

# SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTING VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY



# BRITISH ROWING SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTING VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

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# GLOSSARY

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition / Explanation</b>
Abuse	See section 2.4.
Adult	A person of or over the age of 18 years.
Advocate	An individual who speaks on behalf of, or represents the interests of, the vulnerable adult where appropriate.
Child (ren)	Anyone under the age of 18.
Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)	The CPSU team is sited within the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) and was established with joint funding from Sport England.
Child Protection Officer (CPO)	British Rowing officer whose responsibilities are explained in Section 5.3.
Child Protection Case Manager (CPCM)	Individual within British Rowing whose responsibilities are explained in Section 5.2.
Children and Vulnerable Adults Social Care Services	The Local Authority statutory agency with responsibility for safeguarding and protecting children and families, formerly known as Social Services.
Club Welfare Officer (CWO)	The designated individual within a British Rowing affiliated club whose responsibilities are explained in Section 4.1.
Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)	Administrators who check on behalf of the Home Office for 'Registered Bodies'.
Duty of Care	The duty that rests upon an individual or organisation to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety of any person involved in an activity for which that individual or organisation is responsible (WG 3.1).
Independent Safeguarding Authority	Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), established under the <i>Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006</i> , to administer the Vetting and Barring Scheme.
Local Protection of Vulnerable Adults Committee (LPVAC)	These Vulnerable Adult protection committees have responsibility for the co ordination of work undertaken by agencies involved both in providing services and safeguarding vulnerable adults. LVAPCs provide local inter-agency guidelines detailing procedures for cases of actual or suspected abuse. Some areas have established sports sub-groups to inform their work. There are similar structures for children called Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCBs).
Parent/Carer	A generic term which includes parents, carers and guardians.
Personnel	Employees of British Rowing and its affiliated clubs, or facilities used in rowing as well as volunteers and all participants in the sport of rowing.
Position of trust	This is where an individual, such as a coach, teacher, or club officer who makes decisions for or about a child, can influence the child's actions and may misuse that position to groom or abuse the child. This position can be a positive one, in building confidence and self-esteem in children.
Registered Body	An organisation such as British Rowing that is able to act as recipient of CRB information on behalf of its members.

Regulated Activity	<p>Regulated Activity (RA) involves contact with vulnerable groups and is: Of a specific nature eg. training, teaching, supervising, advice, treatments or transport provided for the purposes of the activity</p> <p><b>Or</b> In a specified place eg. schools, children’s homes and hospitals, juvenile detention facilities, adult care homes.</p> <p><b>And</b> Occurs once a week or more</p> <p><b>And/or</b> Occurs on four or more occasions in a 30 day period</p> <p><b>And/or</b> Occurs overnight between 2am and 6am.</p>
Regulated Activity Provider	The person or organisation responsible for employing or deploying workers to facilitate an activity, whether these workers are paid or unpaid. See WG 2.9.
Risk assessment	A procedure to help identify possible sources of danger and take appropriate action to minimise these risks taking into account the age, number and competence of participants. See British Rowing’s <i>RowSafe</i> guide for examples.
Rower	Generic term to include every rower, sweep-oar or sculler, cox or indoor rower.
Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006	Established ISA and VBS to protect children and vulnerable adults.
Significant Access	Being in a position to have regular and direct contact with children/vulnerable adults whether as a volunteer or employee (see ‘Position of Trust’).
Vulnerable Adult	<p>A person, 18 years or over, who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.</p> <p><i>No Secrets</i>- definition based on that set out in the 1997 Consultation paper: “Who Decides?” Issued by the Lord Chancellor’s Department.</p> <p>In respect of sporting activity a person is regarded as a vulnerable adult under the Vetting and Barring Scheme when they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receiving any form of medical care or therapy, such as being treated by a physiotherapist</li> <li>• Receiving a service or participating in an activity that is specifically targeted at people with age-related needs or disabilities.</li> </ul>
Welfare of the child is paramount	This is a key principle of the <i>Children Act 1989</i> . It means that the needs of children override those of the adults working with them.
WG	Welfare Guidance documents, detailed in Section 10, and available to download from the British Rowing website <a href="http://www.britishrowing.org/welfare">www.britishrowing.org/welfare</a>
Vetting and Barring Scheme	The Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS) is a registration scheme administered by the ISA that identifies those people who may work in a regulated activity and who are not barred from working with children or vulnerable adults.

# 1. SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTING VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

## 1.1 General principles

- Everyone who participates in rowing is entitled to do so in a safe and enjoyable environment.
- All British Rowing clubs, competitions and associated individuals must follow the policies defined in this document.
- British Rowing is committed to helping everyone in rowing accept their responsibility to safeguard vulnerable adults from harm and abuse and support them to do so.
- This document sets out the procedures you need to follow to protect vulnerable adults and what you need to do if you have any concerns.

## 1.2 Scope

These policies apply to all rowers, coaches, volunteers, employees and anyone involved in rowing, whether or not they are British Rowing members. All these people have a duty of care to safeguard the welfare of vulnerable adults and prevent their abuse.

## 1.3 Why these policies are needed

British Rowing has realised the need for an individual policy for vulnerable adults, in line with the considerations of the *Disability Discrimination Act 2005*, to promote equal opportunities and provide a clearer framework for those who suffer from physical, mental health and learning disabilities.

Vulnerable people are at heightened risk of abuse and discrimination because of their susceptibility and many experience this in all walks of life. Practice has shown that vulnerable people who are victims of abuse in the sports setting can be reluctant to report their experiences for fear of losing a positive and important part of their lives. Therefore it is essential that British Rowing, as a national governing body, and its associated clubs and personnel, are aware of the indicators of abuse and can recognise and act appropriately to protect potential victims. Abuse can occur in many situations, including the home, workplace, day centre, at the shops, on the bus, in educational institutions and of course in the rowing club.

For the majority of vulnerable adults, rowing will be a positive and rewarding experience, however, there is a growing recognition that sport generally provides easy access to vulnerable people for those who wish to perpetrate abusive behaviour for their own gratification. Therefore, British Rowing is aware of the need to protect vulnerable adults from those individuals who may seek to harm them in the rowing environment. Although this document mirrors the *British Rowing Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy* for practical reasons, there are fundamental differences between the policies.

The primary difference in addressing adult and child abuse relates to the adult's right to self-determination. Adults may choose not to act at all to protect themselves and only in extreme circumstances will the law intervene. This is not the case for children because they are minors under the *Children Act 1980* and this legislation can be used quickly and effectively to ensure protection from abuse once it has been recognised.

In cases of suspected adult abuse it is important to recognise that assertive persuasion to encourage the individual to report or take action against an abuser or abusive situation may have negative outcomes for the vulnerable adult and could be detrimental to their wellbeing by causing them further harm. Therefore, the protection of vulnerable adults from abuse is a more complex process than child protection and requires policy and procedures that reflect this.

Policy users need to develop an understanding that protecting vulnerable adults necessitates a more supportive and advisory approach in response to reporting abuse, than in child protection situations where the legal framework is clear and definitive and requires stipulated responses. In serious situations the child can be removed from the abusive environment, for vulnerable adults it is not always possible or appropriate to achieve this level of safety.

Each vulnerable adult is a unique individual with varying degrees of need and ability. Some people will have a combination of physical and learning disability, others may have one or the other; some may have mental health needs and a combination of other complex disabilities such as Epilepsy, Diabetes, Down Syndrome, visual or hearing impairment.

The appropriateness of involving carers in any rowing and welfare related decision making will depend on the individual needs and circumstances of the vulnerable adult and, most of all, upon their wishes. Often vulnerable adults feel strongly that they want to maintain independence and make decisions for themselves; such views should be encouraged and supported wherever possible. Ideally, good practice suggests a partnership model of working involving the British Rowing coach, teacher or club officer, the vulnerable adult and their carer. In these circumstances it is important that the vulnerable adult is at the centre of the decision making process.

The provisions in the *Mental Capacity Act 2005* should be considered in relation to vulnerable adults and decision-making. Those without the capacity to make decisions under this legislation will be more dependent on their carer or responsible adult in the decision making process. The act provides that:

"For the purposes of section 2, a person is unable to make a decision for himself if he is unable -

- (a) to understand the information relevant to the decision,
- (b) to retain that information,
- (c) to use or weigh that information as part of the process of making the decision, or
- (d) to communicate his decision (whether by talking, using sign language or any other means).

- (2) A person is not to be regarded as unable to understand the information relevant to a decision if he is able to understand an explanation of it given to him in a way that is appropriate to his circumstances (using simple language, visual aids or any other means).
- (3) The fact that a person is able to retain the information relevant to a decision for a short period only does not prevent him from being regarded as able to make the decision.
- (4) The information relevant to a decision includes information about the reasonably foreseeable consequences of -
  - (a) deciding one way or another, or
  - (b) failing to make the decision."

British Rowing encourages the individual's development of independence, confidence and self-esteem on a personal level and in their rowing activities. Hence it is important that everyone in rowing is aware of the need to balance the involvement of carers and the needs and wishes of individual rowers in cases where vulnerable adults are concerned.

The following policy document draws from and includes relevant legislation and government guidance such as the *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006* and the *No Secrets* guidance (2000) regarding vulnerable people.

## 1.4 Policy statement

British Rowing is committed to:

- making the welfare of vulnerable adults paramount, even where the rights and needs of the other adults that work with them are overridden in order to provide the necessary protection to these individuals
- enabling everyone whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity to participate in rowing in a fun and safe environment
- taking all reasonable steps to protect vulnerable adults from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings
- taking seriously all suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse and responding swiftly and appropriately to them in accordance with current procedures
- ensuring that all British Rowing employees who work with vulnerable adults are appropriate for that role and responsibilities and provided with relevant training
- requiring all its member clubs, competitions and regional councils to accept responsibility for the welfare of the vulnerable adults in their care in accordance with all British Rowing's policies and procedures, and to incorporate these in their constitutions and rules
- being mindful and ensuring all member clubs, competitions and regional councils are mindful of the differences between policies and procedures regarding vulnerable adults and those of children, and particularly that each vulnerable adult has the right to self determination in all but the most extreme matters
- where appropriate, working in partnership with parents and carers to support the vulnerable adult and, where practicable, co-operating with their wishes to achieve the best outcomes for the vulnerable adult.

# 2. GOOD PRACTICE, POOR PRACTICE AND ABUSE

## 2.1 Introduction

It can be difficult to distinguish poor practice from abuse, whether intentional or accidental.

It is not the responsibility of any individual involved in rowing to make judgements regarding whether or not abuse is taking place, however, all British Rowing personnel have the responsibility to recognise and identify poor practice and potential abuse, and act on this if they have concerns as explained in section 3.

## 2.2 Good practice

British Rowing strongly advises that coaches of vulnerable adult rowers:

- be a registered British Rowing member
- fully accept Sports Coach UK and British Rowing Coaches Codes of Conduct
- hold a British Rowing recognised qualification
- have completed a course in basic awareness in working with vulnerable adults.

Everyone should:

- conduct a risk assessment before undertaking any rowing related activities
- aim to make the experience of rowing fun and enjoyable
- promote fairness and playing by the rules
- not tolerate the use of prohibited or illegal substances
- treat all vulnerable adults equally and preserve their dignity; this includes giving more and less talented members of a group similar attention, time and respect.

Coaches and those working directly with children should:

- respect the developmental stage of each rower and not risk sacrificing their welfare in a desire for club or personal achievement
- ensure that the training intensity is appropriate to the physical, social and emotional stage of the development of the rower
- work with vulnerable adults and their carers (where appropriate) to develop realistic training and competition schedules which are suited to the needs and lifestyle of the rower, not the ambitions of others such as coaches, team members, parents, carers or the club
- build relationships based on mutual trust and respect, encouraging vulnerable adults to take responsibility for their own development and decision-making
- always be publicly open when working with vulnerable adults:
  - avoid coaching sessions or meetings where a coach and an individual rower are completely unobserved
- maintain an appropriate and open environment, with no secrets
- avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people. Physical contact (touching) can be appropriate so long as:
  - it is neither intrusive nor disturbing
  - the athlete's permission has been openly given
  - it is delivered in an open environment
- maintain a safe and appropriate relationship with rowers and avoid forming intimate relationships with rowers you are working with as this may threaten the position of trust and respect present between athlete and coach
- be an excellent role model by maintaining appropriate standards of behaviour
- gain the vulnerable adult's consent and, where appropriate, the consent of relevant carers, in writing, to administer emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises
- be aware of medical conditions, disabilities, existing injuries and medicines being taken and keep written records of any injury or accident that occurs, together with details of treatments provided
- arrange that someone with current knowledge of emergency first aid is available at all times

- gain written consent from the correct people and fill out relevant checklists and information forms for travel arrangements and trips.

## 2.3 Poor practice

The following are regarded as poor practice and should be avoided:

- unnecessarily spending excessive amounts of time alone with an individual vulnerable adult away from others
- engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- allowing or engaging in inappropriate touching of any form
- using language that might be regarded as inappropriate by the vulnerable adult, especially comments regarding disability which may be hurtful or disrespectful
- making sexually suggestive comments, even in jest
- reducing a vulnerable adult to tears as a form of control
- letting allegations made by a vulnerable adult go uninvestigated, unrecorded, or not acted upon
- doing things of a personal nature that vulnerable adults can do for themselves
- taking vulnerable adult alone in a car on journeys, however short
- inviting or taking vulnerable adults to your home or office where they will be alone with you
- sharing a room with a vulnerable adult.

**Note:** At times it may be impractical to avoid some of these particular examples of poor practice. In this case, to protect both vulnerable adults and yourself, seek written consent from the vulnerable adult and, where appropriate, their carers and ensure that the CWO of your club/organisation is aware of the situation and gives their approval.

If, during your care, you accidentally injure a vulnerable adult, they seem distressed in any manner, appear to be sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstand/misinterpret something you have done, report these incidents as soon as possible to another adult in the organisation and make a brief written note of it. It may also be in the best interests of the vulnerable adult to discuss the matter with them openly and in a professional and sensitive manner that will avoid embarrassment; this is dependent on the individual rower and the circumstances.

## 2.4 Abuse

Abuse has many forms and can affect a vulnerable adult of any age or disability. The effects of such treatment can be degrading and damaging in the longer term and may follow an individual throughout their lives.

An individual who has been abused may exhibit a wide range of uncharacteristic behaviours some of which may manifest in the following ways:

- find it difficult, or impossible to maintain a stable, trusting relationship
- become involved with drugs or prostitution
- increase alcohol consumption
- show angry or volatile behaviour without reason
- attempt suicide or self-harm
- go on to abuse another child.

Some of the reasons why vulnerable adults may be at increased risk of abuse are as follows:

- stereotyping
- prejudice
- discrimination, including ethnic or racial
- isolation
- low self image and low self esteem resulting in vulnerable self presentation
- lack of knowledge about appropriate behaviours by others
- desire for acceptance, affection and attention
- powerlessness to protect themselves
- dependency upon others to care for them
- inability to communicate that abuse has occurred.

### 2.4.1 Indicators of abuse

Even for those experienced in working with the abuse of vulnerable adults, it is not always possible to recognise potential abusive situations or situations where abuse is ongoing. Personnel involved in the work of British Rowing do not have responsibility for assessing and deciding situations where abuse may be occurring. It is however the responsibility of everyone in rowing to be alert to the indicators of abuse and to act upon any concerns in line with British Rowing policy and procedures relating to the protection of vulnerable adults.

Indicators of abuse may include one or more of the following:

- unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- an injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent and improbable
- a disclosure made by a vulnerable individual describing what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her
- an expression of concern from a third party about the welfare of an individual unexplained changes in an individual's behaviour, such as loss of confidence, low self-esteem
- becoming quiet and withdrawn, sudden outbursts of temper or uncharacteristic changes in behaviour, tearful, depressed, angry, watchful and frightened
- engaging in sexually explicit behaviour
- distrust of others, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- difficulty in making friends and socialising contrary to previous social behaviour
- being prevented from socialising with other individuals by a carer or person in a position of authority
- displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating, loss of appetite or stealing and concealing food
- unexplained weight loss deterioration in personal hygiene and physical appearance
- refusal/reluctance to undress or change for sporting activities.

## 2.4.2 Degree of Abuse

In response to the *No Secrets* Government guidance, the Law Commission states that the severity and extent of abuse should be evaluated based on the level of harm brought about by ill treatment (not only physical ill treatment) "that leads to an impairment of, or avoidable deterioration in physical or mental health and the impairment of physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development".

In assessing the degree of abuse, consideration should be paid to:

- the vulnerability of the victim
- the nature and extent of the abuse
- the length of time the abuse has been occurring
- the impact on the individual.

## 2.4.3 Types of Abuse

The government guidance *No Secrets* provides the following as classifications of abuse:

In a rowing situation this could include:

- a coach disregarding the individual requirements of each child's growing body or needs when setting a training programme e.g. allowing 14 year olds to undertake hour-long, continuous ergos.

### 2.4.3.1 Neglect and acts of omission

*"Including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating."*

In a rowing situation indicators could include:

- a coach not keeping a vulnerable individual safe by exposing them to undue cold, heat or the unnecessary risk of injury e.g. allowing rowers under their supervision to train or race inappropriately clothed for the prevailing conditions
- a parent, guardian or carer consistently leaving a vulnerable individual without adequate provisions e.g. food, water, clothing, sun block where they are unable to provide themselves with these provisions

### 2.4.3.2 Physical Abuse

*"May involve hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions."*

In a rowing situation indicators could include:

- a coach disregarding the individual requirements of each vulnerable person's needs when setting a training programme e.g. allowing those who are limited by a physical impairment to undertake long, continuous ergo training

### 2.4.3.3 Sexual Abuse

*"Including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent, or was pressured into consenting."*

In a rowing situation indicators could include:

- a coach engaging in unnecessary and inappropriate physical contact e.g. massaging the shoulders of the rowers in a suggestive manner

- a coach making suggestive comments to their rowers, an individual spending an unnecessary amount of time in the changing area where vulnerable individuals are present.

#### 2.4.3.4 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."*

In a rowing situation indicators could include:

- a carer or coach subjecting a rower to constant criticism, shouting, name-calling, sarcasm, bullying or discriminatory behaviours or prejudicial attitudes
- a carer or coach putting a rower under unrealistic pressure in order to perform to high expectations

#### 2.4.3.5 Financial or material abuse

*"Including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits."*

In a rowing situation indicators could include:

- blackmailing a rower by requiring financial or material payment in return for certain benefits such as rowing awards or complements
- charging vulnerable individuals more than the standard fee for participation in rowing activities

### 2.4.4 Bullying

"Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves"

Bullying can be:

- **Emotional** - being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically), sending hurtful text messages, tormenting, (e.g. hiding kit or equipment, threatening gestures)
- **Physical** - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- **Racist** - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- **Sexual** - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- **Homophobic** - because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- **Verbal** - name-calling, shouting, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.

#### 2.4.4.1 Anti-Bullying Policy

British Rowing is committed to fostering a caring, friendly and safe environment for everyone involved in rowing so they can participate in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in rowing. If bullying does occur, all rowers, coaches, volunteers or carers should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Bullies come from all walks of life; they bully for a variety of reasons and may even have been bullied or abused themselves. Typically bullies can have low self-esteem, be excitable, aggressive or jealous. Bullies can be boys or girls, men or women. Although bullying often takes place in schools and care homes, research shows it can and does occur anywhere where there is inadequate supervision—on the way to and from college, university or the sports club, at a sporting event or in the changing rooms.

#### Competitive sports such as rowing are an ideal environment for the bully

The bully in rowing can be a:

- parent who pushes too hard
- coach who adopts a 'win at all costs' philosophy
- rower or cox who intimidates or ridicules a peer
- club official who places unfair pressure on a person
- spectator who constantly shouts abuse.

See the Model Anti-Bullying Policy for Rowing Clubs (WG 1.1) and flow chart for responding to allegations of bullying involving Vulnerable Adults (WG 1.15).

#### 2.4.4.2 Why is it important to respond to bullying?

Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Rowers who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. Everyone involved in rowing has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

### 2.4.4.3 Signs and Symptoms

The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to all individuals, particularly vulnerable groups. An individual may indicate, by signs or behaviour, that he or she is being bullied. Coaches and those in staffing positions should be aware of these possible signs that they should investigate, especially where an individual:

- says they are being bullied
- is unwilling to go to club sessions
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- regularly feels ill before training sessions
- has clothes torn or possessions damaged
- has possessions go “missing”
- asks for money
- steals money or parts with their own money (to pay bully)
- has unexplained cuts, bruises or injuries
- is frightened to say what’s wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

In more extreme cases:

- starts stammering cries themselves to sleep at night
- has nightmares or demonstrates any other form of unusual behaviour during the evenings
- becomes aggressive
- disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other individuals
- stops eating
- self harms
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.

# 3. RESPONDING TO SUSPICIONS AND ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

## 3.1 Introduction

Although most cases of child abuse take place within the family setting, abuse can and does occur in rowing.

- It is essential that all allegations are taken seriously and appropriate action is taken.
- It is not your responsibility to decide if vulnerable adult abuse is taking place.
- It is your responsibility to report your concerns to the appropriate agencies (see below).
- Not acting is not an option.

## 3.2 Receiving evidence of possible abuse

You may have concerns about abuse/poor practice because:

- you see it happening
- you recognise signs such as those listed in Section 2.4.1
- someone reports it to you
- a vulnerable adult approaches you directly.

Advice on what to do if a vulnerable adult says or indicates that they are being abused, or you have concerns about their welfare is available in WG 2.15. [www.britishrowing.org/welfare](http://www.britishrowing.org/welfare)

## 3.3 Recording information: confidentiality and information sharing

All concerns that you may have or receive should be recorded, ideally using the British Rowing form, Recording Concerns of Abuse (WG 1.2).

You are recording this information for:

- yourself, so you have a record of what happened
- the CWO or other designated welfare person within your club, who will co-ordinate any action that needs to be taken
- the British Rowing Child Protection Officer and Case Manager so that they can advise you
- the Police/Children's Social Care Services if appropriate.

It is not appropriate to share sensitive and confidential information with other people, e.g:

- your club committee
- members of your club
- other acquaintances outside rowing.

When recording information you should:

- stick to the facts – what you have seen, heard or had reported to you
- distinguish between what is your personal knowledge and what you have been told by others
- do not give your own opinions: be clear when you are giving your own or others' interpretation of events and reason for this (for example if a comment was in response to a question or an unsolicited remark).

British Rowing has adopted an Information Sharing Protocol developed by the CPSU. This comprehensive document illustrates clearly, in words and diagrams, how decisions to share information are made within British Rowing and between British Rowing and other bodies. The document is available as WG 5.2 on the website [www.britishrowing.org](http://www.britishrowing.org)

The key principles of this protocol will be used to make information sharing decisions in cases involving vulnerable adults.

### 3.4 Reporting the concern

The discovery that someone you know may be abusing a vulnerable adult will raise feelings and concerns at your club. Although it can be difficult to report such matters, you must remember that:

- the welfare of the vulnerable adult is paramount
- being vigilant helps to protect the individual
- do not undertake to keep any disclosure of abuse confidential. It is important to explain to the vulnerable person **before** a disclosure that you may have to discuss the information they give with a person in a more responsible position than yourself
- always ensure you have the permission of the individual and/or their carer (where appropriate) before taking official action regarding the concern. It is important that the individual is able to exercise their right to self-determination unless in exceptional circumstances, the level of abuse is very serious and clearly necessitates criminal investigation.
- do not pressurise the vulnerable person as this can contribute to their stress. Try to negotiate an amicable agreement with the individual about sharing your concerns and be honest about who must be told and what may then happen. Ensure the vulnerable individual feels in control of their information and seek to encourage the individual to report the abuse themselves.
- a good reporting structure ensures that concerns are dealt with fairly.

British Rowing's Whistleblowing Policy (WG 1.3) assures all members, staff, and volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith, reports a concern that a colleague is or may be abusing a vulnerable individual.

#### 3.4.1 Involving Parents and/or carers

British Rowing is committed to working in partnership with parents and/or carers where appropriate. In most situations, it is important that the CWO or CPO involve carers to clarify any initial concerns e.g. if a vulnerable adult seems withdrawn, it may be that they have experienced a recent bereavement. Consulting carers or parents must be considered in light of the vulnerable adult's right to confidentiality (*Mental Capacity Act 2005*) and ideally should be undertaken with the full consent of the vulnerable individual. Where there is doubt as to the vulnerable individual's mental capacity to make decisions then advice must be sought from the CPO.

Where it is considered that a carer may be the perpetrator of (responsible for) the abuse or is colluding with it, or may not be able to respond to the situation appropriately they should not be involved, as it may place the vulnerable individual at greater risk.

#### 3.4.2 Involving British Rowing

The CPO must be informed of all allegations of abuse and persistent poor practice as soon as possible in order to decide the following:

- what further action should be taken by the club or British Rowing
- whether the vulnerable adult should consider taking further action or advice
- whether further action, advice or investigation is needed by/from the Police or Social Care Services.

Passing on this information is important because the matter may be just one of a series of other instances which together cause concern. It enables the Case Management Group (Section 6.3) and Child Protection Group (Section 10) to analyse trends and improve existing British Rowing policy and guidance.

Vulnerable adult referral letters should be clearly marked **private and confidential** and sent to the CPO at: British Rowing, 6 Lower Mall, London, W6 9DJ.

Alternatively, the CPO can be contacted through British Rowing HQ on: **0208 237 6700**.

#### 3.4.4 Involving Statutory Agencies

It should be noted that physical and sexual abuse is illegal. Consequently there is an obligation that allegations and concerns are reported to the police who will decide whether to take criminal action or not. In some instances, other types of abuse such as discrimination and financial exploitation may also be considered to be criminal and these should also be reported.

In any case of physical or sexual abuse or where a vulnerable adult's safety is at risk, the vulnerable adult must be encouraged to contact one of the following statutory agencies:

- their local police station or in an emergency, dial 999. The police should be involved if the abuse is thought to be of a criminal nature. A record should be made of the details of the referral and the crime reference number
- Adult Social Care Services (formerly Social Services). This body has a statutory duty to ensure the welfare of adults in vulnerable positions and are legally bound to investigate allegations of abuse. Such investigations will involve discussing the matter with the Vulnerable Adult, and where appropriate their carers. They will also gather information from others who know and are involved with the vulnerable person.

In an emergency, Social Care services contact details can be found on your area's County Council website or from the Samaritans (**08457 909090**) who will hold the Duty Officer's contact number.

All telephone referrals made to the statutory agencies must be confirmed in writing within 24 hours detailing the following information:

- the name and title of the member of staff to whom the concerns were passed and the date this happened
- any action that has been taken
- a summary of the information shared and the response received
- the time and date of the referral call to the statutory agency.

Other services that can offer help and advice:

- **Careline**  
Telephone counselling service for children, young people and adults on any issue, including relationships, depression, mental health, abuse, addictions, stress etc. [www.carelineuk.org](http://www.carelineuk.org) 08451 228622
- **Disability Information Service**  
National service providing information on all aspects of disability for disabled people, their families, friends and carers. [www.diss.org.uk](http://www.diss.org.uk)
- **Mencap**  
Charity working with people with a learning disability and their families and carers. [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk) 0808 808 1111
- **Mental Health Foundation**  
Information about how to get help with any mental health problem in your local area. [www.mentalhealth.org.uk](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)
- **Mind**  
A wealth of information about mental health issues and contact details for the nearest Mind group in your area. [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk) 0845 766 0163
- **Ann Craft Trust**  
Offer advice on issues relating to children and adults with learning disabilities. [www.anncrafttrust.org](http://www.anncrafttrust.org) 0115 951 5400

# 4. ALLEGATIONS OF PREVIOUS ABUSE

Allegations of abuse are occasionally made some time after the event, for example by an adult abused as a young person by a member of staff who is still working with children or vulnerable adults. Where such an allegation is made, you should follow the procedures relating to the involvement of statutory agencies (section 2 & 3). This is because other vulnerable adults, either within rowing or in other environments, may be at risk from this person. Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse should automatically be excluded from working with vulnerable groups.

# 5. SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS IN THE CLUB

## 5.1 Club Welfare Officer (CWO)

Every rowing club that has children and/or vulnerable adults regularly using its facilities must appoint a Club Welfare Officer (CWO). This person must have a good awareness of vulnerable people and the difficulties they face, good communication skills and an ability to provide support and advice. They should also be well organised, have good administrative and recording skills and an ability and willingness to promote and implement the *British Rowing Safeguarding & Protecting Vulnerable Adults Policy*, procedures and resources.

The CWO should be a figure well-known in the club and approachable by vulnerable people but not someone involved directly in the coaching or day-to-day running of vulnerable adult rowing programmes. It is advisable that the CWO is a registered member of British Rowing. It is essential that the CWO is able to act in a confidential manner and to recognise the boundaries of his or her competence, role and responsibilities and where to seek advice and support. The role and responsibilities of a CWO are outlined in section 5.1 and 6.1.

## 5.2 Codes of Conduct

Codes of conduct are useful for everyone concerned with rowing to outline the expected behaviour of different groups. There are a number of different codes of conduct and many clubs will already have adopted and adapted their own.

British Rowing has published a comprehensive code of conduct document that contains ideas for model codes. It may also be useful to consider developing specific codes of conduct for parents and carers, athletes and other members and you may wish to consider consulting participants who are considered to come within the Vulnerable Adult category and their carers on other areas they might wish to include.

The British Rowing Codes are available from the website at [www.britishrowing.org/publications](http://www.britishrowing.org/publications)

## 5.3 Changing rooms

- Where it is felt that supervision is necessary for vulnerable adults, this should be undertaken by two or more personnel
- Adult coaches or volunteers should not shower or change at the same time as the vulnerable individuals they have been working with.
- No staff or volunteers, medical or otherwise should be present when rowers of the opposite sex are showering or changing (for example a male coach working with a female crew)
- In mixed gender clubs separate changing facilities should be available. If a vulnerable individual is uncomfortable showering or changing in public, no pressure should be put on them to do so; they should be encouraged to change and shower at home
- Vulnerable adults and, where appropriate, their carers should be involved in deciding how best they can be assisted. Always ensure the vulnerable adult consents to the assistance that is offered
- No photographic equipment should be used in the changing room environment. This includes cameras, video cameras, camera phones etc.

## 4.4 Coaching ratios

Although there is government guidance for people working with vulnerable adults such as that found in the *No Secrets* guidance, it is essential in rowing that a separate risk assessment is undertaken for each group of vulnerable adults and that this is reviewed for each training session. Participants who require care or support from other adults for whatever reason, even those qualified as coaches, should be supervised at all times.

In line with the national guidance the level of supervision should take account of the:

- disability and level of physical and mental ability of each individual
- extent of dependency of the vulnerable individual on carers/parents
- type of training session being undertaken: on land or water
- individual's scope for developing independence

- environment that the session is taking place in
- risk assessment.

If there is an accident or incident you should ensure there is always someone available to supervise the other vulnerable adults and coaches should ensure they never work in isolation.

## 5.5 Local Protection of Vulnerable Adults Committees

The British Rowing Safeguarding & Protecting Vulnerable Adults Policy and the guidance contained in this document and its appendices are consistent with the government's *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006*. However, clubs and regions should endeavour to make themselves aware of the local authority Protection of vulnerable adults arrangements, policies and procedures as they relate to sports. The CWO should obtain the Local Authority lead officer's name and contact details.

## 5.6 Regulated Activity Providers and ISA referrals

Under the *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006* any organisation, including a sports club, may be regarded as a Regulated Activity Provider if it offers services for those in vulnerable groups, that is, for children aged under 18 years or people who may be vulnerable adults

Under the SVG Act the Regulated Activity Provider has a legal responsibility to refer anyone who it has removed from a Regulated Activity due to safeguarding concerns, to the ISA. (See WG 2.9). The CPO or CPCM can help with this process or you can find details of how to make a referral at [www.isa-gov.org.uk](http://www.isa-gov.org.uk)

Any referrals to the ISA must also be reported to the British Rowing CPO.

# 6. DESIGNATED PERSONS WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS IN ROWING

## 6.1 Club Welfare Officer (CWO)

### 6.1.1 Responsibilities

The CWO needs to have awareness and understanding of the *British Rowing Safeguarding & Protecting Vulnerable Adults Policy* and procedure, and keep up to date with the appropriate training. The CWO is responsible for acting as a source of advice on safeguarding vulnerable adults and issues relating to their protection. The CWO must also co-ordinate club responses and actions, in line with British Rowing policy and procedure, to referrals and expressions of concern about vulnerable adults. Ideally the post holder should be a member of their club's committee.

### 6.1.2 Role related to SPVA Policy

- To provide information and advice on protection for vulnerable adults within the club. To ensure that the club adopts and follows the *British Rowing Safeguarding & Protecting Vulnerable Adults Policy* and procedures, understands its responsibilities under the *SVG Act*, and promotes awareness of these within the club.
- To be a confirmation signatory, verifying the identity of individuals completing CRB Disclosure application forms.
- To keep records of all those who have been vetted within the club and to ensure that CRB checks are updated on at least a three yearly basis.
- To receive information from club staff, volunteers, vulnerable adults, parents, carers or advocates who have protection concerns regarding vulnerable adults and record it.
- To assess the information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate.
- To report concerns where appropriate to the police in consultation with the individual or their carer.
- To report referrals or concerns to the British Rowing CPO as soon as possible in line with British Rowing procedures.
- To ensure that adequate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing, under confidential cover, where possible using the British Rowing Incident Report Form (WG 1.2).
- To advise club officers regarding the appropriate levels of protection required during the training of vulnerable adults from all individuals working with vulnerable groups in the club.
- To promote an equal opportunities approach within the club, by maintaining anti-discriminatory practice standards, acknowledging that discrimination exists, actively addressing instances in line with British Rowing policy and procedure and encouraging club members receive training to raise awareness and improve understanding of discrimination.
- To advise the club of relevant training opportunities.

The CWO should undergo the vetting procedure outlined in Section 7.

## 6.2 British Rowing Child Protection Officer (CPO)

This should be someone with good knowledge and understanding of the issues that vulnerable adults face in the sporting environment and a focussed approach to addressing concerns, raising awareness and improving practice. The post holder must be able to communicate effectively to provide advice and support at all levels. They should have influencing skills and an ability to work with conflict and with emotionally distressing matters. Knowledge of relevant legislation, government guidance, the *British Rowing Safeguarding and Protecting Vulnerable Adults/Children Policies* and procedures is essential. The ability to confront poor and discriminatory practice and also to promote and demonstrate high standards of anti-discriminatory practice in relation to safeguarding and abuse.

### 6.2.1 Responsibilities

The British Rowing CPO has overall responsibility for the development and establishment of the British Rowing's approach to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

## 6.2.2 Role related to SPVA Policy

- To liaise with the specialists and investigators who may be brought in to help with vulnerable adult cases regarding individual cases, proposed policy and guidance.
- To convene and chair the Case Management Group as required. To convene and chair the Child Protection Group meetings at least three times a year. To take a lead role in maintaining and reviewing the British Rowing's Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Implementation Plan.
- To co-ordinate the dissemination of this policy, procedures and related resources throughout British Rowing.
- To represent the British Rowing at external meetings related to the protection of children and vulnerable adults.
- To receive reports of referrals and investigations from the Case Manager or investigators on behalf of the Case Management Group and convene meetings of the Case Management Group.
- To keep up to date with own knowledge and skills.

The CWO should undergo the vetting procedure outlined in Section 7.

## 6.3 Case Management Group

This group must work within the policies and procedures of British Rowing to ensure that all decisions relating to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults are reached following a fair, open and transparent process. The group comprises: the British Rowing CPO; National Manager; one other suitably qualified, independent person. It may call upon whatever professional input is required on an advisory capacity for each case.

### 6.3.1 Responsibilities

- To recommend, where appropriate, that a person is referred to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA).
- To recommend to the Officers of British Rowing, where appropriate, that a person is temporarily suspended or banned from some or all activities related to rowing.
- To monitor and review progress on all cases and to identify any trends emerging which require a review or revision of existing policies and procedures.

### 6.3.2 Role related to SPVA Policy

- To make decisions on the initial approach to all reported cases related to the welfare and protection of vulnerable adults. That is, to decide on the 'route' a case will take, either internally or via external referral to statutory agencies, but may also include making decisions in relation to concerns arising from information gathered in the recruitment process.
- To make initial decisions as to the 'internal' level each case shall be dealt with. For example minor poor practice cases may be referred back to the club complaints or disciplinary process
- To advise others within British Rowing about actions they may need to take, such as initiating disciplinary procedures.
- To confirm all final decisions relating to Safeguarding Referrals or CRB Disclosures. Each closure document must be signed by at least two of the CMG members, showing clearly the identified actions and considerations taken.

The members of the CMG should undergo the vetting procedure outlined in section 7.

# 7. RECRUITING AND SELECTING PEOPLE TO WORK WITH CHILDREN IN ROWING

Anyone may have the potential to abuse vulnerable adults in some way and it is important that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable people from working with them. This applies to anyone whether voluntary or paid who is going to have Significant Access to vulnerable adults. The steps that should be taken are the same for volunteers or employees.

British Rowing's recruitment and selection procedures are based on the *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006* and may be revised from time to time, in particular to reflect the introduction of the Independent Safeguarding Authority scheme.

## 7.1 Controlling access to vulnerable adults

All individuals who will have Significant Access to vulnerable adults must first be vetted to establish whether they have any criminal convictions or other past behaviour that suggests they are unsuitable to work with vulnerable adults or may present a risk to them. This applies equally to paid staff and volunteers.

From 1st January 2008 all new volunteers and paid staff working in a role that entails Significant Access to vulnerable adults, or where they have a Position of Trust, or existing volunteers or staff who change their role to work with these vulnerable groups, are required to complete the following vetting process:

- Complete a self-declaration form (see WG 2.6)
- Complete a CRB Disclosure application
- Provide two appropriate referees (WG 2.4 is provided for this purpose)
- Provide details of previous volunteering experience or relevant employment, accounting for any gaps in employment history.

The CWO must maintain records of any references including written records of verbal references. In addition, those working in a Regulated Activity must also comply with legal requirements of the *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006* (See WG 2.9).

The procedure for obtaining a CRB Enhanced Disclosure is contained in WG2.2, and advice on completing the form can be found in WG2.3. In order to apply for a CRB Disclosure the CWO must ask the individual to disclose any criminal record or other matter that has a bearing on their suitability to work with vulnerable adults.

The CWO should make it clear that a failure to disclose relevant information will result in disciplinary action and possible dismissal or exclusion. The CWO is strongly advised to use the form 'New Volunteer Details' (WG 2.5) for this purpose. It should also be made clear that having a criminal record is not necessarily a barrier to working in rowing. Individuals being asked to complete a CRB application form should be made aware of the British Rowing policy on the 'Recruitment of Ex-Offenders' (WG 2.1).

WG 2.5 should be completed and returned to the CWO. WG 2.6 must be sent, marked **private and confidential**, to the Child Protection Officer at British Rowing.

This declaration should be renewed if the individual significantly changes their role within the club or joins a new club.

On receipt of the Self-declaration form British Rowing will send a CRB Disclosure Application form to the CWO. The applicant should complete the form and return it to the CWO to complete the identification verification. The CWO must return the form to the CPO at British Rowing; application forms MUST NOT be returned directly to the CRB.

A CRB Enhanced Disclosure will provide information about:

- criminal convictions and police cautions
- relevant police/social services information considered to be relevant by the relevant chief of police officers

CRB Disclosure information will be assessed by the British Rowing Case Management Group, in line with British Rowing's policy on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders and the CRB Code of Practice.

*Note: Completing the above process does not guarantee that the individual is safe to work with Vulnerable Adults. British Rowing will use information from the CRB as part of an overall recruitment and selection process to assess any potential risk. The club will also need to assess for itself the individual's suitability by taking up references, interviewing and supervision.*

Completing a CRB Disclosure application is a particularly confidential and sensitive matter for some people and care should be taken to explain how any information contained on the Certificate will be treated. This is explained fully in the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy (WG 2.1). As a Registered Body of the CRB, British Rowing is fully compliant with the CRB Code of Practice including the secure storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure Information (WG2.8).

CRB Disclosures should be renewed every three years, if the individual remains in post, or more regularly if, for example, there is concern raised, if the person changes their role significantly or moves club frequently, or if the person has been absent for a significant period.

## 7.2 Who should be CRB checked?

Every rowing club that has Vulnerable Adults regularly using its facilities must ensure that the following roles are CRB checked:

- Club Welfare Officer (CWO)
- coaches who regularly coach vulnerable adults
- trailer drivers or volunteers who regularly spend time away with vulnerable adults at regattas or training camps.

Before requesting a CRB Disclosure the CWO, as the recruiting officer, must satisfy himself or herself that the position that the individual will be working in involves Significant Access to vulnerable adults or is a Regulated Activity. For the purposes of rowing, a Regulated Activity, as defined by the SVG Act would include:

- Training, teaching or instruction provided wholly or mainly for vulnerable adults such as coaching a group of rowers with a specific disability, for example a group with learning disabilities,
- Any form of assistance, advice or guidance provided wholly or mainly for vulnerable adults, such as rowers who have been or a referred to the club by their GP for problems with weight management
- Any form of treatment or therapy for a vulnerable adult, such as a club physiotherapist providing treatment in the club
- Driving a vehicle which is being used only for the purpose of conveying children or vulnerable adults and any person caring for the child or vulnerable adult, for example taking a group of adaptive rowers to a regatta or indoor rowing competition.

It also includes those whose normal duties include supervising or managing an individual in his work in a regulated activity.

It is not enough to meet the CRB eligibility criteria, to state that an individual may come into contact with children or vulnerable adults. Eligibility to apply for a CRB check depends on the specific role a person will perform whilst conducting their duties within an organisation. A Risk Assessment should be undertaken to assess the role and duties they are expected to fulfil whilst carrying out their role and CRB applications should be made accordingly. The Child Protection Administrator (CPA) or CPO at British Rowing will advise CWOs who are unsure of the appropriate level of vetting for any role.

The following roles should only be CRB checked if they involve Significant Access to vulnerable adults:

- club officers / committee members
- volunteer / parent helper
- bar staff
- competition organiser
- umpire / race official club member
- club employee / steward.

# 8. AWARENESS AND TRAINING

## 8.1 Training for staff and volunteers

Training should be provided for staff and volunteers on the policy, procedures and professional practices that are in place and commensurate with their responsibilities in the vulnerable adult protection process. Training should take place at all levels of British Rowing to ensure that procedures are carried out consistently, it should also be considered as a continuing responsibility.

This should include:

- awareness training in the abuses that can take place and the duty to report
- specialist training for investigators and managers
- issues relating to staff safety within a Health and Safety framework

To create an enjoyable and safe environment for all vulnerable people, everyone involved in rowing must be aware of what is good practice and how to deal with poor practice and abuse.

Formal training will help people to work safely and effectively with vulnerable people by:

- comparing their own practice against what is regarded as good practice and identifying ways to improve
- ensuring that they are not placing themselves at risk from allegations
- recognising their responsibilities and reporting any concerns about suspected poor practice or abuse
- understanding the recruitment and selection procedures described (Section 7)

The CWO should maintain a written record of training and relevant qualifications of those working with vulnerable adults within the club.

Role	Read <i>British Rowing Safeguarding and Protecting Vulnerable Adults Policy</i>	Complete Basic Awareness module	sportscoach UK Safeguarding and Protecting Vulnerable Adults workshop or equivalent
Membership secretary	✓		
Club Welfare Officer (CWO)	✓	✓	✓
Coaches of vulnerable adults	✓	✓	✓
Co-ordinator or manager of groups of vulnerable adults or coaches	✓	✓	✓
Trailer drivers who may travel with vulnerable adults	✓		
Club residents	✓		
Club officers / committee members	✓	✓	
Volunteer / parent helper	✓		
Bar staff	✓		
Competition organiser	✓	✓	
Umpire / race official	✓		
Club employee / steward	✓		

## **8.2 Recommended levels of awareness and training**

Within the club environment everyone has a responsibility to be aware of the Safeguarding & Protecting Vulnerable Adults policy, understand what is good and poor practice and know what to do if they have a concern. All members should have access to the policy document at the club or be made aware that it can be accessed through the British Rowing website.

## **8.3 Training**

Coaches and volunteers may undertake the generic sports coach UK courses such as Equity in your coaching and Creating a safe coaching environment. Information is available on the Sportscoach UK website [www.sportscoachuk.org](http://www.sportscoachuk.org)

A number of local authorities also run basic awareness level safeguarding courses although these will not be specific to rowing and may not be specific to sport.

British Rowing will promote all Safeguarding & Protecting Vulnerable Adults training via Regional newsletters and the British Rowing website [www.britishrowing.org](http://www.britishrowing.org)

# 9. COMPLAINTS & DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

British Rowing has its own Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure (WG 1.7) for dealing with breaches of the *Safeguarding & Protecting Vulnerable Adult Policy* and procedures.

- If a case is being investigated by a statutory agency, British Rowing may suspend the individual concerned whilst this investigation is taking place. This is a neutral act and is not intended to prejudge the outcome of the investigation, but simply to remove the individual from contact with vulnerable adults until the investigation is concluded. Once the statutory agency's investigation is completed, and irrespective of its findings, British Rowing will assess the case following its disciplinary procedures.
- If the abuse is alleged to have been committed in the course of a person's employment, he or she will be subject to whatever disciplinary procedures and sanctions are stated in their employment contract. British Rowing may decide to await the outcome of such procedures before starting its own investigation.
- In accordance with British Rowing's Rules, British Rowing may impose disciplinary sanctions against clubs who fail to adopt and implement the *Safeguarding & Protecting Vulnerable Adult Policy* and procedures, particularly if such failures are serious or persistent. If concerns remain once a matter has been handled by the club these should be referred to the CPO who will ask the senior officers of British Rowing to decide how to deal with this and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.
- Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality for all concerned, and consideration will be given to what support may be appropriate to vulnerable adults, carers, parents, members of staff and volunteers.
- It is not always possible to determine exact timescales for when cases will be resolved, however British Rowing will always try to ensure that all parties know what procedure will be followed and what the expected time scales are. If there is a delay they will endeavour to inform all parties why there is a delay and when any development is expected. There should not be any period without communication of more than 28 days with involved persons. Ideally case management processes should not extend over more than 3 months; only in exceptional circumstances should they extend up to 6 months.

# 10. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING PROCEDURES

British Rowing has established a Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Group (CPG) to oversee the implementation of these procedures and to monitor their application in practice.

It is the CPG's responsibility to check that:

- British Rowing's procedures continue to reflect the current recommendations of external agencies that specialise in Child and Vulnerable Adult protection
- the procedures are disseminated and applied by British Rowing members and staff.

The CPG has designed a checklist for clubs and other organisations to monitor their own compliance with the requirements set out in this booklet (Club Audit WG 3.6). From time to time, checks will be conducted to verify the results of this self-monitoring procedure. Clubs who have junior members, children or vulnerable adults regularly visiting must ensure that the name and contact details for their CWO, or in the case of an educational establishment, the person with responsibility for welfare, are completed in their British Rowing Annual Return. This information must be updated, as necessary, during the year by the Club Secretary or other senior club officer.

The CPG will make an annual report to British Rowing's Executive Committee, through the CPO, on the progress of its activities in implementing and monitoring these procedures, and on the incidence and outcome of cases that have arisen in the year. The CPG may from time to time call upon external expert advice in auditing its procedures and improving its policies.

# 11. GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS

The Welfare Guidance documents (WGs) are available to download from the British Rowing website [www.britishrowing.org/welfare](http://www.britishrowing.org/welfare)

Stay up to date with new guidance on the British Rowing website  
[www.britishrowing.org/welfare](http://www.britishrowing.org/welfare)

## Section 1. Codes of Conduct, disciplinary procedures and raising concerns

- 1.1 Model Anti-Bullying Policy for rowing clubs
- 1.2 Report form for recording concerns and referrals
- 1.3 Whistleblowing Policy
- 1.4 British Rowing Code of Conduct
- 1.5 Question and Answer Advisory Sheet: codes of conduct and disciplinary matters
- 1.6 The adoption and application of codes of conduct for rowing clubs
- 1.7 Complaints & Disciplinary procedure
- 1.8 Advice and support for individuals receiving a concern or allegation
- 1.9 Advice and support for those who have reported concerns
- 1.10 Information for those against whom a complaint of poor practice or allegation of abuse has been made
- 1.11 Flowcharts for referral procedure within rowing
- 1.12 Flowchart for referral procedure outside rowing
- 1.13 Advice and support for junior rowers

## Section 2. CRB Disclosure and ISA guidance

- 2.1 Recruitment of Ex-offenders
- 2.2 Obtaining a CRB clearance
- 2.3 Applying for a CRB clearance
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- 2.6 Declaration of criminal record and CRB applications
- 2.7 Guidance on the portability of CRB Disclosures
- 2.8 Secure storage, handling, use, retention & disposal of disclosure information
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## Section 3. Club, training and competition guidance

- 3.1 Duty of Care
- 3.2 How much and how often?
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- 3.4 Guidelines for rowing competitions
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## Section 4. Training camps and residential visits

- 4.1 Planning residential trips for children
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## Section 5. Use of social media and information sharing

- 5.1 Safeguarding and photography
- 5.2 CPSU Information Sharing Protocol
- 5.3 Seven Golden Rules for Information Sharing
- 5.4 Using social networking and social media
- 5.5 Text and email messaging



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