

## **English Bowls**

**PROTECTING CHILDREN and THE VULNERABLE**

## **Children Learn what they Live**

If a child lives with criticism  
He learns to condemn  
If a child lives with hostility  
He learns to fight  
If a child lives with ridicule  
He learns to be shy  
If a child lives with shame  
He learns to feel guilty  
If a child lives with tolerance  
He learns to be patient  
If a child lives with encouragement  
He learns confidence  
If a child lives with praise  
He learns to appreciate  
If a child lives with fairness  
He learns justice  
If a child lives with security  
He learns to have faith  
If a child lives with approval  
He learns to like himself  
If a child lives with acceptance and friendship  
He learns to find love in the world.

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# 1 Introduction

The National Governing Bodies (NGBs) of all Bowling Codes recognise and acknowledge their joint and several responsibilities to establish policies which promote and encourage their affiliated associations and clubs to adopt the highest possible standards of care towards children and other vulnerable people participating in the Game of Bowls.

NGBs believe that everyone has a duty of care towards the children and other vulnerable people with whom they have contact, and to safeguard and protect them from abuse. This is both a moral and legal obligation. Everybody, whether administrator, official, coach, or bowler, involved in working with children, young people and the vulnerable has a responsibility to be informed about, and be able to recognise the different forms of abuse. They also need to know what precautions or steps should be taken for its prevention and what action to take if an incident occurs.

## 1.1 National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and Joint Panel for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

In common with governing bodies in other sports, steps were taken towards producing a comprehensive Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy by the English Bowling Association, the English Women's Bowling Association, the English Indoor Bowling Association, and the English Women's Indoor Bowling Association. The British Crown Green Bowling Association, the English Short Mat Bowling Association, the English Bowling Federation and the English Women's Bowling Federation later joined them.

To implement and progress the policy and procedures throughout the sport, they have established a joint working group – The Joint Panel for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults on which representatives from other interested associations [The English Bowls Coaching Scheme (EBCS), English Bowls Youth Development Scheme (EBYDS), English Bowls Umpires Association (EBUA) and English Women's Umpires Association (Bowling) (EWUA (B))] also participate.

This panel, working in liaison with the National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) Child Protection in Sports Unit (CPSU), has the task of helping to implement the policy and to monitor progress.

It will offer help and advice to affiliated Clubs and Associations, who are introducing procedures for child protection in their own locality; it will also seek feedback on their experiences.

The panel will also act with the governing bodies as an advice and control point for Criminal Records Bureau referrals.

## 1.2 Policy Statement

An acceptance that abuse does take place within sport is a pre-requisite for safeguarding children and young people. If the sport of bowls is to establish a culture and ethos where the rights of children are respected and promoted, it is essential that everyone involved recognise their responsibility for safeguarding and protecting children and the vulnerable.

Everyone in the sport of bowls needs to be aware of their individual and collective responsibilities for:

- ⊙ Challenging poor practice,
- ⊙ Preventing abusive behaviour,
- ⊙ Developing a vigilant and whistle blowing culture,
- ⊙ Promoting safeguarding interventions.

This requires that everyone is informed about the nature and extent of abuse in sport. Bowls must promote a zero tolerance approach to harm or abusive behaviour and ensure that everyone involved in the sport can, with confidence, report concerns with any of these matters.

## **1.3 Aims and Objectives**

The aim of this document is to set out a joint policy on child protection for Bowls, and to provide guidelines to assist those people who may work with children in associations and clubs, to understand and fulfil their obligations. Although emphasis is given on child welfare, the contents of this document are equally valid as general guidance for those involved with the disabled and other vulnerable adults.

The person in charge may be the Club Child Protection Officer (CPO)/ the Club Chairman/President/ Secretary or the Teacher or Youth worker concerned where the activity is part of a school or youth project.

This document follows recommendations published by the Home Office, NSPCC, Sport England, Sportscoach UK, and other concerned bodies.

## **1.4 Principles**

**The following principles form the basis of the policy and guidelines contained in this document:**

- ⊙ The welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount.
- ⊙ Each individual irrespective of age, gender, religion, race or disability has the right to protection from abuse.
- ⊙ Allegations and suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- ⊙ Each individual has the right to be safe, and to be treated with respect and dignity.
- ⊙ Coaches, and other adults, having had an allegation made against them may seek assistance from their appropriate governing body.
- ⊙ Recognition that working in partnership with individuals, their parents or guardians, carers, families, social services, and other agencies necessary for their welfare and protection.

## **2 Definitions**

### **2.1 What is a child?**

A child (or young person) is defined by the Children's Act 1989 as any male or female under the age of 18 years.

For the purpose of Bowls the date of achieving 18 years will be 1 May for the outdoor season or 1 October for the indoor season in the appropriate year.

### **2.2 What is a vulnerable adult?**

A vulnerable adult is any person aged 18 or over who is, or may be, in need of community care services because they have health or other disabilities related to age or illness. They are people who are not able to take care of themselves or protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation. (Department of Health guidance document 'No Secrets: Guidance on Developing Multi Agency Policies and Procedures to Protect Vulnerable Adults from abuse' [March 2000]).

### **2.3 Relevant Legislation and Guidance (England and Wales)**

A list of relevant legislation and guidance is given in Appendix 14.

### **3 What is Abuse?**

The term abuse is used to describe ways in which an individual is harmed, usually by adults, and often by people they know and trust.

#### **3.1 Forms of Abuse**

Physical and emotional abuse, as well as neglect and sexual abuse, make up the four recognised main categories of abuse. In addition, bullying is now recognised as another major form of abuse in its own right.

##### **3.1.1 Neglect**

- ⊙ Where adults fail to meet the individual's basic physical needs for food, warm clothing etc.
- ⊙ Where adults fail or refuse to give the individual love or attention.
- ⊙ Where adults consistently leave an individual alone or unsupervised.

##### **3.1.2 Physical Abuse**

- ⊙ Where an individual is physically hurt or injured by the use of inappropriate force, given alcohol and/or inappropriate drugs.

##### **3.1.3 Sexual Abuse**

Sexual molestation is the most widely published form of abuse, but is not the only way in which children or vulnerable people are harmed.

- ⊙ When adults of either sex use them to meet their own sexual needs.
- ⊙ Engaging in any kind of direct sexual display or activity.
- ⊙ The showing to a child or vulnerable person of any form of pornographic material or taking photographs for any such purposes.

##### **3.1.4 Emotional Abuse**

- ⊙ Where there is a persistent lack of love or affection.
- ⊙ Constant over protection preventing the individual from socialising.
- ⊙ Frequent taunting or being shouted at.
- ⊙ Experiencing any of the other categories of abuse.

### **3.2 What is child abuse?**

The term child abuse is used to describe ways in which children are harmed, usually by adults, and often by people they know and trust. Both boys and girls are at risk of having their physical and mental health damaged by any of the forms of abuse stated above.

Child abuse can take many forms, and may occur within and outside the family, at school, and even within a social or sports environment.

### **3.3 Abuse of a vulnerable adult**

Abuse is mistreatment by any other person or persons that violates the individual's human and civil rights. The abuse can vary from treating someone with disrespect in a way which significantly affects the person's quality of life, to causing actual physical or mental suffering.

Abuse can happen anywhere – in a residential or nursing home, a hospital, in the workplace, at a day centre or educational establishment, in supported housing or in the street.

Forms of abuse include:

- ⊙ Physical Abuse such as hitting, pushing, pinching, shaking, misusing medication, scalding, restraint, hair pulling.
- ⊙ Sexual Abuse such as rape, sexual assault, or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not or could not have consented, or to which they were pressurised into consenting.
- ⊙ Psychological or Emotional Abuse such as threats of harm or abandonment, being deprived of social or any other form of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, being prevented from receiving services or support.
- ⊙ Financial or Material Abuse such as theft, fraud or exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property, or inheritance, misuse of property, possessions or benefits.
- ⊙ Neglect such as ignoring medical or physical care needs and preventing access to health, social care or educational services or withholding the necessities of life such as food, drink and heating.
- ⊙ Discriminatory Abuse such as that based on race or sexuality or a person's disability and other forms of harassment or slurs.
- ⊙ Institutional Abuse can sometimes happen in residential homes, nursing homes or hospitals when people are mistreated because of poor or inadequate care, neglect and poor practice that affect the whole of that service.

#### **3.3.1 What should be done if there is cause for concern**

Any concerns should be reported as soon as possible, no matter how insignificant they appear to be. A copy of this report should be given to the CPO. The agency to which the report is made will vary according to the vulnerable adult's living arrangements.

If the vulnerable adult lives:

- ⊙ Within a residential care home, report your concerns to the care home manager first. Once reported to the manager, also report your concerns to the County Registration and Inspection Unit (contact details will be in your local directory or publicised through your local authority web-site or literature).
- ⊙ In a nursing home, report concerns to the County/ Local Authority Nursing Homes Inspectorate.
- ⊙ In their own home and receiving services from an agency or individual, make your report to the Agency concerned and/ or Adult Protection Co-ordinator.
- ⊙ In the community, report concerns to the Adult Protection Co-ordinator.
- ⊙ If concerns are regarding hospital treatment of a vulnerable adult, contact the Nursing Homes Inspectorate or Adult Protection Co-ordinator.

## 4 Bullying

- ⊙ Bullying behaviour can occur anywhere especially if supervision is inadequate.
- ⊙ It is an abuse which can take many forms from simple verbal taunts and persistent teasing to humiliation and physical abuse.
- ⊙ It should be recognised that the competitive nature of sport creates a potentially ideal environment for bullying. The bully may be a child or an adult.
- ⊙ Expectations of a 'pushy' or over anxious parent or carer may give rise to signs of bullying.
- ⊙ All signs of bullying must be taken seriously.

Measures to combat bullying and advice on action to help the victim and deal with the bully are given in Appendix 1.

## 5 Race and Racism

Children from ethnic communities and their parents are likely to have experienced harassment, racial discrimination and institutional racism.

All organisations working with children or vulnerable adults, including those operating where ethnic communities are numerically small, should address institutional racism as defined in the Macpherson Inquiry Report on the death of Stephen Lawrence as '*.....the collective failure by an organisation to provide appropriate and professional service to people on account of their race, culture or religion*'.

## 6 Recognition of Abuse

A situation where child or vulnerable adult abuse has, or may have occurred, is not easy to recognise even for those experienced in working in this field. It is acknowledged that members of an association or club, whether Team Managers or Coaches, etc. are not experts at such recognition.

It is not their responsibility to decide whether abuse is occurring, but they are expected to be vigilant and act on any concerns by being prepared to report and discuss these matters with the appropriate persons or authority.

### 6.1 Symptoms of abuse and indicators

The following signs are among known indicators of abuse.

- ⊙ Something a child or vulnerable adult says
- ⊙ Unexplained or suspicious bruising or injuries
- ⊙ Sudden changes in behaviour
- ⊙ Sexually explicit language or actions, especially by children
- ⊙ Observed change in weight or appearance over a period of time

See also Appendix 2 which details symptoms of abuse that might be seen

### 6.2 Acting on something an individual says

If a child or vulnerable adult says or indicates that he or she is being abused, it is important that the person receiving the information stays calm so that he or she can:

- ⊙ Ensure that the individual is, and feels, safe
- ⊙ Tell and show the individual that what he or she says is being taken seriously
- ⊙ Reassure the individual that he or she is not to blame
- ⊙ Be honest and explain that it will be necessary to tell someone else
- ⊙ Obtain medical help if individual needs immediate treatment
- ⊙ Write a full report of what the individual has said as soon as possible after the event
- ⊙ Maintain confidentiality, and only tell others if it will protect the child

On no account should that person rush into actions that may not be appropriate, or make promises that cannot be kept. Nor should they ever take sole responsibility; they should consult the CPO or Club Secretary so that they can begin to protect the child or vulnerable adult, and gain support for themselves.

### 6.3 Acting on suspicions or allegations

Abuse of any kind is an emotive and difficult subject. The action to be taken needs to be governed by the nature of the concern, see Appendix 3.

A specimen report form is given in Appendix 3.

If a change in the individual's behaviour has been noticed, it may be that difficulty with schoolwork or a bereavement etc has caused the individual to be unhappy.

It may be appropriate to speak to the parents, guardians or carers. However, if the concern is about physical, emotional or sexual abuse, talking with these adults may put the individual at greater risk as they may be the perpetrators. In such cases, consult with the Club CPO.

It is for that person to decide the action to be taken. This may require contacting Social Services or the Police, who have responsibilities under the Children Act if the individual concerned is a young person.

If the CPO is not available, the person receiving the information should do this themselves. If in doubt, advice may be obtained in confidence by telephoning one of the help-lines listed in Appendix 14.

## 7 Promoting Good Practice with Children and Vulnerable Adults

Abuse of children and vulnerable adults can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with the judgement about any action to take. Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with children in order to harm them. A coach, instructor, official or volunteer may have regular contact with children and be an important link in identifying cases where the child needs protection. All suspicious cases or poor practice should be reported following guidelines in this document. When a child or vulnerable adult enters the club having been subjected to abuse outside the sporting environment, sport can play a crucial role in improving the individual's self esteem.

### 7.1 What is Good Practice?

#### Always:

- ⊙ Be an excellent role model.
- ⊙ Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- ⊙ Treat everyone equally with respect and dignity.
- ⊙ Always work in an open environment (avoid private and unobserved situations).
- ⊙ Respect a child/ vulnerable adult's right to privacy.
- ⊙ A commitment to a drug-free sport.
- ⊙ Securing parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis.
- ⊙ Be aware of any medical problems and medication should a medical emergency arise.
- ⊙ Keep a written record of any injury sustained and the treatment given. Report the incident immediately to the Club CPO/ County CPO with a copy to the Club/ County Secretary.
- ⊙ Secure written parental consent if club members/ officials are required to transport children / vulnerable adults in their cars.
- ⊙ Recognise that someone else may misinterpret your actions no matter how well intentioned.
- ⊙ Report any concerns you may have.

#### Never:

- ⊙ Work alone. Ensure a parent of other adult is present.
- ⊙ Allow ridicule or bullying.
- ⊙ Engage in rough, physical or sexual provocative games, including horseplay.
- ⊙ Make suggestive comment to a child/ vulnerable adult, even in fun.
- ⊙ Show favouritism to any individual.
- ⊙ Allow allegations made by a young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- ⊙ Try to investigate any concerns personally.
- ⊙ Rely on your good name to protect you.
- ⊙ Believe "it could never happen to me".
- ⊙ Allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour such as tantrums and crushes.

## **8 Responding to Complaints**

### **8.1 Dealing with complaints where a child or vulnerable adult is involved**

#### **Always**

- ⊙ Stay calm and do not rush into inappropriate action.
- ⊙ Reassure the child/vulnerable adult he/she is not to blame. Communication should be at the individual's pace without pressure.
- ⊙ Listen to what the individual is saying and take them seriously.
- ⊙ Do not make promises you cannot keep.
- ⊙ Ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times.
- ⊙ Explain to the individual what steps you intend to take having heard their account.
- ⊙ Ensure that you understand what the individual has said and that you record it accurately immediately after the conversation.
- ⊙ You should not take sole responsibility, consult the Club CPO/Club Secretary so that they can take steps to protect the child / vulnerable adult and offer support.

### **8.2 Responding to Suspicions and Allegations**

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in the sport of bowls, in a paid or unpaid capacity to take the responsibility or to decide whether or not abuse has taken place.

However, if there are concerns that abuse is occurring and you need advice you can contact the Police, or Social Services, who have the responsibility under the Children's Acts to investigate the matter further where children people are involved. Where a vulnerable adult is involved guidance is provided at Section 3.3.1.

For further reference see Appendix 3.

Confidential advice can be obtained by telephoning any of the help-lines listed in Appendix 14.

## **9 Disciplinary Procedures and Appeals**

### **9.1 General**

Provision must be made to empower a specified senior committee member (eg, CPO and/or Secretary/ Chief Executive) to take action if notification of an offence against a child or vulnerable adult within the sport has been received. This should permit such action as interim suspension pending full enquiry and formal hearing by a disciplinary committee.

The accused must have the right of appeal to an independent panel for example via the Sports Disputes Resolution Panel. In addition, reference should also be made to the disciplinary procedures as contained in the constitution of all the relevant NGBs, County Associations and Clubs. These can be found in the relevant Handbooks or Constitutions.

See also flowcharts under Appendix 3.

### **9.2 Process**

Any act, statement or other matter which causes, poses, or indicates a risk of harm to a child or other vulnerable person is deemed to constitute unacceptable improper behaviour and may be referred to the Case Management Group (see Appendix 15).

Within these regulations the expression 'offence' shall include such behaviour, and any other criminal act which may pose a risk or cause harm to a child or vulnerable adult.

Upon receipt by the Senior Officer of the Club/ Association information or notification that an individual:

- a) has been charged with an offence; or
- b) is subject to investigation by the police, social services, or other agency relating to an offence; or
- c) poses or may pose a risk to a child/ vulnerable adult,

then the Senior Officer/ Disciplinary Committee shall have the power to order that the individual is suspended from the sport for such period and on such terms as [he/she] shall decide according to the guidelines set out in the relevant NGB complaints procedure.

In reaching their decision due consideration shall be given to whether:

- a) The child or vulnerable adult is or may be at risk;
- b) The matters are of a serious nature;
- c) The order is necessary or desirable to allow any investigation to proceed.

Written notice of any order made shall be given to the person concerned and his club as soon as reasonably practical.

There shall be a right of appeal against the decision to an independent appeals panel, (reference should be made the relevant NGB disciplinary code).

Any complaint brought by one person against another must be in writing. If the Senior Officer finds that there is a case to answer, the matter is to be placed before the Executive/ Disciplinary Committee, and the person involved notified in writing of the complaints made, with an invitation to respond within 21 days.

Following the 21 day period, the Executive/ Disciplinary Committee shall decide to accept the response and take no action, or take simple disciplinary action, or schedule a full hearing. The accused may request a full hearing.

The date set for the hearing shall not be later than four weeks from the date of the decision or request, and must be notified to the parties in writing.

There shall be a right of appeal to the decisions reached at the hearing to an independent panel.

### **9.3 Policy re previous misdemeanours**

Reference should also be made to Section 10.7 regarding the rights of ex-offenders under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.



## **10 Guidance for Associations and Clubs**

### **10.1 General**

The responsibility of making bowls safe and free from harm for children and vulnerable people is one which must be shared at all levels of our sport. This Guide is designed to help you understand the part which your association or club is expected to play, and the necessary steps to take in doing so.

In it, references to a child or young person means anyone under the age 18 years and the term parent is used generically to represent parents, carers and guardians.

All of the policies and procedures mentioned refer equally to those who, as a result of physical or mental handicap and irrespective of their age, are deemed to be vulnerable.

### **10.2 The role of Child Protection Officers (CPOs)**

Each Association and Club should identify a designated person (see also Section 10.5 and 11) to be titled the Child Protection Officer (CPO) and deal with issues relating to child and vulnerable adult protection.

Clubs with insufficient members who are unable to appoint their own CPO may seek the assistance of a neighbouring CPO to act on their behalf.

Prior to this appointment it is strongly recommended that the person undertakes a Criminal Record Check at Enhanced Level through their NGB. The CPO will be supported by a Case Management Group (see Appendix 15) and the Joint Panel for the Protection of Child and Vulnerable Adults.

All Associations linked to each NGB are strongly recommended to identify a designated person to take on the role of CPO for that Association with responsibility for child and vulnerable adult protection policies. Clubs or local organisations within member associations (or affiliated directly to NGBs) are also strongly recommended to identify a designated person to be titled Club CPO to handle child and vulnerable adult protection issues. Similarly, prior to appointment these persons should also undertake a Criminal Record Check at Enhanced Level.

The Club CPO acts as the first point of contact for anyone in the Club who has a concern about a child or vulnerable adult and/or about poor practice or possible abuse by anyone working with them.

Each Association CPO (whether at National, Regional, County or Club Level) must have a formal role within the Association's management structure. The Association's CPO will require support from the Association, and designated training should be provided. The Association may wish to appoint more than one CPO.

The role of Association CPO is critical in ensuring that the Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Implementation Procedures work in practice. The Association CPO may also act as the first point of contact for anyone who has a concern about a child/ vulnerable adult and about poor practice/ possible abuse by anyone working with them.

The CPO therefore needs to be perceived as being approachable and as having a child-focussed and/or vulnerable adult-focussed approach.

The CPO does not need to be child or vulnerable adult protection 'experts'. That is the role of the statutory agencies (Police and Social Services).

Both Association and Club CPOs should be supported by their NGB, Associations and Club management and have a formal role in the management structure.

### **10.3 Associations and Clubs**

Whether or not children or vulnerable adults currently participate in its activities, each affiliated Association and Club has a duty to play its part in the implementation process.

This Guide (see Section 18) offers practical advice with responses to some frequently asked questions aimed at helping your understanding. Specimens of the various recommended forms will be found in the Appendixes.

## 10.4 How to begin

A good way to begin is to get an overview of the issues. Then let everyone know that your association or club is committed to the protection of children and vulnerable adults by issuing a simple statement of intent or a more formal policy document.

The form of words used in a Statement of Intent need not be very complex.

The following is a suggestion, which could also be introduced as an additional clause in your organisation's Rules and Constitution.

“The XYZ Bowling Club / Association is committed to promoting a safe environment in which children and vulnerable adults can enjoy taking part in games of bowls.

It will seek to underpin and ensure this commitment by following and promoting the joint Child Protection Policy and Procedures of the National Governing Bodies.”

Appendix 6 gives an example of a formal policy document, which incorporates the underlying principles. It is important that the statement of commitment to child and vulnerable adult safety is prominently displayed in the club, and copies made available on request to members and parents.

## 10.5 What next?

The next step is for your Executive Committee to set a timed action plan to guide the scheduling of implementation. An example is given at Appendix 7.

The plan will need to cater for the following:

- ⊙ Recruitment of an Officer responsible for Child/ Vulnerable Adult Protection.
- ⊙ Preparation and printing of necessary forms for parental consent, volunteer disclosure and references, accident / incident reports, etc.
- ⊙ Training policy for volunteers.
- ⊙ Formalised adoption by members of the policy and procedures, including monitoring and disciplinary matters.
- ⊙ Amendment of Constitution & Rules.

## 10.6 Recruitment

To ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children or vulnerable adults, all applicants should be interviewed, and asked to undertake an Enhanced CRB Check or complete a Volunteer Disclosure and Reference Form (as appropriate). References should be taken up.

There may be an administrative charge for handling the processing of the CRB form on behalf of the NGB.

Clubs with paid staff should review the extent to which their employees have access to children and vulnerable adults, and seek advice from their NGB as to whether a CRB check is appropriate.

## 10.7 Recruitment of Ex-Offenders: Statement of Policy

This applies to all aspects of employment albeit as a post as part of an NGB or at Club level.

### 10.7.1 Policy

Any organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to assess an applicants' suitability for positions of trust, must comply fully with the CRB Code of Practice. Also undertake to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

**They must:**

- ⊙ Be committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background;
- ⊙ Have a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, which is made available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.
- ⊙ Actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. Select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience
- ⊙ Ensure that a Disclosure is only requested after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a Disclosure is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.
- ⊙ Be aware that where a Disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, that they encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. The CRB request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover, to a designated person within this sport and we guarantee that this information is only seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.
- ⊙ Be aware that unless the nature of the position allows the NGB to ask questions about an individual's entire criminal record that only "unspent" convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 are considered.
- ⊙ Ensure that all those in the bowls (Club/ Association or NGB) who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. Also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, eg the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- ⊙ At interview, or in a separate discussion, ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

**Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar a person from working with an organisation associated with bowls.** This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offences.

## 10.8 Forms

Specimen forms are given in the Appendixes, but there is no objection to them being modified to meet local requirements, or to designing your own provided that they elicit the same minimum information. Remember that you will need to add the name and address, etc of your association or club, and to adopt a firm policy on their completion.

Particular attention should be given to completion of parental consent forms for both general association / club activities, and for special multiple or 'one off' events.

Accept that circumstances may have changed and obtain fresh consents each time.

## 10.9 Training

Decisions will need to be taken on the training needs for your Association/Club CPO, volunteers and coaches, including cost implications. A number of agencies offer awareness courses and other training related to child protection. Some have been attended by members of the Joint Panel for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults who can offer advice on their suitability. (See Appendix 8 for contact details.)

Financial support to help with course fees may be available from local award schemes, and information on these is often obtainable from the local authority or library service.

## 10.10 Adoption of Policy and Constitution changes

County Associations are required to make provision in their Rules and Constitution to ensure that those Clubs with members under 18 years of age and other vulnerable people, adopt appropriate protection procedures or will do so at an early date.

The Club and officials having adopted and placed on display their Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy, should make sure that the appointed CPO is known to all members of the club, and fully supported by the committee.

NGBs, County Associations and Clubs should also recognise the importance of making early arrangements to bring the policy and other relevant child and vulnerable adult protection matters into their Rules and Constitution.

### **10.11 Why do Bowls need a Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy?**

This question is frequently asked. We need only to look around us to find the reply. Most bowlers acknowledge that our sport is undergoing change, with many more children, disabled and vulnerable people taking part than before.

Everyone has a duty of care for the welfare of children and other vulnerable people.

This is a legal and moral responsibility, which our sport must be prepared to meet.

By adopting and implementing a Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy we can provide reassurance to the child's parents, and show our acceptance of responsibility for child and vulnerable adult welfare.

It also demonstrates that we have procedures in place for the correct conduct of the individuals delivering the activity, which should help to deter the undesirable.

### **10.12 Anything else?**

It is acknowledged that this guide is not exhaustive, and that you may have unanswered questions. Please make your first point of call one of the members of the Joint Panel for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults listed in Appendix 8.

This helps with NGB monitoring arrangements, and will ensure that your query receives an answer.

## **11 Club policy and procedure**

There is no desire that the contents of this document should deter any club from opening their membership and activities to children or vulnerable people. Each club must decide what is appropriate, having regard to local circumstances. All are recommended to adopt and publish their policy, for the guidance of all. It is strongly recommended that a statement of the Club Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy is displayed on the Club notice board (see Appendix 6 for a proforma).

It is advisable for the club or association to appoint a responsible person to be the CPO who will be willing to liaise with their NGB/ County Associations (see also Section 1.2).

Clubs with insufficient members who are unable to appoint their own CPO may seek the assistance of a neighbouring CPO to act on their behalf.

See also Section 9 on matters relating to disciplinary proceedings.

## **12 Parental Involvement**

Parents and guardians should be asked to sign a form of consent to cover activities at the club/ association and match play, both home and away. See example forms at Appendix 11 which may be amended as appropriate to meet the Club's/ Association's needs.

It is also a good idea to promote a code of conduct for both young people and their parents to ensure their 'buy-in' to good behaviour and practice and therefore minimise the risk of any kind of abuse.

Special Consent forms (see Appendix 11) must be completed when an overnight stay is required.

It is also good practice to make the club policy and procedures available to parents and guardians, and to keep a complete record of the participating children.

## **13 Photography and Dealing with the Media**

### **13.1 Guidelines for Use of Photographs at Sporting Events**

#### **13.1.1 General Policy statement**

##### **Where children/ vulnerable adults are involved**

- ⊙ The interests and welfare of children and vulnerable adults taking part in events is paramount.
- ⊙ Parents/ carers and children/ vulnerable adults have the right to decide whether children's/ vulnerable adult's images are to be taken and how those images may be used.
- ⊙ Images should convey the best principles and aspects of sport, such as fairness and safety.
- ⊙ Care should be taken to make sure that the images are not sexual or exploitive in nature, not open to obvious misinterpretation and misuse.
- ⊙ Images should only be taken by accredited persons who must wear identification at all times. See Appendix 4.
- ⊙ All images of children/ vulnerable adults should be securely stored.
- ⊙ Care must be taken when reproducing photographs in the press and on the web-site that no identifying details could permit contact with a child/ vulnerable adult by a potential abuser.
- ⊙ Do not allow unsupervised access of children or vulnerable adults for photo sessions without consent.

Specimen forms for consent by parents/ carers and individuals can be found in Appendix 4.

Also at Appendix 4 is a specimen form for those wishing to take photographs and it is strongly advised that all parents/ carers and family attending events where other children/ vulnerable adults are involved are urged to register.

#### **13.1.2 Photographic images (cameras or video media or mobile phones)**

Care should also be taken to monitor the use of mobile phones with a photo capability to ensure that the above guidelines are adhered to.

The individuals being photographed must be appropriately dressed for the activity and the photography or recording should focus on the activity rather than on the individual.

#### **13.1.3 Coaching and Photography**

All individuals featured must be appropriately dressed for the sport with garments adhering to the dress code of bowls for the appropriate NGB.

Any photography or recording should focus on the activity and be recorded in small groups (which may comprise a combination of adults and young individuals).

Coaches are allowed to use video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid and means of recording special occasions. However, care should be taken in the dissemination and storage of the material.

### **13.1.4 Use of photographic/ filming equipment by parents/ carers and spectators**

Whenever parents, carers, or other spectators intend to photograph or video at an event they must be made aware by the Event Organiser/ CPO that they must be prepared to identify themselves and state their purpose for filming.

The Event Organiser and/or Event CPO should approach or challenge any person taking photographs who has not made themselves known and/or registered with them. If need be advice may be sought from the Police if this person continues to record images unauthorised within the confines of the event.

## **13.2 Dealing with the Media**

### **13.2.1 General**

The abuse of children and the vulnerable is an issue which will generate media interest at any level. It is important that at all levels within bowls, from Club to NGB that there is an effective strategy for handling media.

If there is an allegation made it is important that initial enquiries are handled in such a way that it will not aggravate any situation or generate negative publicity.

Be prepared:

- ⊙ If you are made aware of any allegation of abuse it is important to be prepared in advance for potential publicity.
- ⊙ To consult the relevant Lead CPO of your NGB (or County CPO if appropriate) for advice and liaise with them giving them all the facts.
- ⊙ To have a responsible representative to handle media enquiries.
- ⊙ To be aware of the policy regarding the employment of ex-offenders (see Appendix 10.2).

### **13.2.2 Contact from the press or a journalist**

If contacted or approached by a member of the press, it is likely that the journalist might have heard about an alleged case of abuse from a source or directly from a relative or acquaintance of the alleged victim.

- ⊙ You are likely to be asked for your response. As the press might approach a NGB, Club or individual, it is worth remembering that the journalist may already have a story 'mapped out', so what you say, and how you say it, is important.
- ⊙ Make sure you clearly hear the name of the journalist and the media they are working for. If needed, ask them to repeat so you can take notes.
- ⊙ Make sure you fully understand what the journalist is asking you, asking them to repeat if needed. You may be aware of the incident concerned, or you may not be aware of it.
- ⊙ Do not say 'No Comment' as it makes you sound guarded as if you had something to hide.
- ⊙ Take details of contact telephone where the journalist can be easily contacted and find out what their deadline is.
- ⊙ Contact your NGB and/or County Associations for advice and to discuss the matter. They will help you formulate an appropriate response, deal with the journalist on your behalf and inform you of the response made.

### **13.2.3 Follow up**

Be prepared for follow up enquiries (either by telephone or personal contact) as allegations of abuse are rarely one-day stories. Just because an initial response has been given does not mean to say that there will be no more questions in the future. Continue to liaise with your NGB and County Body as needed.

Do not comment 'Off the record' on any allegations of abuse of children or the vulnerable. Journalists like nothing better than comments made of this nature. They can use this tool to elicit more information on the understanding that they will not publish what you say.

A chart is indicated at Appendix 4.

## 14 Transport

It is important to take steps to ensure the safe transport of children and vulnerable adults.

- ⊙ If private cars are being used make sure that parental consent has been obtained.
- ⊙ If the driver undertaking this role on behalf of the club is not a parent/ carer or relative, they must be made aware of guidance in relation to working with children and vulnerable adults.
- ⊙ Unaccompanied children/vulnerable adults should carry with them a contact name and telephone number.
- ⊙ Parents/ Carers should be made aware of pick up and drop off points and times.
- ⊙ The following points should be complied with:
  - ⊙ Name/ contact number provided.
  - ⊙ Pick up / drop off point named.
  - ⊙ Name of parent/ carer to collect.
  - ⊙ Emergency telephone contact number.
  - ⊙ Participants are not left unsupervised (dropped off without parent/ carer present).
  - ⊙ Do not take the child/ vulnerable adult home or to another location.

More detailed guidance notes can be found in Appendix 5.

## **15 Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) and Personal Disclosures**

Anybody may have the potential to abuse children/ vulnerable adults in some way, and it is essential that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that unsuitable people are not allowed to work with them. It is therefore important that checks are made as to the suitability of those volunteering to become involved with individuals, and they should be asked to complete a disclosure to an Enhanced Level.

### **15.1 Criminal Record Bureau (CRB)**

The CRB enables employers of private, paid and voluntary organisations in England and Wales to do checks related to an applicant's suitability to work with children or vulnerable adults. Access to the CRB checking service is available to all organisations working with children and vulnerable adults by using the services of one of its Registered Bodies.

The NGBs for the Flat Green Codes and Short Mat use the auspices of The Media Group (TMG). British Crown Green currently has a separate dedicated system and applications should be made to their Lead CPO, Mr Ken Jarvis (contact details are in Appendix 8).

Coaches (licensed under the EBCS) should apply for forms through Mrs Pat Ostler (EWBA) (contact details are in Appendix 8)

The CRB Disclosure application form and the procedure to be followed on completion of the form can be obtained from your NGB representative (see also Appendix 10).

Persons with regular contact with children or vulnerable adults should ensure that they have obtained a CRB Disclosure, updated every 3 years. Advice on whether a CRB check is appropriate can be sought from any of the Panel members listed in Appendix 8.

Care should be taken as the CRB Disclosure information may reveal personal information on an individual regarding convictions on which the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act may apply for spent convictions.

The policy for handling and storing of confidential information is detailed in Appendix 11.

### **15.2 Personal Disclosures**

The Voluntary Disclosure procedure may be used for one-off occasions (see Appendix 10).

Where Personal Voluntary Disclosures are taken these should be considered confidential and kept in a secure place by the CPO. See Appendix 11 for standards for holding and storing confidential information.

## 16 Code of Behaviour for those involved with Children or Vulnerable Adults

All should adopt an acceptable code of behaviour guided by the following principles

### **Always:**

- ⊙ Provide an example you wish to be followed;
- ⊙ Treat everyone with respect;
- ⊙ Plan activities which involve more than one other person, or which are within sight or hearing of others;
- ⊙ Respect an individual's right to personal privacy;
- ⊙ Provide access for individuals to talk to others about any concerns they may have;
- ⊙ Recognise that someone else may misinterpret your actions no matter how well intentioned;
- ⊙ Exercise caution especially in sensitive times of counselling;
- ⊙ Report any concerns you may have about the individual.

### **Never:**

- ⊙ Work alone. Ensure that a parent or other adult is present;
- ⊙ Allow ridiculing or bullying, by peers, team colleagues, etc;
- ⊙ Indulge in or allow physical contact ;
- ⊙ Make suggestive remarks or gestures;
- ⊙ Show favouritism to any individual;
- ⊙ Allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour, eg tantrums, or crushes;
- ⊙ Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts;
- ⊙ Try to investigate any concerns personally;
- ⊙ Rely on your good name to protect you;
- ⊙ Believe " it could never happen to me ".

## **17 Implementation and Monitoring**

To ensure the adoption and effective management of child and vulnerable adult protection policies and procedures, there must be agreement on the methods and strategy to be employed firstly to introduce them, and then to measure how they are performing.

### **17.1 Implementing policy**

To enable the agreed policy and procedures to be effective, they will need to be merged with existing philosophies and practices. There may be some resistance to the inevitable changes, diplomacy will be required.

The process will involve some or all of the following:

- ⊙ Raising committee awareness of the issues;
- ⊙ An acceptance by club/ association of the principles of child and vulnerable adult protection;
- ⊙ Establishing budgets and financial constraints, eg training;
- ⊙ Disseminating information;
- ⊙ Overseeing the operation of procedures;
- ⊙ Recruitment and training;
- ⊙ Review and development of current knowledge and practices

Throughout it will be necessary to keep abreast of changes to legislation and good practice in child and vulnerable adult protection, and make periodic amendments as required.

### **17.2 Monitoring**

In order to make informed assessments of the progress of implementation, it will be necessary to decide from among the many factors involved which are both relevant and measurable.

They may include monitoring:

- ⊙ Raising awareness of child and vulnerable adult protection within the Club environment;
- ⊙ Effectiveness of CPO's duties and responsibilities;
- ⊙ Requests and recommendations for training;
- ⊙ Case management to include analysis of feedback reports and recommendations for policy and practice (see Appendix 15)

It could also include analysis of feedback reports, and recommendations for changes to policy and practices.

## **18 Child Protection – Some Frequently asked Questions**

**We have got along without child/vulnerable adult protection all these years; why should we change our thinking now? What has changed to suddenly make this so important?**

For many years, the general public preferred not to acknowledge the existence of child and vulnerable adult abuse and its harmful long-term effects. The high profile media reporting of incidents in recent years has heightened awareness of the issues. This disclosure has brought to many the stark reality that the abuse does take place in all walks of life. It even occurs in sport, with instances of coaches and other trusted adults being convicted.

**Doesn't anyone realise that this is more work for already over stretched club officials and committees? Little clubs are struggling; this is one more burden they don't need.**

The demands made on voluntary club officials and committees are fully recognised and understood.

Nevertheless, it is important that they do not see protection issues as a burden. Instead, it should be seen as an opportunity to demonstrate their awareness and of the club's commitment to keeping safe any individual taking part in its activities. Protection is the responsibility of the club as a whole, and should be shared. Officials should look for help from members outside of the committee, some of whom may already have experience in this field.

**Who are we safeguarding? Do adults need protecting too?**

The principle objective of protection policies is to safeguard the welfare of children and those adults who are vulnerable to abuse by reason of physical or mental disability. A secondary objective but no less important, is to assist coaches and other volunteer helpers to have recourse to counter false allegations made against them.

**Who decides if a member is a child?**

This is already decided by Parliament in The Children's Act 1989 which defines a child as any male or female person who has not attained 18 years of age.

**We don't have any 'youngsters'; so why do we need to bother?**

There is a growing trend to encourage child participation in all sports through youth development schemes and other initiatives, and this could result in a change in the age profile in membership applications. Although all NGB's recommend the adoption of a child protection policy, it is voluntary and a matter for the club committee to decide.

Remember that the success of grant aid applications is dependant on being able to show a positive attitude to junior membership and child protection.

**What is the 'Children's Charter'?**

The Children's Charter is a set of human rights principles designed to safeguard the well being of children and protect them from abuse. They are set out in the Human Rights Act 1998 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). They are the principles underlying child protection policies.

**Who decides if a member is a vulnerable adult?**

A vulnerable adult is any person aged 18 or over who is or may be in need of community care services because they have health or other disabilities related to age or illness. They are people who are not able to take care of themselves or protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation. (Department of Health guidance document 'No Secrets: Guidance on Developing Multi Agency Policies and Procedures to Protect Vulnerable Adults from abuse' [March 2000]).

**What exactly is the 'code of practice'?**

The code of practice forms part of a general Code of Ethics and Conduct for coaches and others involved in delivery of the activity. It is a set of common sense guidelines designed to ensure that sport is delivered in a safe and positive manner. The code offers examples of exemplary behaviour, which not only create a good sporting environment, but should help to protect the coach and adult volunteers from false accusations.

### **What is meant by ‘best practice’?**

Best practice refers to those positive guidelines in the code of practice (the Do’s and Don’ts) aimed at ensuring appropriate and exemplary behaviour by the individual.

There are no simple clear instructions and complicated ‘bumph’ will only put people off.

Because of the underlying legal requirements, it is inevitable that explanation of some details of the issues involved may appear complicated and off putting. The supplementary guidance notes are an attempt to offer more intelligible instruction.

### **We want to start a ‘junior’ section by advertising in our local village newsletter; do we have to have this in place before we can proceed?**

It is recommended that the process of introducing child protection has begun before you proceed. Local child protection action groups will join responsible parents in expecting to see a formal policy statement or at least a statement of intent. They are also likely to demand reassurance on issues relating to safety issues and the credentials of the personnel involved.

### **My Club Committee is considering starting a junior section, but have been told that we must provide separate changing rooms for them. This will prevent us doing so, as we have no funds for building work of this nature.**

Separate facilities for juniors would be ideal, but few clubs or public buildings can offer them. However, it makes sense and is generally accepted that there should be some supervision in the changing rooms.

It can be achieved by involving parents, and other trusted adults working in pairs. They should be required to complete an Enhanced CRB Disclosure or a voluntary disclosure form as deemed expedient.

### **We have been told that adults must leave the toilet area if it is required to be used by a child. Is this true?**

This is neither true nor feasible. See also the reply to the previous question.

### **After our junior bowling sessions, I have always taken the children home in my car. I am now told that this is against the law, and I must not do so. Is this right?**

No, it is not against the law; nevertheless, it does not make sense to be alone with a child. If there is no other viable option, it is all right to provide a lift on a single occasion, but it is important to inform the parents. However, to do so regularly or frequently is not very wise, and could lead to false allegations. See also Appendix 5 for Transport Policy guidance.

### **Will the relevant NGB Child Protection Officer be visible and easy to contact with any worries we might have?**

Yes, details of members of the Joint Panel for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults are detailed at Appendix 8 as well as those with responsibility at County level (see the relevant County or NGB Handbook). Remember that advice can also be obtained from the Childcare helpline, and Local Child Protection Committee / Local Safeguarding Child Boards.

### **We feel it is time wasting bringing up concerns that are not important to other people**

For child protection to work, a very high priority must be given to dealing with any concerns. Bringing them up is important and not time wasting. **None action is not an option!**

### **I help with the junior section at my Club. Do I have to undergo a character check? by the police? Will such checking etc. stop people from volunteering?**

Self-disclosure may be subject to the option of authentication through the Criminal Records Bureau. This would normally only be done where the individual has significant responsibilities for child and/or vulnerable adult protection.

The self-disclosure process will be acceptable for a large number of volunteer helpers.

It is believed that the majority of volunteers will recognise and accept the need of some degree of formal checking, but it is acknowledged that the thought of such a check could discourage very few from volunteering.

**I already have a CRB Disclosure Certificate for my job, why do I need another for Bowls?**

The Disclosure obtained for the employment purposes will have looked at information available at that time. This may have changed and may not have been of the correct (Enhanced) Level. It may have been in issue more than three years, and when issued may not have included full checking of the lists held under the Protection of Children and of Vulnerable Adults Acts.

Obtaining a fresh Disclosure will give the club renewed assurance that all issues have been examined (see also Appendix 10.2).