

19 May 2022**SAFEGUARDING ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22****Purpose**

1. To update the Executive Board on progress on safeguarding in the business, update on incidents within the year, and to agree priorities for the year ahead.

Background

2. Safeguarding means protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. All Forestry Commission staff have a duty of care to safeguard people whether staff or members of the public they come into contact with within their role. Children, young people and vulnerable adults can be at particular risk.
3. This annual report has been brought to the Board to confirm and raise awareness of work undertaken during the year to ensure we meet and strengthen safeguarding measures in the business.

Discussion

4. The report provides an update on activities specifically within Forestry England, Forest Services, Commissioners' Office and Forest Research and how to take forward these activities. It covers areas such as implementation of the DBS checks, the rollout of safeguarding training to staff and volunteers, development of toolkits to support managers, and a general update on engagement and delivery of activities with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults across the nation's forests.
5. There were seven incidents reported in 2021-22 and the report provides more detail on each incident and lessons learned.

Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment is not required in respect to the report.

Communications

6. We now need to increase awareness and understanding amongst staff and volunteers as to what constitutes a safeguarding incident and how this should be reported on Airsweb. A communications plan will be developed and commenced in the first quarter of 2022/23.
7. As in previous years, a copy of the report will be made available to FC ARAC.
8. Throughout the year we will seek opportunities to further raise general awareness about safeguarding and learning from incidents through material on ROOTS / FR intranet plus targeted communications to key staff groups.

Recommendations

9. The Board are invited to note this report and the stated priorities for the year ahead.

Mike Seddon

Chief Executive, Forestry England & FC Safeguarding SRO

13 May 2022