Safeguarding: What Every OTRC Member Must Know

1. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

   All members have a duty to help keep children and adults with additional care and support needs safe from harm, abuse, neglect, bullying, or exploitation—whether on the water, at the club, during travel, or at events.

2. Know what a safeguarding concern looks like

   Concerns may include physical, emotional, or sexual abuse; neglect; bullying or harassment; discriminatory behaviour; inappropriate relationships; or unsafe practices. A concern can be something you see, hear, are told about, or simply feel uneasy about.

3. Take all concerns seriously — do not ignore them

   Never assume someone else will deal with it. Even if you are unsure, it is better to report a concern than to do nothing.

4. If someone tells you about a safeguarding issue, listen calmly

   Stay calm, take them seriously, and give them your full attention. Do not show shock or disbelief.

5. Do not promise confidentiality

   Explain that you cannot keep the information secret and that you will need to share it with the Club's Welfare Office to help keep them safe.

6. Do not investigate or ask leading questions

   Let the person speak in their own words. Do not probe, confront others, or try to gather evidence yourself.

7. Reassure the person and explain what will happen next

   Thank them for speaking up, reassure them that they have done the right thing, and explain that the concern will be passed on to the appropriate person to ensure support and safety.

8. Report the concern immediately to the Club Welfare Officer

   As soon as possible, report what you have seen or been told to the club's Welfare Officer. If they are not available, follow the club's safeguarding policy for alternative contacts.

9. Record what you know accurately and promptly

   Write down what was said or observed as soon as you can, using the person's own words where possible. Include dates, times, names, and locations. Do not add opinions or assumptions.

10. If someone is in immediate danger, act straight away

    If a child or adult is at immediate risk of harm, contact emergency services immediately. Inform the Club Welfare Officer as soon as it is safe to do so.