviour could include:

- Attempts by members to meet/engage in social discussion with children they have met through the Green Party outside of a Green Party context
- Members making reference to sexual matters to children, young people and adults at risk in any context
- Members seeking to spend time along with children, young people and adults at risk in any context
- Members making physical contact with children, young people and adults at risk when this is not strictly required
- Members making children, young people and adults at risk feel uncomfortable

You can contact the central safeguarding team (safeguarding@greenparty.org.uk) to ask for advice on possible concerning behaviours.

Version Control

Version Number	Date	Saved by
v0.1	27 th February 2023	Sarah Santos, Head of Governance
V1.0	5 th April 2023	Sarah Santos, Head of Governance