

# Great Cockcrow Railway

## APPENDIX H.2

### YOUNG PERSONS, VULNERABLE ADULTS AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

|                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| By Order of              | Hardwick Central Station |
| The Management Committee | Hardwick Lane            |
| 01st February 2026       | Chertsey                 |



## **BACKGROUND**

Young people wish to participate at the railway (GCR) in a number of capacities to learn how to undertake driving and signalling tasks, to support the operation of the railway and to be part of the team. The railway has a policy that all members must be at least 12 years of age but allows those who demonstrate appropriate skills to take on "qualified" roles before the age of 18.

The nature of the railway is that it is spread over a site and so as part of the development of a young person's skills they will need to go to all parts of the site, sometimes alone and sometimes with others, including adults.

It is important that all young people feel safe at all times, that parents / guardians have confidence in the management of the railway and that adults do not expose themselves to the risks of false accusations either by young people or other adults.

Members can be considered as vulnerable due to age, illness, mental conditions or other circumstances. The railway and its members have a duty not to exploit any vulnerabilities but to support each other.

## **YOUNG PEOPLE AS MEMBERS**

The parents or guardians of the young person (referred to here as the parents) should complete a Personal Information Form when (or as soon as practicable after) the young person starts to work on the GCR. The form is available from the Membership Manager. The parents should be encouraged to come to the Railway to see what is involved. By completing the information form the parents are presumed to be giving consent for the young person to attend the railway and that the young person is required to follow the rules of the railway.

The Personal Information Form includes emergency contact details and any medical conditions or other factors which may affect the young person in their volunteering. The Membership Manager will follow up any conditions where special arrangements may be required. Information will be treated in confidence unless it is necessary for others to be aware of a particular issue which may affect the safety of the young person or others.

Like all adult members, young people should undertake to ensure that suitable clothing is worn for all Railway activities. This should include overalls and other Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as appropriate. These requirements will also be made clear to parents at the outset.

Safety is the first priority of the railway and some dangers are not immediately obvious and hazards can arise quickly. Parents will be informed that to act with sufficient speed in an emergency or when learning a Railway discipline, it may be necessary to raise one's voice, or make physical contact (e.g., by taking hold of the young person's hand to remove the person from a position of Danger). This can be demonstrated to the parents during their early visit to the Railway. Procedures for acting in an emergency should be rehearsed, e.g. following the instruction "Stand Clear" if a train approaches.

Where a parent is always present on the Railway, e.g. as a working member, the parent is primarily responsible for the young person's welfare when in the vicinity of the young person.

Each young person will be introduced to a Mentor in addition to the Membership Manager who they, or the parents, can contact if at any time they feel they are at risk of physical or other harm, or feel uncomfortable with any tasks they are being asked to do.

## **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

GCR is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all young people and vulnerable adults members.

GCR recognises the serious issue of the abuse of young people and recognises that this may take the form of physical, emotional, sexual, financial, spiritual or institutional abuse or neglect. It acknowledges the effects these may have on people and their development. It also recognises that adults may be vulnerable to abuse or manipulation. It accepts its responsibility for ensuring that all people are safe in its care and that their dignity and right to be heard is maintained.

GCR accepts its responsibility to support adult members when guiding, instructing or volunteering alongside adults and young people.

### **a) Good Practice**

We believe good practice means that:

- i) All people are treated with respect and dignity.
- ii) Those who act on behalf of GCR should not plan to meet or work alone with a young person where the activity cannot be seen by others on a frequent basis, preferably continual. Such occasions should be where it is necessary to undertake the role of member and alternative arrangements are not practicable.
- iii) Where a member may be vulnerable that all those working alongside them avoid actions which may cause them harm or expressing opinions, however well intentioned, which may lead them to make inappropriate decisions.

The good practice above is to safeguard both those working with young people or vulnerable adults and those who may be at risk if this practice is not followed.

## **b) Briefing of members**

GCR commits itself to the provision of support, advice and training for members that will ensure people are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and other members.

Each member will be provided with a copy (electronically) of this policy and asked to affirm that they accept its contents and will abide by it.

## **c) Specific guidelines for working with young people at GCR**

The committee have identified the following common scenarios where extra consideration needs to be given to both adult and young person members.

- i) Cockcrow Hill Signalbox – this is away from the main site and hence it is undesirable that an adult and young person are alone at this location. During the set up and packing away of the railway another person should be in the immediate area. During the operation of the railway the passing of trains provides frequent visual observation by others and, subject to both adult and young person being comfortable, no other person is required to be continually present.
- ii) Diesel Depot – this is away from the main site and young people often like to go to fetch the signals train, etc. Situations where an adult and young person are in the diesel depot alone should be avoided although it is recognised that this may be challenging to avoid – in which case the length of time should be kept to a minimum. It is good practice that any adult or young person going to the diesel depot informs another adult of their whereabouts and whether they are alone or with another person (this is to also address the risk of accidents).
- iii) Lester's Crossing – members at this location tend to work alone however others may join them and young people may need to be instructed and supervised in the operation of the level crossing. The frequent passing of trains and the fact that the location is adjacent to the car park provides sufficient visual observation. However adults or young people going to Lester's Crossing should inform another adult of their whereabouts.
- iv) Workshop – young people are not allowed in the workshop for safety reasons unless they are under the direct supervision of a competent adult and there are other people present.
- v) Tasks around the site – young people are often involved in putting out the animals, clearing vegetation, putting out and collecting the signals, etc. and due to the nature of the tasks there will be times where they are alone with an adult. These occasions will be of short duration and often in sight of others.

- vi) During any work in an enclosed area, such as the storage containers, diesel depot, locomotive shed, carriage shed, REB etc. it is undesirable that an adult and young person are alone in either of these locations, another person should be in the immediate area.
- vii) Similarly, when the railway is not operating and particularly in the winter when Hardwick, Everglades and Lester's Crossing signal boxes have their shutters fitted, it is undesirable that an adult and young person are alone in either of these locations, another person should be in the immediate area.

#### **d) Requirement for Disclosure and Barring Service checks**

The Managing Committee have reviewed the guidance issued by the Disclosure and Barring Service and Government and concluded that, in their view, the role of an adult member does not constitute a Regulated Activity as defined in Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (SVG) Act 2006 on the grounds that the contact is not sufficiently regular, for significant durations or overnight.

#### **e) Responding to Allegations and Suspicions**

The Managing Committee of GCR commits itself to respond without delay to any allegation or cause for concern that a young person may have been harmed. It commits itself to challenge the abuse of power of anyone in a position of trust.

Any cause for concern, however minor, must be reported to the Membership Manager unless the concern is about that person, in which case it must be reported to the General Manager. All suspicions will be recorded factually.