



Gay Outdoor Club

Health and Safety Policy

Statement of Policy

This Health and Safety Policy for the Gay Outdoor Club Limited (“GOC” or “the club”) is designed to prevent accidents and provide adequate control of risks arising from our events to event leaders, participants and members of the public.

It reflects the variety of events promoted by the club, the decentralised nature of the club and the crucial role of group coordinators and event leaders in applying the policy. It adopts the risk management guidelines of the national governing body for each activity where they are applicable.

This policy has been approved by the Officers of the club on the 9 April 2016. It will be reviewed annually, and additionally as required by changes in legislation or external advice, the review to include all documents referenced in this policy.

The policy will be available to members through the club’s website and members made aware of any changes to it.

Responsibilities

Overall and final responsibility for health and safety is that of the Chairperson.

Implementation of this policy will be the joint responsibility of the Safety Officers.

Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice is delegated to the leader of each event in conjunction with the coordinator(s) of the group(s) promoting the event.

If the leadership of an event is sub-contracted to a third party, they will be entirely responsible for the implementation of appropriate health & safety policies.

Participants in GOC events (whether club members or guests) must comply with all of the following:

- Assess, and take responsibility for, their own ability to participate in an event based on their experience, fitness and abilities;
- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of other participants;
- Comply with the instructions of the event leader regarding health and safety;
- Behave in accordance with the club’s Code of Conduct;
- Report all health and safety concerns to the appropriate person

Reporting of a health and safety concern should be made as soon as possible to:

- If it relates to an event, the event leader
- If it refers to an incident, policy or general matters, the Secretary

Advice on this policy can be obtained from a Safety Officer.

Safety Officer refers to one or all of the following:

- Chairperson
- Secretary
- Events Officer
- Group Liaison Officer

Activities

Implementation of this health and safety policy will be by event leaders in conjunction with group coordinators in accordance with the documentation specific to the activity. In all cases the documentation can be found in the section of the club's website dealing with leading an event.

Walking

This includes activities which may be described by the following terms:

- Rambling
- Hill-walking
- Mountaineering
- Scrambling

This activity also includes situations where equipment such as ropes and ice-axes are needed for safety reasons (for instance because of the conditions) over ground that could normally be traversed without this equipment. Mountaineering activities which include "pitched climbing" where members of a party ascend in stages one after the other with the aid of a rope are not included.

The following documentation should be referred to as appropriate:

- Generic Risk Assessment – Walking
- Ramblers - Walk leaders checklist
- Ramblers - Leading group walks
- Ramblers - Leading walks in remote areas

Cycling / Mountain Biking

This activity includes the use any type of pedal cycle on road, cycle path or bridleway (or the equivalents in Scotland).

The following documentation should be referred to as appropriate:

- Generic Risk Assessment - Cycling
- CTC - Guidelines for ride leaders

Badminton, Gym and Swimming

These activities will take place in public venues appropriate to the activity (e.g. Sports Halls, Gymnasia or Swimming Baths) and the risk management strategies of the venue should be followed.

Running

When indoor, the activity will take place in public venues appropriate to the activity (e.g. Sports Halls or Gymnasia) and the risk management strategies of the venue should be followed.

When outdoor, the following documentation should be referred to as appropriate:

- Generic Risk Assessment - Running

Camping and social

Camping will take place in camp sites or other places where camping is permitted.

Social events may be indoor (in private homes or public places) or outdoor.

For both activities the risk management strategies of the venue should be followed, together with:

- RSA (Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance) – A guide to supervision of social activities in the sports industry

Other activities

Activities not shown above may be advertised by the club in order to facilitate members meeting to pursue other activities, which may include:

- Canoeing/Kayaking/Rafting
- Caving
- Climbing (including indoor or outdoor climbing walls)
- Mountain biking (off tracks)
- Mountaineering (using ropes)
- Skiing
- Wilderness swimming

In all such activities, GOC does not provide leadership or guidance on risk management – every participant must make their own decisions on whether, and how, to pursue such activities.

Incidents

Notification

Any incident must be reported to the Secretary as soon as possible.

An incident is defined as:

- a fatal accident.
- an injury involving either referral to or actual hospital treatment.
- any allegations of libel/slander.
- any allegations of Professional Negligence i.e. arising out of tuition, coaching or advice given.
- any investigation under any child protection legislation.
- any circumstance involving damage to third party property.
- any allegation of trespass

An injury is defined as:

- any head injury that requires medical treatment (Doctor or Hospital).
- any fracture other than to fingers, thumbs or toes.
- any amputation, dislocation of the shoulder, hip, knee or spine.
- loss of sight (whether temporary or permanent).
- any injury resulting from electrical shock or burn, leading to unconsciousness or requiring resuscitation or admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours.
- any other injury leading to hypothermia, heat induced illness or to unconsciousness which requires resuscitation or admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours.
- loss of consciousness caused by asphyxia or by exposure to a harmful substance or biological agent.

The above list is not exhaustive and if you are unsure as to whether an incident should be reported, then please contact a Safety Officer for further advice.

Under **no** circumstances should anyone admit liability or agree to pay for any damage caused as this may prejudice the position of our Insurers and could result in the withdrawal of any indemnity. We have a Liability Policy where Insurers decide if negligence attaches to us. Therefore any payments you make to any third parties will not necessarily be reimbursed.

Recording

Any notified incident must be recorded by the Secretary on the Ramblers Incident Report Form which can be found in the 'Ramblers Insurance Guide'. The printed (and electronic, if applicable) copy will be retained by the Secretary for at least 3 years.

Progression

It is important that all incidents that may give rise to a claim are reported to our insurers as soon as possible after the event. This will enable them to carry out investigations at an early stage whilst information relating to the claim remains fresh in the mind. This will also ensure that we are complying fully with our policy terms and conditions.

Contact with the insurers and any other party or organisation may only be from the Secretary.

Safeguarding

Policy

The club acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. The club is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice.

The policy recognises that the welfare and interests of safeguarding are paramount in all circumstances.

It aims to ensure that regardless of age, gender, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation everyone:

- Has a positive and enjoyable experience at the club's events in a safe environment
- Is protected from abuse whilst participating in the club's events

As part of our safeguarding policy the club will:

- Promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of members and guests
- Ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding
- Ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern
- Ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in the club's events.

Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in exclusion from the club.

Principles

The general principles for safeguarding people that will apply to all activities organised in the name of the club are that:

- All members of the club are over the age of 18
- Anyone under the age of 18 that participates in any activity as a guest will in the first instance remain the responsibility of the member who invited them on the activity, who should be an adult with an interest in the young person's welfare
- No one under 18 will participate in any overnight activities

The above principles will apply equally to vulnerable adults.

Progression

Any concerns about safeguarding children, young people or vulnerable adults must be reported immediately to the event leader, who will:

1. Take immediate action as necessary to safeguard the person; and
2. Advise the Group Coordinator as soon as practicable who will, in all cases, report the matter to the Secretary.