**Welfare Policy (incorporating Child Protection)**

Swindon Harriers believe that everyone involved in athletics should enjoy their participation and development in safety and security and with protection from abuse, maltreatment or misconduct. Every individual involved in athletics events and programmes is responsible for upholding this belief.

To this end the Club accepts the legal and moral responsibility to provide a duty of care for all people (including children and vulnerable adults) within the sport and to safeguard their welfare, irrespective of age, impairment, gender, racial origin, religious belief and sexual identity.

In implementing this policy, the Club will adhere to the current Welfare Policy and Procedures adopted by England Athletics

**To achieve this Swindon Harriers will**

* Provide and enforce procedures based upon current England Athletics policy and procedures to safeguard the well-being of all participants and protect them from abuse
* Ensure all young people and vulnerable adults who take part in athletics are able to participate in a safe and fun environment.
* Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of people taking part in athletics including young people, disabled and/or vulnerable adults
* Recruit, train and supervise their employees and volunteers to adopt best practise to safeguard and protect young people and vulnerable adults from abuse, and themselves from false allegations.
* Ensure its volunteers are CRB-checked and adopt best practice in all equality issues, to safeguard and protect young people from abuse and themselves against false allegations
* Require volunteers to adopt and abide by the Welfare Policy and Child Protection Procedures and the relevant grievance, investigatory and disciplinary procedures.
* Respond swiftly and appropriately to any allegations and implements the relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures
* Review the Welfare Policy and procedures and associated activities annually at the Annual General Meeting.

In implementing this policy, the Club will through the Club Officers, committee members and Welfare Officer(s);

* Appoint at least one Welfare Officer, preferably two, one male and one female and notify EA of the name and contact details for each Welfare Officer.
* Ensure that ALL club officer and committee members have responsibility to uphold the welfare policies and procedures, to adhere to good practice and to support the club Welfare Officer to respond to any suspected breaches. This is NOT the sole responsibility of the Welfare Officer.
* Ensure that all within the Club are aware that if there is any concern about child abuse the Welfare Officer should be informed immediately. If the Welfare Officer is not available, the person with concerns should report the matter to the local Children’s services or police themselves.
* Ensure that information is available at the club and to all club officers, team managers, coaches and officials regarding contact details for local Children’s services, the police and the NSPCC.
* Ensure there are club disciplinary procedures to deal with issues of misconduct which are not child abuse.
* Ensure that club members, coaches, club officers and committee members attend recommended training in welfare and safeguarding and protecting children as appropriate and comply with requirements to obtain CRB clearance.

**The Club Welfare Officer is to;**

* Advise and support the club officers and committee in the maintenance and implementation of welfare policies and procedures and to support the club to adhere to appropriate codes of conduct and good practice.
* Ensure that all club coaches/helpers/volunteers have completed a volunteer reference form or complied with a volunteer recruitment process and assist in this process as appropriate and to ensure that all coaches/officials/volunteers have completed CRB checks and assist in this process as appropriate.
* Respond to suspected breaches of the Welfare Policies and Procedures that may be referred to them, in accordance with the Welfare Procedures and, to advise and support other club officers or committee members how to respond appropriately in accordance with the Procedures.
* Report any concerns about child abuse to local children’s social care services or police immediately. If the Welfare Officer is not available, the person with concerns should report the matter to the local children’s services or police themselves.
* Also report any concerns about child abuse to both the UKA Welfare Officer and the EA Welfare Officer and inform them what action has been taken.
* Inform the EA Welfare Officer about any concerns regarding misconduct which is not child abuse.
* Maintain up to date knowledge of welfare and child protection issues with support from UKA including having attended Safeguarding and Protecting Children Training and Time to Listen Training for Club Welfare Officers within the last 3 years.

N.B. Time to Listen is a course that is currently being developed by England Athletics and the Child Protection in Sport Unit and will be offered to all club welfare officers when available from 2010)

* Maintain confidentiality of all information relating to matters referred regardless of action taken but ensure this information is available to UKA Welfare Officers, Social Services and the Police as necessary.