

# YGH Safeguarding Policy. January 2025

## Contents

- 1. Policy Statement
- 2. Definitions
- 3. Objectives
- 4. Our commitment to safeguarding
- 5. Information sharing
- 6. Record keeping
- 7. Responsibilities
- 8. Managing safeguarding allegations or concerns involving staff and volunteers
- 9. Recruitment practices
- 10. Training
- 11. Monitoring and review

## 1. Policy Statement

**Yarmouth Greyhound Homefinders is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of everyone who comes into contact with the Charity, particularly with regard to children, elderly and vulnerable adults and those with special needs that have been communicated to us.**

YGH encourages a culture where people are easily able to speak up immediately if they feel something is wrong. This policy is put into effect through procedures which provide for easy access to staff who will deal with concerns sensitively and in accordance with YGH protocols and principles.

All YGH employees are expected to behave with respect and consideration towards those they come into contact with while performing their duties for the Charity. Our employees are under both a contractual and ethical duty to uphold our Safeguarding Policy.

Volunteers and others with whom the Charity has contact such as visitors, fosterers prospective adoptees and adoptees must also comply with the Charity's legal obligations and safeguarding policy requirements when undertaking their roles or when engaging in the rehoming process.

## 2. Definitions

In this policy, and the supporting procedures, the following definitions will apply:

**An employee is anyone working under a contract of employment for the Yarmouth Greyhound Homefinders (YGH) Charity whether full or part time.**

**A volunteer is anyone who gives up their time to perform tasks allocated to them by the Yarmouth Greyhound Homefinders (YGH) Charity, whether registered as a volunteer or not.**

**Other persons bound by the YGH safeguarding policy include those persons intending to foster or adopt our greyhounds and casual and commercial visitors to our premises.**

**The latter definition is not exhaustive.**

### **3. Objectives**

The objectives of this Safeguarding Policy and the supporting procedure and guidance are to:

- Outline YGH's commitment to the safeguarding and protection of all those who come into contact whether formally or informally with the YGH Charity.
- Refer to and adopt the measures and practices in place in pursuance of the Safeguarding Policy.
- Outline the responsibilities of the YGH and all those bound by this policy, in observing and upholding our position on minimising safeguarding risks.
- Provide information and guidance to all those bound by our safeguarding policy on how to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns.

### **4. Our commitment to safeguarding**

At YGH we recognise that we have a duty to safeguard everyone with whom we come into contact. This duty arises from a framework of legislation and guidance, including Guidance from the Charity Commission for England and Wales. This policy reflects this framework and YGH will comply with all relevant legislation and guidance as required by law.

Safeguarding is a key part of feeling and being safe at YGH. Safeguarding is about protecting the health, wellbeing and human rights of children, young adults, adults and all those who are vulnerable or who have special needs and thereby enabling everyone to live free from abuse, harm and neglect as far as the YGH is concerned. The vulnerable groups may include employees, volunteers, clients, customers, supporters and others we may come into contact with. We recognise that YGH may not always have enough information to know whether someone meets the criteria of a child or person who is at risk and therefore, ALL CONCERNS involving those who MAY be vulnerable or under the age of 18 will be reported in line with this policy and associated procedures.

YGH is committed to making 'safeguarding' a person-led approach that enhances involvement, control and choice throughout the safeguarding process. When making decisions about an adult at risk, consideration will be made using the six principles of adult safeguarding set out in the Care Act 2014:

- Empowerment: people should be supported and encouraged to make their own decisions.
- Prevention: it is better to take action before harm occurs.

- Proportionality: the best approach is the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- Protection: support and representation should be provided to those in greatest need.
- Partnership: services should offer local solutions through working closely with their communities.
- Accountability: there should be accountability and transparency when delivering safeguarding practice.

## **5. Information sharing**

Keeping everyone safe often requires information to be shared with appropriate agencies in order to piece together a full picture of the circumstances. Single pieces of information can reveal a very different picture when combined together. To make this possible, effective information sharing between YGH and other agencies may be essential. This ensures concerns can be identified, the situation assessed, the right actions taken and the implementation of services a person needs, provided.

Therefore, we recognise that if YGH receives information that someone has been, or is at risk of, harm we may need to inform or seek support from other relevant agencies.

While we will always seek to involve children, adults at risk and their carers as much as possible in decision making, the law allows us to share information without consent in certain circumstances. This is in line with the Data Protection Act 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as well as the Mental Capacity Act 2005. When deciding how to apply this legislation to determine whether we should share information externally without consent the basic principle remains that if we have a concern that someone is at risk of abuse, neglect or immediate harm we may need to share this suspicion externally, with or without consent.

Please note, we never need consent to share information within YGH to keep someone safe.

## **6. Record keeping**

Records will be shared and stored securely, in line with GDPR. This includes the storing of safeguarding information in online personnel, client and supporter files.

Safeguarding records will be kept up to date by staff members and audited regularly to ensure that records comply with GDPR.

The Safeguarding Officer will have oversight of all safeguarding concerns and will collate incidents and analyse trends in a six monthly report to the Trustees. This information will be used to inform ongoing safeguarding strategy.

## **7. Responsibilities**

### **7.1 Overall responsibilities**

The YGH Trustees have overall responsibility for Safeguarding within the Charity.

### **7.2 Colleague responsibilities**

All colleagues (whether employees or volunteers) should have an awareness of this policy and understand how to comply with its requirements and in so doing all colleagues must act with honesty and integrity at all times.

Where colleagues have concerns about suspected abuse or neglect such suspicions about the actions of others must be reported as soon as possible.

Although this Policy is primarily concerned with ‘people’, it should be remembered that the safeguarding of dogs is covered by The Animal Welfare Act 2006 and other legislation and Codes of Practice and as such the safeguarding of dogs is necessarily encompassed by overall safeguarding considerations. Therefore concerns about the YGH dogs must also be reported to the Safeguarding Officer.

Additionally YGH has a duty of care to help, protect and safeguard the welfare of children and adults at risk whom they may come into contact with during the course of YGH’s activities.

Colleagues are responsible for declaring any convictions in line with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 on application to YGH. They are also responsible for declaring any subsequent convictions of any nature during the course of their employment/volunteering experience at YGH. Failure to do this may result in disciplinary action.

### **7.3 Kennel Manager responsibilities**

The Kennel Manager has an additional responsibility to embed good safeguarding practice, encouraging a culture of openness and understanding. The Kennel Manager must:

- Ensure that all colleagues working within the YGH are aware of YGH ‘s approach to safeguarding and the signs of a safeguarding concern.
- Ensure risks are identified in their environment and procedures and that controls are in, or are put in place through the trustees, to minimise those risks.
- Ensure that safeguarding procedures are complied with.
- Ensure that colleagues feel able to speak up and pass on any worries or suspicions of safeguarding concerns and that they are escalated in line with this policy and supporting procedure.

## **8. Managing safeguarding allegations or concerns involving staff and volunteers**

YGH will always take safeguarding allegations against, or concerns about the behaviour of staff and volunteers seriously, and will respond in a way that places the protection and needs of people including children and adults at risk first. The procedures for managing such concerns are outlined in various documents that are cited at the end of this document.

YGH will work with relevant agencies with openness and transparency and share information in line with the relevant legislation and statutory processes. YGH will always inform the police if information is received that suggests that a law has been broken.

## **9. Recruitment practices**

In order to ensure that our staff and volunteers feel and are safe we adopt the following practices throughout our recruitment activity.

### **9.1 Safer recruitment**

Our colleagues, whether staff or volunteers, are recruited knowing what behaviours are expected of them. These behaviours underpin everything we do.

Additional safe recruitment measures are in place for certain posts as appropriate for the duties and responsibilities of the role

### **9.2 Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Checks**

YGH will ensure it regularly assesses the requirement for roles, both new and existing, to be DBS checked. Where a DBS check is considered essential for a role, activity and/or project, the check will be undertaken.

For the roles identified as requiring a DBS check, periodic rechecks will be undertaken at a frequency appropriate for the role; in any case, this will be as a minimum requirement every three years. However, it is expected that colleagues will make us aware immediately of any changes that may affect them with regards to this.

## **10. Training**

YGH employees are asked to participate in safeguarding training. Staff and volunteers are encouraged to participate in a free on-line course offered by the Department for Education.

Awareness of this policy is part of the induction process for all new colleagues.

## **11. Monitoring and review**

The Safeguarding Officer will chair the annual safeguarding meeting and coordinate a review of any concerns raised. These concerns will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees which will decide on any action that needs to be taken in consequence of the safeguarding issues raised. No specific personal details with regards to the concerns will be included in the summary outcome.

The annual safeguarding meeting will also review the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the policy and procedures and any improvements identified will be made as soon as possible and this Safeguarding Policy document will be amended and updated accordingly.

Safeguarding is a standard agenda item at full Trustee meetings

## **12. Associated Policy Documents.**

### **Operational documents**

**Dog Walking Policy Doc.**

**Fundraising Policy Doc.**

**Home Checkers Policy Doc.**

**Volunteer Policy Statement.**

### **Risk assessment and associated documents.**

#### **General statement.**

The Trustees of the Yarmouth Greyhound Homefinders charity have overall responsibility for health and safety in the organisation and for ensuring that all legal responsibilities in regard thereto are fulfilled. It is recognised that it is the duty of the Trustees, employees and volunteers to uphold YGH policy in this regard.

Risk Assessments will be revisited when there is a:-

- change in legislation,
- change of premises,
- significant change in work carried out,

transfer to new technology or any other reason which makes the original assessments invalid,  
and in any event on a regular basis.

The file of risk assessment documents can be found in the Kennel Office together with the accident/incident register.

