Safeguarding Adults in Bowls Policy - 2025

Littleton Bowling Club affiliates to Bowls England (BE) and the Club adopts the policies of Bowls England and Bowls Development Alliance (BDA) as set out in Bowls Development Alliance: Safeguarding Adults in Bowls Policy: bowlsdevelopmentalliance.com/safeguarding/resources

Policy Aims

- The purpose of this policy is to outline the duty and responsibility of members and volunteers working on behalf of Littleton Bowling Club in relation to Safeguarding Adults at risk.
- All adults have the right to be safe from harm and must be able to live free from fear of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Littleton Bowling Club is to have an appointed and qualified Safeguarding Officer.

Policy Statement

The BDA and BE believe that everyone has the right to live free from abuse or neglect regardless of age, ability or disability, sex, race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital or gender status. We are committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment and an open, listening culture where people feel able to share concerns without fear of retribution.

The BDA and BE acknowledge that **safeguarding is everybody's responsibility** and are committed to prevent abuse and neglect through safeguarding the welfare of all adults involved in bowls. Physical and mental health, well- being, ability, disability and need for care and support can affect a person's resilience. We recognise that some people experience barriers, for example, to communication in raising concerns or seeking help. We recognise that all these factors can vary at different points in people's lives.

The BDA and BE recognise that there is a legal framework within which sports need to work to safeguard adults who have needs for care and support and for protecting those who are unable to take action to protect themselves and will act in accordance with the relevant safeguarding adult legislation and with local statutory safeguarding procedures.

Actions taken by the BDA and BE will be consistent with the principles of adult safeguarding ensuring that any action taken is prompt, proportionate and that it includes and respects the voice of the adult concerned.

Objectives

- Everyone who participates in bowls is entitled to do so in a safe and enjoyable environment.
- The Club is committed to helping everyone in bowls accept their responsibility to safeguard adults at risk, from harm and abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

Volunteers working with adults at risk in bowls have a responsibility to report concerns to their club Safeguarding Officer.

Definitions

- An **Adult at Risk** is defined in The **Care Act 2014** as:

an individual aged 18 years and over who has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) AND; is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect, AND; 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.

- **Safeguarding adults** is defined in **Care and Support Statutory Guidance** as:

protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear, or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.

Responsibilities and Communication

The Littleton Bowling Club Safeguarding Policy will be available to all members and volunteers. It is important that adults at risk are protected from abuse. All complaints, allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously with the Club Safeguarding Officer passing information to the appropriate County or BE Safeguarding Office and informing the appropriate Club Officers.

The club has responsibility for ensuring that the policy and procedures are implemented, including referring any appropriate disciplinary action to BE as appropriate.

Littleton Bowling Club will ensure it has safeguarding procedures in place. It will:

- Adopt the BDA safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Adopt safe practice in the recruitment, training and supervision of members, coaches and volunteers.

- Nominate and advertise to members the existence of a Club Safeguarding Officer.
- Promote safeguarding training opportunities to the Club Safeguarding Officer and other club members.
- Have a safe and fair membership.

Littleton Bowling Club Safeguarding Officer will be:

- Given access to information and training appropriate to this role.
- Clearly identified to all members with their contact details and preferably a photograph, via handbooks, web site, notice boards or similar.
- The first port of call for any member of the bowls club or other persons to report a safeguarding concern.
- Responsible for making club members aware of safeguarding information and procedures.
- Responsible for reporting safeguarding concerns to the County and/or BE Safeguarding Officer where relevant.

The Club Safeguarding Officer is not required to make a judgement regarding an incident but only to report it to the County and/or BE Safeguarding Officer as appropriate.

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Appendix 1

What is Abuse?

It is important to be aware of what constitutes abuse. Abuse is a form of maltreatment. The Care Act 2014 identifies categories of abuse as applied in England. There are some variations for the other countries of the United Kingdom. Adults may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or by others. Those in positions of trust such as relatives, community leaders, teachers or coaches can be perpetrators of abuse. Several types of abuse affecting adults are identified in the Care Act 2014:

Physical abuse including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint, inappropriate physical sanctions.

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

Psychological abuse including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling,

intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation, unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.
Domestic violence including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse, so called 'honour' based abuse.
Modern slavery encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude, traffickers and slave masters using whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive, and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude, and inhumane treatment.
Discriminatory abuse including forms of harassment, slurs, or similar treatment: because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion.
Neglect and acts of omission including ignoring medical, emotional, or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
Self-neglect: This covers a wide range of behaviour: neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.
Organisational abuse: Including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes, and practices within an organisation.
Some examples of abuse within sport include:
• harassment of a participant because of their (perceived) disability or other protected characteristics,
• not meeting the needs of the participant e.g. training without a necessary break,
• a coach intentionally striking an athlete,
• one elite participant controlling another athlete with threats of withdrawal from their partnership,
• an official, coach or other participant who sends unwanted sexually explicit text messages,
• a participant threatens another participant with physical harm and persistently blames them for poor performance.
Abuse or neglect outside sport could be carried out by:
• a spouse, partner, or family member,
• neighbours or residents,

• friends, acquaintances, or strangers,
• people who deliberately exploit adults they perceive as vulnerable,
• paid staff, professionals or volunteers providing care and support.
Often the perpetrator is known to the adult and may be in a position of trust and/or power.

Signs of Abuse

There are a number of signs that may indicate that an adult is being abused:
• unexplained bruises, cuts, or injuries – or lack of medical attention when an injury is present,
• person has belongings or money going missing,
• person is not attending / no longer enjoying their sessions and is not responding to reminders from team members or coaches,
• someone losing or gaining weight / an unkempt appearance or a deterioration in personal hygiene,
• a change in the behaviour or confidence of a person, for example, a participant may be looking quiet and withdrawn when a relative comes to collect them from sessions in contrast to their personal assistant whom they greet with a smile,
• a fear of a particular group of people or individual,
• a parent/carer always speaks for the person and does not allow them to make their own choices,
• they may tell you / another person they are being abused – i.e. a disclosure.

Key Principles of the Care Act 2014

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

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