



SAFEGUARDING GUIDANCE

Purpose

This guidance is designed to help keep all members of **Extra Cover** safe, respected and supported.

Extra Cover is an informal peer-support and community wellbeing group based around conversation, cricket, activity and social connection. It is not a professional counselling or crisis service.

The aim of safeguarding within **Extra Cover** is to:

- create a safe environment
 - support wellbeing
 - reduce risk of harm
 - ensure concerns are handled responsibly
 - protect both members and volunteers
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1. Core Principles

Extra Cover will always aim to be:

- welcoming
- inclusive
- respectful
- pressure-free
- non-judgemental
- community-led

Nobody should feel forced to:

- speak about personal issues
- attend regularly
- participate in activities
- explain their absence
- share personal information

Sometimes simply attending, keeping busy or being around others is enough.

2. What Extra Cover Is (and Is Not)

Extra Cover IS:

- a peer-support community
- a social wellbeing group
- a safe space to connect
- an opportunity to spend time with others
- a place to escape isolation for a few hours

Extra Cover IS NOT:

- counselling
- therapy
- medical treatment
- a crisis intervention service
- a substitute for professional mental health support

Group organisers should never present themselves as medical or mental health professionals unless appropriately qualified.

3. Role of Organisers and Admins

Admins and volunteers will:

- help create a welcoming atmosphere
- encourage respectful behaviour
- monitor the WhatsApp group appropriately
- respond calmly to concerns
- signpost professional support where needed
- maintain reasonable confidentiality
- act if someone may be at immediate risk

Admins are not expected to “fix” people’s problems.

Listening, checking in and encouraging support is often enough.

4. Confidentiality

Members should respect the privacy of others.

Anything shared within:

- the WhatsApp group
- meetups
- private conversations connected to the group

should remain confidential unless:

- someone is at risk of serious harm
- there is a safeguarding concern
- emergency services need to be contacted

Admins should never gossip or share sensitive information unnecessarily.

5. WhatsApp Group Safety

By joining the WhatsApp group, members understand:

- their phone number will be visible to others
- members may contact each other privately
- they can leave at any time

The following are not acceptable:

- abuse
- harassment
- discrimination
- intimidation
- repeated unwanted contact
- threats
- aggressive behaviour

Admins may remove individuals if behaviour negatively affects the safety or wellbeing of others.

6. Warning Signs to Be Aware Of

Admins are not expected to diagnose mental health conditions, but should be aware of signs that someone may need extra support.

Examples may include:

- repeated expressions of hopelessness
- mentions of self-harm or suicide
- sudden withdrawal or concerning behaviour
- severe intoxication during activities
- threats toward themselves or others
- messages suggesting immediate danger

If concerned:

1. Stay calm
2. Listen without judgement
3. Encourage professional support
4. Contact emergency services if someone is in immediate danger

7. Crisis Situations

If somebody appears to be at immediate risk:

- call 999 if emergency help is needed
- encourage them to contact a trusted person
- signpost professional services
- avoid handling serious crises alone

Useful services include:

- NHS 111
- Samaritans – 116 123
- Local GP services
- Emergency services

Extra Cover should never promise secrecy where someone's life may be at risk.

8. Alcohol and Substance Use

As some meetups may involve social drinks:

- members should drink responsibly
- aggressive or unsafe behaviour is not acceptable
- illegal drug use is not permitted at activities

Admins may ask someone to leave an activity if behaviour creates a risk to others.

9. Boundaries

Admins and volunteers should:

- avoid becoming solely responsible for someone's wellbeing
- avoid making promises they cannot keep
- maintain healthy personal boundaries
- encourage wider support networks

Support should be shared across the community where possible.

10. Lone Working and Transport

Where possible:

- avoid situations where one volunteer is left managing serious concerns alone
 - encourage members to arrange their own transport
 - avoid transporting vulnerable individuals alone unless necessary and appropriate
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11. Inclusion and Respect

Extra Cover welcomes all people regardless of:

- age
- gender
- ethnicity
- sexuality
- religion
- background
- cricket experience

Everyone should feel safe and respected.

12. Safeguarding Contacts

Extra Cover should maintain:

- at least 2–3 trusted admins
- emergency contact details for organisers
- a clear process for raising concerns

Important numbers should be pinned in the WhatsApp group.

Guiding Approach

“Support through company, conversation and community.”

“No pressure. No judgement. Just somewhere to turn up.”