

Safeguarding Policy

Version Control	
Policy Title	Safeguarding Policy
Version	V1.1
Effective date	21/04/2026
Review period	1 year
Review date	21/04/2027
Approved by	Board of Trustees
Policy Owner	Safeguarding Lead

*Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Mary Lewis –
mary@heritagecrafts.org.uk*

1. Policy statement

The Heritage Crafts Association (operating as ‘Heritage Crafts’) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all individuals involved in its activities, including trainees, trainers, volunteers, staff and beneficiaries. We believe that everyone has the right to live free from abuse, neglect and exploitation, and we are dedicated to creating a safe and supportive environment where all individuals are treated with dignity and respect. We promote an organisational culture in which safeguarding is understood as everyone’s responsibility, concerns are welcomed and acted upon, and safe practice is embedded across all our activities.

This policy applies to all individuals working for or on behalf of Heritage Crafts, including employees, trustees, volunteers, contractors and any trainers or mentors involved in Heritage Crafts-funded activities, particularly our Training Bursary and Endangered Craft Fund placements. All individuals engaged in our work are expected to contribute to maintaining and strengthening this safeguarding culture through vigilance, transparency and adherence to safe working practices.

2. Scope of policy

This policy covers all activities undertaken by or associated with Heritage Crafts, including:

- All Heritage Crafts staff, Trustees and volunteers.
- All Heritage Crafts funded placements, whether delivered in formal institutions, trainers' workshops or other settings.
- All Heritage Crafts events, workshops, and programmes.
- All individuals participating in Heritage Crafts activities, including children (under 18) and adults at risk.

3. Definitions

- Child: Anyone under the age of 18.
- Adult at risk: An adult (aged 18 or over) who:

- Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs).
- Is experiencing, or is 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. (As defined by the Care Act 2014).
- Abuse and neglect: Encompasses a wide range of behaviours, including physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, financial, discriminatory abuse, neglect and modern slavery.
- Regulated activity: a specific legal term in safeguarding that defines a level of work with children or vulnerable adults that requires a mandatory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): The named individual within Heritage Crafts responsible for managing and responding to safeguarding concerns.

4. Principles of safeguarding

Heritage Crafts adheres to the following core safeguarding principles:

- Prevention: Taking proactive steps to minimise risks of harm.
- Protection: Responding appropriately to concerns and disclosures.
- Accountability: Ensuring clear lines of responsibility and transparent processes.
- Empowerment (for adults): Supporting individuals to make their own decisions and give informed consent, where they have the capacity to do so.
- Proportionality (for adults): Ensuring the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- Child's welfare is paramount (for under 18s): Prioritising the child's safety and wellbeing above all else.

5. Roles and responsibilities

- All Heritage Crafts staff, Trustees and volunteers have a responsibility to understand and adhere to this policy, to be vigilant for signs of abuse or neglect, and to report any concerns immediately to the DSL. The DSL and all staff undertaking regulated activity will attend safeguarding training before undertaking such activity. All new staff and trustees will be given the policy as part of their induction process.
- Trainers/mentors (especially those on Heritage Crafts funded placements) are expected to uphold the highest professional standards, maintain clear boundaries, and immediately report any safeguarding concerns relating to their trainees to Heritage Crafts' DSL.
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
 - acts as the first point of contact for all safeguarding concerns,
 - provides advice and support to staff, volunteers, and trainers on safeguarding matters,

- manages and oversees the reporting and referral process to external agencies (e.g. Local Authority Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care, Police, LADO),
 - ensures accurate and confidential records are maintained, and
 - oversees the implementation and review of this policy.
- A named Safeguarding Trustee will provide strategic oversight of safeguarding, support the DSL, and ensure that safeguarding risks, reports, training, and controls are scrutinised at Board level. The Safeguarding Trustee is not involved in day-to-day case management but will ensure appropriate challenge, assurance and governance.

Current DSL: Mary Lewis – mary@heritagecrafts.org.uk

Current Safeguarding Trustee: TBC

6. Recognising and responding to concerns

6.1. Recognising signs of abuse or neglect

All individuals working with Heritage Crafts should be aware of the potential signs of abuse or neglect. These can be physical, behavioural, emotional, or verbal, and may include:

- Concerns about a trainer's, volunteer's or staff member's conduct.
- Unexplained injuries or changes in behaviour.
- Withdrawal, anxiety or distress.
- Changes in financial circumstances (for adults).
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour or language.
- Neglect of personal care or living conditions.
- Disclosures of abuse by an individual.

6.2. Responding to a disclosure or concern

If an individual discloses abuse or you have a safeguarding concern:

- Listen calmly and non-judgmentally: Allow the individual to speak without interruption.
- Reassure: Reassure them that you take their concerns seriously and that they have done the right thing by telling you.
- Do NOT promise confidentiality (for U18s): You must explain that you will need to share the information with those whose job it is to protect them.
- Record: Make brief, factual notes immediately (date, time, exact words used, observations). Write a full, detailed report as soon as possible.
- Report: Immediately report your concern to Heritage Crafts' DSL.

7. Reporting procedures

7.1. Internal reporting

All safeguarding concerns, no matter how minor, must be reported immediately to Heritage Crafts' DSL (same day and ideally within two hours where possible). This should be done verbally in the first instance, followed by a written Safeguarding

Incident Report (template available from the DSL). The initial decision regarding next steps should be made within 24 hours of receiving a report.

If the concern relates to DSL themselves, or if reporting to the DSL could otherwise be deemed problematic, it should instead be reported to the Safeguarding Trustee. Heritage Crafts' Whistleblowing Policy also applies to safeguarding concerns and provides protected routes for reporting unsafe, unethical, or illegal behaviour. The Board of Trustees will be notified of any safeguarding concerns that require action on behalf of the organisation.

Any safeguarding concern relating to an external trainer or placement provider must be reported immediately to the DSL. Where a trainer is not directly employed by Heritage Crafts, the DSL will liaise with the trainer's organisation (if applicable) and notify statutory services where required. Heritage Crafts may suspend placement activity with an external trainer pending investigation.

7.2. External referrals

The DSL will decide whether a referral to external agencies is necessary, based on the nature and severity of the concern and relevant statutory guidance. If a referral is required, this will be made immediately or within 24 hours depending on urgency.

For concerns involving a child (Under 18):

- If there are reasonable grounds to suspect a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, the DSL will make a referral to the Local Authority Children's Social Care in the child's area.
- If there is immediate danger or a criminal offence is suspected, the Police (999 in an emergency, 101 for non-emergency) will be contacted immediately.
- Parental consent is not required if obtaining it would place the child at further risk or impede a police investigation. The child's welfare is paramount.

For concerns involving an adult at risk (18+):

- If an adult meets the criteria for an 'adult at risk' (as per Section 3) and is experiencing or at risk of abuse/neglect, the DSL will consider a referral to the Local Authority Adult Social Care.
- Consent: If the adult has mental capacity, their consent is generally required before making a referral to Adult Social Care, unless there are overriding safety concerns (e.g., severe self-neglect, risk to others, criminal act). The DSL will discuss this with the individual where appropriate.
- If a criminal offence is suspected, the police will be contacted.
- The DSL will be guided by the principles of empowerment, proportionality, and the adult's wishes and feelings.

For allegations against a staff member, volunteer or trainer:

- Any allegation of abuse or inappropriate behaviour by a Heritage Crafts staff member, volunteer or trainer towards a child or adult at risk must be reported immediately to the DSL.

- The DSL will then refer the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the relevant local authority. The LADO oversees allegations against those who work with children.
- For allegations concerning adults at risk, the DSL will follow relevant adult safeguarding procedures and involve the police if a crime is suspected.
- Internal disciplinary procedures will run in parallel with any external investigation, as appropriate. The individual against whom the allegation is made may be suspended during this period.

7.3. Low-level concerns

A low-level concern is any behaviour by a staff member, volunteer, trustee or trainer that does not meet the threshold for referral but may indicate a breach of the Code of Conduct or could, over time, signal a pattern of concerning behaviour. Low-level concerns may include: boundary issues, inappropriate language, over-familiarity, or minor policy breaches.

- All low-level concerns must be reported to the DSL, who will record and assess them.
- Patterns of repeated low-level concerns will be reviewed by the DSL and Safeguarding Trustee and may trigger further action.
- Raising low-level concerns is encouraged as part of Heritage Crafts' preventative approach to safeguarding.

7.4. Board reporting

The DSL will provide an annual safeguarding report to the Board of Trustees summarising:

- number and type of concerns
- themes
- training completed
- safer recruitment activity
- policy updates
- lessons learned

Any serious or urgent matters will be reported to the Board promptly throughout the year.

8. Safer recruitment

Heritage Crafts is committed to safer recruitment practices to prevent unsuitable individuals from working with children or adults at risk. This includes:

- Identity Verification: All applicants must provide original identity documents (e.g., passport, driving licence) and proof of address as part of pre-employment checks.
- Right to Work: Right to work checks will be undertaken for all staff and contractors, in line with statutory requirements.

- DBS checks: Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks will be required for all staff, volunteers, and trainers who will be in regulated activity or have unsupervised contact with children or adults at risk. The DSL must also hold a current Enhanced DBS check.
- DBS Renewals: Enhanced DBS checks for roles involving regulated activity will be renewed every three years, or sooner if concerns arise.
- Self-Disclosure: Applicants will be required to declare any criminal convictions, cautions, or investigations that may affect their suitability.
- References: References will be obtained. Where relevant, at least one reference should be from a recent employer or organisation where the applicant has worked with children or vulnerable adults.
- Interview Questions: Safeguarding-specific questions will be included in interviews for any role working with children or adults at risk.
- Clear Roles: Roles and responsibilities are defined clearly.

9. Code of conduct and expected behaviour

All individuals supported by Heritage Crafts, including trainers and trainees on Heritage Crafts funded placements are expected to adhere to a strict code of conduct that promotes mutual safe and professional behaviour. This includes:

- Act professionally and respectfully at all times.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries and keep communication training-focused.
- Follow safeguarding expectations by ensuring that any one-to-one contact is conducted appropriately and in a communal space wherever possible.
- Work safely, follow health & safety guidance, and use tools and PPE responsibly.
- Respect personal space and comfort levels during all activities.
- Raise concerns early about safety, behaviour, or conduct.

10. Appropriate learning settings

Heritage Crafts is committed to ensuring that all learning environments funded through its programmes are safe and conducive to effective training. While we recognise that traditional craft training often takes place in diverse settings, including private workshops, we will assess the suitability of each proposed learning environment to minimise safeguarding risks.

Factors considered for an appropriate learning setting include:

- Visibility and transparency: Preference for settings where activities are visible or where there is transparency in working practices (e.g. clear sightlines, open-plan areas, or a system for regular check-ins).
- Professional environment: The setting should primarily function as a professional workshop or studio, distinct from purely private living spaces, especially when working with children or adults at risk.

- Minimising isolation: Avoiding situations where a trainee (particularly a child or adult at risk) might be isolated one-to-one with a trainer for extended periods without oversight or clear communication channels.
- Emergency access: Ensuring the location has clear emergency access and communication.
- Risk assessment: A risk assessment of the learning environment will be requested by Heritage Crafts for all placements, especially those in private workshops or homes. This will identify and mitigate potential risks related to safety, privacy and boundaries.

While training in a trainer's personal workshop or home may occur in some traditional craft settings, Heritage Crafts will exercise particular caution and may advise against such arrangements for individuals under 18 or identified as adults at risk, where alternative, more transparent settings are available, to mitigate additional risks such as:

- lack of clear separation between professional and private life,
- reduced external oversight or visibility,
- potential for blurred boundaries, and
- difficulty in managing unforeseen personal situations.

Where training or placements must take place in a private workshop or home, additional safeguarding measures and robust monitoring will be put in place, as outlined in Section 9 (specific to Heritage Crafts funded placements in trainers' homes/workshops).

Heritage Crafts recognises that some activities, training interactions, or communications may take place online. Trainers, staff and volunteers must ensure that online engagement with trainees is conducted through approved platforms, adheres to professional boundaries, avoids private messaging where possible, and ensures visibility (e.g., group settings or recordings where appropriate). Any online safeguarding concern must be reported to the DSL.

11. Information sharing and record keeping

- All safeguarding concerns and actions will be recorded accurately, factually and securely.
- Records will be stored confidentially, with access restricted to the DSL and relevant personnel on a need-to-know basis.
- Records will not be stored on personal devices or sent via unsecured email.
- Information will be shared with external agencies only when necessary to safeguard an individual, and in accordance with data protection legislation (GDPR) and relevant safeguarding guidance.
- A central log of safeguarding concerns will be maintained, including low-level concerns,
- Records will be retained in accordance with the Data Retention Schedule.

12. Training and awareness

- Trainers involved in Heritage Crafts funded placements will receive specific safeguarding guidance relevant to their role and the context of their training delivery.
- All individuals will be made aware of this policy and their responsibilities within it.

13. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually by Heritage Crafts' DSL and Board of Trustees, or sooner if there are changes in legislation, guidance, or Heritage Crafts practices.

14. Key contacts

Role/organisation	Contact information
Heritage Crafts Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mary Lewis: mary@heritagecrafts.org.uk
Police (emergency)	999
Police (non-emergency)	101
NSPCC Helpline	0808 800 5000 (for concerns about a child)
Ann Craft Trust	0115 951 5400 (for concerns about adults at risk)
Childline	0800 1111 (for children and young people)

This policy references guidance issued by the Charity Commission for England and Wales and the Disclosure and Barring Service.