



AVON COUNTY SQUASH

SAFEGUARDING & WELFARE POLICY

Incorporating

- safeguarding
- diversity & inclusion
- whistleblowing
- safe recruitment
- harassment & bullying
- changing rooms
- transport
- photography & video
- social media

TOGETHER, PROMOTING AND MAINTAINING A SAFE, INCLUSIVE AND THRIVING SQUASH AND RACKETBALL COMMUNITY IN AVON.

TOGETHER:	<i>safeguarding is everyone's concern</i>
PROMOTING:	<i>approachable in advising and supporting clubs, coaches, parents & players</i>
MAINTAINING:	<i>responsive & on hand to respond to concerns raised</i>
SAFETY	<i>juniors and adults alike, free from harm, to enjoy the sport and thrive to the maximum extent possible</i>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	OVERVIEW AND OUTLINE OF TERMS	1
2.	SAFEGUARDING POLICY & PRACTICES	5
3.	CODES OF CONDUCT	9
4.	DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY	14
5.	WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY	16
6.	SAFE RECRUITMENT POLICY	18
7.	HARASSMENT & BULLYING POLICY	21
8.	CHANGING ROOM POLICY	23
9.	TRANSPORT POLICY	24
10.	PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEO & SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY	25
11.	PREVENT	29
12.	SANCTIONS	31
13.	APPENDICES	32
13.1	Appendix 1: Preventative Risk Assessment	33
13.2	Appendix 2: Reporting a Safeguarding Concern (Squash & Racketball)	36
13.3	Appendix 3: Photographic Consent Template	37
13.4	Appendix 4: Welfare Officer Job Description	38
13.5	Appendix 5: ES Training Requirements	39
13.6	Appendix 6: Incident Referral Form	40

1. Overview and outline of terms

- 1.1 This document has been written to set out Avon County Squash Association's (hereafter referred to as Avon or the County) Safeguarding & Welfare policy both in its own governance and in its support of clubs, coaches and players (and their parents/carers) across the region.

The following sites provide useful additional detail:

England Squash safeguarding website (www.englishsquash.com/about-us/governance/safe-squash)

Children (<https://www.nspcc.org.uk>)

Children in Sport (<https://thecpsu.org.uk/>)

Disabled Children & Vulnerable Adults (<https://www.anncrafttrust.org/>)

- 1.2 Whilst matters of safeguarding and welfare naturally lead to a focus on vulnerable groups (i.e. children, vulnerable adults), we will do all we can as a region to support and maintain a safe and supported playing environment for all. The nature of the risks, preventative steps and follow-up actions will differ across different player groups, but our vision is to support the development of a safe, inclusive and thriving squash and racketball community across Avon.

We actively invite all our partners across the county to work with us in sharing responsibility for achieving this ambition.

1.3 **Responsibilities:**

As a County we accept responsibility for safeguarding matters in the way we conduct ourselves as an organisation and this includes the activities of those acting directly on our behalf (i.e. agents), for example county event organisers, referees and coaches etc.

These guidelines predominately concern themselves with what happens within the county. However, they apply equally to the conduct of officials, volunteers or 'agents' operating out of the county, whilst on official Avon business.

Individual clubs, coaches and players (or their parents or carers) are responsible for safeguarding and related matters in their respective domains.

- Clubs should have their own Welfare Officers and safeguarding processes in place and they are responsible for managing all safeguarding matters at their club.

- Coaches have their own legal, Sport England and England Squash stipulated professional responsibilities. They and the organisations they represent have responsibility for all safeguarding and related matters arising relating to their coaching provision.
- Players and Parents/Carers are responsible for behaving within agreed Codes of Conduct and, as we are all obligated, to report any concerns, in particular with respect to children and/or vulnerable adults.

Beyond the setting and monitoring of these standards, the County's role with respect to safeguarding matters, as they relate to clubs and coaches in the region, is to be available for advice and support, investigating or referring on any reported concerns as required.

This policy document sets out our rights and responsibilities in managing these standards and the steps which will be followed if they are not met or in the case of any concerns being raised more generally.

We recognise that for many clubs, squash & racketball will be only part of their general activities. Equally, coaches may well work across several clubs and age-groups. Common-sense must therefore be applied in the case of any confusion or ambiguities around standards or practices. If time does not allow for clarification around such details, the safest and most stringent rule should be applied. Following the principle of prevention, all reasonable steps should be taken by all interested parties in advance of any event to clarify responsibilities, policies and procedures.

In short, responsibilities are as follows:

County	Club	Coaches	Players/Parents
Defining and monitoring/ auditing minimum standards for the county & participating clubs and coaches	Defining and maintaining club safeguarding (and related) policies and practices	Defining and maintaining coaching safeguarding (and related) policies and practices	Be aware of and work within club and county safeguarding policies and practices and relevant codes of conduct
Having in place suitably trained and DBS-checked (and publicised) County Welfare Lead (CWL)	Having in place suitably trained and DBS-checked (and publicised) Club Welfare Officer (WO)	Maintaining up-to-date licence to coach, DBS checks and training, meeting ES standards	

County	Club	Coaches	Players/Parents
Having in place a publicised and accessible concern reporting process	Having in place a publicised and accessible concern reporting process	Fully understanding the club/county/event concern reporting process	
Managing safeguarding standards for all county office officials, volunteers and contributors acting on behalf of the county (e.g. county coaches, county tournament officials etc.)	Actively liaising with CWLs, coaches and club officials, tournament organisers/ officials to ensure clear lines of responsibility	Actively liaising with WOs, other club officials, tournament organisers/ officials to ensure clear lines of responsibility	
1st line response (i.e. investigating, triaging) for any concerns raised regarding county volunteers/ 'agents'	1st line response (i.e. investigating, triaging) for any concerns raised regarding club activities	Reporting of any concerns; to club WO for club activities, or to CWL for county activities or directly to ES	Reporting of any concerns; to club WO for club activities, or to CWL for county activities or directly to ES
2nd line defence (i.e. supporting and advising clubs & coaches (and investigating if required) on policy, practices & any concerns raised			

- 1.4 This document will be updated as a matter of course every 2 years, or sooner if major national policy, legal changes or major incidents warrant it.
- 1.5 In summary, Avon County require participating clubs, coaches and officials to meet minimum standards. We will do all we can to help support each stakeholder in meeting their obligations, but the responsibility sits with the club, the official and/or the coach/coaching organisation to ensure they meet these minimum standards.

Participation in county leagues, county tournaments, county training camps etc. rests on meeting these minimum standards.

Minimum requirements - clubs:

- Suitably trained and DBS checked Welfare Officer
- Clear Safeguarding Policy, including Diversity & Inclusion, Safe Recruitment, Whistleblowing, Harassment & Bullying, Changing Rooms, Codes of Conduct, Photography, Video & Social Media Policy, Prevent obligations and Travel Policies
- Clear and well-publicised process for reporting any safeguarding (or related) concerns
- Clear and well-publicised contact details for the Welfare Officer(s) (and alternative contacts should they not be available)

Minimum requirements – coaches & officials (e.g. referees, volunteers):

- Fully up-to-date with ES professional training & DBS requirements
- Proactive liaison with other key stakeholders to align on local policies and respective rights and responsibilities
- Fully comply with highest professional standards regarding personal conduct

2. Safeguarding Policy & Practices

2.1 **Prevention:** All reasonable steps should be taken to ensure that safeguarding and related risks are identified and preventative steps put in place in order to create and maintain a safe playing environment across the county.

2.1.1 The key principles of the county's Safeguarding Policy are that:

- the child's/vulnerable adult's welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration
- all children, vulnerable adults and adult players have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, faith or belief
- all suspicions and allegations of abuse and/or neglect will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- working in partnership with other organisations, children and young people and their parents/carers is essential. We acknowledge that every child or young person who plays or participates in squash & racketball should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from poor practice and abuse.

All officials, club Welfare Officers (WOs), coaches, players and parents/carers share responsibility for creating and maintaining a safe environment. This includes being aware of the signs of safeguarding concerns and knowing what steps to take.

2.1.2 Our shared responsibility is therefore to:

- Help **build resilience** by raising awareness of safeguarding issues, equipping all with the skills, knowledge and processes needed to keep everyone safe, included and thriving
- **Supporting vulnerable athletes**, those with additional needs or are at increased risk as a result of their high performance focus or other personal circumstances
- **Preventing unsuitable people** from working within our community, by ensuring we have safe recruitment practices and mechanism in place to prevent and quickly spot and address any safeguarding concerns

A systematic, preventative review should be undertaken annually (at a minimum) by the WOs or coaches and should take into account the following (an assessment template for the same has been included in **Appendix 13.1**):

- **The Physical Environment**, including:
 - Court areas
 - Changing rooms
 - Site access
 - Bar/restaurant and other club areas
- **Safe Recruitment Practices**, including:
 - DBS checks
 - Voluntary disclosures
 - Coaching/refereeing licence checks
 - References
 - ID verification
- **Codes of Conduct**, including:
 - Parent/player rights & responsibilities
 - Referee, tournament official & club agreement on responsibilities
 - Parent drop-off/collection
 - Co-travelling
 - Hosting
 - Photos, video & social media consent and practices
- **Training**; including:
 - basic induction/briefings on in-house policies and procedures
 - formal safeguarding training
- **Promotion**; including
 - Welfare Officers physical posters & online materials
 - 'Reporting a Concern' process flow & forms
 - Emergency contact details

- **Feedback**, including
 - Mechanism for updating practices and policies in light of lesson learned
- **Related topics**, including
 - Diversity & inclusion matters
 - Whistleblowing
 - Harassment & bullying

2.1.3 Safeguarding/Welfare Officer. Every club participating in Avon County squash & racketball activities (e.g. in league matches, hosting ES sanctioned tournaments, hosting ES endorsed training etc.) must have a designated WO. (See **Appendix 4** for sample job description for this role).

This person (or persons if a shared role) must be suitably trained (see **Appendix 5**) and DBS checked.

Their contact details (and a photo ideally) should be well publicised around the club and online such that it is easy for them to be reached and any concerns raised.

The WO is responsible for setting out and delivering club safeguarding policy, reporting in independently to the club's most senior official (e.g. Chair, CEO or General Manager).

2.2 Responding & Reporting: Where there is a safeguarding concern/disclosure the individual who is told about, hears, or is made aware of the concern/disclosure is responsible for following the Reporting a Concern Procedure shown in the flowchart in **Appendix 2**. Unless someone is in immediate danger, they should inform their Club WO, County Welfare Lead or ES National Safeguarding Lead as appropriate.

The Club WO is responsible for reporting safeguarding concerns to the County Welfare Lead and/or ES Safeguarding Team if that is deemed necessary. Concerns can be brought directly to the County or National leads as required if that is felt to be the most appropriate action to take.

All parties would choose to be over-consulted rather than any fears or concerns about whether topics are deemed to warrant escalation but genuine concerns being neglected as a result. **If in doubt, flag it up.**

2.2.1 The Club WO is the first point of contact for all club members regarding concerns about the welfare of players, whether child, vulnerable adult or adult.

2.2.2 **Responding to a Disclosure:** These may not necessarily be made directly to the Safeguarding Lead and so all officials, coaches and key stakeholders need to be prepared to receive a disclosure.

- Stay calm
- Listen carefully to what is said
- Do not promise to keep secrets (explain that it is likely that some information will need to be shared with others, but that their safety will be the priority focus)
- Allow the person to speak at their own pace
- Ask (non-leading) questions only to clarify points of detail and sequence of events
- Reassure the person that they have done the right thing in raising the concern
- Write down as precisely as you can (using the person's own words as much as possible) what was said and shown
- Tell them what you will do next.

3. Codes of Conduct

3.1 Children & Young People Code of Conduct

Avon County Squash is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all its members. The club/organisation believes that it is important that members, coaches, officials and parents associated with the club should, at all times, show respect and understanding for the safety and welfare of others. Therefore, members are encouraged to be open at all times and to share any concerns or complaints that they may have about any aspect of the club.

Sports clubs should offer a positive experience for children and young people, where they can learn and compete in a safe and positive environment. As a member of this club/organisation, you are expected to abide by the following junior code of practice:

Children and young people are expected to:

- Play fairly
- Train and play with focus and good effort
- Respect coaches, staff, officials and accept decisions and their reasonable requests
- Be gracious in defeat
- Respect their opponents
- Not cheat or be violent (e.g. smashing your racket against the wall) or aggressive (e.g. name-calling, shouting or swearing at your opponent)
- Help make their club a fun, safe and inclusive place to be
- Stay safe; keep within the defined boundary of the playing/coaching area
- Take care of equipment owned by the club
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants, regardless of age, gender, ability, race, cultural background or religious beliefs or sexual identity
- Not get involved in inappropriate peer pressure and push others into something they do not want to do or get involved in any social-media bullying or harassment
- Not consume alcohol or drugs of any kind on the club premises or whilst representing the club or county

Children and young people have the right to:

- Be safe, happy and supported in their chosen activity
- Be listened to
- Be respected and treated fairly
- Privacy
- Be protected from abuse by other member or outside sources
- Have any concerns taken seriously and investigated appropriately

3.2 Parents/Carers Code of Conduct

Avon County Squash is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all its members. The club/organisation believes that it is important that members, coaches, officials and parents associated with the club should, at all times, show respect and understanding for the safety and welfare of others. Therefore, members are encouraged to be open at all times and to share any concerns or complaints that they may have about any aspect of the club.

Parents are expected to:

- Positively encourage and reinforce your child (and not engage in any punishment-based or punishment-like strategies, i.e. physical exercise 'punishments') for their effort, participation as well as their performance
- Show an interest in their chosen activity
- Not place your child under pressure or push them into activities they do not want to do
- Deliver and collect your child punctually before and after sessions/matches/the event
- Fully adhere to club/coach/tournament conditions and rules regarding parental attendance
- Detail any relevant medical concerns or conditions pertaining to your child on the registration/consent form. Any changes in the state of the child's health should be reported to the coach/school/event staff prior to the activity
- Ensure that proper sportswear, rackets and protective equipment are available and used, plus adequate food and drink

- Encourage your child to play by the rules, and teach them that they can only do their best
- Ensure that your child understands their and your rights and responsibilities – i.e. the code of conduct
- Behave responsibly court-side; do not embarrass, intimidate or bully your or any other child or official
- Accept the coach's/official's judgment

As Parents, you can expect to:

- Have the club and coach do all they can to safeguard your child and maximise their safe and enjoyable participation
- Be informed of any problems or concerns relating to your child
- Be informed if your child is injured or unwell
- Have your consent sought for issue such as trips, photography, social media content; none of which will go ahead without your express, written consent
- Have any concerns about any aspect of your child's welfare listened and to responded

Any breaches of this code of conduct will be dealt with immediately by Avon County Squash's Safeguarding Officer. Persistent concerns or breaches may result in you being asked not to attend training/games if your attendance is considered detrimental to the welfare of young participants. The ultimate action should a parent/guardian continue to breach the code of behaviour may be to ask your child to leave the squad, session, event or club.

Staff, volunteers, officials and coaches are expected to:

- Ensure the safety of all children by appropriate pre-planning of events/sessions and by providing effective supervision, using safe methods at all times
- Consider the wellbeing and safety of participants above the development of performance (i.e. to not over-train)
- Encourage and guide participants to accept responsibility for their own performance and behaviour
- Treat all people fairly and ensure they feel valued.

- Not allow any rough or dangerous play, bullying, or the use of bad language or inappropriate behaviour
- Be positive, approachable and offer encouragement for effort, participation as well as performance
- Not let any allegations of abuse of any kind or poor practice to go unchallenged or unrecorded. Incidents and accidents to be recorded in the line with the club's/organisation's procedures
- As is safe and possible, to keep parent's informed of incidents or concerns
- Establish and address the additional needs of any disabled participants or other vulnerable groups
- Not neglect or abuse members physically, emotionally or sexually
- Not engage in a sexual relationship (or otherwise pursue) with a young or vulnerable person
- Maintain confidentiality about sensitive information
- Be a role model, displaying consistently high standard of behaviour and appearance (disciplined/committed/time keeping), remember children learn by example
- Refrain from smoking (or other drug taking) or drinking alcohol during club activities or coaching sessions
- Hold appropriate valid qualifications (and not misrepresent these) and insurance cover
- Follow county, club and/or event policies with respect to safe first aid practices, travel with juniors/vulnerable adults, hosting, messaging/social media and images

Staff, volunteers, officials and coaches have the right to:

- Support and guidance around standards of conduct, policies and practices
- Support in the reporting and investigation of suspected abuse or poor practice
- Access to on-going training and briefings on all aspects of safeguarding and welfare
- Fair and equitable treatment by the County and ES

- Expect to be treated with respect and to work in safe conditions; to not be left vulnerable themselves

Any minor misdemeanours and general misbehaviour will be dealt with immediately and reported verbally to the designated person.

Serious or persistent breach of the code will result in disciplinary action and could lead to dismissal from the club/coaching body or county ties being brought to a close and other local sanctions put in place.

Dismissals can be appealed with final decisions taken by the county or club committee or referred to ES.

4. Diversity & Inclusion Policy

- 4.1 The county (and officials, referees, coaches etc. acting as agents of the county) is committed to treating everyone equally regardless of their age, level of ability or disability (whether visible or otherwise), gender (including gender reassignment), marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation or any other relevant characteristic.

The county is responsible for ensuring that no job applicant, volunteer, official or other person within its jurisdiction are unlawfully discriminated against because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (together the “Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010”) or any other irrelevant characteristic. The county supports the ambition of squash & racketball being a “sport for all”.

In law, people are protected from discrimination at work, in education, as consumers, when using public services, when buying or renting property, and, critically in the context of this policy document, **as a member or guest of a private club or association.**

People are also protected from discrimination if:

- they are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic, e.g. a family member or friend
- they have complained about discrimination or supported someone else’s claim

Discrimination can come in one of the following forms:

- direct discrimination - treating someone with a protected characteristic less favourably than others.
- indirect discrimination - putting rules or arrangements in place that apply to everyone, but that put someone with a protected characteristic at an unfair disadvantage.
- harassment - unwanted behaviour linked to a protected characteristic that violates someone’s dignity or creates an offensive environment for them.
- victimisation - treating someone unfairly because they’ve complained about discrimination or harassment.

- 4.2 The county will ensure that equality is incorporated in all aspects of its activities and also recognises and adopts the Sport England definition of Equality and Diversity in sport:

Sport England believes sporting opportunities should be open to all and are committed to:

- Developing a culture that enables and values everyone's full involvement
- Creating an environment in which everyone has opportunities to play, compete, officiate, coach, volunteer and run community sport
- Overcoming potential barriers for those wishing to play sport, particularly if they are from groups who are currently under- represented in sport

4.3 Clubs in the region are expected, through their own Diversity & Inclusion policies, to uphold the same ideals and legal obligations.

5. Whistleblowing Policy

- 5.1 The concept of whistleblowing (or anonymous reporting) is important in any organisation that is committed to maintaining appropriate levels of safeguarding and good practice. Whistleblowing allows individuals to raise the alarm on any potential incident of poor practice or misconduct by members and employees.
- 5.2 The county is committed to developing a culture that is safe and encourages all those involved in squash & racketball to raise concerns of poor and/or unacceptable practice, breaches in safeguarding and/or incidents of abuse. It is necessary to develop a culture in all organisations across the county where concerned individuals can raise the alarm about unacceptable practice and misconduct in a safe and supportive environment.
- 5.3 **When is it necessary to whistleblow?** An official, club member or player may witness or be told about a situation of poor practice, a failure to safeguard or even an incident of abuse within the region in which a colleague is implicated. While you may be the first person to become aware of an issue, it is not always easy to raise a concern as to do so may appear to be disloyal to your colleague(s) and you may be fearful that you will be victimised or disadvantaged as a result of taking such action. That is an understandable fear, but you must remember that all children and vulnerable adults have a legal right to be protected and that it is often the most vulnerable children and adults who are targeted and who are least able to act or defend themselves, or disclose what is happening. They need you and others like you to protect their wellbeing and safeguard them from harm or potential harm. **Everyone involved in squash & racketball has a responsibility to raise concerns appropriately.** The reasons someone might raise concerns in this context would be in order to:
- Prevent any problems getting worse
 - Protect or reduce the risk to others
 - Prevent becoming a party to the concern by lack of appropriate action
- 5.5 **Whistleblowing: Raising a concern.** In the first instance you are recommended to raise your concern directly with your safeguarding lead. For matters relating to club activities this would be to your Club WO. If the concern relates or implicates this individual, then lift it up to the County Lead (safe@avonsquash.co.uk) or to the ES safeguarding lead (safesquash@englandsquash.com). In your own description of your concerns (or in your reporting of someone else's if you are reporting a third-party concern), please be as specific as you can in detailing:
- Names, roles and any contact details of the individuals involved
 - Details relating to incident(s) and any supplementary evidence available

- The reason for your/their concern

5.6 Your Welfare Lead should acknowledge receipt of your concern, but, given the nature of the topic area, you may not be given updates on how the enquiry is progressing. Every reasonable effort should and will be made to provide feedback to you on the outcome and the actions taken.

6. Safe Recruitment Policy

- 6.1 This policy relates to the county's own recruitment practice but also acts as a guidance framework for clubs and coaching organisations across the region.

All staff, officials and volunteers for any squash & racketball organisation in the region should go through an appropriate vetting process prior to appointment in order to establish their suitability to work, especially where the role entails work with children and/or vulnerable adults.

Whilst we acknowledge that the vast majority of people applying to work in such roles are doing so with the best of intentions, some less suitable will also apply. It is only through sound recruitment practice that they can be screened out.

If there are concerns regarding the appropriateness of an individual who is already involved or who has approached a Club or coaching organisation, the County Safeguarding Lead will undertake an extended risk assessment. The county aims to prevent people with a history of relevant and significant offending from having contact with children or vulnerable adults, the opportunity to influence policies or practice with children or young people or the opportunity to exert power or privilege over vulnerable or at risk groups.

- 6.2 **Application form:** every organisation should develop and use an application form to collect the information required for the post in question. The form should be developed by more than one individual and should include verification of the applicant's identity. There should be space for voluntary disclosures of convictions or past employment details or other imposed restrictions. There should be space for a minimum of two referees' details and applicants should be directed to not invite references from family members.

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, a person with a criminal record is not required to disclose any spent convictions unless the position they are applying for, or are currently undertaking, is listed as an exception under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975.

- 6.3 **Meeting and interviewing the applicant:** it is important that all applicants are interviewed and that the information obtained on the application form is explored appropriately and verified (in particular, verbally confirm their disclosures response). Questions asked of the applicant should be prepared in advance and it is important that each applicant has the opportunity to discuss their experiences and suitability for the role.

Interviews are weak sources of evidence as they rely on what people tell you they can or will do (i.e. rather than demonstrate their skills). The most effective means of improving the effectiveness of an interview is to focus the interview on specific, recent examples – the principle being, **past behaviour is the best predictor of future**

behaviour. (e.g. “Tell me about a specific time when you.....? What was the situation or task? What actions did you take? What resulted? Any reflections on why you did what you did?)

Wherever possible, interviews should be undertaken with more than one interviewer.

- 6.4 **References.** References must be taken up for every role, even those with individuals already known to the organisation. They should be made aware of the role and role description being applied for and asked to confirm that they are not related to the applicant.

All references should be followed up (and to be free of any concerns) prior to any offer of appointment being made.

- 6.5 **DBS (previously known as CRB) checks:** Any individuals wishing to work with children or adults at risk are required to undertake a Barred List check and/or Enhanced DBS Disclosure. A Barred List check is a legal requirement for all individuals applying to work in Regulated Activity. This check will show whether an individual is barred from working with children or adults at risk. The definition of Regulated Activity is as follows:

- **Any position which otherwise involves regularly caring for, training, supervising or being solely in charge of children.**

- 6.5.1 Generally, club or county volunteers and officials will not be required to have extended contact with children or vulnerable adults, and as such DBS checks will most likely not be needed. Referees and tournament organisers may need to undertake a DBS check, depending on the nature of their roles and the supervision available from other DBS-checked officials (i.e. coaches).

Coaches and Welfare Leads will be required to undertake a DBS check, most likely of the more thorough kind, the Enhanced Disclosure with Barred List check.

It is **against the law** to request an extended check for an individual who is not eligible (i.e. who will not be undertaking a ‘regulated activity’). It is also **against the law** to employ someone or allow someone to volunteer for work of this kind if it is known that they are on one of the barred lists.

The definition of regulated activity is important and it is vital that organisations understand what this definition is, in order to comply with the law.

- 6.5.2 It is the responsibility of the Welfare lead for the given organisation to map out which roles require a DBS check and at what level. The following can be used as a guide, but should be verified:

Role	Volunteer	Level of Check Required	Child Barred List
County Committee Member	Yes	N/a	N/a
County WO	Yes	Enhanced	Yes
County Referee Lead	Yes	Enhanced	Yes
Club WO	Yes	Enhanced	Yes
ES Affiliated Coach	No	Enhanced	Yes
Tournament Organiser/Official	No	Enhanced	Yes
S&C Coach /Physiotherapist	No	Enhanced	Yes
Volunteer Assistant Coach/Hitter	Yes	Enhanced	Yes

It is the responsibility of the Welfare lead for each organisation to track and monitor whether required DBS checks are in place and up-to-date.

If an individual is unwilling to undertake a DBS check but one is required, they must not be used by the county or club in any position that places them in a position of trust with children.

- 6.5.3 Even in the case of a *positive disclosure* (i.e. the check being returned with a notification of some criminal history and/or other restrictions, it is not automatically the case that the individual would be barred from taking up a volunteering role. The positive disclosure would lead into an extended risk assessment process, involving the county or club welfare lead, possibly with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The nature of the role and the nature of the restrictions in place on the individual would determine the outcome

Further information can be found via the DBS helpline on 03000 200 190 or visit their website at www.gov.uk/dbs. Please also refer to the DBS's Code of Practice, which can also be found on their website.

7. Harassment & Bullying Policy

- 7.1 Harassment & bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will be responded to in the strongest terms. We as a County team accept responsibility for dealing promptly and effectively with any instances of harassment and/or bullying.

This is all of our concern and includes all interactions with and between committee members, officials, volunteers, coaches, players and parents/carers. If harassment and/or bullying does occur, all stakeholders should be able to speak out and feel reassured that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

- 7.2 Objectives of this policy

- All committee members, officials, volunteers, coaches, players and parents/carers should have an understanding of what bullying is
- Everyone should understand their respective organisation's policy on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported
- Everyone should take bullying seriously.

Players and parents/carers should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

- 7.3 **What is bullying?** Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting, whether verbal and/or physical, of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face-to-face, through social media and all manner of other mediums, and comes in many different forms.

Bullying is a subjectively defined experience – it is in the eyes of the beholder. Bullying itself is not against the law, but harassment is. This is when the unwanted behaviour is related to one of the following:

- age
- sex
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race

- religion or belief
- sexual orientation

7.4 The relevant Safeguarding Lead should be informed of any allegations involving bullying of or by a committee member, a coach or official or any player or parent/carer of a player.

- As per the reporting of a safeguarding concern, the reporting of a bullying complaint should be documented in writing, with as much detail as is possible
- A named person should be appointed to lead the investigation of the complaint. Most commonly this will be the Safeguarding Lead
- Where the concern involves any vulnerable adult or any child, their parent/carer should be consulted in the first instance, with a view to brokering an initial mediated discussion, giving each person the chance to explain what happened and how the incident made them feel and an invitation to admit wrongdoing and apologise
- Face to face mediation may not always be the safest or most appropriate means of resolution, but where possible is the ideal.
- Depending on the outcome of this meeting (e.g. if the alleged bully does not accept responsibility or apologise) further investigations may be required and sanctions imposed (e.g. a behaviour contract, (temporary) suspension etc.)
- Comprehensive notes should be kept, both of discussion topics and agreed actions
- Any appeal can be passed on to the County Safeguarding team (or onwards to ES) as required

8. Changing Room Policy

- 8.1 It is important to clarify what responsibility clubs have for young players and vulnerable adults in changing rooms before, during and after training or an event or competition. Under the duty of care to safeguard children and vulnerable adults, clubs have a responsibility for the wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults in their changing rooms. This does not mean that parents have no responsibility.
- 8.2 Unless there are designated times for the sole use of children or vulnerable adults, changing room users and their parents/carers, need to be made aware that the changing facilities are shared use.
- 8.3 We strongly recommend that clubs make provision for private changing room facilities, whether in a different location or as a partitioned area within the existing changing areas, both for showering and changing.
- 8.4 We recommend that children under the age of 8 should not be allowed to use public/general club member communal changing areas without the presence of their same-sex parent or carer. At the discretion of their parents/carers and local club safeguarding rules, children over this age may be permitted to use communal changing areas unsupervised.
- 8.5 We strongly recommend that clubs prohibit the taking of photos or video footage in the changing and showering areas.
- 8.6 If a complaint is received about an incident that has occurred in the changing room, the club has a duty to act upon that concern as appropriate. If the incident involves a person not associated with the club, the Safeguarding Lead/Club Manager should be made aware and consideration given as to whether the statutory agencies need informing.

9. Transport Policy

- 9.1 This advice should be read in conjunction with the NSPCC's *Safe sport events, activities and competitions (2013)*.
- 9.2 Parents and carers are responsible for the safe delivery and collection of their child (and or a vulnerable adult) to and from any training session or competitive event, except when the county is providing pre-arranged transport for a team or squad. Arrangements made between parents/carers to transport others' children/vulnerable adults are at the sole discretion of the parents/carers concerned.
- 9.3 Where transportation is being provided by others (e.g. a coach, a team captain, a county volunteer/official etc.) parents/carers must provide written consent (including up-to-date primary and secondary contact details and any relevant medical details). Anticipated travel details should be specified and timings should be given. Contact details for the nominated responsible adult should be provided. Appropriate insurance and driver training is mandatory.
- 9.4 Coaches, county volunteers/officials, team captains etc. (i.e. all those unrelated to the child/vulnerable adult in question) should not transport children or vulnerable adults alone in a car except where to fail to do so would cause the child to be placed at risk of harm. In an emergency, if a child has to be transported without a relative present, two suitably DBS checked adults should be present and the child should always be placed in the back seat with the adults in the front. If possible, parental/ carer consent should be obtained in advance, even if only by text/email.

10. Photography, Video & Social Media Policy

10.1 Electronic communications: This section defines what is and is not permissible when communicating with adults, vulnerable adults and children via mobile phones, text messaging, e-mail and other forms of electronic communication.

10.1.1 Coaches and officials should not personally hold the mobile phone numbers or e-mail addresses of children or vulnerable adults, with the exception of open access message groups (e.g. WhatsApp) for the purpose of team or squad communications where this has been consented to by the relevant parent or carer

10.1.2 In limited circumstances, it may be necessary for coaches, team captains, officials or chaperones to have mobile phone contact details of the children/vulnerable adults, e.g. at an away camp for safeguarding reasons. In such circumstances, the individual holding the contact details must be DBS checked, have undertaken appropriate safeguarding training and have the consent of each person's parent or carer to temporarily hold that information for the purpose of the event. The members' phone numbers should then be deleted after the event. It is recommended that all messages be sent transparently with parents/carers in copy (i.e. group messages, cc'd emails etc.)

10.1.3 Coaches of elite athletes under 18 but over 16 may, with the consent of the athlete's parent or guardian, use text messaging or e-mail to directly communicate with the athlete for training and competition purposes only. It is recommended that such communications are also copied to a parent or guardian to safeguard the member **and** the coach.

10.2 Use of a mobile phone by coaches, official and team captains:

10.2.1 Coaches should not take or make calls whilst supervising children or vulnerable adults. It is permissible for a coach to make or take a call during an event, providing they are not the sole supervisor of the players.

10.2.2 Coaches who have mobile phones with camera facilities must fulfil the obligations set out in the County Photography policy. Whenever mobile phones are taken into changing rooms, the camera facility must not be used. Consent must be obtained prior to any photos or video footage being taken or published, even if only for training purposes.

10.2.3 In the event of a player, a coach, an official or any other individual showing a text message or image which is considered to be inappropriate for a child or vulnerable adult to see, the coach, player, parent etc. must advise the Safeguarding Lead.

10.3 Coaches aged 18 to 21: many young coaches or volunteers aged 18 to 21 will have been players themselves before becoming a coach/helper, and will be friends with some of the other players, some of whom will still be children. It is therefore plausible

that they will have the personal contact details for those members. The County accepts it would be inappropriate to require them to remove the details of those players from their contact lists or accounts.

Therefore, in such cases:

- The lead coach is advised to inform the Safeguarding Lead of the pre-existing relationship
- The lead coach should make every effort to ensure the coach/helper is not the primary coach for those specified young persons except on an occasional basis
- The young coach/helper should be advised to show greater restraint and professional boundaries with their friends given their changed role...and to recognise this as an important development skill in becoming a professional coach.

10.4 Guidance on the use of social networking: Safeguarding risks can and do arise from improper and inappropriate use of social networking sites, such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, and instant messaging tools such as Whatsapp and Snapchat. More recent apps, such as Periscope and Meerkat, allow mobile phone users to stream content directly from their phones, bypassing some of the steps required in uploading videos to YouTube or to social networks such as Facebook. Whilst these technologies are part of modern life, they are accompanied by dangers and negative consequences if abused by users.

10.4.1 Guidance for coaches, teachers and other staff: As a coach, official, volunteer, parent of other players etc., you should not be in contact with young players or vulnerable adults through social networking sites. You should decline any related requests to become 'friends' via your personal social networking site if:

- You are in a position of responsibility in respect of that child/vulnerable adult.
- You hold a position of trust and/or responsibility at the club, coaching organisation, tournament team or county committee etc.
- Your contact with the child/vulnerable adult is through an Avon squash & racketball club **and** the parent/guardian of the child does not give their consent to such contact.

10.4.2 The publishing of a photograph or video footage on any social networking site is governed by the same requirements as those contained in the Photography policy.

10.4.3 Any communication, comments, photos and video clips posted on a social networking site may be shared with more people than you originally intended. Never post or send any photographs, videos or make comments that:

- May be hurtful, untrue or upsetting or that you may regret sharing later on.
- May be used by other people in a way you did not intend or want.
- Other people may find inappropriate.

Social networking sites are a method of communication like letter writing and the spoken word. They are bound by the same laws and rules. The delivery of social networking content is instantaneous and this can sometimes result in users reacting in the 'heat of the moment', and your content/comments may spread far from that of your own social network of friends. This is a major difference between the present and the past in which you would have written a letter which would have taken time and allowed for you to think again before sending. So never place a comment on the internet that you would not put in writing or say out loud to someone. To do so may breach ES Policy and also the law.

10.5 Photography Policy: This guidance applies to all images and videos taken on any type of camera or recording device (including mobile phones). It applies to all coaching sessions, matches and events run by a squash & racketball club, coach, referee, and any county endorsed event of 'agent.' It should be acknowledged that although the majority of images taken are appropriate and in good faith, images can be misused and children can be put at risk if common sense procedures are not observed.

The purpose of this policy document is to guide the county team, clubs, coaches and referees and players (and their parents/carers) in the region to avoid three potential sources of child abuse stemming from inappropriate photography:

- The use, adaptation, sharing or copying of images for child abuse purposes, either electronically or in print.
- The possible identification of a child when an image is accompanied by significant personal information, which can lead to the child being 'groomed'.
- The identification and locating of children where there are safeguarding concerns; such cases would include, for example, children who could be compromised by an image because:
 - They have been removed from their family for their own safety.
 - There are restrictions on their contact with one parent following a parental separation.
 - They are a witness in criminal proceedings.

10.5.1 **Recommended best practice:** The publishing of a photograph of a child or vulnerable adult, either on a notice board or in a published article or video recording (including video streaming) of a competition ('Publication') should only be done with parental consent and with a clearly stated purpose (and timescale) associated

A parent or guardian has a right to refuse to have their child photographed. The exercise of this right of refusal should not be used as grounds for refusing entry into a competition. Therefore, any photo that may go to press or on a notice board, be it through a member of the organisation or an official photographer, should receive parental consent before being published. A photographic consent template form has been provided in Appendix 3.

10.5.2 In the case of any event or competition where the event or host organisation has an official photographer, all parents of members who are attending should be made aware of this in the event details. If photos are to be published anywhere, each individual parent should be given the opportunity to withhold their consent. Their right to do so should be specifically drawn to their attention.

10.5.3 All photographs for publication must observe generally accepted standards of decency, particularly:

- Action shots should be a celebration of the sporting activity and not a sexualised image in a sporting context.
- Action shots should not be taken or retained where the photograph reveals torn or displaced sports kit.

10.5.4 With consent, published photographs may identify the individual by first name, but may not state the player's family name, place of residence or school. Personal details should be kept to an absolute minimum. It is safest if none are provided.

10.5.5 The county, club, coaching organisation, tournament organiser etc. should determine who will hold the images recorded and what is to be done with them after they have served their purpose. Consent may be withdrawn at any time and there must be no negative consequences for anyone withdrawing consent.

10.6 **Guidance on filming children during training sessions:** The filming of children or vulnerable adults during training must be justified (e.g. to support technique development, refereeing etc.). Assuming filming is justified, written consent (or emailed) is required from the parents of each child/vulnerable adult who will be filmed. The individual who is responsible for filming should exercise caution when recording and ensure the content of the footage is appropriate, following the advice outlined above. Filming should cease and/ or the footage destroyed should any concerns be raised or if consent is withdrawn. Once the footage has served its purpose, it should always be destroyed, unless the need to keep it can be justified.

11. Prevent

11.1 *Prevent* is a national Counter Terrorism programme. It addresses all forms of dangerous or violent extremism including Islamist extremism and Far Right extremism. Violent extremism may be related to any religion, faith, political group, or environmental issues. There is no single route into extremism, nor is there a simple profile of those that may become extremists. Factors that may indicate vulnerability to extremism may include (but not limited to):

- Possession of literature regarding military training, skills and techniques
- Possession of violent extremist literature
- The expression of extremist views advocating violent actions and means
- Association with known extremists, seeking to recruit others to an extremist ideology or claims of involvement with organisations espousing extreme violence
- Exposure to an ideology that appears to sanction, legitimize or require violence
- A range of perceived grievances, real and some imagined, to which there seems to be no credible and effective non-violent response.

The objectives of Prevent are:

- To respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it;
- To prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and to ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support; and
- To work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation that we need to address.

11.2. All agencies having contact with young people (and/or those at risk of being radicalised), under section 26 of the Counter terrorism and Security Act 2015, have an obligation to take action to prevent radicalisation

It is important to acknowledge that the dealings that a squash & racketball club official will have will be different to those of a teacher. However, we all (County Officials, Volunteers, Club Welfare Officers, Coaches, Players & Parents) are in an important position to identify risks within our local context.

11.3. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. As with managing other safeguarding risks, we should all be alert

to changes in behaviour (e.g. hiding their views, interacting with others differently etc.) which could indicate legitimate concerns.

- 11.4 A concern raised will not automatically lead to an investigation but will ultimately be referred to the relevant professional body.

Any concerns with an immediate risk should be referred immediately to the Police by calling 999.

All other concerns should be reported through to the Club or County Welfare leads as appropriate

Further information on the Government's Prevent strategy can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

12. Sanctions

- 12.1 Breaches of this policy and/or failure to comply with the outlined responsibilities may result in disciplinary action leading to possible exclusion from county activities (e.g. training activities, league matches), official roles, your club, dismissal from your coaching organisation and/or legal action.
- 12.2 The County's primary objective is to ensure safe, inclusive and thriving squash & racketball across the region. To this end all reasonable efforts will be made to issue warnings and help support compliance with our stated minimum standards in advance of any more formal disciplinary sanctions. However, as in an employment context, some offences may be so grave as to warrant more severe disciplinary action, or indeed referral to a higher investigating body.
- 12.3 We will not compromise on our obligations to maintaining a safe environment within the region, but nor will we take lightly any decisions to apply more restrictive sanctions. We will be proportionate and reasonable in our judgements.

The individual against whom a sanction may have been imposed has a right to lodge an appeal. Each club and coaching organisation should have its own documented appeals process. Appeals against decisions made by the County Safeguarding Team can be raised with the County Chairman, who will investigate the merits of the appeal and reach an independent decision. This decision will be final.

13. Appendices

13.1 Appendix 1: Preventative Risk Assessment

Completed by:		Date:		Position Held:	
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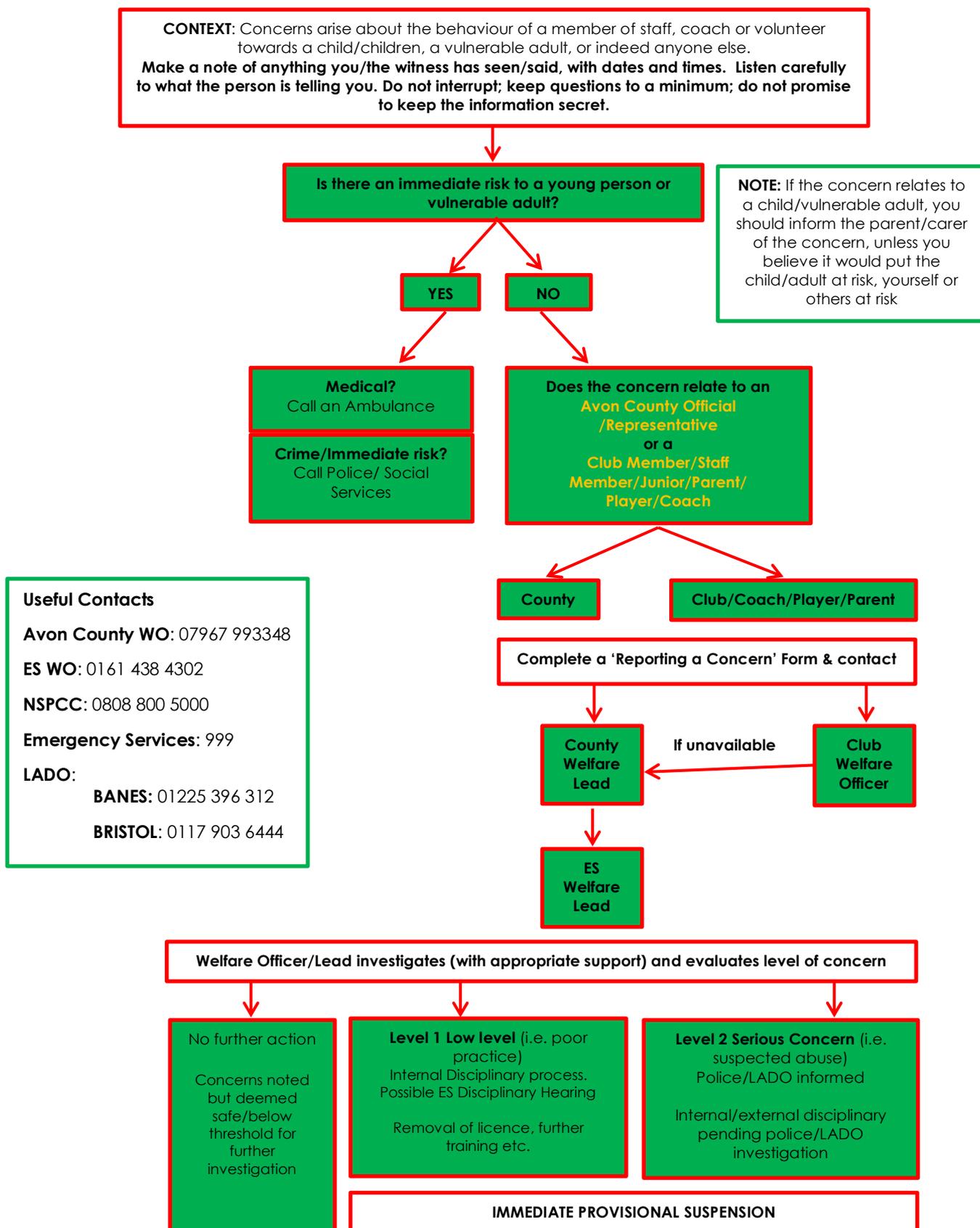
Risk Area		Status (RAG Rating)	Commentary in support of RAG rating	Follow-up Action(s) Required	Who/By when?
The Physical Environment	Court Areas				
	Changing Rooms				
	Site Access				
	Bar/ Restaurant				
Safe Recruitment Practices	DBS checks				
	Voluntary disclosures				
	Coaching/refereeing licence checks				
	References				
	ID verification				

Risk Area	Status (RAG Rating)	Commentary in support of RAG rating	Follow-up Action(s) Required	Who/By when?	Risk Area
Codes of Conduct	Parent/player rights & responsibilities				
	Referee, tournament official & club agreement on responsibilities				
	Parent drop-off/collection				
	Co-travelling				
	Hosting				
	Photos, video & social media consent and practices				
Training	basic induction/briefings on in-house policies and procedures				
	formal safeguarding training				

Risk Area	Status (RAG Rating)	Commentary in support of RAG rating	Follow-up Action(s) Required	Who/By when?	Risk Area
Promotion	Welfare Officers physical posters & online materials				
	'Reporting a Concern' process flow & forms				
	Emergency contact details				
Feedback	Mechanism for updating practices and policies in light of lesson learned				
Related topics	Diversity & inclusion matters				
	Whistleblowing				
	Harassment & bullying				

13.2 Appendix 2: Reporting a Safeguarding Concern (Squash & Racketball)

How to respond to allegations against a member of staff, official, coach, a young person or a parent/carer within the Squash & Racketball environment.



13.3 Appendix 3: Photographic Consent Template

Consent Form - Photography and Filming

I agree to (please tick):

- My/my child's photograph being used within the [venue/event] for display/promotional purposes
- My/my child's photograph being used on the [county/venue/organiser/coach]/Other _____ website/publications [Please delete as appropriate]
- Me/my child being videoed for use on [county/venue/organiser/coach]/Others _____ website & social media pages [Please delete as appropriate]

I understand [please tick]:

- the [County's/venue's/coaches/organiser's] photography and filming policy
- the potential risks associated with the use and distribution of these images
- the purpose for which these images are being used, how they are being stored and for how long they will be kept
- that I must gain permission before sharing photographs/videos of other people and/or other people's children via any means

Signed	Date	
Name (please print)		
Relationship to child/adult (if parent/carer)		
Address		
Preferred Phone Number		
Email address		

Please return this form to: [email/postal address]

Club Welfare Officer Role Description

About the Role

The club safeguarding officer has primary responsibility for managing and reporting concerns and for putting into place procedures to safeguard children and adults at risk in the club

Requirements

- England Squash Enhanced DBS
- Relevant safeguarding training in accordance with the England Squash safeguarding training matrix
- To register with England Squash as a club Safeguarding Officer in order to receive updates and relevant information from the governing body
- Sit on the club's management committee and ensure safeguarding is embedded

Duties and Responsibilities

- Influencing and leading others in the club to ensure a positive environment for all members and visitors
- To ensure England Squash's Safeguarding Policy & Procedures are embedded across all activities
- To assist England Squash in fulfilling its safeguarding duties at club level
- To act as the first point of contact for staff, coaches, volunteers, parents and children/young people in squash where concerns about Children's Social Care, poor practice or child abuse are identified within the county, and pass these concerns on to the appropriate person or organisation
- To be the first point of contact with the safe squash working group
- Assist the club in implementing its safeguarding policies and procedures
- Ensure appropriate confidentiality is maintained
- Ensure all coaches, staff and volunteers acting on behalf of the club who have direct supervisory roles with juniors complete an England Squash personal disclosure form and Enhanced DBS on a 3 yearly basis and attend appropriate safeguarding training
- Promote and challenge anti-discriminatory practice in line with England Squash policies and procedures

Support available

- England Squash website – template policies & procedures
 - Safe Squash <https://www.englishsquash.com/about-us/governance/safe-squash>
- How to apply for an England Squash enhanced DBS: <https://www.englishsquash.com/get-involved/coach/disclosure-and-barring-service-dbs-enhanced-check>

13.5 Appendix 5: ES Training Requirements



England Squash Safeguarding Training Matrix

	NSPCC Online Safeguarding Training	Sportscoach UK: Safeguarding & Protecting Children Workshop (SPC1)	Sportscoach UK online refresher course for SPC1	Sportscoach UK: Safeguarding & Protecting Children – Reflecting on Practice (SPC 2)	Multi Sport Time to Listen Training (For Club and County, advertised and delivered by CSPs)	CPSU Safer Recruitment Training	CPSU Specific Training	Notes
England Squash Board Member							✔	Specific focused training regularly delivered by CPSU.
England Squash Safeguarding Working Group						✔	✔	All SWG members to receive CPSU training. Designated DBS/Coaching Member of SWG to attend Safer Recruitment.
Working Group Member								
County Welfare Officer	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔			
Club Welfare Officer	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔			
Coach Levels 1 & 2	✔	✔	✔	✔				
Coach Levels 3 & 4	✔	✔	✔	✔				
Volunteers not working directly with young people	✔							

Required by England Squash

Recommened by England Squash

Incident Referral Form

Your name:

Your position (e.g. parent, coach, volunteer):

Your contact details (e.g. telephone, email address):

If the concern or allegation relates to behaviour/actions towards a Child, Young Person or Adult at Risk please complete the following details:

Your knowledge of and relationship to the Child, Young Person or Adult at Risk:

Name of Child or Vulnerable Adult:

Address if known:

Date of birth of Child or Vulnerable Adult:

If the concern or allegation relates to the behaviour/actions of a Coach/Official/Volunteer/Other (please delete) please complete the following details:

Your knowledge of and relationship to the Coach/Official/Volunteer/Other (please delete):

Name of Coach/Official/Volunteer/Other (please delete):

Address if known:

Date(s), time(s) and location(s) of the incident(s):

Nature of the concern or allegation:

Observations made by you or to you (e.g. description of visible signs, other injuries, person's emotional state, behaviour/actions shown):

Note: Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay)

Exactly what the person said and what you said (Remember, do not lead the them – record actual details. Continue on separate sheet if necessary).

Actions taken so far:

External agencies contacted (date/ time and contact):

Police: YES/NO If Yes, where:

Name and contact number:

Details of advice received:

Social Services/LADO: YES/NO If Yes, where:

Name and contact number:

Details of advice received:

England Squash: YES/NO If Yes, where:

Name and contact number:

Details of advice received:

Other (e.g. NSPCC, childline) Which:

Name and contact number:

Details of advice given:

Print Name:

Signed: _____ Date: _____

If the incident has been reported to Social Services, a copy of this form must be sent to Social Services within 24 hours of the telephone report. Remember, to maintain confidentiality on a need to know basis and only share it if it will protect the child or young person. Do not discuss this incident with anyone other than those who need to know.

This form identifies the essential information that needs to be recorded if an incident occurs (i.e. there is a disclosure from a young player or an allegation is made) and should be kept by the designated person. On receiving an allegation or disclosure, the designated person should complete the form with the key witnesses involved.