



Main Title: Safeguarding vulnerable adults in sport

1.0 Introduction/Purpose/Outcome.

1.1 Ely Tri Club (ETC) aims to ensure that safeguards are put in place to keep ‘adults at risk’ safe and to protect harm from occurring whilst participating in any activities organised by ETC. This policy statement is in line with government guidelines (2013) and the British Triathlon Federation safeguarding policy.

1.2 ETC promises to provide an inclusive and positive experience for all its members whilst making a firm commitment to a legal, moral and social responsibility to ensure a safe environment at all times for all those participating in the clubs activities irrespective of age, disability, gender, ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation.

1.3 ETC pledges to continually seek ways to improve the safety and well-being of all of its members who participate in triathlon training. By doing this ETC recognises that all of its members have a shared responsibility to ensure that any concerns are raised.

1.4 ETC upholds the following principles;

- a) Everyone has the right to a life free from violence, fear and abuse
- b) All adults have the right to be protected from harm and exploitation
- c) All adults have the right to independence which involves a degree of risk.

2.0 Definition.

2.1 The definition of a vulnerable adult is set out in the government recommendation ‘No Secrets’ (2009) and ‘The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act’ (2006) It not only refers to adults who are at risk from learning disability or mental health issues but also adults who are at risk due to specific circumstances they may find themselves in eg sexual or racial discrimination, domestic abuse, sexual or commercial use, forced arranged marriages etc.

2.2 Whilst there are few sport organisations with adult specific policies to protect adults participating in sport and recreational activities, there is a definite requirement for one as sporting organisations need to be aware of the risks to both adult club members and also to the coaches.

2.3 Abuse is defined as a “*Violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person/s*” The main forms of abuse are;

- a) Physical abuse – hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, restraint.
- b) Sexual abuse – rape, sexual assault, sexual acts without consent or pressured into consent.
- c) Psychological abuse – emotional abuse, threats, humiliation, intimidation, coercion, isolation, harassment.
- d) Financial abuse – theft, fraud, exploitation.
- e) Neglect and acts of omission – ignoring medical needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social and educational needs.
- f) Discriminatory abuse – racist, sexual, disability.

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2.3 Concerns regarding suspected abuse need to be dealt with quickly and appropriately with the correct escalation process to ensure protection and resolution.

2.4 Examples of abuse in sport may include;

- a) An athlete being groomed for sexual abuse by his or her coach.
- b) An athlete with mental health/learning difficulties being financially exploited by other club members.
- c) An athlete confiding to a coach or club member that they are being made to marry against their will.
- d) A coach who regularly neglects the individual needs of disabled athletes during training sessions.
- e) An athlete who is suffering domestic abuse (verbal or physical) that impacts the athlete whilst participating in a club activity.

3.0 Scope/ To whom this Applies.

3.1 This protocol will apply to any member of ETC whilst attending either a training session or an organised competition where ETC are the responsible hosts.

4.0 Aims and objectives.

4.1 ETC promise to provide a framework for the safety of its members and coaches; this will include;

- a) Safe recruiting and vetting of all Coaches.
- b) Clear codes of conduct.
- c) Clarity about rules and regulations
- d) Transparency on establishing the adults at risk and their capacity allowing clear, unambiguous processes for reporting and referring concerns.
- e) A whistleblowing process which upholds supportive and open responses to concerns
- f) A complaints procedure
- g) Access to external help and support for both the alleged victim and others involved.

6.0 Management.

6.1 To ensure the welfare and safeguard adults at risk ETC makes a commitment to protect them from any significant neglect, physical, sexual and emotional harm.

6.2 A designated Welfare officer is available for support if concerns are raised. A formal meeting with the alleged victim and a responsible adult can be arranged to determine the course of action. If deemed appropriate further escalation will be offered to either the committee and or external agencies.

6.3 If there is a genuine threat to the safety of the adult and there is, or has been a criminal offence, ETC has a legal obligation to inform agencies which will provide a safe haven. At this point consent is not required if there is a risk identified.

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6.4 ETC has a duty of care to the alleged victim and the accused abuser, it is not the responsibility of ETC to interview, investigate or determine outcomes in cases of abuse but it is a legal and moral requirement that should a risk for harm be identified a referral to external agencies must be made. This may include working with the police and other statutory agencies

6.4 Alleged victims and other club members may require help and support through other agencies such as citizens advice, Samaritans etc. The Welfare officer should aid this process by providing contact details for appropriate organisations

6.5 Not all matters of concern will require a formal approach, often mediation and discussion is all that is required. It is also recognised that often concerns can be raised whereby the victim does not feel warrants further action. In these cases the welfare officer will provide a confidential statement of the circumstances, discussion and outcome which will be held on file. This will be kept only for the purpose that if any further complaints arise concerning the alleged abuser ETC will be able to take a formal approach. The file will only be accessible to the welfare officer and another designated committee member.

7.0 The role of the Welfare Officer.

7.1 The appropriate process for the welfare officer to follow in cases of alleged abuse is as follows;

- a) First and foremost ensure the victim is safe.
- b) Collect available and relevant information.
- c) Document a record of the concern raised.
- d) Explain to the victim the process of safeguarding and document how the victim wants the matter dealt with.
- e) Confidentiality will be upheld but the welfare officer must explain that if the risk identified is a matter of safety then information may be passed to the relevant agencies with or without consent.
- f) Keeping the victim informed throughout the whole process including the outcome and resolution.
- g) The welfare officer may need to seek advice from the Local Authority Safeguarding Adults team to determine if there needs to be a formal intervention, if this is deemed necessary they will provide information on the correct way to proceed.
- h) Determining whether or not disciplinary action is required once the investigation has been completed.
- i) Document and record accurately any concerns, incidents, referrals and outcomes. This document will be kept within a secure file and only the welfare officer and another designated member of ETC committee will have permitted access.

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Usefull contacts.

Mencap
0808 808 1111
www.mencap.org.uk

Ann Craft Trust.
0115 9515 400
www.anncrafttrust.org

Respond.
020 7383 0700
0808 808 0700 (helpline)
www.respond.org.uk

British triathlon
Hayley Barker HR
01509 226 155
www.britishtriathlon.org

Help for victims

Victim Support
0808 1689 111
www.victimsupport.org.uk

Citizens Advice
www.adviceguide.org.uk/index.htm

The Samaritans
116 123
www.samaritans.org.uk

References;

Statement of Government Policy on Adult Safeguarding. (2013) Available at
www.gov.uk/publications

No Secrets Act (2009) Available at www.gov.uk/publications

British Triathlon Federation www.britishtriathlon.org

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