



## SAFEGUARDING ADULTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

**Rebel Runners – Medway “The club”** believe that it is always unacceptable for any adult to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard their welfare.

We recognise:

- Every adult’s right to live free from abuse
- The welfare of the person is paramount;
- All members, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse;

The purpose and aim of this safeguarding adults policy and procedure is to provide guidance regarding the standards of conduct and behaviour that the club expects from its members and committee.

Rebel Runners – Medway provides a social running group that is England Athletics “EA” affiliated.

This policy and procedure applies to all members of the club, the committee or anyone working on behalf of the club. This policy and procedure is based on a commitment to equality and diversity, individual human rights and anti-discriminatory practice.

We will seek to safeguard adults by

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- Recruiting volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Sharing information about adult protection with club members, committee members and volunteers
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving others where appropriate
- Providing effective management, support and training for volunteers through meetings, training and on line material.

Vulnerable adults who are suspected of, or are subjected to abuse will receive the highest priority, and will be referred immediately through the local Multi Agency Safeguarding protocol. **See appendix 1 for Kent and Medway Multi-Agency Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults & Adult Protection Policy Protocols and Guidance for Kent and Medway.**

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The club believes that it is the responsibility of all members to ensure that adult abuse is regarded as unacceptable and that all incidents of abuse or suspected abuse are reported and responded to immediately. To prevent abuse the club will raise awareness via this policy and procedure, practice, the website and training for committee members. The awareness will include prevention, recognition, and when, how and who to alert if abuse happens.

Abuse can be defined as any deed, not necessarily intentional, that deprives someone of, or does not respect, a person's rights and may consist of a single act or repeated acts. Or:

- It may occur as a result of a failure to take appropriate action.
- It may be a violation of the person, an assault or criminal act.
- It may be poor treatment, a lack of respect, or a failure to uphold the person's rights.
- Abuse can happen within any relationship or setting and may result in significant physical or emotional harm to the person.

The commonly recognised forms of abuse are Physical, Sexual, Financial, Psychological, Discriminatory, Neglect or acts of omission, Organisational, Self Neglect, Domestic Abuse and Modern Slavery.

**Financial or material abuse** - including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

**Physical abuse** - including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.

**Neglect and acts of omission** - including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

**Sexual abuse** - including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault, or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

**Psychological abuse** - including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks

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**Organisational abuse** - including neglect or poor care practice within an organisation or specific care setting, such as a hospital or care home. It can also be in relation to care provided in your own home. This may range from one-off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

**Discriminatory abuse** - including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

**Self neglect** - this covers a wide range of behaviour such as neglecting to care for your personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

**Domestic abuse** - including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional, or so-called 'honour' based violence.

**Modern slavery** - encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Trafficking 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.

**In conclusion**, there are many indicators of abuse and these may be similar in presentation, particularly as they impact on self-esteem and behaviour. However, this must be considered in conjunction with other aspects of the person's life. Many signs and symptoms could also be ascribed to medical and or psychological illness, for example changes in mood, depression and over or under eating.

It is essential that a balanced view is taken and any physical symptoms are also fully explored to ensure that we do not immediately assume that a person is a victim of abuse. This is particularly important when we are unsure, or there has been no witnessed incidents or when the individual is unable to communicate.

If there is a genuine belief that abuse has been perpetrated then in all cases it must be reported at the earliest opportunity.

Name	Position	Contact Number	E-mail address
Johanna Bridge	Club Secretary	07958042520	<a href="mailto:johannabridge@me.com">johannabridge@me.com</a>
Dan Gower-Smith	Welfare Officer	07719136934	<a href="mailto:Dan.gowersmith@yahoo.co.uk">Dan.gowersmith@yahoo.co.uk</a>

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If you believe abuse is taking place, has taken place or will take place, you have a duty to report the matter immediately to the Welfare Officer or any committee member.

You will be asked to complete the following:

- A written factual account of any disclosure as soon as possible, including;
- Time
- Place
- Details of what has or will take place

Immediate action will be taken to ensure that the individual is safe from further abuse, and will advise you about what will happen next.

All safeguarding adult incidents will be reported following the Kent and Medway multi agency protocol. Social services and/or the police will take the lead responsibility in the area of abuse and must be informed of allegations of abuse. Where a criminal act has been witnessed, the Welfare Officer or committee member will make a decision whether to contact the Police immediately. The club recognise that all the members have the right to feel safe and be treated with respect by all club members and committee members.

In the following situations, alleged abusers should not be confronted or alerted:

- where there is suspicion that abuse has taken place, or is taking place
- information may be received from a third party which indicates the possibility of abuse
- you may have concerns about a particular situation

Regardless of how vague the suspicions, all members have a duty to report any concerns they may have about adult abuse to the Welfare Officer.

Allegations from the past should be treated no differently. Inform the individual that you will need to pass on the information. You must pass the information on as soon as possible. You will need to record the information as detailed below. Inform the person that all allegations of abuse will be taken seriously.

Disclosure by the individual

If an individual discloses to you they have been, or are being abused you must:

- Stay calm

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- Believe the person
- Listen patiently to them
- Not pass judgement
- Reassure the person that they are doing the right thing in telling you
- Explain what you are going to do and why
- Try not to appear shocked, horrified, disgusted or angry
- Do not press the individual for details, but try and establish basic facts and time-scales
- Do not promise to keep secrets. Inform the person you have a duty to pass on information about incidents of abuse
- Do not alert the alleged abuser
- Write a full report as soon as possible detailing the above
- Contact the welfare officer immediately

All issues of abuse must be dealt with sensitively with the option of same gender support.

**Recording information:**

The Welfare Officer will advise you of your immediate actions and these will depend on the individual circumstances. In all cases, you will need to write an accurate account of the circumstances as soon as possible. Include the following information:

- Allegation that has been made (where possible, use the individuals own words)
- Date
- Time
- Location
- What you said

This written document may be used in any legal action, write the document using black pen, sign and date each page.

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## **Confidentiality**

The persons disclosing abuse may ask for the information to go no further. However, you will need to explain that you can not keep any disclosure of abuse confidential and you will need to discuss the information given with the Welfare Officer. The information must not be shared with any other club members or the media. A press statement will be agreed by the committee if required.

## **Medical treatment**

If the person has physical injuries and requires immediate medical attention, the nearest Accident and Emergency facilities should be used. Any medical staff treating the person should be informed that abuse is suspected. In all cases the individual's welfare must be your first consideration.

## **Evidence**

It is important that any physical evidence of abuse is not inadvertently destroyed. Wherever possible, a known scene of an incident should not be disturbed. Clothes should not be changed or washed. If you suspect oral sex has occurred, eating, drinking, smoking and brushing teeth could destroy evidence. Therefore, encourage the person not to have any food or drink until after a medical examination. The individual's wishes must be respected in all circumstances. If the person insists on changing their clothes, keep them separately and do not wash them.

Evidence may be destroyed through washing or bathing and in these circumstances the person should be encouraged not to bathe until after a medical examination, but again the individual's wishes in this matter must be respected. These issues need to be dealt with sensitively and discreetly so as not to cause further trauma.

## **Contact with the police**

It must be recognised that the pressure or thought of Police involvement may cause some people stress. If this is the case, every effort must be made to provide the appropriate support and advice.

## **Situations when the alleged abuser is a member of the club**

The club may make a decision to suspend membership of the alleged perpetrator if it is believed that other members are at risk of abuse. The suspension will be without prejudice and the decision will be made after an initial gathering of facts about the case.

In all cases this decision will be the responsibility of the Welfare Officer in conjunction with one other committee member. The member will be informed of the decision to suspend the membership via phone and confirmation will be sent in writing.

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Following an investigation by the club it may be necessary to permanently remove membership from a member. In the event that this is required a meeting will be arranged with the member affected, Welfare Officer and an Executive committee member. The reason for the decision will be explained in full and a letter will be sent following the meeting.

### **The right to be protected from harassment**

The club's first priority is in ensuring the safety and welfare of its members. However, we do recognise that on occasions false allegations are made. Members will

be protected from the harassment of such allegations from members or a third party. All such incidents will be treated seriously but in a sensitive manner.

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