



Manchester Geological Association SAFEGUARDING POLICY & PROCEDURE

1) Policy statement

It is a legal requirement of the Charity Commission that The Manchester Geological Association (MGA) have a safeguarding policy in place to protect their members.

2) Aims of this policy and procedure

This policy is written to enable the committee to address issues where there are safeguarding concerns. Safeguarding includes incidents between members, concerns regarding abuse or neglect that a MGA member may be experiencing outside of the MGA, health related issues or previous or pending criminal convictions.

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the commitment of the MGA to safeguarding their members and to ensure that everyone involved in the MGA is aware of:

- a. The legislation, policy and procedures for safeguarding adults.
- b. Their role and responsibility for safeguarding adults.
- c. What to do or who to speak to if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of an adult within the MGA.

3) Scope

This safeguarding policy and procedure apply to all individuals involved in the MGA and to all concerned about the safety and wellbeing of members taking part in MGA activities and in the wider community.

4) Safeguarding Commitments

In order to implement this policy, the MGA will ensure that all members will be aware of the safeguarding procedures and know who to contact if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of an adult.

the MGA committee has a duty of care to its members, is committed to upholding this safeguarding policy in order to protect its members and whistle-blowers.

MGA recognises that some people are potentially at risk of abuse and neglect. Where abuse or neglect is suspected, the MGA will aim to respond in a prompt and efficient manner to any situation where there is a risk of or perceived risk of harm. MGA does not hold any statutory authority. Matters of concern will be reported to the relevant safeguarding authorities. This may include the local authority or the police in an emergency.

Where there are concerns for a member's wellbeing or safety, the MGA committee will complete a safeguarding risk assessment and will contact the relevant statutory authorities as needed. It is not appropriate for the MGA to take the lead role in any safeguarding enquiry.

The MGA recognises that there are various forms of abuse which can be perpetrated by volunteers, members, relatives, friends, and neighbours. MGA will not condone nor tolerate any form of abuse or neglect and believes that all people should be able and, where necessary, enabled to live in an environment which is safe and free from harm.

The MGA will put the well-being of those at risk of harm first, and they will be actively supported to communicate their views and the outcomes they want to achieve. Those views and wishes will be



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respected and supported unless there are overriding reasons not to. Any actions taken will respect the rights and dignity of all those involved and be proportionate to the risk of harm.

A list of the types of safeguarding risks and harm can be found on the [England and Wales Charity Commission website, which is applicable generally.](#)

The MGA will monitor the implementation of this policy and procedure annually through its committee.

When following the safeguarding procedure, the MGA will strive to uphold the principles that those involved in incidents are entitled to:

- a. privacy
- b. be treated with dignity and respect
- c. lead an independent life and to be enabled to do so
- d. choose how they live their lives
- e. the protection of the law
- f. have their human and civil rights upheld regardless of ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religious or cultural background.

The MGA will also follow the principles enshrined within the England and Wales Care Act 2014

- **Principle 1 – Empowerment** – whereby the approach is focused on the individual making their own decision and gaining informed consent, where possible.
- **Principle 2 – Prevention** – seeking to take steps to prevent issues from arising or escalating.
- **Principle 3 – Proportionality** – responding in a proportionate way to the issues being presented.
- **Principle 4 – Protection** – seeking to keep the membership safe and protection for those deemed to be at risk and the protection of whistle-blowers.
- **Principle 5 – Partnership** – reporting incidents to the relevant statutory bodies and liaising with the Trust.
- **Principle 6 – Accountability** – accurate recording of incidents. Reporting incidents, as required, to the Trust and to relevant regulatory authorities.

5) Procedure

Volunteers and whistleblowers are protected by this policy, if reporting any of the following affecting MGA members or associates/helpers of the MGA:

- a. a criminal offence, for example fraud or theft
- b. someone's health and safety is in danger
- c. risk or actual damage to venues, equipment, documents or the environment
- d. a miscarriage of justice
- e. believing someone is covering up wrongdoing
- f. bullying, abuse, neglect of other MGA members
- g. the identity of the whistleblower is confidential to the investigation unless the whistleblower gives their written consent to disclosure
- h. protection of a member from any detriment from other members that arises because of making a "protected disclosure" including protection from harassment or victimisation.



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The MGA will make every effort to respect the confidentiality of any information that is disclosed under this policy and procedure, however due to the seriousness of allegations confidentiality is not absolute. Information will be recorded and stored securely in accordance with Data Protection Act 2018 but information may have to be shared with relevant authorities on a 'need-to-know' basis only, to prevent:

- a. Danger to a person's life
- b. Danger to a person's health
- c. Danger to others
- d. Danger to the community
- e. To facilitate the investigation of a serious crime

a) Courses of action

Where the committee becomes aware of a safeguarding concern, steps will be taken, as needed, to ensure the safety of adult/s at risk is secured as a priority. The steps to take to address this will be discussed and agreed between the Executive Officers of the committee in the first instance. No committee member will act in isolation when dealing with a safeguarding concern. The steps taken should be documented and stored securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

Where the MGA committee becomes aware of a safeguarding concern, the first step will be to gather as much information as possible to assist with the decision as to the next steps. A risk assessment will be developed and recorded as soon as possible after the concern comes to the attention of the committee.

Where it is deemed that the risk is high and immediate action needs to be taken, the committee will contact the relevant authorities.

As far as possible, the adult at risk's wishes will be respected as to whether or not to refer any concerns to the local authority. However, it may be necessary to override their wishes in the best interests of other adults at risk.

A safeguarding concern raised by a whistleblower must contain as much relevant information as possible. In making a protected disclosure the member must:

- a. reasonably believe that the disclosure they are making is in the interest of the person.
- b. reasonably believe that the information detailed and any allegations in it are substantially true.

Information needed:

- a. who the allegations are against.
- b. details of the nature of the alleged wrongdoing
- c. dates, places and amounts where possible
- d. provide or highlight any evidence they have in support of the allegation
- e. state if the person making the disclosure is a member of MGA
- f. name and contact details (unless they wish to remain anonymous)

In undertaking the risk assessment, the committee will consider the level of risk and the action that needs to be taken accordingly. Assessment of risk will include:

- a. Risk to the individual member
- b. Risk to other members within the MGA



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c. Reputational risk for the MGA

Once the risk assessment is completed, the committee will decide as to the most appropriate course of action. This could include excluding members from certain activities, requesting that a member attends the MGA with a carer or excluding a member from an activity run by a particular group leader.

Depending on the nature of the allegation it may be necessary to pursue the incident following MGA's complaints or disciplinary procedure. Where it is decided that this is the best course of action the matter will not be investigated by any party that was privy to the initial reporting of the incident.

All actions taken will be recorded. Any records will remain confidential to the committee unless a prior decision has been taken to share the record with the relevant statutory bodies.

	The MGA Safeguarding policy	
Draft 1	Issued to committee for comment	17 th August 2025
Final Draft	Issued for committee meeting Sept 27 th 2025	
Version 1	Approved for issue	27/09/2025