

SWALEDALE RUNNERS

Welfare Policy

‘Welfare - it is the responsibility of our whole club’

We believe that taking part in our club’s activities can help our members to:

- Be healthy
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve wellbeing
- Stay safe.

At Swaledale Runners we aim to create an environment where everyone involved in our club feels safe and secure to enable them to achieve their potential.

Welfare covers a range of issues, including equity, grievance and disciplinary matters, challenging poor practice in coaching and protecting vulnerable adults

Our Welfare Policy aims to link together the various policies, procedures and systems developed by Swaledale Runners, England Athletics and United Kingdom Athletics that underpin our practice in order to ensure the safety and enjoyment of athlete, coaches, officials and volunteers.

Swaledale Runners has adopted in full the principles and policy guidance relating to welfare and safeguarding created by England Athletics, making it specific to the activities and functioning of our club.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Club Constitution and Codes of Conduct which are an integral part of how we work as a club to promote the welfare of our members.

Who does this Welfare Policy apply to?

This policy applies to all Swaledale Runners club members and in particular those members who can be seen as ‘vulnerable adults’. A vulnerable adult is defined in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland as a person over the age of 18 who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself from significant harm or exploitation. The person may be receiving or in need of Community Care Services because of learning or physical disabilities, older age or physical or mental illness.

Vulnerable adults covered by this policy may be members of Swaledale Runners or other athletes taking part in club activities or using our facilities.

Equity

Swaledale Runners has adopted *England Athletics Equity Policy (September 2007)* and aims to ensure that all people irrespective of their age, gender, ability, race, religion, ethnic origin, creed, colour, nationality, social status or sexual orientation have a genuine and equal opportunity to participate in athletics at all levels and in all roles.

Grievance

Grievances will be dealt with in a timely manner using the procedures set out in the *Club Constitution*. Any grievance will be dealt with at a local level, but in the event that all options have been exhausted at this level and the grievance remains unresolved, it will be referred to England Athletics to be dealt with through the *Revised Grievance Procedure for Affiliated Member (August 2013)*

Disciplinary

There are expected standards of behaviour for ordinary club members, which have been developed in order to make club membership a positive and safe activity. These are detailed in the Swaledale Runners *Codes of Conduct for Members* and have been adopted from *England Athletics Codes of Conduct*. There are also additional *Codes of Conduct for Committee Members and other Roles, including Welfare and Disability Officers*.

Disciplinary procedures will be implemented as a result of a complaint of misconduct against expected standards of behaviour or other serious misconduct allegations. This includes poor practice in coaching. These are dealt with at local level, using procedures set out in the *Club Constitution*. However, if the matter cannot be resolved at local level, it will be referred to England Athletics to be dealt with through the *Revised Disciplinary Procedures for Affiliated Members (August 2013)*. Additional guidance for cases of poor practice in coaching can be found in *Guidance for Clubs when Dealing with Poor Practice (January 2010)*

Our Welfare Responsibilities

Within Swaledale Runners, all our club officers and committee members have responsibility to uphold the welfare policy, to adhere to good practice and to respond to any suspected breaches.

In order to do this, we have appointed a Welfare Officer. The Welfare Officer is experienced and trained in safeguarding vulnerable adults from abuse and experienced in working with welfare matters.

The role of Swaledale Runners' Welfare Officer is to:

- Advise and support the club officers and committee to implement welfare policies and procedures
- Respond to any concerns regarding welfare and safeguarding
- Ensure that all leaders, coaches, and the Welfare Officer/Disability Officer have completed Disclosure and Barring Service checks as required

The role of Welfare Officer is described in more detail in Appendix One.

The club's Welfare Officer is readily available and contactable at training sessions. Their photo and contact details are available on the club website (About Us – The Committee).

The remainder of this policy relates specifically to Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

Key Principles of Our Policy

The following key principles underpin our approach to safeguarding vulnerable adults:

- We fully accept our legal and moral obligations to provide a duty of care, to protect all vulnerable adults and safeguard their welfare, irrespective of age, impairment, gender, racial origin, religious belief and sexual identity.
- In all that we do, we believe that the welfare of the vulnerable adult is paramount and that they have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All individuals involved in our club understand and accept their responsibility to report concerns to our Welfare Officer, or where appropriate to the Chair of the Club.
- We recognise that interagency working and appropriate information sharing is crucial for the protection of vulnerable adults from abuse

- Confidentiality will be respected at all times and the sharing of information is on a strictly need to know basis

In order to meet this obligation we will:

- Follow our agreed procedures to safeguard the wellbeing of all participants and protect them from abuse, which have been developed from the *UKA Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures (September 2013)*
- Ensure all vulnerable adults who take part in our activities are able to participate in a safe environment.
- Respect and uphold the rights, wishes and feelings of vulnerable adults.
- Require members to abide by our Welfare Policy, Codes of Conduct and our Club Constitution and relevant grievance, investigatory and disciplinary procedures.
- Respond to any allegations appropriately and implement the appropriate complaints, disciplinary and appeals procedures
- Review our policies every 6 months

What is Abuse?

Abuse can occur wherever there are young people or vulnerable adults. There are four main types of abuse:

- *Physical abuse.* This includes being hit, kicked, shaken or punched, or given harmful drugs or alcohol.
- *Emotional abuse.* This is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on a individual's emotional wellbeing and development. This includes being called names, being threatened or being made to feel worthless.
- *Sexual abuse.* This is where vulnerable adults are used by adults or other young people to meet their own sexual needs. This includes being touched inappropriately or where the individual feels threatened or uncomfortable, sexual innuendo, being asked or forced to have sex or being exposed to images of a sexual nature.
- *Neglect.* This is when an individual is not looked after properly, including having no place to stay, or not enough food to eat, or clothes to keep them warm. It also includes when a vulnerable adult's safety is not considered or medical attention is not sought immediately when it is required.
- *Discriminatory Abuse:* This includes discrimination towards a person due to their race, sex, disability, religion etc. It includes slurs and harassment.
- *Bullying:* This is deliberately harmful behaviour which is usually repeated over a period of time. It may include threats, name calling, physical and emotional abuse and taking of property

Responding to Suspicions of Abuse

Every member of Swaledale Runners must recognise their role in alerting others by reporting any concerns if they suspect or witness abuse of a vulnerable adult. It is not their responsibility or that of Swaledale Runners however, to decide whether a concern constitutes abuse. This is the responsibility of the Local Authority or the Police

Concerns about abuse or harm may be identified in many different ways by any member of Swaledale Runners. They may be identified by:

- An individual disclosing that they are being abused
- The behaviour of an adult towards a vulnerable adult
- A number of indicators observed in a vulnerable adult over a period of time.

In the event of a concern that abuse is occurring, you should:

- Listen to the vulnerable adult rather than question him/her

- Allow the person to freely recall significant events
- Be sympathetic and tell them that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Advise the vulnerable adult that you will have to pass information on to the relevant people

You should not:

- Probe for more information than is offered;
- Speculate or make assumptions;
- Show shock or distaste;
- Make comments about the person against whom the allegations have been made;
- Make promises or agree to keep secrets or give a guarantee of confidentiality
- Contact the alleged abuser
- It is not appropriate for a club member to investigate the circumstances arising from any concern

Recording and Reporting Procedure:

1. If there is an emergency situation, where the vulnerable adults safety or health is at immediate risk, ring 999 for either Police or Ambulance. Do not delay in order to report via club procedures, always deal with the emergency first
2. In all situations, however the abuse or suspicion of abuse comes to light, you must record your concerns in writing. This should include:
 - The referrer's and the vulnerable adult's name, address and date of birth
 - The date and time of the incident
 - The facts about the allegation or observation.
 - Your factual observations e.g. describe the behaviour and emotional state of the alleged victim, and note any marks, bruising or other injuries.
 - The vulnerable adult's account, if it can be given, of what happened using the exact words if possible.
 - Details of any witnesses
 - Any action that was taken as a result of the concerns.
 - A clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
3. Contact Swaledale Runner's Welfare Officer without delay, or contact a Committee Member if not the Welfare Officer is not available or if the case relates to the Welfare Officer
4. The Welfare Officer will notify the Chair of Swaledale Runners
5. The concern will be shared firstly with the England Athletics Welfare Team for advice. Contact Jane Fylan at jfylan@UKA.org.uk or ring 01612 234246. Through the UKA, an interim suspension can be imposed on a club member whilst further investigations take place
6. If appropriate, the concern will be shared with the local authorities Safeguarding Adults Team (in the area in which the vulnerable adult *resides*) or their emergency duty team (if outside normal working hours)
7. The Safeguarding Teams will advise about what to do next and will take responsibility for making sure that appropriate enquiries are made. They will advise on specific actions that the club must take depending on the circumstances of the case

It is acknowledged that strong emotions can be aroused particularly in cases of possible sexual abuse or where the allegations relate to a colleague. Our club Welfare Officer is there to support individuals in passing on their concerns and can support you with the consequences of sharing information.

Storage of Records

Swaledale Runners will keep records relating to any concerns for three years or as advised in individual cases by local authorities who are passed information.

Records will be stored securely at the residence of the Club Chair.

A copy of this information will be sent to the UKA Welfare Team in situations where the abuse relates to abuse within athletics. Information will be handled and disseminated on a *need to know basis only*.

Contacts

North Yorkshire Police:

In an emergency: 999
For non-emergencies: 101

Medical Services

In case of a medical emergency: 999
For non-medical emergencies: 111

Adult Safeguarding

North Yorkshire

North Yorkshire County Council's Customer Services Centre for Social Care Enquiries

Telephone: 0845 034 9410

Minicom: 0845 603 6391

Opening hours for telephone callers (except Bank Holidays): Monday to Friday 8am to 5.30pm and Saturday 9am to 5pm

Social care emergencies outside the hours above:

The emergency duty team is the contact for all social care enquiries outside of normal office hours. The team carry out urgent assessments of adults, young people and children. They can be contacted on:

Telephone: 0845 034 9417

Fax (out of hours only): 01347 824 648

Darlington

Adult Social Care Services

Telephone: 01325 742030

Fax: 01325 346474

Minicom: 01325 468504

Text: 07538 601527

If you require help urgently outside office hours, you can contact the Emergency Duty Team from 5pm on Friday to 9am on Monday and also on Bank holidays.

Telephone: 08702 402994

Text: 07826 903165

England Athletics Welfare Team

Jane Fylan

Telephone 01612 234246

E-mail: jfylan@UKA.org.uk

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

PO Box 91 Liverpool L69 2UH

Helpline 0870 90 90 844

www.direct.gov.uk/crb

Related Documents

Swaledale Runners Club Constitution (February 2012)

Swaledale Runners Codes of Conduct for Members: Information for Members 2012

Swaledale Runners Codes of Conduct for Committee Members and Other Roles (November 2013)

UKA Codes of Conduct for Athletes, Coaches, Team Managers and Club (Revised September 2013)

England Athletics Equity Policy (September 2007)

England Athletics Revised Grievance Procedures for Affiliated Members (August 2013)

England Athletics Revised National Disciplinary Procedures for Affiliated Members (August 2013)

UKA Guidance for Clubs when Dealing with Poor Practice (January 2010)

UKA Safeguarding Adults in Athletics: Policies and Procedures (September 2013)



Information for Welfare Officers

Welfare covers a range of issues such as safeguarding and protecting children, anti-bullying, equity, poor practice in coaching and disciplinary and grievances matters. It encompasses policies and procedures to set out minimum standards of expectations, such as codes of conduct, procedures to follow for dealing with child protection concerns, other welfare issues or complaints, and to ensure that EA, clubs and associations meet their statutory responsibilities to safeguard and protect children. Welfare is essential to contribute to good practice within the sport, develop performance and to ensure the safety and enjoyment of athletes, coaches, officials and volunteers. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure the welfare of all those who participate in athletics.

The key roles and responsibilities are set out below:

Athletics Clubs

- Every athletics club should appoint at least one Welfare Officer, preferably two, one male and one female and they should notify EA of the name and contact details for each Welfare Officer.
- ALL club officer and committee members have responsibility to uphold the welfare policies and procedures, to adhere to good practice and to support the club Welfare Officer to respond to any suspected breaches. This is NOT the sole responsibility of the Welfare Officer.
- Under the Welfare Policies and Procedures, if there is any concern about child abuse the Welfare Officer should be informed immediately. If the Welfare Officer is not available, the person with concerns should report the matter to the local Children's services or police themselves.
- The Welfare Officer, club officers and committee members should ensure that information is available at the club and to all club officers, team managers, coaches and officials regarding contact details for local Children's services, the police and the NSPCC.
- The club officers and committee members should ensure there are club disciplinary procedures to deal with issues of misconduct which are not child abuse.
- All club officers and committee members should ensure that club members, coaches, club officers and committee members attend recommended training in welfare and safeguarding and protecting children as appropriate, comply with requirements to obtain CRB and Independent Safeguarding Authority checks (when required after July 2010) and that all coaches/volunteers/helpers complete volunteer reference forms or comply with a club volunteer recruitment process.

Club Welfare Officers

- The Welfare Officer's role is to advise and support the club officers and committee to implement welfare policies and procedures and to support the club to adhere to codes of conduct and good practice.
- The Welfare Officer's role is to ensure that all club coaches/helpers/volunteers have completed a volunteer reference form or complied with a volunteer recruitment process and assist in this process as appropriate and to ensure that all coaches/officials/volunteers have completed CRB and Independent Safeguarding Authority checks as required and assist in this process as appropriate. (N.B. The Independent Safeguarding Authority is a new government body that should start processing checks in July 2010 but checks should be managed by UKA under their current CRB procedures)
- The Welfare Officer's role is to respond to suspected breaches of the Welfare Policies and Procedures that may be referred to them, in accordance with the Welfare Procedures and, to advise and support other club officers or committee members how to respond appropriately in accordance with the Procedures.
- The Welfare Officer should report any concerns about child abuse to local children's social care services or police immediately. If the Welfare Officer is not available, the person with concerns should report the matter to the local children's services or police themselves.

- The Welfare Officer should also report any concerns about child abuse to both the UKA Welfare Officer and the EA Welfare Officer and inform them what action has been taken.
- The Welfare Officer is advised to inform the EA Welfare Officer about any concerns regarding misconduct which is not child abuse.

The Welfare Officer should have attended Safeguarding and Protecting Children Training and Time to Listen Training for Club Welfare Officers within the last 3 years. (N.B. Time to Listen is a course that is currently being developed by England Athletics and the Child Protection in Sport Unit and will be offered to all club welfare officers when available
