

Friends of MV Freedom

Charity Number 283955

POLICY - Safeguarding Young Persons and Vulnerable Adults

1. The charity 'Friends of MV Freedom' is committed to protecting the safety and well-being of young persons and vulnerable adults. We expect all our volunteers to share this commitment and to be aware of their own safeguarding responsibilities.
2. All volunteers who apply to join our charity 'Friends of MV Freedom' are subject to the 'Safe Recruiting Policy' which is subservient to this policy. 'Best Practice' behaviour, at Para 5 below, is highlighted and taught during annual crew training each spring - or during mid-season crew training. None of the roles within the charity require DBS checks.
3. There is a plethora of Legislation and Codes of Practice covering the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups that may come aboard MV Freedom. Common sense must be used by the Boat Crew and to apply 'Best Practice', where appropriate, as laid out in Para 5.
4. The Charity, as a matter of policy, does not accept direct responsibility for the personal care of young persons or vulnerable adults whilst they are passengers on MV Freedom. In all cases such vulnerable young persons and adults will be accompanied by their carers or family members who will always provide all necessary personal care and attention. That policy does not preclude the crew of MV Freedom from having regard to the risk assessment and general health and safety of all persons whilst on board the vessel. The decision of the skipper, in charge at the time, will always be final in respect of any health and safety matters.

5. Best Practice during embarkation, onboard, or disembarkation, from MV Freedom:

Always:

- Treat all young persons and vulnerable adults equally, with respect and dignity.
- Put the welfare of the vulnerable first.
- Ensure any form of manual/physical support is provided openly, following consultation and agreement with the vulnerable and their carers.

Never:

- Engage in rough, physical, or sexually provocative activity or language.
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a vulnerable person - even in fun.
- Allow allegations made by a vulnerable person to go unrecorded or acted upon.

6. Procedures:

Reporting Procedure:

If:

- You accidentally hurt a vulnerable person.
- A vulnerable person seems distressed in any manner.
- A vulnerable person appears to be sexually excited by your actions.
- A vulnerable person misunderstands something you have done.

If you have any concerns with the above, ensure the carers are informed, report it as soon as possible to the skipper, and record it in the boat's log. Also, report it as soon as practicable to a Trustee. Trustees must react and investigate without delay.

7. Responding to A Clients Concern:

- Stay calm.
- If possible, listen to the vulnerable person, show that you are taking what is being said seriously.
- Keep questions to a minimum, but you must have a clear and accurate understanding of any complaint or allegation. Take care not to lead a vulnerable person or to suggest words or ideas, as this could result in an abuse case being dismissed.
- Explain that you will have to tell other people in order stop any abuse.
- Record what has happened and report the facts to a Trustee as soon as practicable.

8. If you suspect that a vulnerable person may have been the subject of abuse, it is not your responsibility to decide whether abuse has occurred / is occurring, but it is your duty to report your concerns / memories to a Trustee as soon as practicable. Trustees must react and investigate without delay.

9. Operating Online:

- Volunteers who manage our online media presence must have adequate control over our website and social media accounts. We must ensure that whoever can post information, and any content, is suitable for our charity.
- The charity must ensure we have permission to display any images published on our website or social media accounts. We may need individual or parental permission.

Next Review - Jan 2025.