



Williton Bowling Club

Safeguarding Policy

Policy Title: Safeguarding Policy

Adopted 1 November 2025

Review 1 November 2027

Reporting a Safeguarding concern within the bowling environment

Useful contacts: Club Safeguarding Officer Linda Sully 07484601929 NSPCC: 0808 800 500 Emergency Services: 999 Bowls England 01929 500 490		
	Concerns arise about the behaviour of a coach or volunteer towards a child/ children. Make a note of anything you/the witness has seen/said, with dates and times.	Note: you should inform the parent/ carer of the concerned unless you believe it would put the child/adult at risk, yourself, or others at risk.
There is an immediate risk to a young person or vulnerable adult?		
YES		NO
Crime/immediate risk: call Police/ Social Services		Is the Club Safeguarding Officer available

Club Safeguarding Officer will contact the Safeguarding Team for advice and guidance and provides the completed Reporting a Concern Form.

If the Club Safeguarding Officer is unavailable, please report to Bowls England safeguarding@bowlsengland.com or call 01929 500 490 for advice and complete Reporting a Concern Form.

Safeguarding Team in conjunction with Safeguarding and Protection Committee makes decision as to level of concern

Level 1 (low level i.e. poor practice) – Concern dealt with by Club discipline/appeals process.

Level 2/3 serious concern (i.e. suspected abuse) SPC conduct investigation, inform Police

Safeguarding Policy

- **Policy statement**

Williton Bowling Club is committed to prioritising the well-being of all children and adults at risk, always promoting safeguarding in our club, including all activities and events we run. This Policy strives to minimise risk, deliver a positive bowls experience for everyone and respond appropriately to all safeguarding concerns/ disclosures.

- **Use of terminology**

Child: a person under the age of eighteen years.

Adult at risk of abuse or neglect: a person aged eighteen years or over who is, or may be, in need of community care services by reason of disability, age or illness; and is, or may be, unable to take care of, or unable to protect him or herself against abuse or neglect.

Safeguarding children: protecting children from abuse and neglect, preventing the impairment of children's health or development, ensuring that they grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

Safeguarding adults at risk: protecting adults from abuse and/or neglect. Enabling adults to maintain control over their lives and make informed choices without coercion. Empowering adults at risk, consulting them before taking action, unless someone lacks the capacity to make a decision, or their mental health poses a risk to their own or someone else's safety, in which case, always acting in his or her best interests.

(See appendix A for full glossary of terms).

- **Scope**

This Policy is applicable to all volunteers, committee members, coaches, and club members. It is in line with national legislation and applicable across the UK.

Advice, guidance, and support is available from Bowls England Safeguarding Team.

Responsibility for the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct and Reporting Procedure

SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY: NOT RESPONDING TO A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN IS NOT AN OPTION.

- Our Club's committee has overall accountability for this Policy and its implementation
- Our Club Safeguarding Officer, **Linda Sully** is responsible for updating this Policy in line with legislative and club developments
- All individuals involved in/present at the Club are required to adhere to the Policy and Code of Conduct
- Bowls England can offer support and help clubs proactively safeguard.

Where there is a safeguarding concern/disclosure:

- The individual who is told about, hears, or is made aware of the concern/disclosure is responsible for following the Reporting a Safeguarding Concern Procedure. Unless someone is in immediate danger, they should inform their club Safeguarding Officer or Bowls England safeguarding team.
- The club Safeguarding Officer is responsible for reporting safeguarding concerns to Bowls England safeguarding team.

- The BE safeguarding team are responsible for assessing all safeguarding concern/disclosures that are reported to them and working with the club Safeguarding Officer and national Safeguarding Leads to follow up as appropriate on a case-by-case basis, always prioritising the well-being of the child/adult at risk. Dependent on the concern/disclosure, a referral may be made to:
 - The Police in an emergency (999)
 - Local Authority Children's Services
 - Local Authority Adult Services
 - Club Safeguarding Officer
 - Disclosure and Barring Service

Breaches of the Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct and Reporting Procedure

Breaches of this Policy and/or failure to comply with the outlined responsibilities may result in the following:

- Disciplinary action leading to possible exclusion from the club, dismissal, and legal action
- Termination of current and future roles within the club and roles in other clubs

Actions taken by players, parents or carers, volunteers, officials, coaches inside or outside of the club that are seen to contradict the Policy may be considered a violation of this Policy.

Where an appeal is lodged in response to a safeguarding decision made by the club, the individual should adhere to the BE appeal procedure.

The Code of Conduct in Bowls

The BDA have, in conjunction with the National Governing Bodies of Bowls, set these standards that apply to everyone involved in the sport including staff, club officials, coaches volunteers, players and spectators. This Code of Conduct has been produced to protect everyone in the sport and to ensure that everyone can enjoy the sport of bowls in a safe and inclusive environment.

R.E.S.P.E.C.T.



Respect all participants and decisions

Encourage everyone

Sportsmanship

Play for enjoyment

Educate and be knowledgeable

Conduct yourself courteously

Treat everyone fairly

Key Principles of Respectful Behaviour

Do	Don't
Respect all players, coaches, officials, volunteers and spectators	Participate under the influence of illegal drugs or excessive alcohol
Participate in the right spirit – the sport should be fun at all levels	Use foul, abusive, threatening or discriminatory language or gestures
Take reasonable measures to keep yourself and others safe	Show dissent towards officials and their decisions
Promote the sport in the best possible light through your actions and behaviour	Discriminate on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010
Abide by the rules/regulations of the sport, and any additional competition rules	Publicly criticise or engage in demeaning descriptions of others, including online
Abide by the policies of the sport and its National Governing Bodies	Engage in any behaviour that constitutes abuse as identified in the Safeguarding in Bowls Policies
Speak to someone if you are concerned that any of this code is being broken	Keep your concerns about abuse or poor practice secret

The general principles above apply to everyone in the sport of bowls. The following sections cover specific responsibilities linked to different groups.

1 - Code of Conduct for NGB, Club and County Associations' staff and volunteers.

This group has an essential role to play in upholding and implementing the code of conduct in bowls. All should be advocates of equality, fair play and safety. They should:

- Operate within the letter and spirit of the code
- Promote the etiquette of the sport of bowls
- Treat everyone with dignity and respect
- Listen carefully to all stakeholders and respect their views
- Promote the bowls Safeguarding and Equality Policies to foster a safe and inclusive culture.

2 – Code of Conduct for Coaches

The coach in bowls is in a position of trust and has a central role in promoting and developing the sport at all levels. They should:

- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person
- Help create an environment where all children and adults at risk have an equal opportunity to participate
- Help create and maintain an environment free of fear and harassment
- Recognise the rights of parents, children and adults at risk to confer with other coaches
- Develop relationships with parents, children and adults at risk based on openness, honesty, mutual trust and respect
- Do not condone or allow to go unchallenged any form of discrimination or prejudice
- Be aware of the physical limits of children and adults at risk and ensure that training is appropriate
- Ensure that physical contact is appropriate and necessary and is carried out within recommended guidelines
- Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoid private or unobserved situations)
- Do not engage in any form of sexually-related contact with children or adults at risk. Sexual innuendo, flirting or inappropriate gestures and terms are also unacceptable. Do not have a sexual relationship with someone under the age of 18 who you are coaching
- Report any concerns you may have in relation to a child or an adult at risk or the behaviour of an adult, to the most appropriate person
- Always emphasise that the well-being and safety of the child or adult at risk is more important than the development of performance
- Do not smoke, or drink alcohol, while actively working with children or adults at risk. Never use recreational or performance-enhancing drugs
- Attend appropriate training to enable you to keep up-to-date with your role and matters relating to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk
- Hold "Coach Bowls" membership and relevant qualifications
- Ensure necessary insurance cover is in place for you to perform your coaching role

3 – Code of Conduct for Players

All players have a responsibility to maintain the highest standards in their enjoyment of the sport of bowls. They should:

- Be punctual for games
- Accept success and failure
- Recognise good play by teammates and opponents
- Set a positive example for young participants and spectators
- Abide by the accepted etiquette of the sport

4 – Code of Conduct for Young Players (Under 18s)

Young players are the future of the sport. Everyone has the responsibility to make it fun. They should:

- Always play fairly and apply bowls' standards both on and off the rink
- Respect all advice that you are given
- Treat others as you would wish to be treated
- Always report anything which worries you to a responsible adult eg a Club Safeguarding Officer. Speak out if you consider that you or others are being poorly treated
- Always tell someone if you are leaving a venue or competition

5 – Code of Conduct for Spectators including Parents and Carers

The sport of bowls welcomes spectators and values the part parents and carers play in supporting and encouraging the participation of children and adults at risk. They should:

- Remember that bowls is FUN
- Applaud effort and good play as well as success
- Appreciate good play by the opposition
- Encourage all players to respect the opposition, coaches, the referee, umpire and other bowls' officials
- Offer encouragement at all times
- Leave the coach to communicate with individual players
- Respect the decisions of officials.
- Show an appreciation of all volunteers and their efforts.

Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

Safeguarding: protecting **children** from abuse and neglect, preventing the impairment of children's health or development, ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances. Enabling **adults at risk** to achieve the outcomes that matter to them in their life; protecting choices, stay safe and raise any concerns. Beginning with the assumption that an individual is best placed to make decisions about their own wellbeing taking proportional action on their behalf only if someone lacks the capacity to decide, they are exposed to a life-threatening risk, someone else may be at risk of harm, or a criminal offence has been committed or is likely to be committed.

Abuse and neglect

Physical abuse: A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or adult at risk. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness.

Sexual abuse: Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Emotional abuse: The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child or adult at risk such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child/adult at risk that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person; not giving them opportunities to express their views; deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed, including interactions that are beyond a child or adult at risk's development capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing them participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hear the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing a child or adult at risk to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Neglect: The persistent failure to meet a child/adult at risk's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child/adult at risk from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers), or
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsive to a child's or adult at risk's basic emotional needs. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Additional examples of abuse and neglect of adults at risk

Financial abuse: having money or property stolen; being defrauded; being put under pressure in relation to money or other property, and having money or other property misused.

Discriminatory abuse: treating someone in a less favourable way and causing them harm, because of their age, gender, sexuality, gender identity, disability, socio-economic status, ethnic origin, religion and any other visible or non-visible differences.

Domestic abuse: includes physical, sexual, psychological or financial abuse by someone who is, or has been a partner or family member. Includes forced marriage, female genital mutilation and honour-based violence (an act of violence based on the belief that the person has brought shame on their family or culture). Domestic abuse does not necessarily involve physical contact or violence.

Psychological abuse: including emotional abuse threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

Organisational abuse: where the need of an individual are not met by an organisation due to a culture of poor practice or abusive behaviour within the organisation.

Self-neglect: behaviour which threatens an adult's personal health or safety (but not that of others). Includes an adult's decision to not provide themselves with adequate food, clothing shelter, personal hygiene or medication (when indicated), or take appropriate safety precautions.

Modern slavery: encompasses slavery, human trafficking, criminal and sexual exploitation, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude, and inhumane treatment.

- A person who is being abused may experience more than one type of abuse
- Harassment and bullying are also abusive and can be harmful
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is now recognised as a form of physical, sexual and emotional abuse that is practised across the UK
- Child Sexual Exploitation is recognised as a form of sexual abuse in which children are sexually exploited for money, power or status
- Child trafficking is recognised as child abuse where children are often subject to multiple forms of exploitation. Children are recruited, moved or transported to or within the UK, then exploited, forced to work or sold
- People from all cultures are subject to abuse. It cannot be condoned for religious or cultural reasons
- Abuse can have immediate and long-term impacts on someone's well-being, including anxiety, depression, substance misuse, eating disorders and self-destructive conducts, offending and anti-social conduct
- Those committing abuse are most often adults, both male and female. However, child-to-child abuse also takes place.

Appendix B: What to do if a disclosure from a child or adult at risk is made to you:

1. Reassure the child/adult that s/he is right to report the behaviour
2. Listen carefully and calmly to him/her
3. Keep questions to a minimum – never ask leading questions
4. Do not promise secrecy. Inform him/her that you must report your conversation to the Bowls England safeguarding officer (and the Police in an emergency) because it is in his/her best interest.
5. REPORT IT. If someone is in immediate danger call the Police 999, otherwise talk to the BE Safeguarding team as soon as possible. Once reported, the Safeguarding team will work with you to ensure the safety and well-being of the child/adult at risk
6. Do not permit personal doubt prevent you from reporting the concern/disclosure.
7. Make an immediate objective written record of the conversation using the Reporting a Concern Form. Make certain you distinguish between what the person has actually said and the inferences you may have made. Your report should be sent to BE Safeguarding team within 48 hours of the incident, who will store it safely.

Appendix C: Reporting a Safeguarding concern outside the Club environment

What to do if you are worried that a child is being abused outside the club environment (e.g. at home, school or in the community) but the concern is identified through the child's involvement in the club.

Follow the guidelines for safeguarding even if the abuse/discrimination happens outside of the club environment. Phone emergency services 999 in an emergency.