

## **Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility**

Welcome to our safeguarding policy which applies to all clubs and districts in Rotary in Great Britain & Ireland. It also applies to everyone working or volunteering with us. Anyone who comes into contact with Rotary should expect to feel safe and respected.

### **Aim of the policy**

The central aim of Rotary GB&I's safeguarding policy is to inform all of:

1. Our approach to safeguarding.
2. How we do this.
3. The steps we take to prevent abuse taking place.
4. The actions that will be taken to deal with abuse if it occurs.

### **How we do this**

Rotary GB&I employees and members of our clubs and districts recognise that the services we provide are used by children and by adults at risk of harm.

#### **Definition**

A child is defined by the Children Act 1989 as a person aged 17 and under with children protection applying to anyone up to the age of 18.

An adult at risk is a person aged 18 and over who is at risk or may be vulnerable at certain times e.g. through their circumstances which may include needing care (whether or not by their local authority), may have learning difficulties which make them vulnerable to exploitation or other harm, being in receipt of healthcare, travelling due to age, illness or disability, unable to protect themselves or due to socioeconomic factors such as loneliness. This list is **not** exhaustive. Members are advised to check with their country's definition and always adhere to the law.

It is our duty to ensure that we know what to do if a child or adult at risk comes into our care, either through programmes (e.g. youth competitions, community activity etc) or temporarily (e.g. lost child point or needs assistance) and show signs of abuse or neglect. This involves:

1. Reporting the risk to an appropriate agency and Rotary GB&I.
2. Promoting a safe environment within the organisation. This is achieved by protecting all from the risk of abuse, identifying and dealing with specific instances of abuse if it occurs.
3. Regular provision of safeguarding training to staff and by district officers to clubs.
4. Access to support from Rotary GB&I.
5. When planning activities and events, we include safeguarding in the risk assessment and designate a person who will be in attendance as a safeguarding lead for that event.

Every possible action is taken to prevent abuse and to deal with it as promptly and effectively as possible if it occurs.

#### **Definition of abuse**

We recognise that abuse takes many forms and are vigilant to this:

1. Emotional.
2. Discriminatory.
3. Physical abuse.
4. Financial or material abuse.
5. Inhuman or degrading treatment.
6. Psychological abuse.
7. Inappropriate or excessive restraint.
8. Neglect.
9. Psychological.
10. Sexual.

### **How we report**

Rotary GB&I employees, clubs and districts **will** report serious concerns relating to abuse to appropriate agencies including the police, social services, local authority designated officers, district safeguarding officer as well as the Rotary GB&I Compliance Officer. We work in partnership with these agencies to prevent and to deal with abuse of any kind.

The clubs and districts have a duty to ensure that Rotarians, or others who may be supporting Rotary activities have been carefully interviewed and selected, are adopting safe practices, have been appropriately trained and, where required, have had an enhanced background check (for example DBS, PVG, PSNI, Tusla).

The Rotary GB&I employees and members will undergo regular education to make sure adults at risk of harm or children are appropriately cared for.

### **Rotary GB&I does the following:**

1. Sets out and informs employees and Rotarians of the procedures for responding to suspicions or evidence of abuse. This is done through regular training, delivered by Rotary GB&I and the district safeguarding officers.
2. Incorporates guidance material relevant to issues of abuse on the Rotary GB&I website. This is in our Members Area for our safeguarding officers.
3. Is continually being vigilant to the possibility of abuse from whatever source.
4. Encourages a climate of openness which enables Rotarians to pass on concerns about behaviour that might be abusive. Anyone can raise concerns and find support.
5. Produces and regularly revises policies and procedures to minimise the risk of abuse.
6. Investigates any allegations of abuse quickly and thoroughly.
7. Implements improvements to procedures if an investigation reveals deficiencies in the way in which Rotary GB&I operates.

8. Collaborates with other relevant agencies in combating abuse and improving the protection of the people we work with such as the public and our members. This includes the police and local authority designated officers.

#### **Rotary GB&I district safeguarding officers**

Each year, districts appoint a Rotarian to be the district safeguarding officer and also a Rotarian to be the club safeguarding officer. These officers have suitable experience, training and expertise. There are role descriptions in the Rotary GB&I Safeguarding manual which is available in the compliance section of the Members Area of this website.

[Safeguarding – Rotary GB&I Members Area \(rotarygbi.org\)](https://www.rotarygbi.org)

The district safeguarding officer ensures all club safeguarding officers within their district receive regular education to minimise any risks.

#### **Rotary GB&I expects ALL members, volunteers and employees to:**

1. Refrain from any abusive action.
2. Report anything they witness which is or might be abusive.
3. Co-operate in any investigation into alleged abuse.
4. Be aware of who they may turn to for advice if they become aware or suspect that abuse is taking place. Failure to report incidents or suspicions of abuse may lead to disciplinary action and possibly legal action e.g. police prosecution.

Thank you reading and for helping prevent abuse.

For more information, or to raise a concern, please contact: [compliance@rotarygbi.org](mailto:compliance@rotarygbi.org).

*Rotary GB&I – last updated 6th May 2025*