

CLUB WELFARE OFFICER ROLE DESCRIPTION

British Canoeing's safeguarding Team's vision is:

“We will have a safe, open and inclusive culture where poor practice does not go unchallenged and deliberate attempts to cause harm cannot easily hide. Safeguarding, safety, welfare and wellbeing will be prioritised and embedded across our organisation from grassroots through to world class programmes.”

All affiliated British Canoe Clubs must have at least one Club Welfare Officer (CWO) who should be suitable and appropriate for the role and be willing to undertake the necessary training outlined below. In your role as CWO, you may come into contact with children and/or adults at risk at any time, therefore are responsible for understanding both children and adults safeguarding legislation and referral pathways. 2 CWO's are preferable where possible, and depending on the membership, it might be helpful to have a male/female CWO, or a junior/senior role.

TRAINING

- The CWO must complete **'Time to Listen' training**
- The precursors to this are the **basic safeguarding training** (e-learning provided by British Canoeing)
- **Safeguarding and Protecting Children.** (details of where to find these are online)
- They must also ensure that this **training is kept up to date** as required by British Canoeing
- **Additional accredited training** completed outside of your paddle sport role (*mandatory safeguarding training for teachers, carers, nurses, etc.*) is beneficial and should be evidenced.

CWOs are frequently used as a point of contact for discipline or conduct issues that do not fall under safeguarding and therefore should understand the relevant club processes for dealing with complaints to appropriately signpost these.

Being an CWO can be a very rewarding role, it enables you to have a visible presence within the club and puts you in a position to influence culture. You will help people to solve problems, to feel safer, and have more positive and enjoyable experiences in your paddle sport.

The role of Club Welfare Officer (CWO) at times, can be complex. There is a need to be able to balance the expectations of a number of people, sometimes under pressure, sometimes having to challenge behaviour or have difficult conversations. But the British Canoeing Safeguarding Team are here to support.

In addition to the training listed above, CWO's will have access to an online video induction, to webinars led by the BC safeguarding Team, regular virtual drop-in sessions for the opportunity to ask questions and regular newsletters to share updates, learning and good practice.

CWO ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Policy and Procedures

- To ensure that the club adopts **British Canoeing Safeguarding policies and procedures** which should be reviewed and updated regularly.
- To ensure that the club adopts, publicises and follows **Codes of Conduct**, with clear consequences for breaching these.
- Ensure that **DBS check** and **safeguarding training** is completed **and refreshed** as required, for all staff and volunteers.
- Ensure that **safer recruitment** processes are followed, including obtaining references where required.

Responding to concerns

- Ensure safeguarding procedures, including processes for reporting and managing safeguarding concerns are in place. These procedures should be **accessible and visible** throughout the club, and **promoted** during induction, online and at key times and events during the season.
- As the first point of contact with primary responsibility for managing and reporting concerns about children, young people, and adults at risk within the club, the CWO should be a **visible and present** member of the club. The **CWO contact details should be shared appropriately with all members of the club including family members of athletes.**
- CWO's ensure appropriate **confidentiality is maintained** regarding any safeguarding/welfare concerns.
- CWO's are a key link between the club and British Canoeing safeguarding team, and are responsible for escalating concerns (using BC tiering guidance) ensuring that **all concerns, even low-level ones** managed by the club are reported to BCST.

Knowledge and awareness

- CWO's should be aware of the need to safeguard and protect children and adults at risk of harm, and to promote a child focussed (where applicable) and inclusive environment. They should demonstrate their commitment to this through their own practice and behaviours.
- CWO's should understand poor practice and abuse, British Canoeing safeguarding policies and procedures and confidently challenge poor practice and harmful behaviours and promote positive practice.
- CWO's should advise the club on appropriate safeguarding training for coaches/volunteers using the British Canoeing recommended training requirements.
- CWO's maintain contact details for the local children's and adults social care department, the police, Designated Officer (formerly LADO) and have an awareness of local and national welfare, mental health and emotional wellbeing support to signpost members to.

What makes a Suitable and Appropriate Club Welfare Officer?

SKILLS

Problem-solving
Tact
Diplomacy
Objectivity
Active-listening
Communication
Organisation
Confidentiality



CHARACTERISTICS

Friendly
Open
Approachable
Co-operative
Non-judgemental
Empathic
Observant
Confident
Child-centred approach

EXPERIENCE

A background in safeguarding, or a role/job where safeguarding training has been completed is desirable, however, mandatory training is provided for this role. The training will provide an awareness and understanding of safeguarding within BC what this means, and some of the issues that children and adults at risk may face both inside and outside of sport. It will also help the CWO to create a safer culture within their club and to promote good practice, as well as ensuring that CWO's understand statutory requirements and thresholds for referrals, including information on referral pathways, multi-agency approaches and any other relevant information required for the role.

The most important element to being a successful Club Welfare Officer is recognising the importance of safeguarding and holding the safety and welfare of others, particularly children and adults at risk in the highest regard across all areas of the club/committee.