Wareham Golf Club Safeguarding Whistleblowing Policy

Safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk requires everyone to be committed to the highest possible standards of openness, integrity and accountability.

As a Club, we are committed to encouraging and maintaining a culture where people feel able to raise a genuine safeguarding concern and are confident that it will be taken seriously.

What is whistle blowing?

In the context of safeguarding, "whistle blowing" is when someone raises a concern about the well-being of a child or an adult at risk.

A whistle blower may be:

- a Club Member or employee
- a parent, carer, guardian or other relative
- a volunteer
- a coach
- an official
- a member of the public

Reasons for whistle blowing:

Those involved in sport must acknowledge their individual responsibilities and bring matters of concern to the attention of the relevant people and/or agencies. Although this can be difficult, it is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour in order to:

- protect or reduce risk to others
- prevent a problem from becoming worse or more widespread
- prevent becoming implicated yourself

What prevents individuals from whistle blowing:

- Starting a chain of events that they have no control of
- Disrupting work or training
- Fear of getting it wrong or making a mistake
- Fear of repercussions e.g. being victimised
- Fear of damaging careers
- Fear of not being believed

What to do if you believe that there is a safeguarding concern

1. If a child, or an adult at risk, is in immediate danger or risk of harm, the police

should be contacted by calling 999. If they have already suffered harm and need immediate medical attention, also call for an ambulance. Then report the matter to the Club Welfare Officer (CWO) as in paragraph 2

2. Where a child, or an adult at risk, is not in immediate danger you should report your suspicion or allegation to the CWO. If for any reason you cannot, or do not wish to report the matter to your CWO, contact the England Golf Lead Safeguarding Officer on 01526 351824 or email safeguarding@englandgolf.org Alternatively, you can contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000.

Information to include when raising a concern

The whistle blower should provide as much information as possible regarding the incident or circumstance which has given rise to the concern, including:

- their name and contact details (unless they wish to remain anonymous)
- names of individuals involved
- date, time and location of incident/circumstance; and
- whether any witnesses were present.

The Club assures that all involved will be treated fairly and that all concerns will be properly considered. In cases where suspicions prove to be unfounded, no action will be taken against those who report their concerns, provided they acted in good faith and without malicious intent.

What happens next?

- You should be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries – this may vary depending on the nature and result of the investigations.
- All concerns will be treated in confidence. During the process of investigating the matter, every effort will be made to keep the identity of those raising the concern to the minimum number of individuals practicable.
- The Club has a responsibility to protect you from harassment or victimisation
- No action will be taken against you if the concern was raised in good faith, but proves to be unfounded
- Malicious allegations may be considered a disciplinary offence under the Club's Rules or Staff Handbook

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects whistleblowers from victimisation, discipline or dismissal where they raise genuine concerns in good faith of misconduct or malpractice. If the whistle blower does not believe that the concern has been dealt with appropriately and wishes to speak to someone outside the Club or the England Golf Governance Department. The NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline can be contacted on 0800 028 0285 or by emailing help@nspcc.org.uk.