

Protocols in the event of a significant incident or adverse event

1. Introduction

This document outlines the protocol to be followed in the event of any untoward incident or adverse occurrence taking account of its staff, operations, finances and or reputation.

The protocol describes what a serious incident is and the reporting process to follow.

The circumstances around incidents and adverse occurrences can be very different, not all are classified as reportable and not all will be deemed to be significant.

Actions which may be necessary during an incident to support business continuity within Trefoil will be addressed in The Trefoil Guild's business continuity plan.

2. Significant serious incidents

2.1 What is a serious incident

A serious incident is any event, whether actual or alleged, which results in, or risks, significant:

- Harm to the Trefoil's members, staff, volunteers, or others who encounter Trefoil through its work
- Loss of Trefoil money or assets
- Damage to Trefoil property
- Harm to the work or reputation of Trefoil or other charities

It is the responsibility of the trustees to decide whether an incident is significant and should be reported.

2.2 Reportable incidents

Reportable incidents typically relate to:

- Safeguarding
- Financial crimes including suspicious financial activity using the charity's funds or other significant financial loss
- Financial challenges such as insolvency or withdrawal of banking services
- Links to terrorism or extremism
- Significant data breaches or cyber crime
- Any other losses or incidents that materially affect the charity

The charity commission provide a helpful table on understanding which incidents to report however a summary of those more relevant to Trefoil appear in the appendix. [gov.uk - deciding what to report](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/deciding-what-to-report)

2.2 Reporting serious incidents

The Trefoil Guild will report any serious adverse incident, whether alleged or actual, promptly and with full disclosure to the Charity Commissioner.

The Trefoil Guild will also ensure that all other parties such as regulators, legal entities, police, safeguarding professionals, and members are notified as relevant to that specific incident

The chief guide will be advised of the incident by the national chair, delegated trustee or staff member.

All incidents will be reported by the trustees, delegated to an employee or Trefoil's professional advisers to the appropriate body as set out in their guidelines but typically will cover:

- What has happened or is alleged to have happened
- What is being done to resolve the incident
- What other regulators or agencies are involved

3. Process to be followed

It is the responsibility of all members to notify the national chair or The Trefoil office of any potential serious or suspected incident or adverse effect as soon as one is suspected. **Do not wait until confirmed or further details are known.**

3.1 During office hours

Telephone the Trefoil office with an outline of the issue on 020 7834 6242 Ext: 3010 and follow it up with an email.

If the office is unavailable members should contact their county, country or region chair who should then escalate the issue to the national chair or in their absence the chair of finance and general purposes.

3.2 Outside office hours

Members should contact their county, country or region chair who should then escalate the issue to the national chair or in their absence the chair of finance and general purposes.

3.1 Outline actions

All incidents are different however the following should be undertaken by the national chair or their delegate, who will:

- Arrange for any immediate actions required to ensure the safety of Trefoil members, staff, and other guests, visitors or public as relevant.
- Work with the Trefoil support group or a small team to manage the incident to:
 - Pull together all the related information
 - Document the information, record all actions taken by whom and when throughout the incident and until fully concluded

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- Identify any 3rd parties or witnesses
- Determine the level of alleged or actual incident
- If significant report the incident to the relevant regulatory authorities
– see section 2.2
- Advise the Girlguiding insurance and media team as relevant
- Commence an investigation internally or with other partners or statutory bodies as relevant and agree an action plan to resolve
- Ensure all actions are done to bring the incident to a conclusion
- Following the incident ensure that a lessons learned process is undertaken to prevent reoccurrences.

Communication to members and the media will depend on the nature of the incident and actions will be agreed by the group and the national chair.

Trustees will be kept updated in accordance with the nature and severity of the incident.

APPENDIX: Examples to help on deciding what to report	
See also gov.uk - deciding what to report for a more detailed list.	
Serious incidents to report	Incidents not reported
Safeguarding	
<p>A Trefoil member, staff or other individual connected with Trefoil has suffered serious harm.</p> <p>Any allegation of physical or sexual assault in Trefoil or to a member of its staff.</p> <p>Any investigation of widespread bullying in the Trefoil.</p>	<p>Minor and unusual aggressive behaviours to staff or volunteers.</p> <p>Allegations of abuse or neglect not associated with Trefoil.</p> <p>Minor accidental injury to members or staff, e.g. slips and trips</p>
Fraud, cyber crime	
<p>Trustees producing false invoices or expense claims.</p> <p>Bogus fundraising schemes in the charities name or loss of funds due to online or telephone scams.</p> <p>Attempted fraud by staff or trustees but intercepted by internal financial controls</p>	<p>Attempted cyber-crime blocked by Trefoil's computer network security systems</p>

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Theft	
Theft of computers holding personal details of staff, members, etc	One off random theft, e.g. mobile phone, purse at an event or in the office.
Theft of money from Trefoil accounts on a regular basis	Small amounts of cash at an event

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Unverified donations	
An amount over £25k is donated from an unknown or unverified source	Large legacy through a solicitor where the donor wishes to remain anonymous or low value donations.
Other significant financial losses	
Significant investment losses made without professional advice. Sudden loss of 20% or more of charities income or substantial loss due to court case.	Losses less than 20% of income which has no impact on charities services.
Links to terrorism or extremism	
A member of staff or trustee has been arrested for terrorism related offences. Charity members have been detained or kidnapped by a terrorist group overseas A speaker has used a charity event or social media to promote extremist messages	
Governance related	
Anyone acting as a trustee whilst disqualified. Charity is investigated by another regulator. Mass resignations of trustees. Evidence of trustees signing blank cheques	A trustee voluntarily stepping down. Trustees stepping down at end of term or other personal reasons.
Fundraising issues	
Unauthorised fundraising in the name of Trefoil. Non-compliance with legal requirements	Missing collection tin. Failure to submit small amounts of money to charity

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Data breaches or loss	
Personal data accessed and deleted Unencrypted laptop containing personal data stolen. Data protection breach resulting in ICO notification.	Computer or phone lost or stolen which doesn't contain personal data
Any other type of incident that appears serious and likely to damage reputation or incur loss of charitable funds or assets.	

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