



CHELTENHAM CANOE CLUB

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Procedure



1.0 Introduction

Cheltenham Canoe Club (CCC) is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment for all individuals involved in supporting or participating in kayaking and kayaking associated activities.

Safeguarding duties apply to an adult who: -

- 1.1 Has need for care and support (whether or not the local authorities are meeting any of those needs) and;
- 1.2 Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and;
- 1.3 As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

2.0 Principles in relation to adults at risk

The six key principles which underpin all adult safeguarding work, as set out in the Care and Support Statutory Guidance are:

- 2.1 Empowerment: People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
- 2.2 Prevention: It is better to take action before harm occurs.
- 2.3 Proportionality: The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- 2.4 Protection: Support and representation for those at greatest need.
- 2.5 Partnership: Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
- 2.6 Accountability: Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

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Wherever possible discuss safeguarding concerns with the adult to get their view of what they would like to happen and keep them involved in the safeguarding process, seeking their consent to share information outside the organisation where necessary.

The principles of the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) state that every individual has the right to make their own decisions and provides the framework for this to happen.

In addition, CCC recognises the following principles which underpin work with individuals who may have additional needs for support and protection:

- It is every adult's right to be protected from abuse irrespective of their age, gender identity, faith or religion, culture, ethnicity, sexual orientation, background, marital status or disability.
- All volunteers share the responsibility for the protection of adults at risk and will show respect and understanding for their rights, safety and welfare.
- The additional vulnerability of disabled adults (including those with invisible disabilities, learning and communication differences) is recognised.
- Allegations of abuse or concerns about the welfare of any adult will be tested seriously and will be responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- CCC recognises the role and responsibilities of NGB and other statutory agencies in safeguarding adults and is committed to complying with the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Adults authorities, (Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board).
- Confidentiality will be maintained appropriately at all times and the adult's safety and welfare must be the overriding consideration when making decisions on whether or not to share information about them.
- All participants involved in CCC activities have the right to be listened to with respect and to be heard.

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3.0 Guidance and legislation

The practises within this procedure are based on the principles contained within UK Legislation, Guidance and Paddle UK (PUK) guidance as detailed in the 'Cheltenham Canoe Club Safeguarding Adults policy'.

4.0 Responsibilities and implementation

CCC will seek to promote the principles of safeguarding by:

- 4.1 Reviewing CCC policies and procedures every two years or whenever there is a change in legislation.
- 4.2 Giving guidance on appropriate recruitment procedures to assess the suitability of volunteers working with vulnerable groups and are trained in compliance with the requirements of **PUK's Standards for Deployment Policy**.
- 4.3 Procedures are to report welfare concerns and allegations about the behaviour of adults and ensure that volunteers, parents and participants, including children, are aware of these procedures.
- 4.4 CCC will appoint a Club Welfare Officer (CWO) who will have completed a recognized safeguarding training course and will attend a 'refresher' course every three years. In addition, a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check is mandatory for anyone involved in regulated activities within PUK.
- 4.5 Safeguarding training is also required for members, other than CWO, as defined by PUK. Details of which can be found on the PUK website, reference document 'Safeguarding Training Requirements (G21)'.

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5.0 Complaints, concerns and allegations

- 5.1 As a paddler, parent, carer, chaperone or volunteer you may be concerned about the welfare of an adult, become aware that abuse or poor practise is taking place, suspect abuse or poor practise may be occurring or be told about something that may be abuse or poor practise. These concern's should be brought to the attention of the clubs Club Welfare Officer (CWO) on email: welfare@cheltenhamcanoeclub.com and the Paddle UK Safeguarding Team on email: safeguarding@paddleuk.org.uk and telephone **0115 8655354**. If the CWO or PUK are uncontactable, advice can be sought through the Gloucestershire Safeguarding website or email: socialcare@gloucestershire.gov.uk and telephone **01452 426868**
- 5.2 The person reporting the concern is not required to decide whether abuse has occurred, simply has a duty to pass on their concerns and any relevant information. Details should only be shared on a 'need to know' basis with those who can help with the management of the concern.
- 5.3 CCC will work with PUK and other external agencies to take appropriate action where concerns relate to potential abuse or serious poor practise.
- 5.4 Safeguarding adults at risk requires everyone to be committed to the highest possible standards of openness, integrity and accountability, CCC supports an environment where paddlers, volunteers, parents, carers, chaperones and the public are encouraged to raise safeguarding concerns.
- 5.6 It is important when considering your concern that you also consider the needs and wished of the person at risk.

6.0 Responding to disclosure of abuse.

- 6.1 If an adult indicates that they are being abused, the person receiving the information should:
- Stay calm

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- Listen carefully to what is said, allowing the adult to continue at their own pace, and take it seriously.
- Explain that it is likely the information will have to be shared with others and do not promise to keep secrets.
- Keep questions to a minimum, only ask questions if you need to identify or clarify what the person is telling you. Take care to distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion. It is important that the information that you have is accurate.
- Reassure the person that they have done the right thing in revealing the information.
- Ask them what they would like to happen next.
- Explain what you would like to do next and ask if they are happy for you to share information in order for you to help them. As long as it does not increase the risk to the individual, you should explain to them that it is your duty to share your concern with the CWO and Paddle UK Safeguarding team.
- Record in writing what was said using the adult's own words as soon as possible.

6.2 DO NOT:

- Dismiss the concern.
- Panic or allow shock or distaste to show.
- Probe for more information than is offered.
- Make promises that cannot be kept.
- Conduct an investigation of the case.
- Make negative comments about the alleged perpetrator.

If the matter is urgent and relates to the immediate safety of the adult at risk then contact the police immediately. Inform the CWO and PUK Safeguarding team within 24 hours.

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7.0 Signs and indicators of abuse and neglect.

Abuse can take place in any context. Abuse may be inflicted by anyone. Paddlers, Volunteers, Members and Chaperones may suspect that an adult is being abused or neglected outside of the club setting. There are many signs and indicators that may suggest someone is being abused or neglected, these include but are not limited to:

- Unexplained bruises or injuries – or lack of medical attention when an injury is present.
- Person has belongings or money going missing.
- Person is not attending or no longer enjoying their sessions.
- Someone losing or gaining weight or becomes of unkempt appearance. A change in the behaviour or confidence of a person.
- Self-harm.
- A fear of a particular group or individual.
- They may tell you or another person that they are being abused, i.e. a disclosure.

8.0 Consent and Information Sharing

The Care Act statutory guidance advises that the first priority in safeguarding should always be to ensure the safety and well-being of the adult.

Adults have a general right to independence, choice and self-determination including control over information about themselves.

CCC does not expect volunteers to support an adult who is felt to be vulnerable or at risk through their own decision-making process but expects them to inform the CWO and PUK Safeguarding Team without delay so that they can clearly define the various options to help support the adult at risk to make a decision about their safety. As long as it does not increase the risk to the individual, it should be explained to them that it is their duty to share their concern with the CWO and PUK. Consent is not required to seek guidance or share information with PUK.

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Adults may not give their consent to the sharing of safeguarding information. For example, they may be unduly influenced, coerced or intimidated by another person, they may be frightened of reprisals, they may fear losing control, they may not trust social services or other partners or they may fear that their relationship with the abuser will be damaged. Reassurance and appropriate support may help to change their view on whether it is best to share information.

Those seeking to support the adult should consider the following:

- Explore the reasons for the adults' objections – what are they worried about?
- Explain the concern and why you think it is important to share the information.
- Tell the adult with whom you maybe sharing the information with and why.
- Explain the benefits, to them or others, or sharing information – could someone come to harm?
- Discuss the consequences of not sharing the information – could someone come to harm?
- Reassure them that the information will not be shared with anyone who does not need to know.
- Reassure them that they are not alone and that support is available to them.

If the adult continues to refuse intervention to support them with a safeguarding concern, or requests that the information about them is not shared with other safeguarding partners their wishes should be respected.

However, there are a number of circumstances where those seeking to support the adult can reasonably override such a decision, including but not limited to:

- It appears the adult lacks the mental capacity to make a decision.
- Emergency or life-threatening situations may warrant the sharing of relevant information with the emergency services without consent.
- Where other people are, or may be, at risk, including children.
- A serious crime has been committed or may be prevented.

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- Individuals in a Position of Trust are implicated.

In such circumstances, it is important to keep a careful record of the decision-making process and guidance should be sought from PUK Safeguarding Team. If the decision is to take action without the adult's consent, then unless it is unsafe to do so, the adult should be informed that this is being done and the reasons why.

If someone does not want you to share information with the WO, or outside of CCC, consider the following:

- Is the adult placing themselves at further risk of harm?
- Is someone else likely to get hurt?
- Has a criminal offence occurred? This includes theft or burglary of items, physical; abuse, sexual abuse, forced to pay extra money for lessons or harassment.
- Is there suspicion that a crime has occurred?

If the answer to any of these questions is 'YES' - then you can share information without consent. When sharing information, keep accurate notes and take into account the following guidance:

- Seek advice if in any doubt
- Be transparent - The Data Protection Act (DPA) is not a barrier to sharing information but to ensure that personal information is shared appropriately; except in circumstances where by doing so places the person at significant risk.
- Consider the public interest – Base all decisions to share information on the safety and well-being of the person or others that may be affected.
- Share with consent where appropriate – Where possible, respond to the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent, if this is in the public interest.

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- Keep a record – record your decision and reasons to share or not to share information.
- Accuracy and Proportional - Ensure all information shared is accurate, up-to-date and necessary. Share only with those who need to have it.
- Remember, the purpose of the DPA is to ensure personal information is shared appropriately, except in circumstances where by doing so may place the person or others at significant harm.

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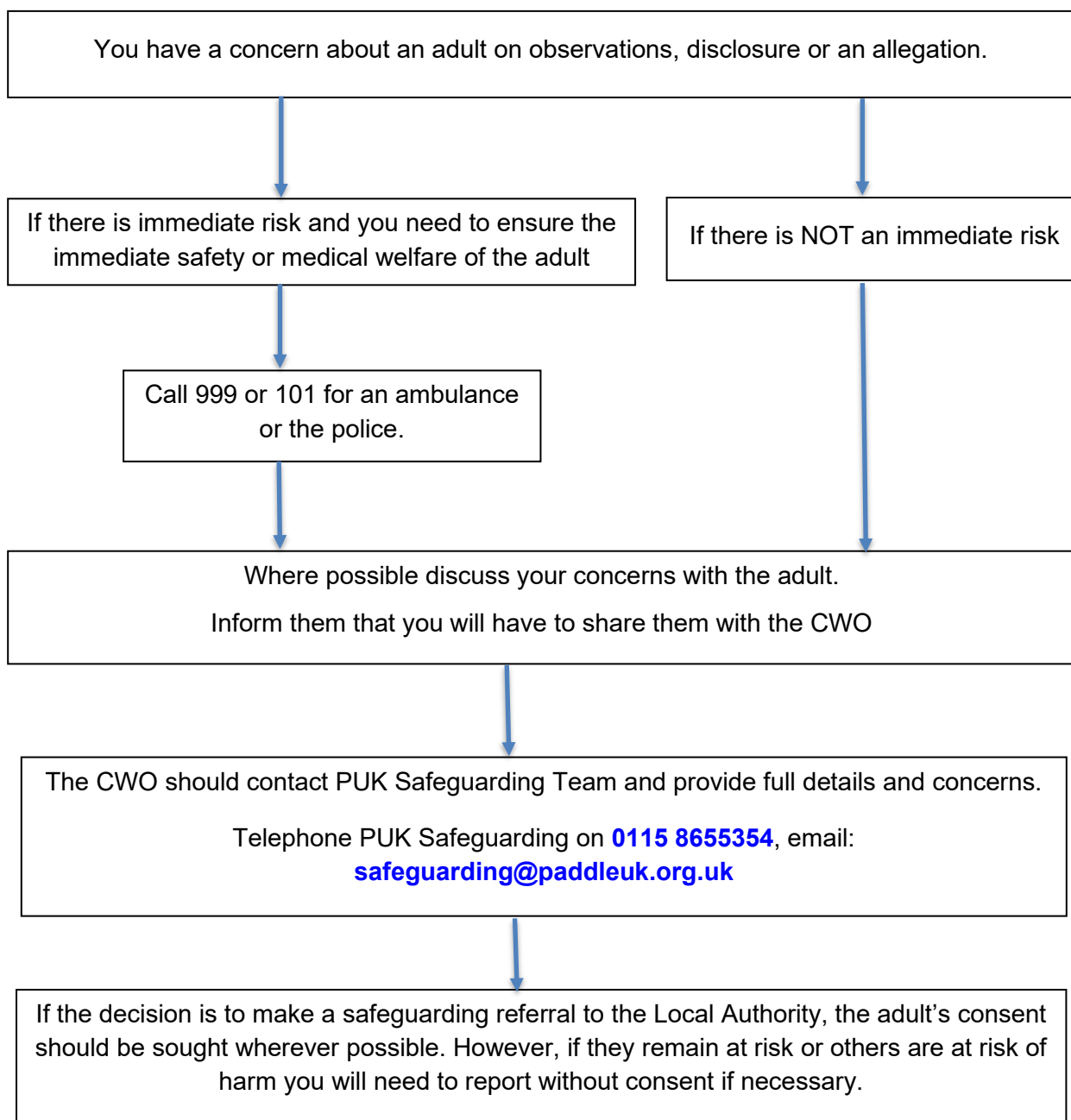


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9.0 Safeguarding Adults Flow Chart



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10.0 Guidance on Making Decisions

The issue of capacity or decision making is a key one in safeguarding adults. We make decisions every day, often without realising; we make so many decisions that it's easy to take this ability for granted. Some people can make some decisions and some people cannot make any decisions. An inability to make a decision is referred to as "lacking capacity".

10.1 To make a decision we need to:

- Understand information
- Remember it for long enough
- Think about the information
- Communicate our decision

10.2 A person's ability to make a decision may be affected by a number of factors such as physical ill health, anxiety, brain injury, mental health needs or a learning disability.

10.3 The Mental Capacity Act (MCA) states that every individual has the right to make their own decisions. The MCA is about making sure that people over the age of **16** have the support they need to make as many decisions as possible. Our ability to make decisions can change over the course of a day. E.g.:

- A person with epilepsy may not be able to make a decision at that point.
- Someone who is anxious may not be able to make a decision at that point.
- A person may not be able to respond as quickly if they are fatigued by either medication or over exercise.

In each of the examples above, it may appear that the person cannot make a decision at the time, but may be able to do so later in the day given a change of circumstances.

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10.4 The MCA recommend considering the following points:

- Assume people are able to make decisions, unless they show that they are not. If you have a concern about a person's level of understanding, you should check with them, if necessary, advise the event organiser or team leader.
- People have the right to make unwise decisions. The important thing is that they understand the implications. If they understand the implications, consider how the risks might be minimised.
- If someone is not able to make a decision, then the person or persons responsible for safeguarding must only make decisions in their "best interests". This means that the decision must be what is best for the person and not for anyone else.
- Find the least restrictive way of doing what needs to be done.

10.5 Remember

You should not discriminate or make assumptions about someone's ability to make decisions, and you should not pre-empt a "best interests" decision merely on the basis of a person's age, appearance, condition or behaviour.

With regard to decision-making, you could be involved in a minor way, or asked to provide more detail. The way you provide information might influence a person's ultimate decision.

11.0 Guidance on types of harm.

The Care Act recognises 10 categories of abuse that may be experienced by adults.

11.1 Self-Neglect

This covers a wide range of behaviour e.g. neglect of one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

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11.2 Modern Slavery

This encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude.

11.3 Domestic Abuse

This includes psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse perpetrated by anyone within a person's family. It also includes what is termed as 'honour' based violence.

11.4 Discriminatory

Discrimination is abusing which centres on a difference or perceived difference particularly with respect to race, gender or disability or any of the protected characteristics of the Equality Act.

11.5 Organisational

This includes neglect and poor practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practise as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practises within the organisation.

11.6 Physical

This includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.

11.7 Sexual

This includes rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

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11.8 Financial or Material

This includes theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

11.9 Neglect and Acts of Omission

This includes ignoring medical or physical care needs, failing to provide access to appropriate health social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

11.10 Emotional or Psychological

This includes threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services.

Not included in the Care Act, but relevant to safeguarding adults in sport and physical activity:

11.11 Cyber Bullying

Cyberbullying occurs when someone repeatedly makes fun of another online or repeatedly picks on another person through text and email messages, or uses online forums with the intention of harming, damaging, humiliating or isolating another person or group of persons.

11.12 Mate Crime

A 'mate crime' is when vulnerable people are befriended by members of the community who go on to exploit and take advantage of them. It may not be an illegal act but still has a negative impact on the individual. Mate Crime is carried out by someone the adult knows and often happens in private.

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11.13 Radicalisation

The aim of radicalisation is to attract people to their reasoning, inspire new recruits and embed extreme views and persuade vulnerable individuals of the legitimacy of their cause. This may be through a direct relationship or through social media.

12.0 Club Welfare Officer

The role of the CWO is to take the lead on Club welfare and protection issues and ensure appropriate action is taken when there is a potential for or alleged abuse, bullying or poor practice with respect to vulnerable adults or child welfare. It is not their role to fully investigate any allegations made.

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