Adult Safeguarding Policy

This policy should be read alongside England Golf safeguarding procedures and guidance documents.

FOREWORD FROM THE CEO OF ENGLAND GOLF

Safeguarding is at the heart of everything we do at England Golf. Our sport thrives when every individual—whether a player, coach, volunteer, or spectator feels safe, respected, and supported. This is not just a policy; it is a commitment that defines who we are as an organisation.

Golf is a game built on integrity, and that same principle must guide how we protect those involved in our sport. Safeguarding is not the responsibility of a single team or department—it is everyone's responsibility. Each of us has a role to play in creating an environment where people of all ages and backgrounds can enjoy golf free from harm.

I want to make it clear that safeguarding is non-negotiable. We will continue to invest in training, resources, and support to ensure best practice across our clubs and communities. But policies alone cannot achieve this; it requires vigilance, empathy, and action from all of us.

Together, we can uphold the highest standards of safety and wellbeing. Thank you for joining us in making golf a sport where trust and respect are as important as skill and competition.

Jeremy Tomlinson
Group Chief Executive Officer
England Golf

1. INTRODUCTION

England Golf is committed to creating and maintaining a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment for all adults involved in golf and an open, listening culture where people feel able to share concerns without fear of retribution. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility—staff, volunteers, coaches, participants, and visitors—regardless of role. We accept our responsibility for safeguarding adults at all levels of our sport, in line with UK legislation and sector best practice.

Organisations and individuals should follow relevant statutory guidance unless there is a good reason not to. As a condition of England Golf affiliation, clubs, counties and facilities which affiliate to England Golf are required to adopt and implement safeguarding policies and procedures that are consistent with this policy and the England Golf Safeguarding Regulations.

2. SCOPE

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. This policy applies to everyone involved in England Golf activity, including staff, volunteers, PGA Professionals, players, carers, and visitors. The welfare of adults at risk is paramount. The policy aligns with UK legislation including the Care Act 2014, UK GDPR, and Equality Act 2010 in addition to England Golf's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, and we therefore highly recommend that clubs and facilities which affiliate to England Golf adopt this policy for all of their activities too.

3. ADULT SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

England Golf adopts and applies the six principles that underpin all adult safeguarding work in England:

1. **Empowerment** – We support adults to make their own decisions and give **informed consent** wherever possible.
2. **Prevention** – We act early to prevent harm and reduce the likelihood of abuse or neglect.
3. **Proportionality** – We respond in the **least intrusive** way appropriate to the risk presented.
4. **Protection** – We provide support and representation for adults in greatest need, including where risk is high.
5. **Partnership** – We work with clubs, counties, communities and statutory services to prevent, identify and respond to abuse or neglect.
6. **Accountability** – We act transparently, record decisions, and ensure roles and responsibilities are clear.

These principles guide all decisions and actions taken under this policy.

4. OUR PRINCIPLES

We adhere to the following principles:

- All adults should be free to safely enjoy our sport, protected from any form of abuse.
- The welfare of Adults at Risk is paramount. Anyone of us, at some stage in our lives, may become at risk for a variety of reasons.
- An 'Adult at Risk' is any person aged 18 or over who has care and support needs, is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and is unable to protect themselves.
- All adults, regardless of age, ability, disability, gender, race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital or gender status, pregnancy or maternity, have the right to protection from abuse.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- All concerns and allegations will be taken seriously and acted upon promptly.
- Adults have the right to be safe, treated with dignity, and respect.
- England Golf works in partnership with statutory agencies and complies with safeguarding legislation and guidance.

- Clubs, counties, and other golf bodies owe a legal duty of care to adults on their premises or engaged in their activities.
- We will assess everyone's status as an 'Adult at Risk' on a case-by-case basis and reserve the right to signpost individuals to alternative processes or support, where appropriate.

5. OUR OBJECTIVES

We strive to:

- Provide a safe environment for all adults.
- Ensure robust systems are in place to manage safeguarding concerns or allegations.
- Support everyone engaged in England Golf activities to understand their safeguarding responsibilities and duty of care.
- Deliver safeguarding training and resources to staff, volunteers, and coaches.
- Involve adults in decisions that affect them, supporting choice and control.
- Ensure all individuals working with Adults at Risk have undergone robust recruitment checks.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Specific responsibilities include:

All staff, volunteers, coaches and officials

- Know this policy and the linked procedures and act in line with them.
- Recognise, respond, record, and report concerns promptly.
- Maintain professional boundaries and follow Codes of Conduct.

Club/County Safeguarding and Welfare Officers and Event Safeguarding/Welfare Leads (where applicable)

- Provide advice and act as the first point of contact for concerns.
- Ensure concerns are recorded and escalated in line with procedures.

- Support safer recruitment checks and training compliance locally.

England Golf Safeguarding Team

- Provide safeguarding advice and case management support.
- Liaise with statutory agencies as required.
- Maintain oversight, learning and quality assurance across the sport.

7. RECOGNISING AND PREVENTING HARM

Safeguarding includes preventing harm and creating conditions where abuse is less likely to occur. England Golf promotes prevention through safer recruitment, clear codes of conduct, training, safe environments (including online), and a culture where concerns are raised early.

8. CODES OF CONDUCT AND PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

Everyone involved in golf must follow England Golf Codes of Conduct. This includes:

- Treating EVERYONE with respect; avoiding favouritism and discriminatory behaviour.
- Maintaining appropriate language and behaviour; no humiliation, shouting or intimidation.

9. REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO CONCERNS ("THE 4 R'S")

It is not the role of staff members or volunteers to investigate Safeguarding concerns. Everyone must follow the 4 R's:

- **Recognise** – notice signs, disclosures or poor practice and take them seriously.
- **Respond** – listen, reassure, and do not promise confidentiality.
- **Record** – write down the facts as soon as possible (date/time, who, what, where).
- **Report** - share promptly with the Safeguarding & Welfare Officer/Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or England Golf Safeguarding Team. In an emergency call 999.

Immediate risk / emergency

- If anyone is in immediate danger or needs urgent medical attention, call 999 immediately and then inform the relevant Safeguarding & Welfare Officer/DSL and England Golf Safeguarding Team as soon as it is safe to do so.

Allegations about people in a position of trust

- Where a concern relates to the conduct of a person in a position of trust, England Golf will follow appropriate safeguarding and disciplinary procedures and refer to statutory agencies as required. For purposes of this policy, 'position of trust' refers to certain roles and settings where an adult has regular and direct contact with children and/or adults at risk.

10. REPORTING & RESPONSE FLOWCHART

1. Concern Raised →
2. Club/County Safeguarding & Welfare Officer →
3. England Golf Safeguarding Team →
4. Case Management Processes →
5. Outcome & Feedback

11. CONSENT, WISHES AND INFORMATION SHARING

England Golf is committed to a person-led and outcome-focused approach to safeguarding adults.

Wherever possible, we will:

- speak with the adult about the concern.
- establish what outcomes they want.
- seek informed consent before sharing information or making a referral to external agencies.

When consent is not given:

- If an adult with capacity does not consent to information sharing or referral, we will respect their wishes unless there is a lawful and proportionate reason to override this, such as:
    - the adult is, or may be, at immediate risk of serious harm;
    - there is risk of serious harm to other people (e.g., children or other adults);
    - a serious crime is suspected, or public interest considerations apply; or
    - The adult is subject to coercion/undue influence affecting their ability to make a free choice.

- Capacity: We will presume an adult has capacity unless there is reason to doubt it. If capacity is in doubt, we will take appropriate advice and act in the adult's best interests, ensuring decisions are recorded with rationale.

In all cases, we will share information only as necessary, only with appropriate parties, and record the decision-making process securely in line with data protection requirements.

12. SAFER RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND SUPPORT

England Golf promotes safer recruitment and suitability processes for roles working with children and/or adults at risk. This includes role descriptions, references, appropriate checks (including DBS eligibility where relevant), induction, and safeguarding training proportionate to the role. England Golf provides guidance and resources to support clubs and counties to implement these requirements.

13. COMMUNICATION, PARTICIPATION AND LISTENING

England Golf supports a listening culture and encourages the views of everyone involved in the sport to be proactively sought and acted upon. Safeguarding information, reporting routes and key contacts should be easy to find and accessible to all.

14. IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

England Golf will promote implementation of this policy through training, guidance, communication and support to clubs and counties. We will monitor safeguarding practice through case oversight, learning from concerns/incidents, and review of training and compliance information where appropriate.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years, or sooner in response to significant changes in legislation, statutory guidance or learning.

15. RELEVANT POLICIES

This policy should be read in conjunction with all England Golf Safeguarding Policies, Procedure and Guidance, in addition to relevant Codes of Conduct, Safer Recruitment Policy, Whistleblowing Policy and Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy.

16. APPLICATION IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS

Where an affiliated organisation is established outside England, references in this policy to legislation, statutory guidance, public authorities or safeguarding processes specific to England shall be read as references to the applicable legal and regulatory framework of the jurisdiction in which that organisation operates.

Nothing in this document alters the safeguarding standards, responsibilities or expectations set out in this policy. It is intended solely to recognise that affiliated organisations may operate under different legal frameworks while maintaining the safeguarding standards required by England Golf.

England Golf may publish supplementary jurisdiction-specific guidance where this is considered necessary.

17. CONTACT FOR SAFEGUARDING

England Golf Safeguarding Team
Tel: 01526 351856
Email: safeguarding@englandgolf.org

18. FURTHER INFORMATION

https://www.anncrafttrust.org/
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-duties-for-adult-social-care-providers
https://www.englandgolf.org/safeguarding

APPENDIX A – WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE WORRIED ABOUT AN INDIVIDUAL (QUICK GUIDE)

- If someone is at immediate risk: call 999.
- If not thought to be at immediate risk: tell the Safeguarding & Welfare Officer/DSL as soon as possible.
- Record what you saw/heard and keep it factual.

Do not investigate or promise confidentiality.

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