



Safeguarding annual report 2025-26

1. Context

This report provides an overview of safeguarding activity across the Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA) for the reporting year. It aims to provide assurance and outlines progress made in protecting children, young people, and adults at risk who interact with Authority staff, volunteers, services, or environments, whether onsite, online, or through outreach programmes.

As an organisation with statutory responsibilities, public contact and a large volunteer and visitor population, PDNPA remains committed to ensuring that all interactions are safe, respectful, and compliant with national safeguarding legislation.

2. Governance

We have a safeguarding policy which sets out the Authority's aims, commitments and responsibilities on safeguarding in the delivery of our services. The policy is subject to annual review and is published on our website at <https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/publications/operationalpolicies>

We have a Safeguarding Working Group (SWG) which is chaired by the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and the group met twice in this reporting period. Due to a number of structural changes across the organisation, the SWG currently consists of:

Post	Role
Designated Safeguarding Officer	People Manager
Deputy DSO and lead on volunteer processes	Volunteering Manager
Lead on staff processes including Disclose and Barring Checks (DBS)	HR Adviser

The group continues to ensure our policy and associated guidance align with the NSPCC, Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and Derbyshire Safeguarding Adults Board guidance. A review of the membership of the group following recent organisation changes is planned for 2026/27.

The SWG oversaw delivery of the 2025/26 Action Plan and has shaped the new 2026/27 priorities which remain linked to the NSPCC's safetycheck standards checklist.

3. Progress against the 2025/26 Action Plan (Year-end position)

During 2025/26, we continued to strengthen our safeguarding arrangements through a range of practical improvements across policy, procedures and day-to-day practice. Safeguarding guidance was actively promoted to staff and volunteers, with clear information provided at induction and through annual reminders for those in DBS-checked roles. Designated safeguarding roles remained in place throughout organisational change. Preventative measures were enhanced through continued safer recruitment training, completion of a DBS audit, and closer integration of safeguarding considerations within risk assessment processes. Communication and visibility also

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improved, with safeguarding messages highlighted at staff briefings and work undertaken to ensure updated posters and contact details. Induction and ELMS safeguarding training continued across the organisation. Throughout the year, a number of actions were paused pending implementation of changes to the organisation structure and further areas for development were identified, helping develop clear priorities for the next reporting period. The 2025/26 action plan, including the year-end position, is provided at Appendix 2A.

4. Policy, Procedures and Compliance

The PDNPA safeguarding policy and guidance have been reviewed and updated with minor amendments which reflect changes in the organisation structure. These amended versions are published on the HUB for staff to access and on Better Impact for volunteers.

Compliance reviews highlighted:

- Assess and implement mechanism for ensuring induction briefing is completed.
- Monitoring safe recruitment is not yet fully embedded.
- Clearer links between safeguarding and disciplinary and grievance procedures

5. Safeguarding Activity During the Year

Education and Training in 2025/26

It is recognised that staff and volunteers with special safeguarding responsibilities require training to enable them to develop and maintain the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding. The following safeguarding training has been carried out throughout 2025-26:

- The new DSO and Deputy DSO completed the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) 2 day Designated Safeguarding Officer Training in June (this is a requirement for all Authority designated posts every 3 years).
- As part of Safeguarding Awareness Week:
 - 1 member of staff completed Online Safeguarding
 - 1 member of staff and 19 volunteers in DBS checked posts, completed Safeguarding for All - Adult's Edition
 - 231 staff, 14 volunteers and 10 members completed Safeguarding for All - Children's Edition
- 4 staff completed Safer Recruitment training.
- 19 staff completed a half day classroom *Safeguarding in Practice* training sessions by the Independent Safeguarding Service CIC, in May.

Work experience placements

In 2025-26 the Authority hosted 10 work experience placements.

Host team	No. of placements
CMPT/Rangers/Estate Ranger/PPCV	5
Development Management	2
Rangers	1
Woodlands	1
Strategy & Performance	1

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Staff supervising work experience students do so on an ad hoc basis and therefore do not have a DBS check. Parent or guardian consent was obtained for all placements on that basis. A list the common hazards associated with work at the National Park Authority was provided in each case. The Authority's generic risk assessment for young persons & students applies to these placements and where any more significant risks are identified, a specific risk assessment would be completed.

Safeguarding concerns and casework

There have been no concerns raised during the reporting period.

Safer Recruitment

PDNPA continues to implement safer-recruitment principles for staff and volunteers. During 2025/26 we conducted enhanced DBS checks for 7 staff and 23 volunteers which were either new hires or renewals in line with our policy.

6. Safeguarding culture and engagement

Awareness has been strengthened helping ensure that safeguarding remains understood as a shared responsibility. Engagement at staff briefings, promotion of key messages, and visible safeguarding information across the organisation all contribute to a culture where people feel informed, confident and encouraged to speak up about concerns. Highlights from the year include:

- Implementation of a systematic approach to assessment of our safeguarding arrangements using the NSPCC's safetycheck standards, a checklist relevant and proportionate to the Authority's activities. The checklist is used by the SWG to identify what actions are required to either maintain, update or improve the measures.
- Reinforcement of our safeguarding culture through delivery of a safeguarding staff briefing during Safeguarding Awareness Week.
- Completion of an audit of all posts requiring a DBS check to ensure legal compliance.
- Production of new guidance to help and support staff: Responding to an individual making an allegation, Reporting allegations or suspicions and a Checklist for reporting suspected abuse.
- Raised awareness and improved knowledge and confidence through training.

7. Areas for development and priorities for 2026/27

Our safeguarding priorities for 2026/27 are outlined in the Safeguarding Action Plan 2026/27 and focus on strengthening core governance, improving visibility, and enhancing consistency across the organisation. They include ensuring the Safeguarding Working Group and DSO/DDSO arrangements remain fit for purpose following recent structural changes and improving how safeguarding information is communicated through clearer signposting, updated posters, and a dedicated careers landing page. We will also strengthen safe recruitment and training by ensuring induction and role-specific safeguarding training are consistently completed, and by working to improve monitoring and compliance. These key priorities will help ensure our safeguarding approach remains strong, proactive and aligned to the needs of the organisation.

8. Conclusion

Safeguarding remains a priority for the Peak District National Park Authority. Over the past year, significant progress has been made in strengthening culture and training provision and enhancing guidance. PDNPA continues to foster a culture where all staff

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and volunteers understand their responsibility to protect and support vulnerable individuals who live in, work in, or visit the National Park.

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