

# Child Safeguarding and Welfare Policy

SOA is committed to maintaining a culture where good, appropriate practices ensure the safeguarding and wellbeing of children and to ensuring there is zero tolerance for divergence from this culture. Members and participants in events and activities are also required to abide by applicable national legislation and relevant national and local guidelines.

SOA has a Code of conduct in place that addresses standards of general behaviour: qualified coaches sign up to the British Orienteering Code of Conduct for Coaches.

## 1. Scope

This policy and procedure address the safeguarding and wellbeing of all children who are participating in events or activities under the jurisdiction of SOA, open affiliated clubs and any closed clubs who run events or activities involving children, wherever they take place. It applies to Board members, staff, members and volunteers, all of whom shall adopt and apply the policy and associated procedures and guidance.

This policy addresses the topic for SOA and for affiliated clubs and their members. Affiliated clubs may choose to introduce additional club specific requirements.

## 2. Policy

The SOA is fully committed to safeguarding of all children involved with or affected by Scottish Orienteering activities and interactions. SOA embraces the responsibility to promote the health and wellbeing of children by providing opportunities for them to participate in a safe and enjoyable environment, and to implement this policy and appropriate procedures to protect them from harm, bullying, abuse and exploitation.

The SOA requires members of SOA and participants in events or activities that occur under SOA jurisdiction to ensure application of this commitment and abide by applicable national legislation and relevant national and local guidelines.

SOA undertakes to:

- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of children,
- Recruit, train, support and supervise staff, members and volunteers to adopt best practice to reduce risk, safeguard and protect children from

abuse, bullying, harm and exploitation.

- Address any allegations of misconduct or abuse of children in line with the procedures below addressing reporting, investigation and the SOA disciplinary policy.

### 3. Definitions

**A child:** for the purposes of this policy and associated procedures a child is recognised as someone under the age of 18 years.

**Wellbeing:** this is described in terms of 8 indicators (see reference 7.8) - Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included. The elements collectively are frequently referred to by their initials SHANARRI.

**Open and closed clubs:** Open clubs accept their membership without any qualifying requirements, while closed clubs restrict who is able to join by having qualifying requirements e.g. is enrolled at a particular further education establishment.

### 4. Principles

This policy and procedures are based on the following principles.

**Child centred** - protection and the wellbeing of the child are the primary goals

**Prevention** - it is better to take action before harm occurs

**Protection** - knowledge of, suspicions and allegations of poor behaviour and abuse will be investigated swiftly and appropriately

**Empowered** - children have the right to express views on all matters that affect them, should they wish to.

**Accountability** - ensure clarity around roles, responsibilities and accountability for everyone involved with safeguarding activities

**Working together** - we will work in partnership with young persons, clubs, carers/family/support workers and statutory agencies to achieve the best results for the individual.

**Support** - involved parties will be provided with appropriate support and training to ensure effective implementation of this policy.

## 5. Safeguarding procedures and responsibilities

Appendix 1 provides the listing of the responsibilities below by roles.

### General and appointments

- 5.1 The SOA Board shall, through ongoing implementation of this policy, promote the wellbeing and safeguarding of children while they are engaged in orienteering activities and events, and shall maintain a culture of listening to and engaging in dialogue with them.
- 5.2 The Board shall appoint an SOA Lead Welfare Officer.
- 5.3 The Lead Welfare Officer shall create a small team, normally consisting of themselves, the Welfare Director and one other Board member, to address more complex or significant safeguarding issues and incidents.
- 5.4 The committee of each open club affiliated to SOA shall ensure that a Club Welfare Officer is appointed and that continuity in filling these roles is maintained.

### Coaches and Club Welfare Officers

- 5.5 All active qualified coaches shall, if they wish to coach orienteering in Scotland, have PVG or equivalent certification in place, be licensed under the British Orienteering system and have attended the SportScotland Child Wellbeing and Protecting Children in Sport (CWPS) course (formerly known as the Child Welfare and Protection Course (CWPS)) or appropriate refresher within the last 36 months. All active Club Welfare Officers (CWOs) shall have PVG certification and have attended the CWPS course or appropriate refresher and the SportScotland Club Wellbeing and Protection Officer training course within the last 36 months.
- 5.6 Club Welfare Officers shall provide advice to the club committee and club members on safeguarding and wellbeing matters and required actions plus what needs to be avoided (poor practice and abuse). Mentoring of club members is important when they are first taking up roles that involve working with children, so that they understand risks and normal precautions associated with the activities.
- 5.7 All people acting in support roles accompanying Scottish junior groups spending nights away from home (where some juniors are not family members) should have completed PVG certification. Parents may accompany their own children without PVG certification if they are in separate accommodation.

- 5.8 All people acting in support roles during coaching activities who do not have PVG clearance shall work under the direct supervision of someone with PVG certification. Such people when acting in these roles frequently are expected to obtain PVG certification.
- 5.9 Club Welfare Officers, on being made aware of a potential safeguarding issue, should focus on supporting the individuals, ascertaining the facts without passing any judgement, record the information, inform the Lead Welfare Officer and agree with them as to who will handle the matter.
- 5.10 Where there is more than low safeguarding risk associated with an orienteering event or activity then the more significant hazards, risks and precautions need to be part of the risk assessment and the assessment signed by someone who is PVG certified (normally the Club Welfare Officer or a qualified coach).

### Education

- 5.11 The Lead Welfare Officer shall ensure that appropriate initial and refresher training materials on Safeguarding of Children and on Wellbeing are available for sharing with members, and that who should be requested to take the training is specified and shared with chosen recipients.
- 5.12 The Lead Welfare Officer shall, working with the staff and Club Welfare Officers, produce and deliver the training plan, including refresher training particularly when there are substantive changes in requirements. Likely recipients will be Board members, Club Committee members, employees, event officials, qualified active coaches and would be coaches.
- 5.13 The SOA staff team shall keep records of who has received safeguarding and wellbeing training including when it happened, when aware that such training has happened: these records will be used to identify who should receive refresher training.
- 5.14 Club Welfare Officers and qualified coaches shall ensure that they and people assisting with coaching of young people are aware of the SHANARRI indicators and how to apply them.

### Communication

- 5.15 The Lead Welfare Officer and SOA staff shall produce and deliver a Safeguarding and Wellbeing communication plan to ensure that SOA members are kept aware and knowledgeable of safeguarding and wellbeing.

- 5.16 The Lead Welfare Officer and the Safety Director shall share with SOA clubs and Club Welfare Officers suitable and anonymised learning from significant safeguarding incidents, with the focus being on the learning to be gained. If thought appropriate they may run a webinar on the topics for interested parties. Incidents from outside of orienteering can be used if they provide appropriate learning.

#### Reporting of concerns, practice or abuse

- 5.17 While the intent is to implement and follow beneficial practices for wellbeing and safeguarding (known as best or good practices), at times wellbeing concerns, poor practices or abuse/neglect may be encountered and identified. All these wellbeing concerns, poor practices or abuse/neglect instances need to be reported and investigated.

#### Definitions:

**Wellbeing concern:** when a child's wellbeing (as defined by the SHANARRI indicators) has been or is at risk of being adversely affected e.g. a child starts self-harming or becomes depressed (Health), or is being bullied or excluded (Included) .

**Poor practices:** behaviour towards a child from an individual in a position of responsibility which falls short of the required standards set in the SOA code of conduct, the British Orienteering code of conduct for coaches, and the requirements of this policy, or behaviour that does not respect children's rights or those of their parents/carers.

**Abuse:** Abuse is when a person or persons inflict or fail to prevent significant harm to a child. There are 4 identified types of abuse - physical, emotional, sexual and neglect.

- 5.18 The committee of each SOA affiliated club shall ensure that there is a working reporting system for safeguarding concerns, incidents and abuse associated with orienteering events and activities, and that access to the system by members is simple and obvious. Any reports made should go direct to the Club Welfare Officer without transit through an intermediary. The system should include the option of reporting to the SOA Lead Welfare Officer should the potential issue be with a Club Welfare Officer. Flow charts showing the decision making process for reporting and initial follow up are shown in Appendix 2. Note that information about all incidents and concerned shall be shared with the Lead Welfare Officer.

- 5.19 The Lead Welfare Officer shall ensure that a similar reporting system is in place should the reports be made direct to SOA, or to enable Club Welfare Officers to forward reports to them.
- 5.20 All members and participants at orienteering activities and events shall, if they encounter evidence of wellbeing concerns, poor practices or abuse, raise a report using the provided club or SOA reporting systems.
- 5.21 Club Welfare Officers and the Lead Welfare Officer shall ensure that the reports are stored securely, information contained within them is only shared on a need to know basis, and that ongoing appropriate security of the information is maintained.
- 5.22 Club Welfare Officers and the Lead Welfare Officer shall treat reports of historic poor practice or abuse with the same priority and interest as similar reports of current issues.

#### Investigations should issues arise

- 5.23 The Club Welfare Officer shall, on receipt of a report, involve the Lead Welfare Officer in making an early decision based on likely severity and complexity of the issue(s) and extent of information available as to whether to collect additional information and handle the investigation or to forward the issue to the Lead Welfare Officer for investigation (or if not related to orienteering, to appropriate external bodies).

The flowcharts attached to this policy set out what steps need to be taken by whom, depending upon whether the issues involve wellbeing concerns, poor practice or suspected abuse and also on the severity of the issue as seen in the initial assessment. For all more significant issues including any involving possible abuse the matter must be handed over promptly to the Lead Welfare Officer.

- 5.24 Whether it is the Club Welfare Officer or the SOA Lead Welfare Officer handling the matter, in the initial phase they should:
- make contact with the person who has submitted the information,
  - focus on collecting facts and document the information provided,
  - outline the next steps,
  - maintain appropriate confidentiality,
- 5.25 For more serious cases and for complex or significant investigations the Lead Welfare Officer shall involve the SOA Welfare Director and one other Board member in order to ensure impartiality in the investigation.
- 5.26 If the above small team choses to do so they have the option of referring cases to the British Orienteering Safeguarding case management team.

## Auditing

- 5.27 The Lead Welfare Officer shall organise and deliver an annual audit of implementation of at least one part of this policy, either across SOA or within one or more clubs.
- 5.28 The Welfare Director and the Safety Director shall review the scope and effectiveness of this policy once every 3 years, or following a significant audit finding or case in Scottish Orienteering or following changes to regulations, and make appropriate updates, should findings indicate that they are required.

## Board level oversight

- 5.29 The SOA Board shall review performance at least annually, focussing on training, communication and the number of incidents in this area that have been dealt with by SOA. If appropriate a brief summary of learning arising from the incidents may be included in the President's report to the AGM along with mention of initiatives in place to avoid incidents.

## 6. Guidance

- 6.1 Guidance on interpretation and application of the various wellbeing indicators applied to young people that may coalesce into concerns is available on the Children First and SportScotland websites.
- Wellbeing concerns can be assigned to one or more of the 8 SHANARRI indicators - some examples are:
    - **healthy** - the child has started to self-harm, is depressed or shows other signs of poor physical or mental health,
    - **achieving** - the child has struggled to master and develop skills at training that are normal for the age and stage of child,
    - **included** - a child who is being excluded or bullied.
- 6.2 A normal orienteering event held away from any buildings, changing rooms, shower facilities will have low safeguarding risks in keeping with a generic safeguarding risk assessment. Higher safeguarding risks may be present if overnight stays with juniors are organised and/or there are changing facilities/showers. Quiet and secluded routes between a finish and assembly may also increase the risk.
- 6.3 The PVG scheme, including the need for certification, applies to Regulated Work. Regulated work includes:
- teaching or supervising children
  - providing personal services to children

- working directly with children

Typical roles/positions this applies to in orienteering are qualified coaches, Club Welfare Officers, accompanying adults for junior trips involving overnight accommodation. People with the Coaching Foundation qualification are encouraged to register with the PVG scheme.

- 6.4 Event organisers for events where first aid provision is through an external company should check that the contracted first aid team members attending have PVG or equivalent certification in place. They should also inform the company that juniors will likely be present at the events.
- 6.5 SOA affiliated clubs and squads involving junior members of SOA should provide regular opportunities for the juniors to have a say about decisions involving them.
- 6.6 An individual raising a wellbeing concern or a safeguarding issue is likely to be outside their comfort zones and recipients of such information need to
  - be supportive of the individual making the report,
  - remain calm and avoid passing opinions or judgements,
  - focus on facts and be wary of introducing their own interpretations/opinions,
  - provide guidance and explanation of the next steps including the need to report the information,
  - demonstrate that they are taking the report seriously,
  - create a record of what the individual has said.
- 6.7 People who may be exposed to situations where higher safeguarding risks (as mentioned in section 5.6) are present, if the coaching or overnight stays will be taking place outside of Scotland, should check, before undertaking these roles, what the country specific requirements are for these circumstances and comply with them.
- 6.8 While the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 Part 1 section 2 indicates that placing a young person at risk is grounds for referral for inclusion in the children's list, it seems that at present the requirement is not implemented for standard risks (with normal precautions) encountered within sports.



References:-

Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007

The Equalities Act 2010

Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020

Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Act 2021

British Orienteering Safeguarding policy 2021

British Orienteering Transgender policy (awaiting review).

SportScotland Standards for Child Wellbeing and Protection in Sport 2017

National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021

Custodian: Equality, Welfare & Diversity Director

| <b>Revision No.</b> | <b>Date</b> | <b>Pages changed and brief outline</b> |
|---------------------|-------------|--|
| Issue 1             | 04/11/2023  | New policy                             |

## Appendix 1: Policy requirements by roles

### The SOA Board shall

- through ongoing implementation of this policy, promote the wellbeing and safeguarding of children while they are engaged in orienteering activities and events, and shall maintain a culture of listening to and engaging in dialogue with people in these groups.
- appoint an SOA Lead Welfare Officer.
- review performance at least annually, focussing on training, communication and the number of incidents in this area that have been dealt with by SOA. If appropriate a brief summary of learning arising from the incidents may be included in the President's report to the AGM along with mention of initiatives in place to avoid incidents.

### The Lead Welfare Officer shall

- create a small team, normally consisting of themselves, the Welfare Director and one other Board member, to address more complex or significant safeguarding issues and incidents.
- ensure that appropriate initial and refresher training materials on Safeguarding of Children and on Wellbeing are available for sharing with members, and that who should be requested to take the training is specified and shared with chosen recipients.
- working with the staff and Club Welfare Officers, produce and deliver the training plan, including refresher training particularly when there are substantive changes in requirements. Likely recipients will be Board members, Club Committee members, employees, event officials, qualified active coaches and would be coaches.
- acting with the SOA staff, produce and deliver a Safeguarding and Wellbeing communication plan to ensure that SOA members are kept aware and knowledgeable of safeguarding and wellbeing.
- working with the Safety Director, share with SOA clubs and Club Welfare Officers suitable and anonymised learning from significant safeguarding incidents, with the focus being on the learning to be gained. If thought appropriate they may run a webinar on the topics for interested parties. Incidents from outside of orienteering can be used if they provide

appropriate learning.

- ensure that a reporting system is in place for safeguarding concerns, incidents and abuse should the reports be made direct to SOA, or Club Welfare Officers decide to forward reports to them.
- ensure that the reports are stored securely, information contained within them is only shared on a need to know basis, and that ongoing appropriate security of the information is maintained.
- treat reports of historic poor practice or abuse with the same priority and interest as similar reports of current issues.
- on initially receiving a report they should:
  - make contact with the person who has submitted the information,
  - focus on collecting facts and document the information provided,
  - outline the next steps,
  - maintain appropriate confidentiality,
- with more serious cases and for complex or significant investigations, involve the Lead Welfare Officer and one other Board member in order to ensure impartiality in the investigation or refer the case to the British Orienteering Safeguarding investigation team.
- organise and deliver an annual audit of implementation of at least one part of this policy, either across SOA or within one or more clubs.

#### Club Welfare Officers shall

- provide advice to the club committee and club members on safeguarding and wellbeing matters and required actions plus what needs to be avoided (poor practice and abuse). Mentoring of club members is important when they are first taking up roles that involve working with children, so that they understand risks and normal precautions associated with the activities.
- on being made aware of a potential safeguarding issue, focus on supporting the individuals, ascertaining the facts without passing any judgement, record the information and decide whether to pass handling of the matter over to the Lead Welfare officer.

- where there is more than low safeguarding risk associated with an orienteering event or activity then the more significant hazards, risks and precautions need to be part of the risk assessment, check and sign the risk assessment (this may also be signed by a coach).
- ensure that they and people assisting with coaching of young people are aware of the SHANARRI indicators and how to apply them.
- ensure that the safeguarding and wellbeing reports are stored securely, information contained within them is only shared on a need to know basis, and that ongoing appropriate security of the information is maintained.
- treat reports of historic poor practice or abuse with the same priority and interest as similar reports of current issues.
- on receipt of a report involve the Lead Welfare Officer in making an early decision based on likely severity and complexity of the issue(s) and extent of information available as to whether to collect additional information and handle the investigation or to forward the issue to the Lead Welfare Officer for investigation (or if not related to orienteering, to appropriate external bodies).

The flowcharts attached to this policy (Appendix 2) set out what steps need to be taken by whom, depending upon whether the issues involve wellbeing concerns, poor practice or suspected abuse and also on the severity of the issue as seen in the initial assessment. For all more significant issues including any involving possible abuse the matter must be handed over promptly to the Lead Welfare Officer.

#### The Welfare Director and the Safety Director shall

- review the scope and effectiveness of this policy once every 3 years, or following a significant audit finding or case in Scottish Orienteering or following changes to regulations, and make appropriate updates, should findings indicate that they are required.

#### The committee of each open club affiliated to SOA shall

- ensure that a Club Welfare Officer is appointed and that continuity in filling this role is maintained.

- ensure that there is a working reporting system for safeguarding concerns, incidents and abuse associated with orienteering events and activities, and that access to the system by members is simple and obvious. Any reports made should go direct to the Club Welfare Officer without transit through an intermediary. The system should include the option of reporting to the Lead Welfare Officer should the potential issue be with a Club Welfare Officer. Flow charts showing the decision making process for reporting and initial follow up are shown in Appendix 2.

All active qualified coaches shall,

- if they wish to coach orienteering in Scotland, have PVG certification in place, be licensed under the British Orienteering system and have attended the CWPS course or appropriate refresher within the last 36 months. All active Club Welfare Officers shall have PVG certification and have attended the CWPO course and the CWPS course or appropriate refresher within the last 36 months.

All people acting in support roles during coaching activities who do not have PVG clearance shall

- work under the direct supervision of someone with PVG certification.

All people acting in support roles accompanying Scottish junior groups spending nights away from home (where some juniors are not family members) should

- have completed PVG or equivalent certification. Parents may accompany their own children without PVG certification if they are in separate accommodation.

The SOA staff team shall

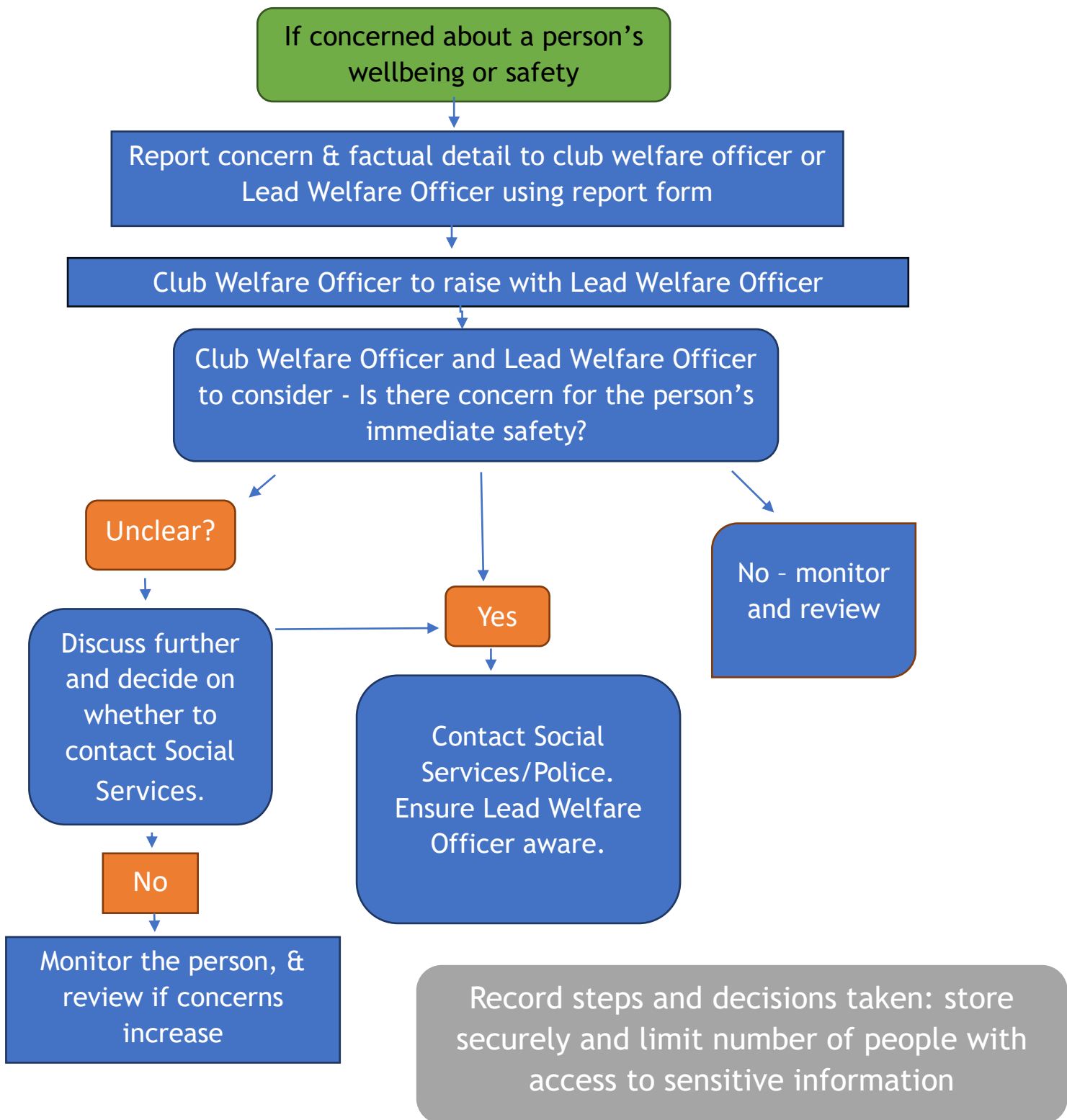
- keep records of who has received safeguarding and wellbeing training including when it happened: these records will be used to identify who should receive refresher training.

All members and participants at orienteering activities and events shall

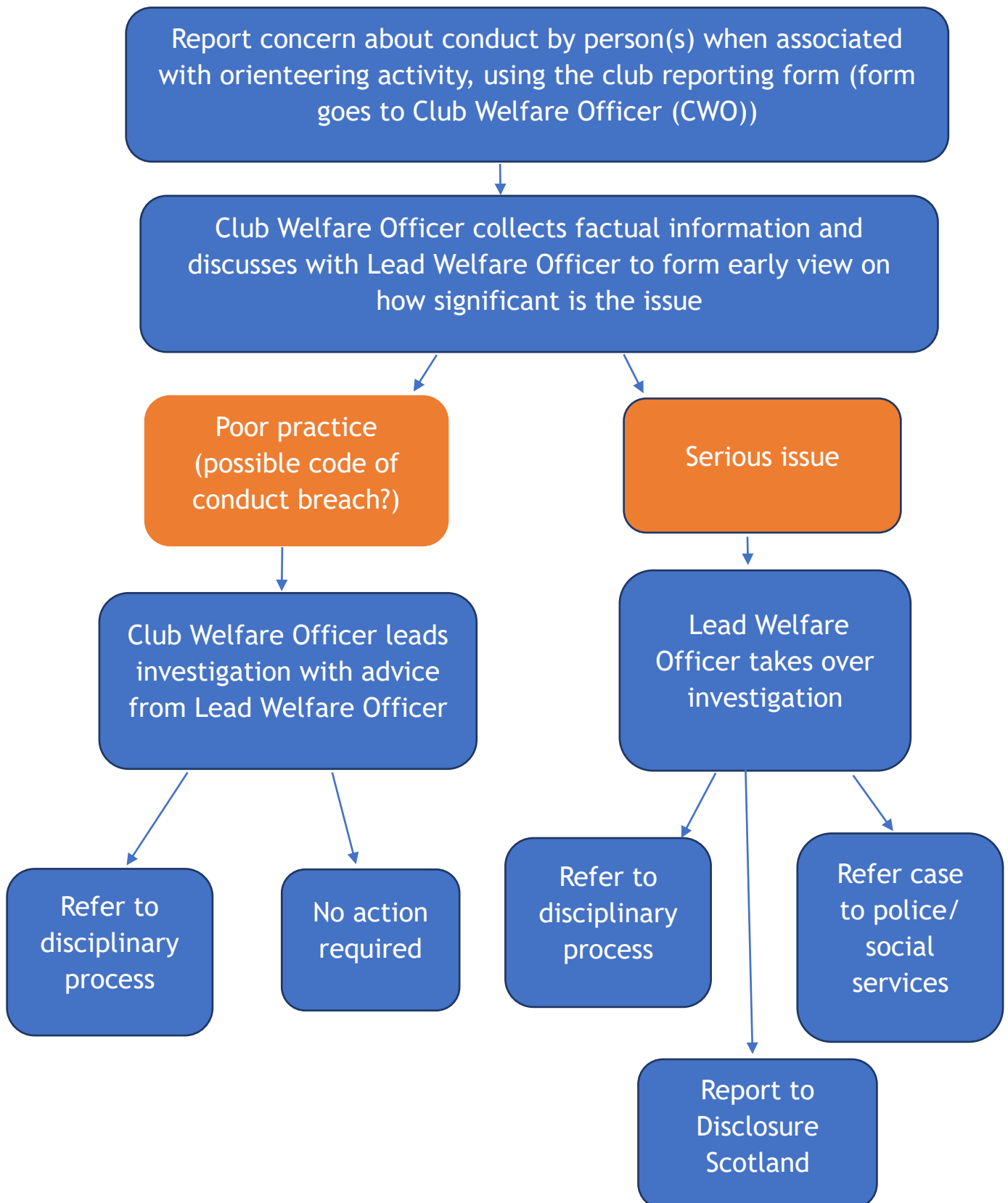
- if they encounter evidence of wellbeing concerns, poor practices or abuse, raise a report using the provided club or SOA reporting systems.

Appendix 2 Flowcharts for responding to reports of wellbeing concerns, poor practices and abuse.

## Concern flow chart



# Safeguarding incident at or associated with orienteering activity



# Appendix 3: SHANARRI wellbeing wheel

