

Thornhill Community Trust

Safeguarding Policy

Last updated: January 2021



1. What does TCT do?

Thornhill Community Trust (TCT) was established in 2004 and is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), Scottish Charity Number SC035940.

Its charitable aims are:

- to improve quality of life by providing a framework for community development
- to preserve, restore and improve the environment
- to provide facilities for recreation and leisure activities
- to promote other schemes of a charitable nature in Thornhill

2. Purpose and limits of the safeguarding policy

- The purpose of this policy is to provide TCT members and the community at large, with the principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and the actions we will take.
- This policy applies to organisers and participants in TCT-related activity, those working on behalf of TCT and the Board of Trustees.
- Every person involved with TCT has the same legal and moral responsibility to safeguard the welfare and safety of children and vulnerable adults as applies to any citizen. Nothing in this policy overrides that individual responsibility.
- The accompanying notes form part of this policy, providing guidance, procedures and sources of information.

3. Overarching principles

We believe that:

- Every individual has the right to live in safety, with dignity and free from abuse or neglect.
- A community of our size will include individuals who may be less able to keep themselves safe or be more vulnerable to exploitation by others. This may be due to a person's age, circumstances, health, development or other factors that affect their capacity or agency.
- To feel safe and respected is a precondition of participation and inclusion in our community and its activities. The organisation of TCT events and projects should be guided by this principle. We therefore have a duty to promote a safe environment and culture during a TCT event.

4. What we will do

- We will value and listen to all members of our community and build a culture of respect and trust through our words and our actions.
- As TCT Trustees and volunteer organisers, we will conduct ourselves in ways which promote every person's right to be and feel safe.
- We will follow guidance on involving child volunteers and participants (see Note 1).
- TCT Trustees will respond to any allegations or concerns in relation to safeguarding in a timely and sensitive manner with guidance from relevant agencies as required:
 - This action will be taken if a child or vulnerable adult has experienced (or is seen to be at risk of) significant harm as a result of participation in activities held under the auspices of TCT.
 - In this event, advice should be sought from the TCT Safeguarding Lead (see Note 2) or in their absence, the Chair of Trustees. *The current Safeguarding lead is TCT Trustee, Richard Waite who can be contacted on ****.*
 - This does not preclude any person reporting their concerns directly to the relevant authorities (for how to do this, see Note 5).
- TCT Trustees will respond to any evidence of bullying behaviour in a sensitive, timely and appropriate manner with guidance from relevant agencies as required (see Note 3.6).
- Safeguarding will be considered when risk-assessing TCT activities.
- Our approach to Safeguarding will promote inclusion. Children or adults affected by disability, poor mental or physical health, developmental issues or situations which affect their wellbeing or behaviour may require additional support to participate in ways which meet risk controls. When informed, we will strive to provide or accommodate the support needed, so that activities and opportunities are as inclusive as possible.
- To ensure an accountable, ethical and effective approach to Safeguarding we will:
 - Share information about our safeguarding policy on Thornhill Community Website.
 - Promote a safe physical environment for participating children, young people and adults by applying our Health and Safety policy.
 - Store and use information responsibly and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance.
 - Notify OSCR (the body regulating charities in Scotland) in the event of a safeguarding incident involving TCT.
 - Review and learn from any safeguarding incidents with the help of experts if required.
 - Review, amend and adopt this policy every two years in light of our experience and latest guidance.

5. Notes forming part of this policy

Note 1 *Guidance in relation to young volunteers and participants*

We want Thornhill to be a community in which children young people and their families are encouraged to contribute and benefit from events and activities on their doorstep. This means that unaccompanied children may sometimes wish to join activities organised by TCT. The following guidance applies to such situations.

- A child is any person under the age of 18.
 - However, children grow in ability and capacity to act independently as they mature, so the need for adult supervision also changes.
- It is expected that children under 12 will always be accompanied and supervised by a parent, carer or nominated adult.
 - An obvious exception would be a children's activity event supported by TCT but organised and conducted by a body (a youth organisation, playgroup etc) which had their own child safeguarding procedures and parental agreement protocols.
- We would usually expect children over the age of 12 but under 16 to be accompanied by a parent, carer or responsible adult.
 - Where that is not the case, an organiser, having welcomed the child and explained the situation to them, should seek to establish the consent of their parent, carer or adult family member, either in writing (e.g. text or email message) or phone call before or at the time the child joins in. It is important to include a clear description of the activity and who is involved so that the person giving consent can do so in an informed way.
 - Adult volunteers should avoid being on their own with an unaccompanied child unless in exceptional circumstances or at the request of a parent or carer.
- 16-18 year-olds should usually be treated as capable of independent choice when it comes to participation in local TCT events. Organisers should however use common sense in regard to people of this age or older who they think may be less able to take responsibility for themselves and their decisions due to their capacity or particular circumstances.
- Organisers should feel able to refuse the participation of any person (child or adult) who they think is likely to become unsafe or compromise the safety of others and if doing so should inform the TCT Chairperson as soon as possible afterwards so that the organisation is aware of and can respond to any issues or complaints arising.

Note 2 *Safeguarding Lead Person.*

- The TCT Board will appoint a Safeguarding Lead Person who will provide advice and oversight in the event of any safeguarding concerns arising.
- As appropriate, the Safeguarding Lead will ensure liaison with Stirling Council, Police Scotland and NHS Forth Valley in a sensitive and timely manner. The Board will ensure that the Safeguarding Lead has sufficient professional experience, training or

access to information to exercise the role. In the absence of the Lead Person, the Chair of Trustees will undertake the Safeguarding Lead role.

- The duties and actions of the Safeguarding Lead will be guided by advice given in the NCVO document [The Designated Safeguarding lead's handbook](#) (suitably amended to reflect the nature of TCT as an organisation).
- In the event of doubt as to whether or not external agency involvement is required, then Stirling Council advice should be taken (see note 5). Names of those affected should not be given at this stage, unless advised otherwise by Stirling Council.
- The TCT Board retain responsibility for good governance in relation to safeguarding.

Note 3 *Guidance documents*

1. [OSCR Safeguarding Guidance: keeping vulnerable beneficiaries safe](#)
2. [National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014](#)
3. [Stirling Council's Adult Protection webpage](#)
4. [Stirling Council Child Protection webpage](#)
5. [The Designated Safeguarding lead's handbook \(NCVO\)](#)
6. [Respect Me \(Scotland's anti-bullying service\)](#)
7. TCT Health and Safety Policy (Thornhill Community website / drive)
8. TCT risk assessments (Thornhill Community website / drive)

Note 4 *Legal context*

This policy has been drawn up in the context of Scottish legislation and guidance that seeks to protect children and vulnerable adults in Scotland.

Note 5 *Making contact with agencies if you are concerned for a child or vulnerable adult*

- If you are worried about a child or vulnerable adult, you can contact Stirling Council to report concerns.
 - For children during the day contact Stirling Council Social Work on 01786 471177.
 - For vulnerable adults contact the Health and Social Care Partnership on 01786 404040.
 - The Out of Hours Service (after 5pm and weekends) for child or adult is on 01786 470500.
- If there is an immediate risk of significant harm, contact the Police 999 (emergency number) or 101 (if less urgent).