PROTECTING VULNERABLE PEOPLE RISK ASSESSMENT
(was Child Protection)

Risk Assessments regarding child protection or specific safety issues in regard to any vulnerable person must be reviewed every 12 months, or whenever a substantial change is made (e.g. a new member of staff is appointed). However, it is important to understand that the Society has a duty of care to all users of our properties, and this includes all vulnerable persons (any person who might or can not be expected to understand risk in the same way as an adult).

The Society has so far concentrated on the protection of children, as they represent a significant proportion of visitors to our properties.

Code of practice for working with children:

1. Staff who work with children, will be trained in the use of appropriate techniques, methods and language for working with children.

2. Full details: (name, home address, date of birth, health details and emergency contact number for parent or responsible adult) should be obtained for all children attending Society group activities where the parent or guardian is not present. The member of staff organizing the activity is responsible for obtaining this information. For school / education groups, this responsibility rests with the teachers accompanying the group. Schools are made aware of this responsibility prior to the educational visit.

3. There should always be more than one adult present when working with any child or group of children. Where this is not possible, or if working one to one, care should be taken to ensure that the activity takes place in an open area.

4. Inappropriate close physical contact with children and young people should be discouraged at all times.

5. The right of children to privacy should be respected, e.g. if a child or young person needs to change clothes.

6. It is not the responsibility of staff or volunteers to escort young children to the toilet.

7. Gifts should not be given to individual children at any time, and children should not be encouraged to bring gifts for adults.

8. Staff and volunteers should not make inappropriate contact with children or their families outside Society activities. Where there is suspicion of inappropriate contact taking place, this must be reported according to the Guidelines for Reporting Suspicions / Allegations of Abuse.
9. Confidentiality should be respected when information is given “in confidence”, unless there is a risk or suspicion of harm to children or vulnerable persons. In such cases this must be referred to the appropriate authorities.

10. Lost children should be accompanied as soon as possible to a designated meeting point. The meeting point for ………………………… is as follows:

**Investigating allegations of failing the Code of Practice:**

1. Each property has a designated Child Protection Liaison Officer (CPLO).

2. Any incident or allegation of suspected abuse, however minor, should be reported in the first instance to the CPLO who will then report it to the Society Personnel Officer.

3. If the CPLO is not available, the Personnel Officer should be contacted.

4. In the absence of both the CPLO & the Personnel Officer, direct contact should be made with the Social Services or the Police by the senior officer on site.

5. Any allegation regarding the Society’s staff or volunteers will be subject to the same reporting procedures and investigated if necessary, following the procedures specified in the Staff Handbook / Volunteer Guide. The reporting procedures are the same whether for a member of the public, volunteer or a member of staff.

6. Staff are reminded that in all cases of allegation of suspected abuse they must record all details as they are known to them and to sign and date this record.

7. Any allegation whether substantiated or not will be recorded and records kept with the Society’s personnel records.

**Vulnerable Groups**

Please note that vulnerable groups are not restricted solely to children. These persons require and must be afforded the same level of care. Examples may include:

Persons with learning difficulties
Persons coping with mental health issues.

**Pregnant Workers**
Although not a vulnerable group in the same way the above are, pregnant workers require a special duty of care. Given below is a pregnancy health and safety checklist, which could be completed by the member of staff themselves, which can be used as the foundation of the risk assessment.