

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

POLICY OWNER(S): CLUB CHAIR
WELFARE OFFICER

POLICY LAST UPDATED: FEBRUARY 2025

This policy applies to everyone who plays, coaches, officiates, volunteers, provides services, or otherwise participates in (or visits) our club.

WHY DO WE HAVE THIS POLICY?

We recognise our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children (anyone under 18) and adults at risk. We are committed to ensuring our safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with LTA safeguarding standards.

A summary of the relevant legislation can be found on the LTA website - in the [LTA Safeguarding Children Policy](#) and the [LTA Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy](#), with required standards set out in the [LTA Safeguarding Standards](#).

DEFINITIONS

Child: anyone under the age of 18.

Parent: birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role.

Adult at risk (England: Care Act 2014):

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

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- The safety and welfare of children and adults at risk is paramount.
- All children and adults at risk, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility.
- All safeguarding concerns or allegations will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- We want a culture and environment where everyone is empowered to protect themselves and others and feel able to raise concerns.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR SAFEGUARDING?

Every individual is responsible for raising safeguarding concerns and allegations in accordance with the **Reporting a Safeguarding Concern Procedures**.

We have an appointed **Welfare Officer** who holds operational responsibility for safeguarding in line with the LTA role profile and is supported by the Committee. The Welfare Officer is the first point of contact to raise a safeguarding concern involving a child or adult at risk. They also play a proactive role in increasing awareness of safeguarding within our venue.

If the **Welfare Officer** is not available, safeguarding concerns should be reported to the **Club Chair**. Contact details are available in the Clubhouse and on the [Backwell Tennis Club Website](#).

The **LTA Safeguarding Team** has strategic and operational responsibility for safeguarding in tennis in Britain, including the monitoring and evaluation of safeguarding standards and investigating safeguarding concerns. Safeguarding concerns can be raised directly to the LTA Safeguarding Team via <https://safeguardingconcern.lta.org.uk/>.

The Local Authority contact details are: Children Services 01275 888808 / Adult Services 01275 888801

WHAT CONSTITUTES ABUSE?

There are four main types of abuse that apply to children and adults at risk: Neglect / Physical / Emotional / Sexual.

Detailed descriptions of these types of abuse, along with other forms of harm, can be found in (Appendix C).

Increased Vulnerability to Abuse

Vulnerability may include children and adults at risk with a physical disability or diagnosed condition such as dementia, learning difficulties, or those who have a mental health condition such as severe anxiety or depression.

Personal circumstances away from tennis such as domestic violence, poverty, substance abuse, homelessness and social exclusion may also have an impact on vulnerability.

To find out more about increased vulnerability, please refer to the LTA Safeguarding Policies.

WHAT CONSTITUTES AN ALLEGATION OR LOWER-LEVEL CONCERN?

An **allegation** is against an individual who:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against a child.
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.
- Behaved in a way in their personal life that raises safeguarding concerns. These concerns do not have to directly relate to a child but could, for example, include an arrest for possession of a weapon.
- As a parent or carer, become subject to child protection procedures.

A **lower-level concern** is behaviour that falls short of abuse, but which nevertheless harms or places a child at risk of harm or has a negative effect on the safety and well-being of children. An allegation may be an observation or a 'nagging doubt' that an individual demonstrates behaviour which:

- Is not consistent with our Code of Conduct, and/or
- Relates to an individual's conduct outside of the club which, even if not linked to a particular act or omission, has caused a sense of unease about that adult's suitability to work with children

WHAT IS A POSITION OF TRUST?

There are specific safeguarding laws that relate to the conduct of individuals in a Position of Trust.

A person aged 18 or older who holds a position of authority or responsibility over a child or adult at risk is in a position of trust. Positions of trust are not defined by a qualification or job title, but by reference to the activity which the adult is carrying out in relation to the child or adult at risk, namely, coaching, teaching, training, supervising or instructing (including as a volunteer) on a regular basis.

People who are in a position of trust must be aware of the power imbalance they hold over children and adults at risk and not use this for personal advantage or gratification.

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, in England and Wales it is a criminal offence for a person in a position of trust to have a sexual or intimate relationship with a child under 18 years old, even if the relationship is deemed consensual. Therefore, any sexual activity (including online activity) between someone in a position of trust and a child under 18 years old will be formally reported as it may be a criminal offence.

HOW SHOULD YOU RESPOND TO A DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE?

If a child or adult at risk discloses that he or she has been abused or is at risk of abuse:

- Listen carefully and calmly to what is said.
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing and what they have told you is very important.
- Keep questions to a minimum, only ask questions if you need to identify/ clarify what the person is telling you.
- Ask them what they would like to happen next.
- Let them know that you will need to speak in confidence to the Welfare Officer/LTA Safeguarding Team. Do not seek to investigate it yourself.
- Ensure that their immediate needs are met and that the priority is their safety and protection from further risk of harm
- Record details of the disclosure ([further advice here](#)) as soon as possible (but not during the disclosure) and then submit the details to the LTA via <https://safeguardingconcern.lta.org.uk/>

WHEN SHOULD YOU REPORT A CONCERN?

Everyone has a responsibility to ensure that safeguarding allegations and concerns are taken seriously and responded to quickly and appropriately, even if the safeguarding concern or allegation has not occurred recently.

For everyone:

- **All allegations and low-level concerns** should be reported to the **Welfare Officer** immediately. Never try to investigate a concern yourself.

For the Welfare Officer:

- All allegations and low-level concerns should be reported to the LTA Safeguarding team. Upon receipt by the LTA, low level concerns will be triaged and managed through the LTA Safeguarding Regulations, which form part of the LTA Disciplinary Code available here: <https://www.lta.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/governance-and-structure/rules-regulations/>.
- It is not the responsibility of anyone within the venue to investigate any safeguarding concern or allegation, nor determine whether abuse has taken place.

The process used to respond to the reported concern is summarised in **Appendices A and B**.

The concept of 'well-being' is threaded throughout UK legislation and is part of the Law about how health and social care is provided.

It is important to make sure an adult at risk has choices on, and gives consent to, the actions taken to safeguard them, including whether or not they want other people informed about what has happened. However, in some situations the adult may not have the mental capacity to understand the choice or to tell us their views.

'Making Safeguarding Personal' means engaging an adult at risk in a conversation about how best to respond to their situation in a way that enhances their involvement, choice and control, as well as improving their quality of life, well-being and safety.

For more information on 'Mental Capacity' and 'Making Safeguarding Personal', please refer to the [LTA Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy](#).

WILL YOUR REPORT BE CONFIDENTIAL?

All safeguarding concerns and allegations will be dealt with by the Welfare Officer on a confidential and need-to-know basis, not only to maintain the privacy of the individuals involved but also to ensure that evidence or any investigation is not compromised. All people involved in a safeguarding concern or allegation should similarly ensure they maintain high levels of confidentiality.

There may be circumstances where an individual raising a safeguarding concern or allegation does not wish to be named. It is not possible to assure anonymity, as in some circumstances individuals will need to be named (for example, where it is necessary in order to carry out a fair disciplinary process).

HOW IS INFORMATION SHARED AND RETAINED?

When sharing safeguarding information, we will keep a dated record of:

- what has been shared;
- with whom; and
- for what purpose.

We share safeguarding information with the LTA in accordance with this policy and LTA regulations. In certain situations, we may be required to also share information with statutory agencies and other relevant organisations where it is considered necessary and proportionate to prevent or manage the risk of harm in tennis or sport to children.

The LTA follows the UK Government's Information Sharing Advice for Safeguarding Practitioners which describes the '7 Golden Rules' of information sharing. Further details of this guidance can be found: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>.

WHAT IF YOU NEED TO WHISTLEBLOW?

Whistleblowing is when you report wrongdoing on the basis that it is in the public interest for the wrongdoing to be brought to light. This can include:

- Concerns aren't dealt with properly or may be covered up.
- A concern that was raised hasn't been acted on.
- You are worried that repercussions are likely to arise if you raise a concern.

If you want to report wrongdoing, you should contact the **Welfare Officer** in the first instance. If you don't want to talk to someone in the club, you can contact: the LTA Safeguarding Team; LTA Safecall (on 0800 915 1571 or online: www.safecall.co.uk/report); or the NSPCC Whistleblowing advice line (on 0800 028 0285 or by emailing help@nspcc.org.uk.)

WHAT OTHER POLICIES AND PRACTICES DOES THE CLUB FOLLOW TO HELP SAFEGUARDING?

Code of Conduct

All individuals who use the club are expected to familiarise themselves with this Safeguarding policy, the LTA Code of Conduct (available here: <https://www.lta.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/governance-and-structure/rules-regulations/>), and our club Code of Conduct and at all times act in accordance with them.

Inclusion & Diversity including Anti-Bullying

Our Code of Conduct is augmented by an Inclusion & Diversity policy which sets out our commitment to treat everyone equally.

We have zero tolerance to bullying and harassment and/or any actions that could be construed as such. The standards of behaviour required to ensure this are set out in our Code of Conduct.

Safe Recruitment

We are committed to ensuring that people who work with children or adults at risk (including volunteers and self-employed individuals who we engage) are appropriately qualified for that role. This means that, where necessary, they are required to undergo Criminal Records Checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) in England and Wales, or the equivalent Overseas Criminal Records Check in their country of origin before being allowed to work or volunteer.

Our Coaches and our Welfare Officer have all completed DBS checks. We constantly review to identify whether individuals in other volunteer roles in the club should undergo DBS checks.

Training

All our coaches are LTA accredited. All accredited Coaches and Welfare Officers complete safeguarding training and renew this as required by the LTA standards

The Club Committee also receive safeguarding training every three years and when there are changes to the Committee.

Transportation

It is the responsibility of parents to ensure appropriate transport arrangements are in place for their children when travelling to and from the venue. Similarly, it is the responsibility of the adult at risk (or their carer) to ensure transport arrangements are in place.

A separate policy is in place for the transportation of children to play Club League Matches (**Giving Lifts to Juniors Policy**). A copy of this policy can be found on the Club website.

Supervising Children

Children under the age of 14 should have parental supervision throughout the duration of their visit to our Club, unless they are participating in venue-organised sessions, such as coaching lessons or tennis camps.

For coaching activities, we comply with the LTA guidance on coach-to-player ratios. For children aged under 14, children must be delivered directly into the care of the coach by the parent and picked up directly from the coach.

RELATED POLICIES AND Procedures

This policy should be read alongside our other policies and procedures, including:

- Code of conduct
- Diversity & Inclusion (including Anti-Bullying)
- Photography and filming
- Use of changing rooms
- Lifts to Juniors
- Data privacy

These policies can be found on our website: backwelltennisclub.co.uk

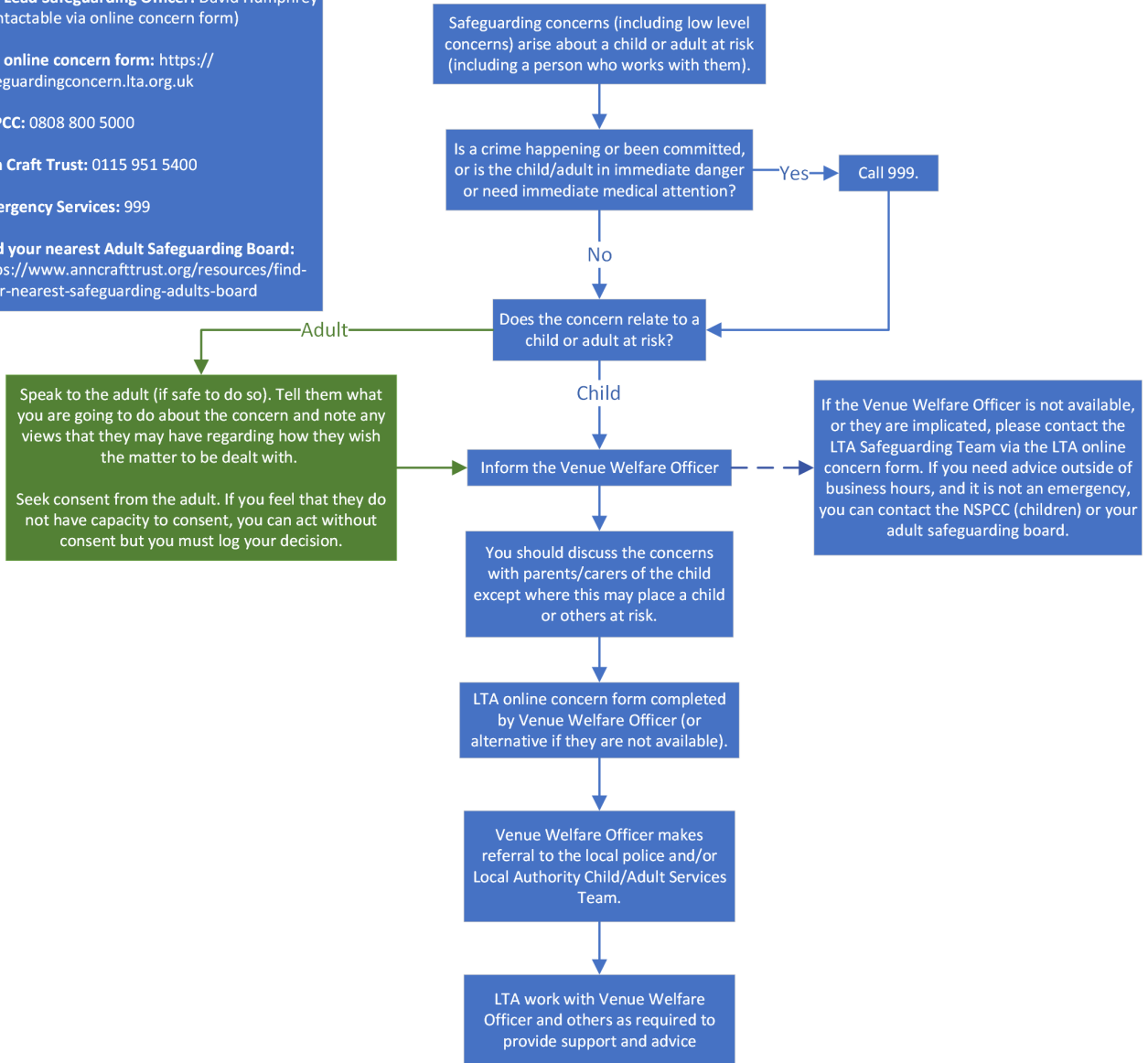
APPENDIX A: REPORTING A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN THAT OCCURS WITHIN TENNIS

Contacts
 LTA Lead Safeguarding Officer: David Humphrey (contactable via online concern form)
 LTA online concern form: <https://safeguardingconcern.lta.org.uk>
 NSPCC: 0808 800 5000
 Ann Craft Trust: 0115 951 5400
 Emergency Services: 999
 Find your nearest Adult Safeguarding Board: <https://www.anncrafttrust.org/resources/find-your-nearest-safeguarding-adults-board>



APPENDIX B: REPORTING A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN THAT HAPPENS OUTSIDE OF TENNIS

Contacts
 LTA Lead Safeguarding Officer: David Humphrey
 (contactable via online concern form)
 LTA online concern form: <https://safeguardingconcern.lta.org.uk>
 NSPCC: 0808 800 5000
 Ann Craft Trust: 0115 951 5400
 Emergency Services: 999
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APPENDIX C: DEFINITIONS

Safeguarding: the action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. This means protecting children from abuse and maltreatment, preventing harm to their health or development, ensuring they grow up with the provision of safe and effective care, and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. Safeguarding adults means protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

Child protection: the processes undertaken to protect children who have been identified as suffering, or being at risk of suffering, significant harm.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): an individual within a local authority in England and Wales with responsibility for oversight of allegations against people who work with children.

Prohibited conduct: engage, or attempt or threaten to engage, in conduct that directly or indirectly harms the physical and/or mental welfare and/or safety of one or more child or adult at risk; or pose a risk of harm to the physical and/or mental welfare and/or safety of one or more child or adult at risk.

Abuse: Abuse happens when a person harms a child or an adult at risk.

Indicators of abuse: There are many signs and indicators that may suggest a child or adult at risk is being abused or neglected. The NSPCC and Ann Craft Trust have comprehensive lists of the types of abuse and their indicators at: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/> and <https://www.anncrafttrust.org/resources/types-of-harm/>.

TYPES OF ABUSE

Neglect

Failure to meet basic needs such as adequate food, health/social care or educational services. Failure to protect from emotional physical or emotional harm.

Emotional Abuse

Any act or other treatment which is persistent and may cause emotional damage and undermine a child's sense of wellbeing. This includes persistent criticism, denigration or putting unrealistic expectations on children, isolation, verbal assault, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation or use of threats.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse happens when a child is deliberately hurt, causing physical harm. It can involve hitting, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or suffocating.

Sexual abuse

Any act which involves forcing or enticing (grooming) a child to take part in sexual activities including on-line activities. It doesn't necessarily involve violence and the child may not be aware that what is happening is abuse.

Complete definitions and a list of other forms of abuse are included in the [LTA Safeguarding Policy](#).