

Bellahouston Fencing Club

Adult Protection Policy



Version History

Version Number	Date Updated	Created/ Updated by	Comments	Approved by Board
V1	12/08/2024	PAC	For Board approval	TBC

Bellahouston Fencing Club is committed to ensuring that everyone is safe in all respects when involved in our activities.

We will do this through our policy and procedures, which are designed to protect and safeguard all who participate in the sport of fencing. Adherence to our policy and procedures will also protect our employees, including volunteers.

Whilst this policy provides for all adult members there are certain groups within our adult membership that have higher risk factors. There is a separate Child Protection policy which covers Bellahouston Fencing Club members under the age of 18.

The aim of this policy is to outline the practice and procedures for paid and voluntary staff in Bellahouston Fencing Club to promote safe practice and to protect all members, especially Adults at Risk. We will do this through raising awareness and providing a clear framework for action when abuse is suspected.

Adults at Risk refers to individuals who have health or social care needs (irrespective of whether or not those needs are being met by social care) and who are unable to safeguard themselves as a result. Some Adults are considered to be Adults at Risk due to their learning disability or mental health needs. There are also those adults who are at risk due to a specific circumstance they may find themselves in, for example: domestic abuse, forced marriage, sexual or commercial exploitation (this is not an exhaustive list).

Adults who may be at risk

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 defines an Adult at Risk as an individual aged 16 or above who finds it difficult to keep themselves or their property safe and might be more vulnerable to harm from other people because of a disability, illness or mental disorder/infirmity.

It doesn't mean that all people with learning disabilities, mental health problems or illnesses or disabled people are always "at risk". It means that there are certain people in this situation who find it more difficult to keep themselves or their property safe.

An Adult is at Risk of HARM if:

- the conduct of another person is causing (or likely to cause) the Adult to be harmed, and/or
- the adult themselves engages in conduct that is causing (or likely to cause) self-harm.

The presence of a particular condition or disability does not automatically mean that an adult is an Adult at Risk. A person can have a disability but be perfectly able to look after their own well-being. Their circumstances as a whole should be considered and all elements of the definition must be met in order for them to be classed as an Adult at Risk.

Capacity

Capacity relates to the ability of an individual to make a decision at a particular time. Under the Mental Capacity Act 2005 an individual may be considered to 'lack capacity' if they cannot:

- Understand information given to them to make a particular decision,
- Retain that information long enough to make the decision,
- Use or weigh up the information to make the decision, and/or
- Communicate their decision.

The above might be as a consequence of illness or impairment, such as mental health problems, dementia or learning disability (intellectual impairment).

The law focuses on the principle that everyone has capacity to make a decision if given sufficient support, time, and information; and will not treat individuals as 'lacking capacity' just because a decision appears to be unwise or ill-judged.

Whilst it is important to have an appreciation of capacity in order to appropriately support adults at risk it WILL NOT be your role to make a decision about whether an adult 'lacks capacity' or not.

Bellahouston Fencing Club encourages all staff and volunteers to:

- assume that all adults at risk have capacity, and therefore the ability to make decisions,
- support communication in such a way that the adult at risk can understand information being given, and be understood when giving information back,
- treat decisions made by an adult at risk with respect, even if it is felt that a decision is unwise, and
- work with the adult at risk and their advocates (and Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA) if relevant) to ensure that they are appropriately supported, and capacity continues to be effectively assessed

All members of staff have a responsibility to be aware of this policy and to report any suspicions that they might have concerning adult abuse. [The term Staff includes paid employees and volunteers].

A member of the Board of Directors within the organisation with overall responsibility for Safeguarding will normally deal with any allegations or suspicions of abuse. You will find the details of this person on the Bellahouston Fencing Club website. If you cannot access this please call the Bellahouston Fencing Club office where someone will provide these details for you.

The scope of this Adult Protection policy is broad ranging and in practice will be implemented via a range of policies and procedures in the organisation. Links with other policies and procedures include:

- Recruitment and selection policy,
- Induction process,
- Codes of conduct,
- Responding to concerns,

- Risk assessment process.

All allegations or suspicions are to be treated seriously. No abuse is acceptable. Abuse can be a criminal offence and must be reported to the Police as soon as possible.

We believe that everyone regardless of age has at all times and in all situations a right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice that results in a protected adult being physically or psychologically damaged.

In Bellahouston Fencing Club, if there are suspicions about a protected adult's physical, sexual, emotional or financial well-being, action must be taken. All volunteers or staff of Bellahouston Fencing Club are encouraged to share concerns.

If the situation is clearly an urgent case, the protected adult is too frightened to go home or we have very serious doubts about the protected adult's safety, it is essential to contact Social Work Services or Police immediately.

It is important that all volunteers and staff communicate concerns accurately. As soon as volunteers or staff receive information about a protected adult who is at risk or as soon as they suspect an adult may be at risk they should: ,

1. Make an accurate and detailed written record of what they have seen, heard or known, at the time the event occurs;
2. Share their concerns with the appropriate Director within Bellahouston Fencing Club and agree what action to take; If the Director is not available then the volunteer or staff member should contact the Equality and Safeguarding Officer for British Fencing ,
3. Avoid asking any more questions than are necessary to clarify whether there is a concern. Always REFER to statutory services to undertake any INVESTIGATION of any suspicions or allegations about abuse, and
4. Complete an incident form (available from Bellahouston Fencing Club or online/within the Good Practice Guidance) and send to Bellahouston Fencing Club.

Recognise, Respond and Record