

# Safeguarding Adults Policy

Lawn Tennis Association

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# Safeguarding Adults Policy

## Lawn Tennis Association

### Foreword

We, the national governing body for Tennis in Britain, want tennis to be an inclusive, fun, affordable sport for people of all ages and abilities. We want everyone involved in tennis to have a positive experience of the sport, free from abuse or other forms of inappropriate behaviour. It is our responsibility to protect and support those playing our sport, and in particular children, young people and adults at risk.

Most people have a positive experience of tennis. Any form of abuse is unacceptable, and it is our duty to protect those who are more vulnerable to abuse. Where abuse occurs, the LTA acts urgently, working in partnership with Police and Social Services, to protect that individual or individuals from further harm. We have robust safeguarding procedures to manage these situations with confidence and efficiency.

These procedures are set out in this policy which is based on the principle of empowering children and young people. It places the onus on everyone who has contact with vulnerable individuals to protect them from harm as well as to create a positive environment in which to participate. Based on best practice, it provides information about abuse and what can happen, advice on identifying problems, as well as policies and procedures for use by those involved in delivering tennis around the country.

If you are involved in tennis in any capacity, whether as a player, coach, official, parent, volunteer or teacher, I urge you to adopt this safeguarding policy to help provide a positive experience for those playing tennis as we grow and sustain the sport across Great Britain.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M Downey'.

Michael Downey  
Chief Executive, LTA

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Cathie Sabin'.

Cathie Sabin  
President, LTA

## 1. Introduction

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) is the National Governing Body (NGB) for British tennis and the Tennis Foundation is the Britain's leading tennis charity.

The LTA and Tennis Foundation believe that tennis can play an important role in the lives and development of adults, including adults at risk. Tennis is a sport that can be played in a variety of formats, lifelong, by people of all abilities, and provides opportunities for them to take part in exciting, challenging and healthy activities.

The LTA aims to grow and sustain the sport and is committed to providing opportunities for people to take part in tennis, and helping them to achieve their potential. The participation strategy works to achieve this by investing in places where people can play tennis, supporting the people who make tennis happen, developing engaging programmes to attract and retain people in tennis and promoting the sport.

As well as increasing the number of people playing, the LTA is also working to widen access, including to adults who may have additional vulnerabilities. The LTA is committed, in particular, to increasing the proportion of disabled people playing tennis, as a key part of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic legacy.

The Safeguarding Adults policy has been developed to recognise that procedures need to be put in place to protect adults, including those at risk, so that they are safe from harm and have an enjoyable tennis experience. It provides information about ways to successfully engage adults at risk in tennis. It confirms that abuse of any adult at risk towards or by tennis people or any other person will not be tolerated, and that it is everyone's responsibility to ensure their safety and well-being.

As defined in legislation, an adult at risk is any person "over 18 years of age who are or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental health, disability, age or illness, and who are or may be unable to take care of themselves, or protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation."<sup>1</sup> This term replaces vulnerable adults, which was previously used.

Not all disabled adults are considered at risk. However, some disabled adults will have additional vulnerabilities and some adults who are not considered an adult at risk at one particular time, may be so at another point.

The LTA has a three-tiered approach to safeguarding adults at risk and the information in this policy provides information about what to do in a variety of situations. This is available here in line with the LTA's approach of: Early intervention / awareness raising, Prevention and Protection. Advice on what to do in different situations is available below: [Well-Being and Protection Process \[Green – Amber – Red\]](#).

**Please note:** The Board of the Tennis Foundation has adopted LTA policies and where applicable the words Lawn Tennis Association or LTA should be replaced by the Tennis Foundation.

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<sup>1</sup> Protecting adults at risk: London multi-agency policy and procedures to safeguard adults from abuse,' 2011 p.viii)

## 2. Policy Statement – Safeguarding Adults at Risk

It is a fundamental human right to be safe from harm and abuse, and the LTA and Tennis Foundation believe it is important to raise awareness of individuals who may be at risk in British tennis. The LTA will not tolerate abuse of any adult at risk towards or by any tennis people, or any other person.

This Policy relates to all people working within a tennis environment, including those who are both paid and unpaid, employees and volunteers.

The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA), the National Governing Body (NGB) for British tennis, and the Tennis Foundation, Britain's leading tennis charity, are committed to providing opportunities for people to take part in tennis, and to helping to achieve their potential. To achieve this, the LTA and Tennis Foundation will:

- take a positive approach to safeguarding adults at risk, aiming to provide a positive tennis experience to support the wider strategic objective of growing and sustaining the sport;
- seek to ensure tennis is an inclusive sport and ensure ways of adapting tennis for any ability, disability or impairment, will continue to be developed, monitored and reviewed;
- continually seek ways to improve the safety and well-being of all adults at risk who play tennis;
- emphasise that everyone in tennis has a shared responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of all adults at risk who play tennis;
- recognise that ability and disability can change over time, such that some adults may be additionally vulnerable to abuse, for example those who have a dependency on others or have different communication needs;
- recognise that a disabled adult may or may not be identified as an adult at risk; and
- provide support and advice to tennis venues and people working in tennis;

The LTA and Tennis Foundation are committed to improving outcomes for adults at risk by adhering to current legislation that supports the safeguarding of adults, which include:

- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012;
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006;
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005;
- The Equality Act 2010;
- Protecting Adults at risk: London Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures to Safeguard Adults from Abuse (2011); and
- Information Sharing Guidance for Practitioners and Managers (HM Government 2008).  
*Further legislation, specific to adults at risk, is anticipated.*

The LTA continually seeks ways to improve the safety and well-being of all adults at risk who play tennis. To ensure our practice is current and responsive to the needs of adults at risk, the LTA reviews all work in line with guidance issued by the Sport and Recreation Alliance (SRA), UK Sport and the English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS), as well as (in the case of the National Tennis Centre) Wandsworth Council.

The Safeguarding team provides support and advice to tennis venues and people working in tennis. The Tennis Foundation additionally supports coaches and venues delivering tennis events for disabled people, or identifying and developing talented disabled players. All Tennis Clubmark clubs are also required to have a designated Welfare Officer who has attended training. They can access support from the Safeguarding team, ensuring they promote safety and well-being at their club, identify and address any poor practice or abusive behaviour and respond in a timely manner to any suspected abuse. [Well-Being and Protection Process \[Green – Amber – Red\]](#) and [Welfare Officer Flowchart](#).

# Overview of Approach to Safeguarding Adults: Early Intervention, Prevention and Protection

## Green: Early Intervention

**A shared responsibility:** Promoting safety and well-being within tennis venues is a role that everyone in tennis undertakes. This ensures that community members have an enjoyable tennis experience, helping to attract and retain people in tennis. It also ensures compliance with legislation which guarantees and protects the rights of adults who are classified as being at risk.

**Championing safety:** We champion safety and well-being policies and procedures which encompass fair play values, complemented by codes of conduct, to support those who work in tennis to promote safety and well-being. This includes our responsibility to share information effectively and participate in preventative practices when protection issues arise.

**Address issues early:** It is important to address potential issues which compromise the well-being of tennis people early, to ensure they are stopped and do not become greater challenges. Where these issues arise, we strongly encourage tennis venues to deal with them swiftly and in line with our policies. Tennis venues with Welfare Officers will be available to support with this function.

*An example of poor practice may include: a coach texting an adult at risk about their marital problems. It is the responsibility of the person who identifies this issue to address the matter directly with the coach involved, referring to the policies, procedures and codes of conduct in place. Situations like this that are addressed at tennis venues should be recorded and presented to club committees to show the continued work the tennis venue is undertaking to address issues and continue to promote safety and well-being.*

## Amber: Prevention

**Local and national support:** As well as helping tennis venues to champion safety and well-being by sharing policies, procedures, guidance and best practice, situations may occur which require additional support. They may require the support of a Welfare Officer (in place at all Clubmark clubs) or Safeguarding team.

**Central, professional expertise:** the Safeguarding team will always offer information, advice, guidance and support to ensure all tennis venues resolve issues effectively and can continue on their journey of promoting safety and well-being for all members.

*An example of poor practice that could lead to a potentially abusive situation is where a coach tells an adult at risk player that they need to share a room when travelling as this will be cheaper than separate rooms. This places the player at risk of potential harm. It is the responsibility of the person who becomes aware of this situation to address the matter directly with the coach, referring to the policies, procedures and codes of conduct in place that state this should not happen. If you are not confident or do not have the skills to address this situation, contact your Welfare Officer or the Safeguarding team.*

## Red: Protection

**Immediate escalation:** Where a protective issue arises, we acknowledge we have a role to play to ensure that person's safety and well-being. If an adult at risk or other people require the protection of Social Care safeguarding services or the Police, either as a direct result of an incident at a tennis venue or as an on-going matter outside of a tennis venues control, the tennis venue should inform the Safeguarding team immediately. The Safeguarding team will carry out a range of duties within current policies, guidance and legislation to safeguard the well-being of individuals' concerned.

*An example of a situation that would require immediate escalation to the Safeguarding team is where an adult at risk has told you that they are receiving text messages from another player that are sexually explicit and derogatory.*

### 3. Different Types of Abuse [Red]

This section provides information on the different types of abuse. The majority of adults at risk live a life free from harm and abuse; however there are a small number of adults at risk who suffer abuse. This is usually by a family member, close family friend or person in a position of trust. Abuse can be a single act or repeated acts; neglect or failure to act; or multiple acts, such as financial abuse and emotional abuse. Information about the different types of abuse is outlined below.

#### What are the responsibilities of people working or volunteering in tennis?

We remind you that as a person in a position of trust working or volunteering with adults at risk within tennis you are not required to make assessments of whether an adult at risk is at immediate risk of harm or likely to suffer harm. This is something for statutory agencies such as Police and Social Care to assess.

**You are required to report any concerns you may have about an adult at risk and to report anything you may have witnessed.** Please remember, if you fail to respond and report a concern, an adult at risk may continue to suffer harm.

#### What should I do if I have a concern?

Please refer to [Well-being and Protection Process Flowchart](#) for reporting concerns about the safety and well-being an adult at risk.

#### What are the different types of abuse?

There are seven categories of abuse that may happen to any person and very rarely does one type of abuse happen in isolation; with emotional abuse usually occurring with each type of abuse. Abuse can also occur through social media (below).

1. Emotional / Psychological;
2. Physical;
3. Sexual;
4. Discrimination;
5. Institutional;
6. Financial; and
7. Neglect.

#### 3.1 Emotional / Psychological

In tennis, emotional abuse can include: threats, humiliation, intimidation, blame, control, coercion, bullying and cyber-bullying. It is often where a person's emotional health and development is harmed and results in distress, denial of self-expression, privacy or dignity, isolation or over dependence. As mentioned earlier, emotional and psychological harm rarely occur in isolation and is usually present with each other type of abuse.

#### 3.2 Physical

Different types of physical abuse that may be observed within a tennis environment include; training methods in extreme conditions or post match, parents hitting other parents, playing on through injury, innocent 'shoving' of opponents when changing ends and outdated tennis games, such as 'butts up'. Physical abuse always includes any unwanted physical contact.

#### 3.3 Sexual

Sexual abuse can be either direct and indirect involvement in sexual activity or a relationship whereby consent has not occurred, there is a lack of capacity to give consent or that someone has

been coerced into a relationship due to another person's position of trust. Sexual abuse can also occur through social media (see section 2.8).

### 3.4 Discrimination

Discrimination is abuse. In tennis this type of abuse is often difficult to detect and it may not always be clear as to who is the perpetrator. Discrimination can be based on either, age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender reassignment, HIV status, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, religion or sexual orientation, all of which are *Protected Characteristics* under the Equality Act 2010.

Examples of discrimination in tennis can include:

- Referees refusing to umpire female matches;
- Female players not being given 'prime court time';
- Male players using language such as 'you hit like a girl', or
- Language such as 'that was gay'.

Discrimination that takes the form of harassment is a criminal offence and needs to be reported to the police.

For further support please refer to the policy: *Equality and Diversity*

Adults at risk may also be seen to discriminate against each other, for example, using their disability as a joke with other disabled players. It is important to remember that the emotional impact of this type of joking or banter on the other player is not always evident and constitutes emotional abuse. It also sets a level of expectation amongst others who may hear or see this behaviour, as being an acceptable way to address someone with a disability. This is not acceptable in tennis and needs to be addressed immediately.

### 3.5 Institutional

Institutional abuse often occurs due to poor management or outdated practices causing harm on a person. Within tennis, this may be observed where people play on through injuries to ensure they undertake a certain number of games per year. This may also include performance centres or coaches encouraging funded players to withdraw from full-time education to pursue their tennis career.

### 3.6 Financial

Within tennis, some coaches may exploit parents and players with increased fees or ask for additional money in the hope that extra lessons will ensure their child may be the next tennis star. Financial abuse can also include people in tennis venues not accounting for how money has been spent.

### 3.7 Neglect

In tennis, neglect may be either intentional or unintentional. It may include situations such as officials not giving player's appropriate breaks on hot days or coaches not taking a player's injury seriously and asking them to continue playing. It may also include situations where medication is given to ease the pain from injury so play can continue.

### 3.8 Social media

Abuse can occur through social media; this is often harder to detect. It is important to remember that the type of abuse that can occur through social media always includes emotional and psychological abuse and can include sexual and financial abuse. Social media includes (but is not limited to): Social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn; Email; Text messages; Skype, and Blackberry Messenger.

Some examples of abuse that can occur through social media include:

- Unwanted sexual text messages (sexual abuse);
- Unwanted communication (emotional abuse);
- Inappropriate messaging; with kisses attached (emotional and sexual abuse);
- Requests for money (financial abuse);
- Harassment (emotional abuse);
- Intimidation (emotional abuse);
- Sexual coercion (sexual abuse);
- Stalking (emotional abuse); and
- Cyber-bullying (emotional abuse).

## 4. Adults at Risk with Additional Vulnerabilities

This section explains why some adults at risk may have additional vulnerabilities, provides information about other issues to be aware of; information about elite athletes who are adults at risk; and what the responsibilities are if you work or volunteer in tennis, or witness abuse.

### Why do some adults at risk have additional vulnerabilities?

Some adults at risk have additional vulnerabilities because they may have:

- Limited capacity linked to their mental health to make decisions;
- Communication difficulties;
- Physical dependency on others for care;
- Low self-esteem;
- Experience of childhood abuse;
- Experience of abuse;
- Lack of access to support and information;
- Isolation or social exclusion; and
- Not be getting the support they need.

### Are there other issues we should be aware of related to adults at risk?

Yes – other issues outside tennis can sometimes occur. These may include:

- Self-neglect;
- Hate Crime; and
- Domestic Abuse, which includes;
  - Honour-Based Violence;
  - Forced Marriage;
  - Human trafficking;
  - Exploitation by radical people who promote violence;
  - Abuse by another adult at risk; and
  - Abuse by children.

For more information please see pan-London policy [‘Protection adults at risk: multi-agency policy and procedures to safeguard adults from abuse’ \(2011\)](#).

### Elite athletes and adults at risk

Adults at risk who are elite tennis athletes may be more susceptible to abuse for a number of reasons. Some disabled athletes who have been competing from childhood report that they have been subject to behaviour that they had been told, “*just happens in sport*” or that they “*didn’t know that was abuse*”. This makes it even more difficult to say something as the abuse has been long term and undetected. This does not mean abuse or emotional abuse has not occurred, and therefore when identified, it must be reported.

Disabled elite athletes are often more at risk of physical and sexual harm or abuse, due to the intense coaching relationship that often exists. Disabled elite athletes may have found themselves coerced into a relationship with a person in a position of trust, such as a coach, and feel unable to speak out as the relationship is connected to their livelihood.

### Who has a responsibility to act?

It is important to remember that we would not accept this behaviour outside tennis, therefore any abuse must be challenged and stopped when observed or reported within tennis.

For more support on how to welcome adults at risk to your Tennis venue, please visit [www. http://www.lta.org.uk/Tennis-Foundation/Home/](http://www.lta.org.uk/Tennis-Foundation/Home/) or email: [info@tennisfoundation.org.uk](mailto:info@tennisfoundation.org.uk)

## 5. Recognising Signs of Abuse [Amber – Red]

This section provides information about the signs of abuse; when to report a risk or an abuse; and what to do when someone doesn't want you to tell anyone else;

### Why don't adults at risk always report abuse?

Often adults feel disempowered and unable to speak about abuse that may be occurring to them. This is often due to fear about what people will say, or upset at not being able to resolve the situation.

### What are the signs of abuse?

Signs of abuse may include, but not limited to:

- Unexplained or concerning injuries (cuts / bruises / stomach upsets);
- Inconsistent explanation for injury;
- Unexplained change in behaviour;
- Change in physical appearance ( weight loss / weight gain / untidy);
- Change in behaviour (withdrawn / extroverted / tearful);
- No longer able to pay for lessons; and
- Change in performance.

### What are my responsibilities? When should I report a risk?

As it is everyone's responsibility to protect adults at risk from harm, all you are required to do is make sure that you listen to what the person tells you and with consent report what you have been told or seen, to the Welfare Officer or Safeguarding team. If you are concerned that the person may not have capacity to evaluate the risk of abuse with their situation, you can report this to the Welfare Officer or Safeguarding team without consent.

With any abuse situation involving an adult at risk associated with tennis, you should always inform the Safeguarding Team. When reporting any information, it is important to do so with sensitivity for the people involved and the person who may have raised the concern.

### What should I do if they don't want me to tell anyone else or I don't have consent to report a problem?

If someone does not want you to share information or you do not have consent to share the information, please remember the **Seven Golden Rules for Information Sharing**. Detailed information is provided in section 8 and section 9). But above all, please consider the following:

1. Is the adult placing themselves at further risk of harm?
2. Is someone else likely to get hurt?
3. Has a criminal offence occurred? This includes: theft or burglary of items, physical abuse, sexual abuse, forced to give extra money for lessons (financial abuse) or harassment.
4. Is there suspicion that a crime has occurred?

*If the answer to any of the questions above is 'yes' - then you can share without consent and need to share the information with the Safeguarding team and Police or Social Care. The LTA operates in line with Wandsworth Local Authority Protocol, whereby they report criminal offences **without consent** on the basis of preventing crimes, which is in the public interest.*

**Please remember: If an adult at risk is in a position where they are at risk of immediate harm, always contact the Police and Adult Social Care.**

## 6. Barriers to Reporting Abuse

This section outlines some of the barriers to reporting abuse, in other words things that stop or make people reluctant to report abuse.

### What do we know about tennis peoples' views on abuse?

While some tennis people have reported a number of reasons as to why they would be fearful to report abuse if it had occurred, they also expressed that visible signs around venues and at tournaments highlighting a zero tolerance for abuse would help them to feel reassured to tell someone. So, taking a proactive approach to raising awareness of the issues, and reiterating the commitment to ensuring people are safe from abuse, will help some people. However, others may still be afraid to report abuse.

### Why are some people still afraid to report abuse?

Barriers or concerns linked to reporting abuse may include:

- It's my word against his / hers, therefore I may not be believed;
- Not having the confidence to speak up;
- Not being aware that abuse has actually occurred;
- Not wanting to ruin the coach-player relationship;
- Being fearful that by reporting abuse it may impact on funding or career prospects;
- Not wanting to make a big deal of it;
- Threats from other people to stay quiet;
- Accepting the abuse as part of tennis; and
- Being unsure of available support / reporting procedures

### Is there anything I can do to help reduce someone's fear in reporting abuse?

Yes – your initial response can really help. It takes a lot of courage for an adult at risk to disclose situations that may be worrying them or have been occurring to them for a long time. Often an adult at risk may feel ashamed at being unable to stop the abuse, so your initial response is very important to ensure that person feels supported and empowered to manage the situation.

## 7. Responding to Concerns or Allegations [Amber – Red]

This section contains guidance about how to respond to concerns or allegations.

### What should I do if I have a concern about the safety or well-being of an adult at risk?

1. **If you have a concern** about the safety and well-being of an adult at risk, speak with that person directly, in an attempt to see what is happening. Usually worries or concerns can be resolved at this level.
2. **Still worried?** If after speaking with the adult at risk you are still worried, please contact the Welfare Officer or Safeguarding team on 020 8487 7179 / 07971 141 024 for support and advice. (See below for details of how to record information on the Well-Being Form and the section on *How to respond to an abuse disclosure or suspected abuse*).
3. **Emergency?** Always dial 999 in an emergency.

### What should I do if an adult at risk tells me they have been harmed or discloses a situation that worries them?

If an adult at risk discloses a situation that worries them or where they have been harmed, please record details on the Well-Being Form and refer to the section: **How to respond to an abuse disclosure or suspected abuse**.

*Remember, you only need to suspect abuse. You do not necessarily require evidence and it is not your responsibility to investigate these concerns, but you are required to raise the concern with the appropriate services, either the Police or Social Care.*

**National Tennis Centre (NTC):** If a criminal offence has occurred at the National Tennis Centre, please contact the Safeguarding team who will work in line with LTA polices and the Wandsworth Local Authority Protocol.

### Responding to Concerns or Allegations against Colleagues

If you are worried that the behaviour of a colleague is placing or likely to place a child or young person at risk of harm, you are required to contact Police or Social Care and then let the Safeguarding team that you have made a referral. If you are concerned about a colleagues' behaviour (amber issue) please contact your Welfare Officer or the Safeguarding team who can support with managing the situation.

The LTA **Whistle Blowing Policy** offers more information for what happens after a concern has been raised.

### Responding to Bullying & Cyber-Bullying

Bullying and cyber-bullying is emotional abuse and can also include physical abuse. Any person can be a bully and any person can be bullied. This can include intimidation, harassment, stalking, physical abuse and always includes emotional abuse.

Bullying can occur within a tennis environment or as cyber-bullying which is through social media. Either way, the intention is to hurt another person emotionally or even physically. In line with this Policy, it is important to respond to concerns or reports about bullying or cyber-bullying as with the process of any abuse.

### We're a Clubmark Club – is there something in particular we should do?

One of the reasons the LTA encourages clubs to work towards Clubmark status is that this ensures they have the right policies and procedures in place to deal with a range of situations, including abuse. This helps minimise risks and increase the likelihood that people have a positive

experience of tennis; that's also why the LTA promotes Clubmark clubs on its website and other communications.

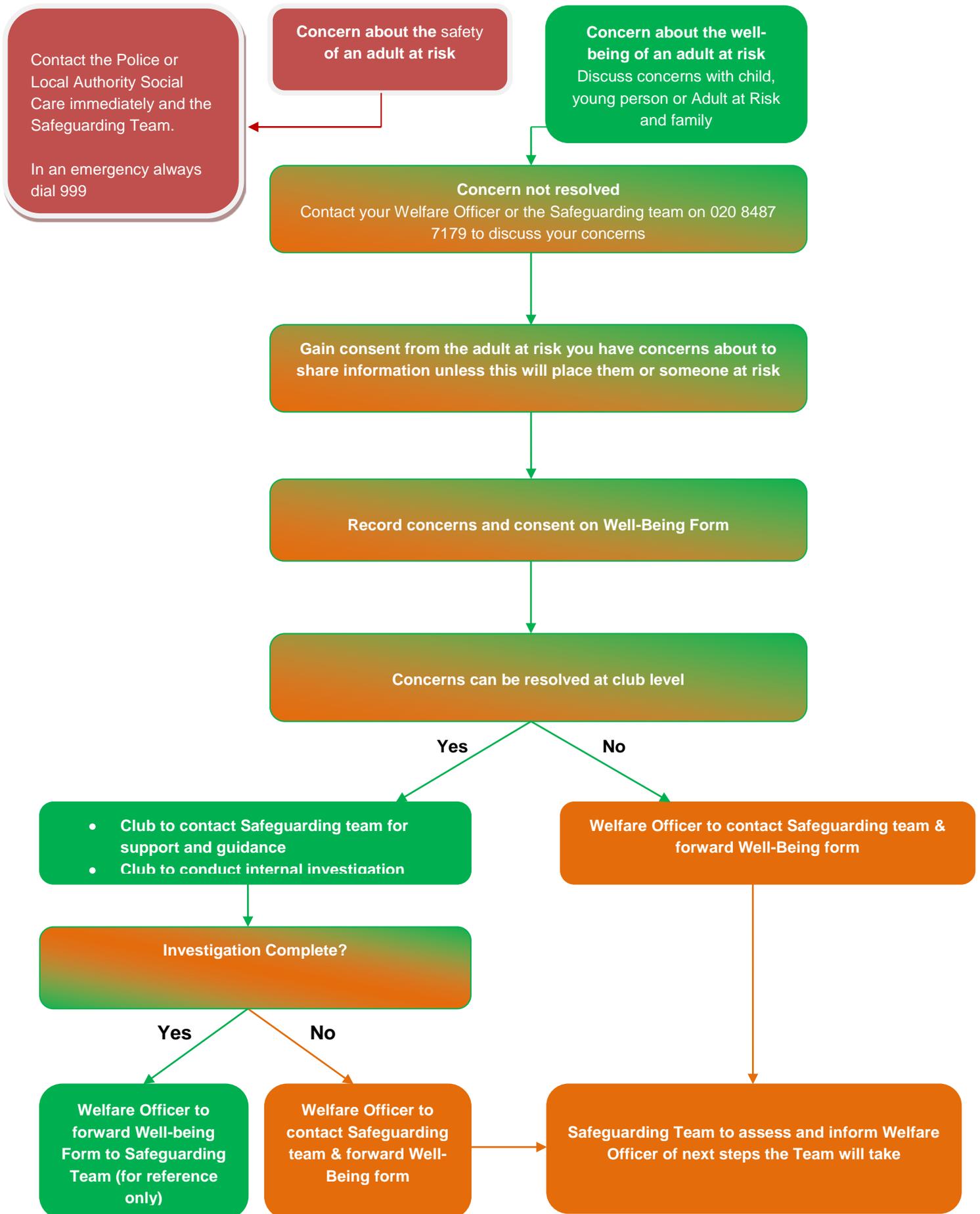
Everyone within Clubmark Clubs is required to have this Policy and procedures in place to manage all types of abuse. You are also required to have a [Complaints Policy](#) and **Feedback Forms** available for every person to be able to report any concerns.

### How should we record concerns? Is there a particular way?

Yes – there is. The LTA expects that coaches, volunteers and others involved in tennis venues should use the [Well-Being Form](#) to record:

- Details of the person;
- Any concerns you have;
- Any concerns you have been told (using the person's words and facts only);
- Actions that have been taken at a club level; and
- Advice from the Safeguarding team.

# Well-Being and Protection Process [Green – Amber - Red]



## 8. How to Respond to an Abuse Disclosure or Suspected Abuse [RED]

This section contains detailed advice on how to respond to an abuse disclosure or suspected abuse.

### Is there a particular way I should respond to an abuse disclosure?

Yes - your initial response is very important to ensure that person feels supported and empowered to manage the situation. It takes a lot of courage for an adult at risk to disclose situations that may be worrying them or have been occurring to them for a long time. Often an adult at risk may feel ashamed at being unable to stop the abuse. The Six R's (below) can help.

### What are the things I need to remember in responding?

When a person tells you about a concern remember the 'Six R's':

- 1. Remain calm** and aware of your body language and facial expressions. Try not to act shocked or worried about what you are being told as this may stop them talking.
- 2. Respond** by listening to what is said and try not to ask questions, rather encourage them by saying 'and then what happened' (remember the most important thing you can do is listen).
- 3. Reassure** the child or young person that what they have told you is important and you need to tell someone else to help keep them safe.
- 4. Remind** them that you cannot always maintain confidentiality in order to keep them safe.
- 5. Record** exact words and phrases on the *Well-Being Form* - be careful not to add you opinion or thoughts.
- 6. Report** the concern to the Safeguarding team on 020 8487 7179 or 07971 141 024.

Welfare Officers receive additional training to be able to respond to concerns that may be raised by tennis people. Information about this training is available here: [www.lta.org.uk/safeguarding](http://www.lta.org.uk/safeguarding)

### What's the formal process for taking action once abuse has been reported or suspected?

Please follow the [Well-Being and Protection Process flowchart](#) for taking action once abuse has been reported or suspected.

### What about historical Abuse – tennis specific

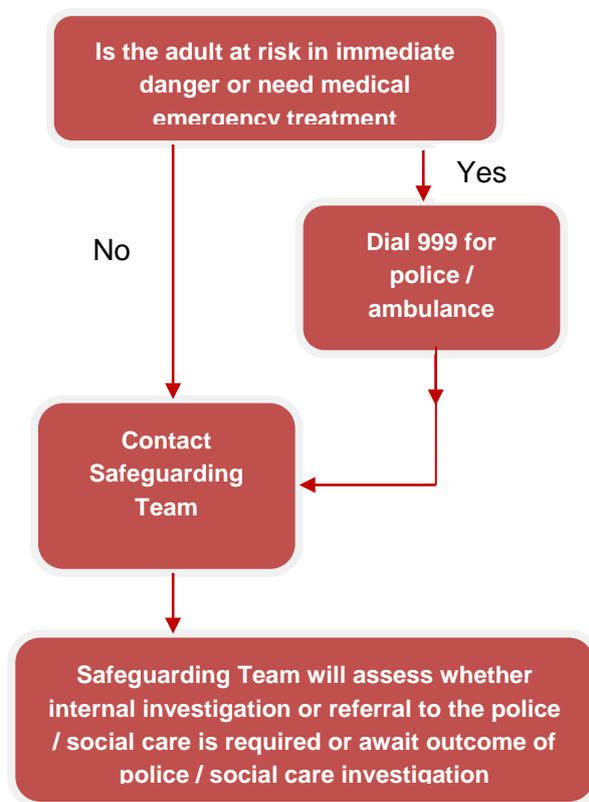
If an adult at risk or adult discloses abuse that occurred in the past within a tennis environment or by a tennis person, encourage the person to contact the **Safeguarding team on 020 8487 7179**. Unlike statutory agencies, such as the Police and Social Care, the Safeguarding team cannot undertake any investigation without consent from the victim, the Safeguarding team would work closely with victim to explain what options could be pursued.

### What if it relates to historical Abuse – not related to tennis

If an adult at risk discloses abuse that occurred in the past and not within a tennis environment, then you can refer that person to their Adult Social Care team. The Social Care team will be able to support with appropriate services that may be required and support with making a referral to the police, if the person chooses to report the crime. For support on how to make a referral, please contact the Safeguarding team on 020 8487 7179.

Always remember if an adult at risk is at immediate and significant risk of harm or a crime has occurred, contact the Police.

**Figure 8.1 Process for taking action once abuse has been reported or suspected [Red]**



## 9. Information Sharing [Amber – Red]

This section provides advice on whether there are grounds to share information, how to do so, and factors to consider.

### What are the rules governing Information Sharing?

Government guidance (2008) on information sharing explains how to share information for every person working with adults who may be at risk. There are 7 Golden Rules for Information Sharing that should be answered if you need to share information or if someone has asked you to share information. When in doubt, please contact your Welfare Officer or the Safeguarding team for support.

**1. Seek advice if in any doubt**

Without disclosing the identity of the person where possible, consult with your Welfare Officer or Safeguarding team.

**2. Be transparent**

The Data Protection Act (DPA) is not a barrier to sharing information but to ensure that personal information is shared appropriately; except in circumstances where by doing so places the person at significant risk of harm.

**3. Consider the public interest**

Base all decisions to share information on the safety and well-being of that person or others that may be affected by their actions.

**4. Share with consent where appropriate**

Where possible, respond to the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent, if this is in the public interest.

**5. Keep a record**

Record your decision and reasons to share or not share information.

**6. Accurate, necessary, proportionate, relevant and secure**

Ensure all information shared is accurate, up-to-date; necessary and share with only those who need to have it.

**7. Remember the purpose of the DPA**

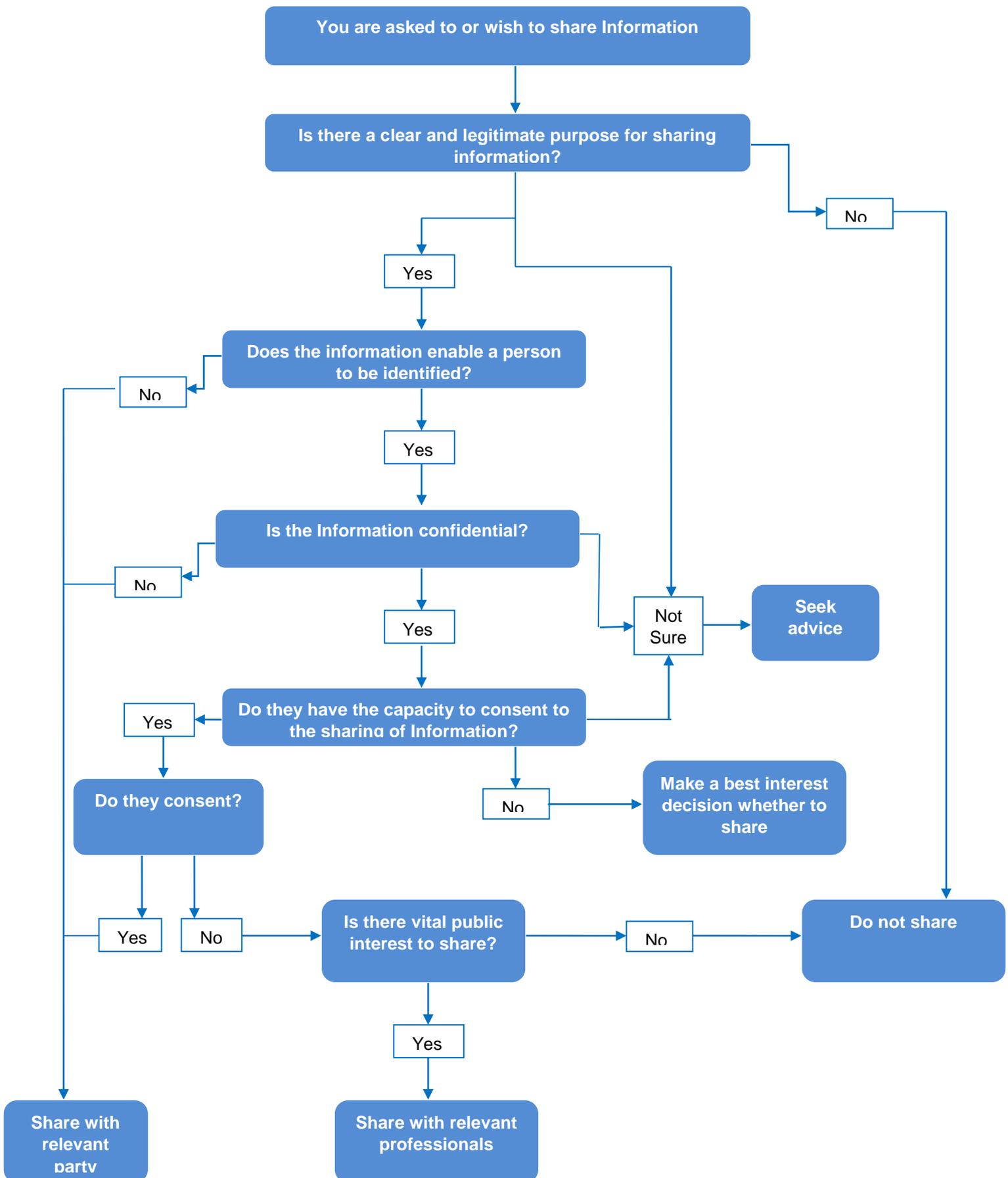
The DPA is to ensure personal information is shared appropriately, except in circumstances where by doing so may place the person or others at significant harm.

### Where can I find out more information?

The Government provides detailed guidance and this is available online. The flowchart below also outlines what to do step-by-step. If in doubt, contact the Safeguarding team.

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationdetail/page1/DCSF-00807-2008>

**Figure 9.1: Information Sharing Flowchart (HM Government, 2008)**



## 10. Confidentiality & Consent [Amber – Red]

### What is meant by confidential information and confidentiality?

Confidential information is something that is no one else knows and this information is usually not in the public domain or public knowledge. However, it is important to remember that when someone tells you confidential information, such as abuse that may have happened to them or someone else, that confidentiality is never promised.

Please be clear with the person about what information you will need to share, who you will share it with, and the purpose for sharing the information.

### Information sharing without consent

As outlined in section 5 and section 7 there are certain situations where you can share information without the consent of an adult at risk, and where you cannot maintain confidentiality. This includes when:

1. An adult at risk has suffered or likely to suffer significant harm;
2. A person (the individual, a family member, a professional or third party) may be at risk of significant harm; or
3. A crime has occurred or to prevent a crime.

### Who can give or refuse consent?

Adults are assumed to be competent to give consent in making decisions, unless otherwise demonstrated by their capacity being affected by things such as; medication, substances and some untreated mental health issues. For adults, this means that they have the capacity to choose how they live and make decisions about their safety, even if we do not agree with certain decisions. If you are unsure about whether a person has the mental capacity to make an informed choice about their safety and they are placing themselves at risk – contact Social Care or the Police.

Under the Data Protection Act 1998, an adult has the right to:

- Withhold consent;
- Limit the type of information shared;
- Limit who their information is shared; and
- Withdraw consent.

### What is informed consent and how do I record my concerns once I have consent?

It is always best practice to get informed consent, which relates to a person having all information available, at a certain point where they are required to make a decision. Once consent has been obtained, make a record of this, along with any limitations mentioned about what information they are happy for you to share and finally their signature for consent on the [Well-Being Form](#). If at any time consent is withdrawn, then this needs to be respected and recorded on the Well-Being Form.

## 11. Glossary

**Abuse:** Abuse can be a single act or repeated acts; neglect or failure to act; or a combination of different types of abuse, such as financial abuse and emotional abuse.

**Adult:** the age specified by law indicating a person has full legal capacity, which is from a person's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**Adult at Risk:** People over 18 years of age who are or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental health, disability, age or illness, and who are or may be unable to take care of themselves, or protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation. This term replaces 'vulnerable adults'.<sup>2</sup>

**Capacity:** An adult who is deemed competent to make a decision at the time this is required.

**Consent:** An adult who has capacity and uses all the information at the time available to make an informed decision.

**Cyber-Bullying:** A type of emotional abuse, including intimidation, harassment or stalking which occurs through social media, such as: Facebook, Twitter, Blackberry Messenger, Skype, and Text messages.

**Position of trust:** Any adult who works with children, young people or adults at risk.

**Safeguarding:** Includes promotion, early intervention and preventative work to help children, young people and adults at risk stay safe from significant harm.

**Significant Harm (Adults):** An adult at risk is defined as being subject to significant harm where there is ill treatment including sexual abuse and forms of ill treatment which are not physical; the impairment of, or an avoidable deterioration in, physical or mental health; and/or the impairment of physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development (Pan London Policy 2011).

**Social Care / Adult Social Care:** This name may vary between local authorities but it is the term used to define statutory local authority social services provided for those adults defined as at risk.

**Welfare Officer:** Person nominated and appointed by a tennis venue to take on the lead role and responsibility for promoting safety and well-being with particular attention to children, young people and adults at risk.

**Well-being:** This includes five areas that are a part of adults' life, which include; being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and economic well-being.

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<sup>2</sup> Protecting adults at risk: London multi-agency policy and procedures to safeguard adults from abuse (2011) p.viii