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**Andover Wheelers Cycling Club**

**Welfare Policy**

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## Document Details

General Detail	
<b>Abstract</b>	This Welfare Policy has been produced to define the safeguarding policy and processes and code of conduct of Andover Wheelers cycling club. Once approved by the Committee it will be published on the Andover Wheelers website.
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<b>Owner</b>	Andover Wheelers Cycling Club

Document History		
Ver	Date	Amendment
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00B	01/07/19	Second draft for release to Committee
001	17/07/19	First issue for release to membership and upload to website.
00C	31/05/22	Third draft incorporating safeguarding adults and new welfare officers
00D	28/07/22	Fourth draft for committee review
002	02/09/22	Second issue for release to membership and upload to website.
003	09/10/23	Third issue – Updated welfare officer info.

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## 1 Policy Statement

Andover Wheelers cycling club recognises that everyone, regardless of age, ability or disability, gender, race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital or gender status has the right to be protected from abuse and poor practice and to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment. All concerns and allegations of abuse and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

## 2 Policy Aims

The aim of the Andover Wheelers Welfare Policy is to promote good practice and ensure everyone participating in club events does so in a safe environment that supports children and young people to meet their potential. Andover Wheelers will work to promote the principles of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults by:

- To enable everyone to enjoy club activities in a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment where everyone feels valued, listened to and respected.
- Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of the club.
- Ensure all those involved in Andover Wheelers club activities are aware of, understand and follow the procedures relating to reporting concerns in confidence.
- Reviewing this policy and procedures every two years or whenever there is a major change in legislation or change in the organisation of the club. This includes directing individuals associated with the club, where it is appropriate to their role, to undertake relevant safeguarding training-.
- Using appropriate recruitment procedures to assess the suitability of volunteers and staff working with the club in line with guidance from British Cycling.
- Allow all Club Members to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

## 3 Safeguarding Adults

Adult safeguarding is working with adults with care and support needs to keep them safe from abuse or neglect. An adult is anyone over 18 years of age. Andover Wheelers will ensure the safety and protection of such adults involved in our activities through adherence to the safeguarding guidelines and policies adopted by British Cycling.

## 4 Safeguarding Children

All children have a right to protection, and the needs of children with disabilities and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. Andover Wheelers will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in our activities through adherence to the safeguarding guidelines and policies adopted by British Cycling.

A child's disability may not always be obvious or visible (for example a child with a learning disability).

When members of staff, volunteers, officials and coaches are working with children with disabilities Andover Wheelers understand that extra safeguards may need to be put in place.

Everyone working with the child should understand what their impairment actually means.

Andover Wheelers will consult with the parents and the child to make sure that there is an appropriate plan in place to meet any additional needs.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 as specified in The Children Act 1989.

## 4.1 Promoting Good Practice

Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about the appropriate action to take.

Abuse can occur within many situations including in the home, at school and in a sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them. A coach, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer will have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where they need protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document.

When a child enters the club having been subjected to child abuse outside the sporting environment, sport can play a crucial role in improving the child's self-esteem. In such instances the club must work with the appropriate agencies to ensure the child receives the required support.

## 4.2 Good Practice Guidelines

All Club Members should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

- Always working in an open environment avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication.
- Treating all young people/disabled adults equally with respect and dignity.
- No adult is to be left alone with a child/young person and vice versa.
- Always putting the welfare of each young person first.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance from a young person (eg. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them).
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust and empowering children to share in decision making.
- By making cycling fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play.
- Ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support or contact is required, it should be provided openly and according to guidelines provided by British Cycling. Young people should always be consulted, and their agreement gained. Some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about manual support and their views should always be carefully considered.
- Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications, and insurance.
- Involving parents/carers wherever possible.
- Ensuring that if mixed teams are taken away for the day or night, they should always be accompanied by a male and female club official. However, remember that same gender abuse can also occur.
- Ensuring that at residential events, adults should not enter children's rooms or invite children into their rooms.
- Being an excellent role model – this includes always behaving responsibly when in the company of young people and not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people during formal club activities.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults – avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- Securing parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis. If the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.

- Requesting written parental consent if club officials are required to transport young people in their cars.

### 4.3 Reporting of Incidents

If any of the following incidents occur to a child whilst in your care, you should report it immediately to another Club Member and record the incident:

- Any injury and details of treatment given.
- If he/she seems distressed in any manner.
- If he/she appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.
- If he/she misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

You should also ensure the parents of the child are informed.

### 4.4 Responding to Allegations or Suspicions

It is not the responsibility of any official or member of Andover Wheelers to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities.

Andover Wheelers will assure all members that it will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith, reports his/her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

If a child confides in you, it is important to remain calm and where possible, seek the assistance of another adult in listening to the child. A note of the conversation should be made as soon as possible after, and contact made with a Welfare Officer without delay. If they are not available and it is considered the matter is urgent and the child is a risk of further harm, the police should be contacted or alternatively the Safeguarding Lead at British Cycling should be contacted or the NSPCC for advice.

#### 4.4.1 Taking Action - Poor practice

If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice, the Club Committee will deal with it as a misconduct issue following the Club Grievance Procedure.

#### 4.4.2 Taking Action - Suspected or disclosed child abuse

Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the Club's Welfare Officer, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.

The Welfare Officer will refer the allegation to the appropriate authorities. i.e. Hampshire Children Services (Phone numbers: Monday to Thursday 8:30am to 5pm and Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm, 0300 555 1384. At other times, 0300 555 1373) who may involve the police. Or, if it is an emergency where the child is in immediate danger, call 999.

If the Welfare Officer is unsure whether reasonable grounds for concern exist, they can informally consult with the local health board/social services.

Before the Welfare Officer reports suspected or actual child abuse to the appropriate authorities, he/she will first inform the family of their intention to make such a report, unless doing so would endanger the child or undermine an investigation.

### 4.5 Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need-to-know basis only. It is also important to reassure the child you will take what they say seriously and avoid promising to keep it a secret.

In all instances the Club will be guided by information, guidelines and policies put in place by British Cycling.

## 4.6 Codes of Conduct

### 4.6.1 Parents/Guardians

Andover Wheelers believes that parents/guardians should:

- Be a role model for children and maintain the highest standards of conduct when interacting with children, other parents, officials, and organisers.
- Always be present at the designated start and end of a scheduled activity.
- Be contactable at all times during any club scheduled activity.
- Support the organising of club youth events whenever possible.
- Ensure your child is properly prepared for the planned scheduled activity, considering weather conditions, nutrition and bike maintenance.
- Ensure that the planned activity is within their child's ability.
- Always behave responsibly and do not seek to unfairly affect the race or cycling session.
- Never intentionally expose any young participant to embarrassment or disparagement by the use of flippant or sarcastic remarks.
- Always recognise the value and importance of the volunteers who provide sporting/recreational opportunities for their child.
- Not publicly question the judgement or honesty of referees, coaches or organisers.
- Respect referees, coaches, organisers, and other cyclists.
- Encourage children to play by the rules and teach them that honest endeavour is as important as winning.
- Encourage and applaud good sportsmanship.
- Set a good example by praising good performances.
- Encourage mutual respect for teammates and fellow competitors.
- Support all efforts to remove abusive/bullying behaviour in all its forms.

### 4.6.2 Young Club Members (U18)

Andover Wheelers wishes to provide the best possible environment for all young people involved in the sport. Young people deserve to be given enjoyable, safe sporting opportunities, free from abuse of any kind. These participants have rights, which must be respected.

Young cyclists are entitled to:

- Be happy, have fun and enjoy cycling.
- Be safe and to feel safe.
- Be treated with dignity, sensitivity, and respect.
- Participate on an equal basis.
- Experience competition at a level at which they feel comfortable.
- Make complaints and have them dealt with.
- Get help against bullies.
- Say No.

Young cyclists also have responsibilities that they must accept. Young cyclists should always:

- Listen to and follow instructions from bike leaders, coaches, officials and managers and treat

them with respect.

- Play fairly and be trustworthy and accept decisions.
- Respect other youth members and leaders.
- Respect opponents.
- Challenge themselves but be realistic in their own abilities.
- Behave in a manner that avoids bringing the sport of cycling into disrepute.
- Talk to Andover Wheelers Welfare Officer if they have any problems or alternatively the British Cycling Safeguarding Officer.

Young cyclists should never:

- Cheat.
- Shout at or argue with officials, teammates or other competitors.
- Use violence or physical contact.
- Bully or use bullying tactics.
- Take banned substances.
- Keep secrets about any persons who may have caused them harm.
- Tell lies or spread rumours.

#### **4.6.3 Club Officers, Coaches and Ride Leaders**

Andover Wheelers has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in club activities from harm. Club Officers, Coaches and Ride Leaders should always:

- Treat all young people equally with respect and dignity.
- Use appropriate language and behaviours.
- Put the welfare of each young person first.
- Make cycling fun, enjoyable and promote fair play.
- Developing knowledge, skills and physical fitness.
- Involve parents/guardians wherever possible.
- Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognise the developmental needs and capacity of young people– avoid excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- Secure parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- Work in an open environment avoiding private or unobserved situations and encourage open communication.
- Act in accordance with the Andover Wheelers Welfare Policy.



## 5 Anti-Bullying Policy

Andover Wheelers believe that every effort must be made to eradicate bullying in all its forms.

Bullying can be difficult to define and can take many forms which can be categorised as:

- Physical
- Verbal
- Emotional

Bullying can take place anywhere but is more likely to take place where there is inadequate supervision. Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

Bullies no longer rely on being physically near to the victim. It can happen face to face or online. Cyberbullying is when a person uses technology to deliberately upset someone.

A bully can be anyone involved in the sport, a parent, coach, child, member of staff, volunteer or official.

Andover Wheelers will not tolerate bullying in any of its forms during activities, events, competitions, coaching or at any other time.

## 6 Andover Wheelers Welfare Officer

Andover Wheelers will appoint at least one Welfare Officer. The Welfare Officer will:

- Receive appropriate training required to perform the role.
- Listen and take evidence but not make judgements.
- Report to parents and relevant authorities as appropriate.

### 6.1 Contacting a Club Welfare Officer

Welfare Officer(s) will make themselves known when attending club events and can be contacted directly by phone call, text message or email.

### 6.2 Current Welfare Officer(s)

Club Welfare officers are elected at AGM. Current elected officers are:

#### **Tonia Stewart**

Email: [tonia.andoverwheelerswelfare@gmail.com](mailto:tonia.andoverwheelerswelfare@gmail.com)

#### **Simon Healey**

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