

Adults at Risk Policy

Guildford City Swimming Club — in association with Swim England's Wavepower

Guildford City Swimming Club (GCSC) is committed to a club environment in which every member — including adult members who may be at risk of harm — can take part safely, with dignity and respect. This policy sets out how GCSC recognises and responds to concerns about adults at risk, in line with Swim England's Wavepower policy and the Care Act 2014.

Who is an 'adult at risk'?

An adult at risk is someone aged 18 or over who:

- Has needs for care and support (whether or not the Club or any other organisation is meeting those needs), and
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
- As a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from the abuse or neglect, or the risk of it

This might include, for example, an adult member with a physical or learning disability, a long-term illness, a mental health condition, or a member who is frail due to age. Being an adult at risk does not mean someone lacks the right to make their own decisions — see 'Mental capacity and consent' below.

Types of abuse or harm

Abuse or neglect of an adult at risk can take a number of forms, including:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological or emotional abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Neglect or acts of omission
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational abuse (poor practice within the Club itself)
- Domestic abuse
- Modern slavery
- Self-neglect

A concern does not need to fit neatly into one of these categories before it is raised — if something is worrying you, please tell us.

Our commitment

- Treat all adult members with dignity, respect and fairness
- Listen to and take seriously any concern raised about an adult at risk
- Respond in a way that respects the adult's own wishes wherever it is safe and lawful to do so
- Ensure coaches, teachers and regular volunteers complete Swim England's approved safeguarding training, which covers adult as well as child safeguarding
- Work with Swim England and statutory agencies where a concern needs to be escalated beyond the Club

Recognising a concern

A concern about an adult at risk might come from something you witness directly, something the adult tells you themselves, or a change you notice over time — for example, unexplained injuries, sudden changes in mood or behaviour, unusual withdrawal from sessions, signs of poor personal care, or a member seeming afraid of, or controlled by, another person. You do not need to be certain that abuse is taking place before raising a concern.

Mental capacity and consent

Adults at risk have the same right as anyone else to make decisions about their own life, including decisions that others might consider unwise, provided they have the mental capacity to do so. Wherever possible and safe, GCSC will seek the adult's consent before sharing information about a concern or taking further action.

Consent may be overridden, and a concern shared without it, where: the adult lacks the mental capacity to make that decision; other people (including children) may be at risk; a serious crime may have been committed; or the risk to the adult is serious enough that the public interest in sharing information outweighs their right to confidentiality. Where possible, this will be discussed with the adult first, and always with the Club Welfare Officer.

How to raise a concern

1. Speak to the Club Welfare Officer, or another Club officer if that feels more appropriate.
2. Your concern will be listened to, taken seriously, and recorded factually.
3. The Welfare Officer will consider the concern against GCSC's procedures and Swim England's Wavepower policy, and identify the appropriate route — which may include referral to Swim England's Safeguarding and Welfare Team, the Local Authority's adult social care team, or the police.
4. Information will be shared only with those who need to know, in line with confidentiality and data-protection requirements.

If your concern is about the Welfare Officer, or you do not feel able to approach the Club, you can instead contact Swim England's Safeguarding and Welfare Team directly, or use GCSC's Whistleblowing Policy.

Immediate danger or urgent risk

If an adult is in immediate danger, or there is an immediate risk of serious harm, call 999.

For non-emergency police assistance, call 101, or contact the Local Authority's adult social care team for advice. Do not wait for a Club meeting or internal process where urgent protective action is required.

Related policies

- [GCSC Welfare and Safeguarding](#)
- [GCSC Whistleblowing Policy](#)
- [Codes of Conduct – Swimmers, Parents, Coaches and Officials](#)
- [Swim England Wavepower](#)

Contact

- [GCSC Welfare Officer — welfare.officer@gcsc.co.uk](mailto:welfare.officer@gcsc.co.uk)



This policy should be read alongside Swim England's Wavepower policy and GCSC's wider Welfare and Safeguarding procedures. It will be reviewed annually, or sooner if Wavepower guidance changes.