



**Virtual Fisheries Forum | 11/01/2024 | Introduction to Safeguarding and Welfare**

**Q & A SESSION**

**Q. If we do not take part or organise any regulated activities, does that exempt us from having to appoint a club Safeguarding / welfare officer?**

A. (Stuart Sharp) – If it is a small club with no activity with children or at-risk adults, the club can decide for itself whether to appoint an appropriate officer. It's not about being exempted. This is about best practice and doing what's right, with club's empowered to make their own decisions. However, if your club committee does decide not to appoint a welfare officer and/or adopt safeguarding policies, they should make a record of this decision.

**Q. So far as vulnerable adults are concerned, we are not aware that we have any such members. Can we still be expected to police the activities of all members in this regard around our fisheries?**

A. (Richard Hadley) - There is a definitive list regarding what that relate to a person who is vulnerable or at risk, this can include things like asthma and epilepsy and dyslexia – It isn't about policing the situation but more, creating opportunities to encourage and support any members with policies and procedures.

**Q. We seek to encourage juvenile participation in our sport and in this regard, we do not have specific Juvenile membership but allow juveniles / young people / children under the age of 16 to fish, at no cost, at our fisheries when they are accompanied by and under the close supervision of a current adult member.**

**We would normally expect parents/ guardians and grandparents to be that 'adult member' and be over the age of 18 Years, but we set no conditions, pre-registration or person identity / relationship disclosure requirements on this concession. Does this present a safeguarding liability?**

**Do we need to implement pre-registration / declaration conditions on this concession to validate the child – Adult relationship arrangement?**

A. (Stuart Sharp) I see this as less of an issue as in most cases the child is accompanied by an adult known to them and this in most cases does not represent a safeguarding or welfare risk. We do however recommend making the juniors a day or season member of the club even if you charge no fee – as elements of the inclusive insurance cover you have in place only covers 'member' related incidents. So the juniors who are fishing are not club members and will not benefit from the same cover..

**Q. How do we know if we have Adults at risk, it's not something we ask, should this be something we ask as members renew their membership each year? how do you have any recommendations about how to approach this?**

A. (Richard Hadley) - As a club will not be expected to know the vulnerable status of all members – as some conditions that categorise them will be of a medical nature. But having good policy and information regarding vulnerable adults and provide a point of contact.

**Q. Is it best practice to keep a discreet or open list of children and/or vulnerable adults? Can this be seen as intrusive? Individuals can claim that their private details are their business.? Also, we let under 10's fish on their parent's permit does this pose an insurance issue.**

A. (Stuart Sharp) - No need to keep a separate list of children and or vulnerable adults. Your own systems may already record your members as children, adults, OAP's etc. Yes, as mentioned, it is advisable to have all juniors - whether they are paying or not – as members of the club even if the child is named on the card of the adult or on a family membership. If you have any queries about

insurance we would recommend discussing the potential insurance cover with the insurer..

**Q. What would qualify a person as being 'suitable' – The SVG Act 2006 – discusses 'barred' persons?**

**Does/would the completion of the AT - Self Declaration form satisfy this 'suitability' requirement?**

**Do we need to ask volunteers if they are 'Barred' under the terms of the SVG Act 2006.?.**

A. (Richard Hadley) – On any DBS check, some convictions have a spent life, but will still appear on an advanced check. Insurance providers will ask for references from other organizations - due to the model practice of an abuser, they tend to be transient in their attempts to cover up and move on in order to continue offending. An annual review and check is advised.

**Q. The title of Welfare Officer seems more onerous and demanding than a Safeguarding Officer and would seem to encompass a broader range of responsibilities and provisions which, in commercial fisheries and corporate organisations may be possible but, in a non- corporate 'local club/ rented/ leased fisheries' situation managed by volunteers, would be difficult / impossible to provide. Do we need to use the post title – Welfare Officer?**

A. (Stuart Sharp) - my view is that the title of the role is less of an issue than actions of the person undertaking the role. I will check with the insurers, but my view is that they used Welfare Officer as a general term for having a nominated and visible person responsible for the welfare/safeguarding within the club environment.

**Q. Regulated or Controlled Activity – Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 - Both of these group's reference – frequently, or on 3 or more days in a 30-day period. Does an unpredictable and indeterminate contact with a child or vulnerable adult by a Bailiff to check a person's / child's membership require us, under the frequency of contact reference above, to implement 'safeguarding' procedures, in either of these groups?**

A. (Richard Hadley) - No. There is a difference though – the DBS has a threshold which is a legal status - But the voluntary declaration form is better for a direct contact – say a bailiff contacting someone on the bank.

**Q. if we have a policy (adapted from AT) is there someone who could give it a review for us.?**

A. (Richard Hadley) – More than happy to review it for you.

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**Q. Questions related to the Reporting Form: 1) What is the purpose of sending this form to the AT if we have already submitted this to the police/LADO 2) What is meant by the sanctions that AT might apply after the CMT have reviewed?**

A. (Richard Hadley) – The incident report form is really a triage form, the information on it enables us to progress the investigation for you. We are members of the Sport England, sport resolutions case management program – giving us access to high level legal services and top-class barristers etc. There is a tiered list of offences – from poor practice right through to severe sexual abuse. And within those tiers there are sanctions relative to the offence.

(Stuart Sharp) – The sanctions are not necessarily to be imposed by AT but by your club or fishery. For instance, if an incident has occurred, you should be considering whether you still want this person in and around the club. You may need to consider suspension whilst the investigation takes place to protect the juniors/adults at risk, your club and the person themselves.

**Q. What is 'Time to Listen' and how important is it from a Welfare Officer standpoint?**

A. (Richard Hadley) – Its is a course written by the Child Protection Support unit specifically written for Welfare officers. Its was then passed over to UK coaching and we The Angling Trust have a licence to deliver this. We are due to be introducing our own bespoke training - concentrating on safeguarding and the role of the welfare officer within an organisation. This has already been integrated within our Level 2 coaching course.

**Q. who in the club would need DBS checks is it just the appointed officer or the committee members and bailiffs?**

A. (Richard Hadley) – This is down to the club – It's is not mandatory for the welfare officer to have a DBS check, but it is good practice. Most thing can be covered with the voluntary declaration form.

**Q. Are DBS checks which you already have from your employer transferable to your angling club role or does the angling club have to apply for them on your behalf?**

A. (Richard Hadley) - This is down to the club – There are three levels of DBS check – If regular contact with children is occurring then the highest (Advanced) check is advised. Basic check for volunteers doing maintenance etc would be fine. DBS check results are confidential and the owner of the check can refuse a request for information – we would then ask why not be open about the content of the DBS check.

**Q. Should we as Clubs be concerned if youngsters turn up not dressed properly, i.e. some form of neglect as defined by Children & Young Persons Act 1933?**

A. (Richard Hadley) – Yes. But use your discretion. If there was an issue – use the incident report form and we would advise going forward. Most likely social services would investigate under a Sec 47 – visit the home and assess the likely risk etc.

**Q. If a member or prospective member says they have a health issue or disability which would mean that they are at risk on our fishery. Could we or should we apply risk assessing which could mean we exclude them or refuse membership as their condition is a risk to them or others and cannot be accommodated. How does this sit with EHRC protected status?**

A. (Stuart Sharp) – Great that you are having these conversations. If the nature of the persons disability is not clear, you may need to have a fair and polite conversation with them to understand the issue here. You need to consider both the fairness aspect to them (Equality Act) but also their safety, all within the context of the nature of their disability and your venues. You must be careful that you do not discriminate. Many commercial type venues have flat, level disability friendly swims, but this may not be possible at other venues. Reasonable adjustments should be made where possible.

**Q. At what age would you consider a junior becomes an adult and what age could they be allowed to fish unaccompanied?**

A. (Richard Hadley) A child is anyone under the age of 18. Our duty of care however, extends to 25 years of age if they are under the care of social

services. Any child over 16 who is happy to fish alone - should have the permission of their parent / guardian to do so.

**Q. Follow on question ... we let under 10s fish on their parents permit without being named on the permit ... assume they might miss out on the insurance cover?**

A. (Richard Hadley) – They should be named and even better, get them to join the club even if the permit is free.

**Q. If they were named on the adult's permit would that get them covered by the insurance?**

A. (Richard Hadley) Possible, but check with your policy provider to ensure the correct cover is in place.

**Q. Would we be at risk of a civil claim against the club if someone brought a child along to a working party and they were injured?**

A. (Stuart Sharp) Absolutely, Yes – Whether they are an adult, child, at risk or not the club would potentially be exposed to a claim. –You may have heard of an incident where a volunteer died following an injury during a work party. The club was investigated and fined by the relevant authorities. It isn't the age of the the individual but that they were put at risk. That said, you wouldn't really expect a person with a significant physical disability or a child to take part in work party tasks.

**Q. As a member of a small club that runs learn to fish sessions for young people using club members, is there any help with costs for DBS checks?**

A. (Richard Hadley) – No. DBS Check has to be paid for. This is outside the Angling Trust. If you have a welfare officer – they should be present this will also send a great message that your club takes safeguarding / welfare seriously.  
(Stuart Sharp) - The risk in this case however is lessened by the parent / guardian being present.

**Q. We have added the line. Nature of disability if any on our membership renewal forms is this ok.?.**

A. (Stuart Sharp) – This is fine, but there should be the option for the applicant to opt out / decline answering the question.

**Q. On the typical policy documents that you have produced I am assuming that it is the club welfare officer who signs this off. Would be grateful if you could just clarify please.?**

A. (Richard Hadley) – Safeguarding policy would be a committee decision.

**Q. Surely you cannot ask someone if they have been investigated? Innocent until proven guilty. It would cloud someone's prospects if they were to say that they had been investigated regarding children.?**

A. (Richard Hadley) - Yes, but there is a difference between burden of proof, conviction and safeguarding.

**Q. Should that new 2-hour course just be for welfare officer or all ex-com members?**

A. (Richard Hadley) It depends on how many people you want to send on the course. This is driven by our insurers, but we will assist you in any way we can with our training.

**Q. would it be advisable to have the welfare officer in attendance for events where children/young people or vulnerable adults are taking part?**

A. Yes - If you have a welfare officer – they should be present this will also send a great message that your club take safeguarding / welfare seriously.

**Q. Within schools enhanced DBS last three years, we then have to sign a declaration form annually to confirm we have not been involved in any criminal activity and are not being investigated, would you consider this to be satisfactory instead of having DBS annually?**

A. (Richard Hadley) – Our policy and protocol around DBS is that we review every 3 years – in-line with what schools are doing.

**Q. If a child tells you something that is of concern do you listen to the end and leave it there then report. Or can you ask clarifying questions. I understand we shouldn't investigate but does establishing facts become investigation?**

A. (Richard Hadley) – You can not ask leading questions – a record must be made and must be dated. A mnemonic called TED is used ‘TELL ME – EXPLAIN MORE ABOUT WHAT HAS HAPPENED – DESCRIBE WHAT HAS BEEN HAPPENING.

**Q. Will you be providing a printable copy of this webinar and details of the course?**

A. Yes, the presentation recording, slide presentation and written Q & A’s will be available here...

<https://anglingtrust.net/regional-forums/virtual-fisheries-forum-resources-centre-2023-24/>

**Q. I have recently been asked to help in the role of Welfare Officer for one of the angling clubs which I am a member....**

Many years ago, I was the Child Protection Officer for the South Staffs branch of the Pony Club, a role which I had for a number of years. A requirement for this position was that I was myself CRB checked. In addition to attending talks/meeting specifically aimed at Child Protection issues I had to ensure all instructors had undergone CRB checks etc, in total around twenty instructors for the various disciplines.

Under your current guidance document I would not meet the threshold for a DBS check, and this was confirmed by one of your colleagues in a recent email enquiry I raised, dated the 19<sup>th</sup> December 2023 I understand the need to keep things simple, reduce the paperwork /burden on clubs, to encourage and not discourage helpers, but, I am struggling to accept that the very person who is expected to co-ordinate the clubs activities and in effect “monitor/police the guidelines” is not required to be DBS checked themselves?

A. (Richard Hadley) - DBS checking around other clubs and organisations is down to how those clubs affiliates its members. We do not have this in place currently and our requirement status come from our insurance company. You are able to follow your own best practice and make sure all parties are DBS checked and we would encourage this.



**Key contacts from this forum meeting: -**

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