

# **CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY POLO CLUB**

## **WELFARE POLICY**

### **AIMS**

Cambridge University Polo Club regards the health, safety and welfare of all members to be of paramount importance. The fundamental basis for our welfare policy is the desire to treat our athletes' responsibly and with respect and to support them in their pursuit of both their academic and sporting goals. The Club recognises that welfare is not just about safety on the pitch but covers the full breadth of Club activities from training and competition through to socials and our media presence.

To this end, the Cambridge University Polo Club aims to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that policies, procedures and practices are in place to maintain a safe and healthy environment and promote a positive club culture, not only for its members but also for other people and organisations that may be affected by the activities of the Club.

### **ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **Everyone Involved in the Club**

Everyone involved in the club regardless of whether they are a participant, committee member, coach, volunteer or spectator is expected to:

- Respect the rights, dignity and values of others;
- Operate within the rules of the sport and respect the decisions of officials, making all appeals through the appropriate formal process and respect any final decisions;
- Treat facilities, staff and students at the University of Cambridge and other institutions with respect and abide by any rules that may apply;
- Be aware of how their actions may be perceived by others;
- Conduct themselves in a reasonable manner relating to offensive language and temperament;
- Refrain from any form of bullying or harassment of others;
- Not act in any way that is, or could be deemed as, discriminatory. Discriminatory behaviour may include giving different treatment to an individual or group based on a protected characteristic, such as: race, sex, gender identity, national origin, colour, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital status, religion or any other status protected by law;
- Not condone, or allow to go unchallenged, any form of bullying, harassment or discrimination if witnessed. It is not the responsibility of club members to judge whether or not a welfare violation has taken place, but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns that they may have.
- Refrain from the use of and involvement with illegal or prohibited substances at all times;
- Not act in an unlawful manner.

#### **The Club Committee**

Overall responsibility for the management of welfare within the Polo Club rests with the Executive Committee. As such, the Committee will aim, as far as is reasonably practical, to:

- Create, promote and maintain an equitable, safe and positive environment for all club members to participate and/or compete in their sport.
- Develop, implement and monitor policies, procedures and codes of conduct that are suitable for the club environment and that these are well publicised and/or formally endorsed by the relevant individuals and/or governing bodies.
- Ensure that there is at least one competent Welfare Officer designated within the club to take the lead role in dealing with welfare matters;
- Ensure that there is at least one competent Safety Officer or person designated within the club to take the lead role in health and safety policies, procedures and practices.
- Ensure that coaches, instructors, officials and other student athlete support services provided, or endorsed, by the Club are at a suitable level for the activities that they run and the skills and abilities of members.
- Support Whistle Blowing and take steps to ensure members feel able to raise concerns without fear of negative repercussions;
- Ensure that confidentiality is maintained in relation to concerns and referrals, and information is only shared on a genuine 'need to know' basis.

### **Club Welfare Officers**

The role of the Club Welfare Officer is to promote welfare centred practices within the club environment, provide a confidential, initial contact point for members in relation to welfare concerns and signpost individuals to relevant University, College and Community support systems when required. The role holder will:

- Assist the club in developing policies and procedures that prioritises equality and the ongoing welfare of club members. This should include welfare and equality policies.
- Work with the Club Committee to ensure that Codes of Conduct are in place for club staff, volunteers, coaches and competitors.
- Be a confidential point of contact for any issues concerning welfare within the Sports Club environment, e.g. poor practice, selection policy concerns, training/competition pressures from captains, coaches or other members, potential/alleged bullying or harassment.
- Ensure that all incidents are reported correctly and referred, in accordance with the Club Welfare Policy and, where appropriate, Disciplinary Policy.
- Keep up to date with referral routes available to students within the University, College and local area and signpost members accordingly.
- Act independently and in the best interests of members of the club, putting their needs above that of others and the club itself.
- Be in attendance at Club Committee Meetings to advise on welfare matters.
- Ensure confidentiality is maintained and information is only shared on a 'need to know' basis and that information is only shared on a genuine 'need to know' basis.

### **CUPC Welfare Officer**

Catherine Richards [welfare@cupolocclub.com](mailto:welfare@cupolocclub.com)

Please note that it is NOT the role of the Club Welfare Officers to provide individual counselling support to club members. The Colleges work in close partnership with the University to provide the very best pastoral and welfare support to students and, as part of that partnership, individuals such as College Tutors and Senior Tutors have

formal welfare roles and responsibilities and, as such, are better placed to provide guidance and support to students on non-sport specific welfare matters.

The University Counselling Service can provide individual counselling support for students in a range of areas, including anxiety, depression, academic related issues and relationships. In addition, Mental Health Advisors, working in the Counselling Service, can provide support and guidance to students who are in crisis or who are experiencing moderate to severe mental health difficulties. There are also a range of self-help guides, resources and information for students available on the University Counselling Service website at: <https://www.counselling.cam.ac.uk/>

## **CLUB POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

The Polo Club recognises the importance of having clear policies and procedures in place to support student welfare. Club Members should ensure that they read and adhere to the following policies and procedures:

POLICY	ACTIONS IN PLACE
Inexperienced Riders	Inexperienced riders should make themselves known. A certain level of riding is required to attend each session – absolute beginner (no previous riding ability), beginner (riding experience but no previous polo experience), novice (1-2y polo), intermediate (3+y polo).
New riding members	All new riding members must fill in a Riders Form, found in the clubhouse, prior to their first lesson.
Hat safety	<p>Helmets must be checked prior to play. A picture of the helmet, description of make and model, and picture of any kitemarks/CE marks and other certifications inside the helmet should be uploaded to the membership form when joining the club.</p> <p>From Jan 2018 we will be following the Hurlingham polo association guidelines; this means hats must be BS kitemarked and certified to PAS 015:2011, SNELL E2001, VG1 01.040 2014-12, or UTAC/CRITT 04/2015 with a either a three or four point harness.</p>
Pony Welfare	Please treat the ponies with care and consideration - they are living animals and not machines. Try not to over-work the ponies during lessons, and make sure that you warm the pony up before starting any hard work. It is suggested that the ponies should be walked and trotted gently first before cantering or working strenuously. This helps to prevent injuries and also since some of CUPC schoolmaster ponies are a little older so this allows them to loosen up first. Ponies should also be cooled down at a gentle walk before being returned to the pony hire, again this helps to prevent injury.
Horse Selection for Lessons	Horses will be matched to each rider by Anita, the groom, based upon an observational measure of ability. Her decision should not be disputed.
Medical Conditions	The pony manager should be notified of any medical conditions.
Drivers	Any registered drivers, transporting members to lessons/matches must not drink alcohol during the day prior to driving.

Socials	Members should be aware of the risks of excessive drinking. No rider should mount a pony having drunk alcohol. Members should be aware of the behavioural standards expected from them by the Club. We encourage drinking responsibly and no event should involve compulsory consumption of alcohol.
Social Media	Be aware that social media posts can be easily accessed and shared and nothing should appear which may bring the name of the Club into disrepute.
Zero Tolerance	The Club has a zero tolerance approach to sexual harassment and taking of illegal drugs. The NUS define sexual harassment as: "Any form of unwanted verbal (such as; sexual comments, unwanted questions & derogatory sexual remarks), non-verbal (such as; wolf-whistling) or physical conduct of a sexual nature which creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment (including; groping, pinching & lifting up a skirt) ."

## SPORTS SERVICE SUPPORT

The Sports Service has a number of staff available to support Clubs in setting up a positive welfare culture supported by clear policies and procedures. The Sports Service Welfare Officers are also available to students if they feel unable to speak to their Club Welfare Officer or College Tutor regarding sports related matters.

WELFARE ROLE	NAME & POSITION	TELEPHONE	EMAIL
Sports Service Welfare Officer	Tristan Coles, Head of Fitness, S&C	01223 768215	welfare@sport.cam.ac.uk
Sports Service Welfare Officer	Lucy McGennity, Sports Club Support Manager	01223 336997	welfare@sport.cam.ac.uk
University Sports Facility Child Protection Officer	Natalie Taylor, Sports Facility Manager	01223 336580	Natalie.Taylor@sport.cam.ac.uk
Welfare@Sport Strategic Lead	Karen Pearce, Deputy Director of Sport	01223 762954	Karen.Pearce@sport.cam.ac.uk