

ALCOVE ANGLING CLUB SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

In the UK, a variety of civil and criminal laws¹ collectively impose a duty of care on clubs and individuals to protect vulnerable people from harm, abuse, exploitation and neglect, a process known as Safeguarding. A vulnerable person is anyone who may be unable to recognise or report potential risks to their wellbeing and, as a result, to adequately protect themselves. Vulnerable people include adults at risk, due to factors such as mental health issues, physical disability, learning difficulties or other circumstances that impair their ability to care for themselves, and children, who are legally defined as anyone under 18 years old.

Alcove Angling Club (AAC) takes seriously its duty of care to safeguard all of its potentially vulnerable Members taking part in its activities but recognises that, in practice, there are wide-ranging limitations on what it can achieve due to, for example, its inability to:

- identify reliably over time potentially vulnerable Members, especially adults at risk for whom there are few definitive identifiers such as age.
- monitor comprehensively the activities of Members, who may visit AAC venues at any time they are open.

In recognition of these limitations, AAC:

- does not have Child or Junior Members' Sections, run matches or other events or provide coaching for Child or Junior Members. As a consequence, no AAC representatives have regulated work² with or regular access to vulnerable Members.
- requires Child and Junior Members to be chaperoned by an adult Member when on AAC venues. AAC does not nominate or endorse adult Members to act as chaperones. Instead a Child or Junior Member's parent or guardian must satisfy him/herself that any AAC Member they appoint for the purpose is suitable.
- requires Junior and Adult Members under 21 years old to be accompanied by a Senior or Adult Member aged 21 or more years old, when night fishing at the Lido. AAC does not nominate or endorse adult Members to act as chaperones. Instead a Junior or under 21 year old Adult Member's parent or guardian must satisfy him/herself that any AAC Member they appoint for the purpose is suitable.
- provides for Associate Non-fishing Members and Disabled Helpers, which enable parents and guardians of potentially vulnerable Members, including adults at risk, and assistants for Blue Badge-holding Members, respectively, to accompany them at AAC venues.

AAC does not have a process for investigating alleged harm, abuse, exploitation and neglect of vulnerable Members because, regardless of any sanction imposed by AAC upon finding a case proven, AAC would be obliged to report the offence to the Police. AAC's investigation and disciplinary process would, therefore, only delay and potentially compromise the Police action. Members who suspect alleged harm, abuse, exploitation and neglect of vulnerable Members, including adults at risk, should, therefore, report their suspicions directly to the Police.

Bill Knight
Chairman on behalf of the AAC Committee

¹ Examples include but are not limited to The Children Acts 1989 and 2004, The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, The Care Act 2014

² defined by The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as "activity that involves close and regular contact with children/vulnerable adults, such as teaching, supervising or caring for them",