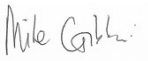
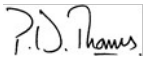
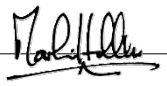
Wilts & Berks Canal Trust

Patron: Her Majesty the Queen

Restoring 70 miles of canal and towpath for the benefit of local communities, wildlife and leisure

Document Details	
Document Number	POL PPL.03
Document Title	WBCT Policy: Safeguarding
Internal Revision	3.1
Document Status	Approved

Document Review and Approval			
	Name and Position	**Signature**	**Date**
Prepared By	J Graham, Trustee		**17 Feb 2026**
Checked By	M Gibbin CEO		**17 Feb 2026**
	Peter Thomas COO		**17 Feb 2026**
Approved By	M Holliss, Chair of Trustees		**17 Feb 2026**

Revision History			
Rev.	**Amendment**	**prepared by**	**Date**
1.0	Original Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy & Procedures		11 Dec 2017
2.0	Revised draft Policy		22 Aug 2024
2.1	Revised draft Policy (incorporating clear statement re DBS checks)		22 Nov 2024
2.2	Revised draft Policy revising basic policy statement		29 Nov 2024
3.0	Revised policy to incorporate all volunteers/visitors (not just YPVA)		14 April 2025

Revision History			
Rev.	**Amendment**	**prepared by**	**Date**
3.1	Revised. Reformatted previous version. DBS checked volunteer present for every unaccompanied YPVA visitor. Procedures taken out. YPVAs not allowed to work on construction sites.		Feb 2026

	Wilts & Berks Canal Trust	POL PPL.03 rev 3.1
	WBCT Policy: **Safeguarding**	17 Feb 2026

Background

The Wilts & Berks Canal Trust (the Trust) is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all staff, volunteers and contractors and also any individuals who come into contact with the Trust. Furthermore, the Trust wishes to support, and engage with, a wide range of audiences in the local community, including young people and vulnerable adults (YPVA) – see Note 1 for definition.

Policy

All individuals, internal or external to the Trust, have the right to be protected from harm and be treated with respect.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All individuals must be vigilant for potential signs of abuse or neglect and follow safeguarding procedures should a concern arise.

The Trust will act promptly and appropriately to investigate any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse and, if necessary, referring such cases to the appropriate authorities.

YPVAs will be given specific protection as follows:

YPVAs should be accompanied by a guardian, care worker or family member. If they are not, they will still be welcomed if all of the following conditions are satisfied:

- The Branch Chair and Committee have approved the visit.
- The Branch has a Branch Safeguarding Lead (BSL).
- Each unaccompanied YPVA is always accompanied by at least two WBCT volunteers, one of whom must be DBS checked.

Photographs of YPVAs must not be taken or used without written consent from their parent/guardian, carer or support worker.

Only parents/guardians, carers or support workers (not Trust volunteers) may assist a YPVA with changing room and/or personal care matters.

YPVAs with a history of anti-social behaviour must always be accompanied by their parent/guardian, carer or support worker.

Trust volunteers must avoid:

- physical contact with YPVA's.
- transporting YPVA's in a vehicle, except in an emergency when they should be accompanied by one other person (either a DBS-checked volunteer or the parent/guardian, carer or support worker).

YPVAs must not work on construction sites.

This policy will be reviewed every nn years.

Legal and Regulatory Framework

The Charity will follow all relevant legislation.

Roles and Responsibilities

Trustees: Ensure safeguarding policies are in place and reviewed biennially, or sooner if there are significant changes in legislation or if there is a safeguarding incident.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Confirms the policy is, and remains, fully implemented. Oversees safeguarding concerns and ensures appropriate action is taken. Oversees DBS checks and register.

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL): Substitutes for the DSL if a concern is raised when the DSL is unavailable or implicated in the concern raised.

Executive Board: The COO will be responsible for the communication, dissemination and implementation of this policy through the SLT and Branch Chairs.

Branch Safeguarding Leads (BSL's): Required in any Branch which hosts YPVA visits.

Training and Awareness

All staff, volunteers, and contractors will have at least safeguarding awareness training and must sign to confirm they have read and understood this policy; those with specific safeguarding roles will have training commensurate with their roles.

DBS Checks

Enhanced level DBS checks are required for the DSL, DDSL, BSLs and nominated volunteers at sites which welcome unaccompanied YPVA's.

Related policies

Whistleblowing, Complaints & Grievance and Bullying & Harassment.

Note 1: Definition of YPVAs

A Young Person (YP) is defined as a person under the age of 18.

A Vulnerable Adult (VA) is defined as a person aged 18+, who has a dependency on others, or requires assistance from others, in the performance of basic functions. This includes people who:

- *Have a severe impairment in their ability to communicate with others;*
- *Have a physical disability, illness or injury;*
- *Have mental health issues or learning difficulties;*
- *Are unable to care for themselves independently; or*
- *Are unable to protect themselves from harm through substance addiction, neglect or abuse.*