

Explanation of BCT Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

This policy sets out the principles and procedures for the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults involved in Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) activity.

There is ever increasing scrutiny around safeguarding (of children and vulnerable adults) and a 'tightening up' by insurers around risk management of health and safety generally. This is with the ultimate aim of protecting BCT's and the bat groups' interests and not leaving any of us exposed to risk. As a result, BCT's insurers now insist that BCT's safeguarding policy and procedure is communicated to any other organisation covered by our insurance, i.e. bat groups, and that you also have a set of relevant health and safety policies.

Please ensure you read the entire policy and share with relevant members of your bat group. Where the document refers to BCT the same principles apply to bat groups. Set out below is an introduction to the policy document by section. There may be some sections which are not relevant to your Group. If you have any questions about the policy or BCT's insurance please get in touch with your nominated bat group contact at BCT: for Scotland Claudia Gebhardt at cgebhardt@bats.org.uk / 020 45490365; and for other parts of the UK Abby Packham at batgroups@bats.org.uk / 020 7820 7193

1. **Statement of intent** – sets out the purpose of the policy, its scope, the commitment to safeguarding, key values and principles and definitions of terms used within the policy.
2. **Responsibilities** – lists what is required of BCT and bat groups and provides details of BCT's Safeguarding Officer but it is important that bat groups, which use BCT's insurance, ensure Safeguarding Officer responsibilities are designated within the Group and that complaints and whistleblowing measures are also in place within the Group.
3. **Arrangements** – sets out what actions BCT and bat groups need to do to keep children, young people and vulnerable adults safe, including planning activities, awareness, code of conduct, supervision, recruitment and training. It also sets out how to respond to abuse, suspected abuse and disclosure of abuse as well as record keeping of suspected abuse.
4. **Law and guidance supporting this policy** – lists the legislation in relation to which this policy has been drawn (there may be different legislation applicable in your part of the British Islands). There is a list of other relevant BCT policies and guidance. These are yet to be made available to bat groups but will be provided in due course. This section also references guidance from the local authority within whose area BCT headquarters are located. Local authorities in your area may also provide guidance so please do check their websites. There is also information available from the various regulatory bodies of charities – for links to their websites see: http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/useful_websites_for_information_on_small_charities.html
5. **Allegations against members of staff and volunteers** – deals with ensuring that safeguarding arrangements protect members and volunteers from the risk of suspicion or allegation of abuse.
6. **Confidentiality** – states that every effort must be made to ensure confidentiality is maintained for everyone concerned.