

TOGETHER FOR THANET

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Children, Young People and Adults at Risk

Organisation	Together for Thanet
Legal status	Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
Principal location	Thanet, Kent
Charity objectives	Promoting social inclusion and supporting people experiencing social exclusion, including adults with learning and behavioural disabilities, young adults with SEN, people with long-term health conditions and people experiencing isolation in Thanet, Kent.
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mark Dent, Chair of Trustees
DSL email	mark.togetherforthanet@outlook.com
DSL telephone	07958 703360
Policy status	Version 1.0 Adopted September 2026 Review September 2027

This policy applies to all trustees, employees, volunteers, sessional workers, contractors and anyone acting for or on behalf of Together for Thanet.

1. Purpose and scope

Together for Thanet is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk who come into contact with the charity. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. The charity will take reasonable and proportionate steps to prevent abuse and neglect, recognise concerns early, respond promptly and work with the appropriate statutory and partner agencies.

This policy applies to all Together for Thanet activities, services, events, social and community activities, one-to-one support, volunteering, trips, transport, digital communications, fundraising and work delivered in partnership with other organisations.

The policy should be read alongside the charity's constitution, safer recruitment arrangements, health and safety procedures, complaints procedure, data protection/privacy arrangements, equality and inclusion arrangements, lone-working procedures and any activity-specific risk assessments.

2. Charity Commission safeguarding governance

Together for Thanet recognises that safeguarding is a core governance responsibility and a fundamental part of operating for public benefit. The trustees retain overall responsibility for safeguarding, even where day-to-day responsibilities are delegated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The trustees will ensure that safeguarding is appropriately resourced, that risks are identified and managed, that concerns are acted upon promptly, and that the charity complies with relevant law, statutory guidance and good practice.

The trustees will maintain appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and practices; ensure people are suitable for their roles; provide appropriate safeguarding training; maintain a safeguarding risk register; provide clear routes for reporting concerns; and work with relevant statutory agencies where concerns arise.

Safeguarding will be a standing governance consideration. Trustees will receive appropriate safeguarding information and assurance, including relevant themes, incidents, training, complaints, risk-management actions and lessons learned. Confidential personal information will only be shared with trustees where necessary and appropriate.

The charity will review this policy and its safeguarding practice at least annually and sooner where there is a serious incident, significant change in the charity's activities or risk profile, or a change in relevant legislation or statutory guidance. Trustees will record significant safeguarding decisions and actions through the charity's governance and risk-management arrangements.

Together for Thanet will make this policy available to those who need to understand it and will ensure trustees, staff, volunteers, partners and relevant beneficiaries are made aware of safeguarding expectations and reporting arrangements.

The charity will seek to maintain an open and positive safeguarding culture in which people feel able to raise concerns and are confident that concerns will be listened to, taken seriously and responded to appropriately.

2. Safeguarding principles

- The welfare and safety of children, young people and adults at risk is paramount
- Everyone will be treated with dignity, respect and without discrimination
- The views, wishes and feelings of people using the charity's services will be listened to and taken seriously

- Adults will be supported using a Making Safeguarding Personal approach wherever appropriate, keeping the adult central to decisions about their safety and desired outcomes
- Children will be safeguarded in accordance with their best interests and current statutory safeguarding arrangements
- Safeguarding concerns will be shared on a need-to-know basis, while recognising that confidentiality must not prevent necessary action to protect someone from harm
- The charity will work constructively with Kent County Council, Kent Police, Thanet District Council and other relevant agencies
- No trustee, employee or volunteer should attempt to investigate a safeguarding concern themselves.
- Safeguarding arrangements will be reviewed in light of incidents, complaints, training, learning and changes to statutory or local guidance

3. Who may be at risk?

Together for Thanet's charitable objects specifically include people who may be socially excluded, including adults with learning and behavioural disabilities, young adults with Special Educational Needs, people with long-term health conditions and people experiencing isolation in Thanet. The charity recognises that some people may have care and support needs or may face increased risks of abuse, neglect, exploitation or coercion.

Safeguarding applies to everyone. A person does not need to have a particular diagnosis, disability or other label for a concern to be taken seriously.

4. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Together for Thanet is:

Name	Mark Dent
Position	Chair of Trustees / Designated Safeguarding Lead
Email	mark.togetherforthanet@outlook.com
Telephone	07958 703360

The DSL coordinates operational safeguarding, receives and records concerns, seeks advice, makes or supports referrals, ensures appropriate escalation, maintains secure safeguarding records, supports staff and volunteers and reports safeguarding matters to trustees as appropriate.

The DSL must not delay a referral to statutory services where immediate action is required. Anyone who believes someone is in immediate danger must contact the emergency services on 999.

5. Responsibilities

- Trustees have overall governance responsibility for ensuring safeguarding is embedded in the charity and that appropriate arrangements, resources and oversight are in place
- The DSL leads operational safeguarding and advises trustees on safeguarding risks, incidents, training and improvements
- All staff and volunteers must read and understand this policy, attend required safeguarding training and report concerns promptly
- Anyone who receives a disclosure, observes worrying behaviour or otherwise becomes concerned must act; they must not assume somebody else will report it

- Activity leaders and managers must maintain safe staffing, supervision and working arrangements appropriate to the activity and people attending
- All people acting for the charity must maintain professional boundaries and follow safe working practices
- Concerns about a member of staff, volunteer or trustee must be reported immediately to the DSL, unless the concern is about the DSL

6. Responding to safeguarding concerns

6.1 Immediate danger

1. If someone is in immediate danger, seriously injured, or a crime is in progress, call 999
2. Take reasonable steps to keep the person safe without putting yourself or others at unnecessary risk
3. Tell the DSL as soon as practicable unless doing so would increase risk or delay emergency action
4. Make a factual written record as soon as possible

6.2 If a child or young person discloses abuse

- Listen calmly and give the child time to speak
- Do not promise secrecy or confidentiality. Explain that you may need to tell someone whose job is to help keep them safe
- Do not investigate or ask leading or repeated questions. Use only limited open clarification where necessary to establish immediate safety
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by telling you and that the abuse is not their fault
- Record the child's words as accurately as possible, including date, time, location, people present and relevant observations
- Report the concern to the DSL immediately
- If the DSL cannot be reached and there is a risk of harm, contact Kent Children's Services or the police directly. Do not wait if delay could leave the child at risk

6.3 If an adult at risk discloses abuse or neglect

- Listen carefully, take the person seriously and support them to communicate in the way that works best for them
- Ask only what is necessary to establish immediate safety and what action is needed. Do not investigate
- Explain that information may need to be shared with professionals to protect them or others.
- Where possible, establish what the person wants to happen and what outcomes would help them feel safer
- Consider communication, accessibility, capacity, advocacy and barriers that may affect the person's ability to protect themselves
- Record the person's words and relevant observations accurately and promptly
- Report the concern to the DSL, or directly to Kent Adult Social Care if immediate referral is required

7. Recognising abuse and neglect

Abuse may happen once or repeatedly, in person or online, and may be perpetrated by a stranger, professional, volunteer, family member, partner, friend, carer, another service user or someone else.

7.1 Adults at risk

- Physical abuse
- Domestic abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological or emotional abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational or institutional abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Self-neglect

The charity will also remain alert to exploitation, coercive control, radicalisation, forced marriage, trafficking and online abuse where relevant. Kent County Council describes adult safeguarding as protecting an adult's right to live safely, free from abuse and neglect, and identifies ten main categories of abuse.

7.2 Children and young people

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Domestic abuse
- Child criminal or sexual exploitation
- Online abuse and grooming
- Bullying and discriminatory abuse
- Female genital mutilation and forced marriage
- Radicalisation and extremism

The charity will follow the current Kent and Medway safeguarding children procedures and relevant statutory guidance. KSCMP provides the current multi-agency procedures for people working with children and young people in Kent and Medway.

8. Safer recruitment and DBS

- Safeguarding will be considered as a core responsibility when recruiting staff and volunteers
- Relevant roles will be subject to appropriate identity, reference, employment-history and DBS checks in accordance with the role and current eligibility rules
- Where a DBS check is required, the charity will not allow a person to undertake regulated activity before appropriate checks and safeguarding arrangements are in place
- Safeguarding concerns arising during recruitment will be considered confidentially and appropriately
- All staff and volunteers will receive safeguarding induction before or at the start of their work

9. Training and safeguarding culture

- All trustees, staff and volunteers will receive safeguarding induction appropriate to their role
- Refresher safeguarding training will normally be completed at least every two years, or sooner where role requirements, local guidance or identified risk indicates
- The DSL will maintain a safeguarding training record and identify gaps

- Safeguarding will be included in appropriate trustee oversight, staff discussions and activity planning
- The charity will promote a culture in which people can challenge unsafe practice, raise concerns and whistle-blow without fear of unfair treatment

10. Allegations against staff, volunteers or trustees

A safeguarding concern about someone working for or on behalf of Together for Thanet must be taken seriously. This includes concerns that a person has harmed or may have harmed a child or adult at risk, may have committed a criminal offence, or may pose a risk because of their conduct or suitability.

- Report the concern immediately to the DSL, unless the concern is about the DSL
- The DSL will consider immediate safety measures and whether statutory or specialist advice/referral is required
- Where a concern involves an adult working with children, the DSL will use the current Kent LADO/LESAS arrangements
- Where a concern involves an adult working with adults at risk, the DSL will seek appropriate advice from Kent Adult Social Care, police or another relevant agency
- The person who is the subject of the allegation will be treated fairly and confidentially, but safeguarding takes priority over protecting reputation
- No internal investigation will compromise or delay a statutory safeguarding or criminal investigation

KSCMP confirms that the Kent LADO service deals with allegations against staff working with children in the wider children's workforce and currently directs professionals to its LESAS enquiry/referral route.

11. Concerns about the DSL

If the concern relates to Mark Dent as DSL, the concern must not be managed solely by Mark Dent. It should be reported to another trustee who can act independently and seek advice from the appropriate statutory safeguarding agency or LADO/LESAS where relevant. If the concern cannot safely be managed internally, the matter should be referred directly to the relevant local authority or police.

If Mark Dent is unavailable, another trustee may receive a concern and seek external safeguarding advice. No one should delay a statutory referral because the DSL is unavailable.

12. Confidentiality, information sharing and records

- Safeguarding records must be factual, objective, dated and written as soon as possible
- Record what was seen, heard or disclosed, using the person's own words where possible. Distinguish fact from opinion
- Do not alter or destroy safeguarding records
- Safeguarding information must be stored securely and only accessed by those who need it
- Safeguarding information may need to be shared without consent where necessary to protect a person from serious harm, prevent crime, or where another lawful basis applies
- The DSL will consider proportionality, relevance, accuracy and security when sharing information
- The charity will cooperate with lawful requests from safeguarding agencies, police and other relevant bodies

KSCMP identifies information sharing as an important part of multi-agency safeguarding, while Kent's adult safeguarding guidance emphasises the importance of acting on concerns rather than remaining silent.

13. Online and digital safeguarding

- Staff and volunteers must maintain professional boundaries when communicating with beneficiaries online
- Approved charity communication channels should be used wherever reasonably practicable
- Personal social-media accounts should not be used to create inappropriate private relationships with beneficiaries
- Staff must be alert to grooming, coercion, exploitation, cyberbullying, inappropriate images, scams and other online risks
- Any disclosure or concern arising through digital communication must be handled under this policy and recorded

14. Safe working practices

- Activities will be planned with safeguarding risks in mind, including staffing, supervision, venues, transport, accessibility, emergency arrangements and individual support needs
- One-to-one support must have clear professional boundaries and be transparent and accountable
- Physical contact must be appropriate, necessary, proportionate and respectful of the individual's wishes and dignity
- Staff and volunteers must never use humiliating, threatening, discriminatory or abusive behaviour
- Any restrictive practice or restraint must only occur where lawful, necessary, proportionate and within agreed procedures
- Safeguarding risks involving transport, trips, changing facilities, toilets, photography or personal care must be considered in advance

15. Mental capacity, consent and Making Safeguarding Personal

Together for Thanet will support adults to make their own decisions wherever possible. Lack of capacity must not be assumed because a person has a disability, communication difficulty, mental health difficulty or other support need.

- Support the person to understand information and communicate their wishes
- Consider capacity for the specific decision at the specific time where relevant
- Where a person lacks capacity, act in accordance with the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and consider best interests and least restrictive options
- Consider independent advocacy where applicable
- Respect the person's desired outcomes wherever possible, while recognising that information may need to be shared or action taken to protect the person or others

Kent County Council describes Making Safeguarding Personal as keeping the person central to decision-making and understanding how they feel and what they want to happen next.

16. Local safeguarding contacts

These contacts should be checked whenever the policy is reviewed because local arrangements can change.

Situation	Agency	Contact	Action
Immediate danger / crime in progress	Emergency services	999	Call immediately.
Adult safeguarding	Kent County Council Adult Social Care	03000 41 61 61 social.services@kent.gov.uk	Report concern; current KCC page states this service is available Monday–Friday 9am–5pm.
Adult safeguarding out of hours	Kent County Council	03000 41 91 91	Use outside normal office hours.
Child safeguarding	Kent County Council Children's Services	03000 41 11 11	Report concerns about a child.
Child safeguarding out of hours	Kent County Council	03000 41 91 91	Use outside normal office hours.
Police – non-emergency	Kent Police	101	Non-emergency crime or police advice.
Allegations about adults working with children	Kent LADO / LESAS	Use current KSCMP LESAS enquiry/referral route	Seek advice promptly; call KCC emergency children's number if immediate danger.
Thanet safeguarding partnership information	Thanet District Council Community Safety	01843 577910 community.safety@thanet.gov.uk	Local safeguarding information and partnership support; statutory referrals remain with the appropriate KCC/police route.

17. Whistleblowing and raising concerns

Together for Thanet encourages anyone working with or for the charity to raise concerns about unsafe practice, poor safeguarding, abuse of power or failures to follow this policy. Concerns should normally be raised with the DSL. If the concern involves the DSL, it should be raised with another trustee or directly with the relevant statutory agency. No person should be disadvantaged for raising a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith.

18. Monitoring and trustee oversight

- The DSL will maintain a confidential safeguarding incident/concern log
- The log will record concerns, actions, referrals, decisions, outcomes and follow-up, subject to appropriate confidentiality
- Safeguarding incidents and themes will be reviewed by trustees at appropriate intervals, with personal information minimised
- The DSL will identify recurring risks and recommend improvements to activities, staffing, training or procedures
- Safeguarding records will be retained securely in accordance with the charity's data protection and retention arrangements

19. Policy review and approval

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner if there is a significant safeguarding incident, change in legislation or statutory guidance, change in the charity's activities, or learning from a safeguarding review.

This policy has been prepared specifically for Together for Thanet using the charity's supplied safeguarding material, its current constitution and current Kent County Council, Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership and Thanet District Council safeguarding information.

Policy adopted	September 2026
Policy owner	Together for Thanet Board of Trustees
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mark Dent, Chair of Trustees
Next review	September 2027
Version	1.0

Signed on behalf of the Trustees:

Name: Mark Dent

Position: Chair of Trustees / Designated Safeguarding Lead

Signature:



Date: 14-09-26

Appendix A – Safeguarding concern quick action guide

RECOGNISE – Something has happened, been disclosed, observed or reported that causes concern.

RESPOND – If there is immediate danger, call 999 and make the person as safe as reasonably possible.

LISTEN – Listen calmly. Do not investigate, interrogate or promise secrecy.

REASSURE – Explain that the person has done the right thing by speaking up and what you need to do next.

RECORD – Write down the facts promptly, including exact words where possible, date/time, location and people present.

REPORT – Tell the DSL immediately. If the DSL cannot be reached or delay creates risk, contact the appropriate statutory agency directly.

REFER – The DSL will make or support referrals to KCC, police, LADO/LESAS or other agencies as appropriate.

FOLLOW UP – Record the decision and action taken securely and ensure agreed safeguarding actions are followed.

Appendix B – Key external guidance

- **Kent County Council – Adult safeguarding:** <https://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/adult-social-care/adult-safeguarding>
- **Kent County Council – Raise an adult safeguarding concern:** <https://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/adult-social-care/adult-safeguarding/how-to-raise-an-adult-safeguarding-concern-about-yourself-or-someone-else>
- **Kent County Council – Making Safeguarding Personal:** <https://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/adult-social-care/making-safeguarding-personal>
- **Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership – Procedures:** <https://www.kscmp.org.uk/procedures>
- **KSCMP – LADO / LESAS:** <https://www.kscmp.org.uk/procedures/local-authority-designated-officer-lado>
- **Thanet District Council – Safeguarding Policy:** <https://www.thanet.gov.uk/info-pages/safeguarding-policy/>

Additional Charity Commission Safeguarding Requirements

Safeguarding risk management

The trustees will identify safeguarding risks arising from the people Together for Thanet works with, the places and environments in which activities take place, the nature of its activities, online activity, transport, partnerships and any other relevant circumstances. Significant safeguarding risks and controls will be recorded in the charity's risk register and reviewed regularly.

Code of conduct and behaviour

Together for Thanet will maintain clear expectations about appropriate behaviour by trustees, staff, volunteers, contractors and others acting on behalf of the charity. The code of conduct will support a culture of dignity, respect, professional boundaries, accountability and safe practice.

Protecting staff and volunteers

Safeguarding applies to trustees, staff and volunteers as well as people who benefit from the charity's

work. Concerns about bullying, harassment, abuse, discrimination, unsafe working practices or other harm affecting staff or volunteers will be taken seriously and managed through the appropriate safeguarding, welfare, complaints, disciplinary or whistleblowing route.

Safer recruitment and role checks

The charity will assess safeguarding requirements for each role. Where legally eligible and proportionate, DBS checks, references, employment-history checks and other suitability checks will be completed. DBS eligibility will be assessed against the duties of the role rather than applied automatically to every role. Where criminal-record information is processed, the charity will handle it lawfully and confidentially and maintain appropriate recruitment-of-ex-offenders arrangements.

Complaints and whistleblowing

Together for Thanet will maintain accessible routes for complaints and safeguarding concerns. People will be able to raise concerns without fear of retaliation. Whistleblowing concerns will be handled in accordance with the charity's whistleblowing arrangements, with escalation to external authorities where appropriate.

Online and digital safeguarding

Safeguarding risks arising from online communications, social media, messaging, remote activities, photography, data handling and digital contact will be identified and managed. Staff and volunteers must maintain appropriate professional boundaries and must not use digital communication to bypass safeguarding procedures.

Serious incidents and regulatory reporting

Where a safeguarding matter meets the Charity Commission's serious incident reporting criteria, the trustees will consider and make a report to the Charity Commission without undue delay, alongside any required referral to the police, social services, safeguarding partnership, regulator or other statutory body. The Charity Commission does not replace the role of safeguarding authorities in investigating allegations.

Insurance and risk controls

The trustees will ensure that appropriate insurance is maintained for the people, activities and environments covered by the charity's work and will consider safeguarding implications when approving new activities, partnerships, venues, trips, transport or delivery methods.

Working with other organisations

Where Together for Thanet works with partners, contractors or other organisations, safeguarding responsibilities, reporting routes and relevant standards will be considered before and during the arrangement. The charity will seek assurance that partners have appropriate safeguarding arrangements where this is relevant to the work.

Learning and assurance

Trustees will use incidents, complaints, safeguarding records, training, feedback and relevant external guidance to identify themes, gaps and lessons. Where appropriate, trustees may review anonymised case information or commission an external review to improve safeguarding practice.

Key statutory and governance guidance

Charity Commission: Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees —
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-and-protecting-people-for-charities-and-trustees>

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Policy update note: This revision incorporates the Charity Commission's safeguarding governance expectations, including trustee accountability, risk management, suitable policies and practices, safer recruitment and DBS considerations, protection of staff and volunteers, complaints and whistleblowing, online safeguarding, monitoring and assurance, periodic review, and consideration of serious incident reporting.