Code of Conduct

**Statement of Intent**

We love Scottish dancing and music.  Every dancer, of every level of experience, should feel absolutely comfortable and safe taking part in the Newcastle Festival.  
Harassment or bullying won’t be tolerated and by attending the Newcastle Festival in any capacity (whether you are a committee member, volunteer, competing participant, spectator or social dancer) you agree to treat all participants with care and respect and to abide by our code of conduct. We want every person to feel comfortable at any of our events and we hope that this document plays a role in fostering a safe and comfortable place to dance. We believe that SCD is one of the safest communities in the world, but we don’t know everyone and, in a world-wide community, like SCD, it’s helpful to have a clear shared understanding of our behaviour expectations. The code of conduct provides us all with that clarity.

**Code of Conduct**

**1. There’s room for all of us on the dance floor**  
We welcome all dancers and music lovers regardless of age, gender/gender identity, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, religion or employment status. We encourage all dancers to explore dancing on either side of the dance (traditionally named Men’s and Ladies’ sides). Each dancer’s preference is left up to the individual. You may want to clarify with someone which role they would like to take when you ask them to dance as many dancers enjoy both sides and would be happy to dance on either.

**2. Respect others**  
Be respectful, don’t be inappropriate. Do not use sexist, homophobic, transphobic, ableist or racist language. Remember that **no** means **no**. We hope that this will be common sense to most of our dancers.

Unless someone specifically asks for feedback, don’t correct people’s dancing on the social dance floor. Please leave giving feedback on an individual to your team’s teacher or the adjudicator.

**3. Look out for each other and your community**  
Look out for each other. We are a big family and let’s ensure we love every step we take while at the same time looking out for those around us. If you feel harassed or are made to feel uncomfortable, please contact the Safer Spaces volunteer (Katie Haigh) immediately. The volunteers (Welcome desk, Refreshments etc) or any committee member will point you in the right direction. If you see someone who looks uncomfortable or upset, ask if they are ok and if they would like you to report any unwanted behaviour to the Safer Spaces volunteer on their behalf. If you harass someone, you may be asked to leave. You may also be banned from future events and the police may be notified at our discretion and as guided by the complainant.

**4. Your personal boundaries are paramount**  
Always respect personal boundaries. Dancing can involve close contact with others and we must respect each other’s personal space. If someone tells you that you are making them feel uncomfortable, respect their requirement for space.

**5. You can say no.**  
If someone asks you to dance and you don’t want to, you can say “no thank you” – you don’t need to offer an explanation. You may then ask or say yes to someone else, if you want to.

**6. Be ok with people saying no**  
If you ask someone to dance and they say no, respect their decision and ask someone else. No one is obliged to dance with you, and no one should feel obliged to accept a dance if they don’t feel like it.

**7. Dance Safe**  
Keep your eyes open on the dance floor and try not to bump into others around you. Extra spins and variations are great fun if everyone is familiar with them but should not be carried out in such a way as to prevent the participation and enjoyment of others. Remember your partner may have an injury that you’re unaware of and even one extra turn might hurt them. If your partner is hurting you unintentionally please take care of yourself and let them know.

**8.Safeguarding and Child Protection**Under UK law anyone under 18 is considered a child and any organisation offering activities for children must have a child protection/safeguarding policy.

The Newcastle Festival strongly believes that children and young people should be encouraged to take part in Scottish Country Dancing and subscribes to the following principles:

* Children and young people have a right to enjoy sport, free from all forms of abuse, exploitation and poor practice.
* All children and young people have equal rights to protection from harm.
* All children and young people should be encouraged to fulfil their potential, and inequalities should be challenged.
* Everybody has a responsibility to support the care and protection of children.
* Sporting organisations have a duty of care to children and young people who take part in sport.

Under 18s are welcome to attend the Newcastle Festival and to compete in the relevant classes. However, they must attend with their parent/guardian or as part of the team with which they are competing. Newcastle Festival is not responsible for their supervision while they are attending, competing, dancing or spectating.

Any team with under 18s who are not accompanied by their parent/guardian is expected to have their own child protection policy and procedures, including appropriate parental permission and background checked adults, in line with the Sport England’s [Standards for safeguarding and protecting children in sport](https://thecpsu.org.uk/media/445556/web_cpsustandards.pdf). For those teams based in Scotland, the [Scottish equivalent](https://www.children1st.org.uk/help-for-families/child-wellbeing-and-protection-in-sport/guidance/) is also acceptable. For teams based outside the UK, their own country’s legal standards must be met and should be compared to the Sport England Standards to ensure a similar level of protection is in place.

The parent/guardian/responsible adult is responsible for ensuring that any under 18 is appropriately supervised at all times. Please note that while performing/competing themselves, a parent/guardian/responsible adult cannot be responsible for a spectating child. Please ensure you have made appropriate alternative supervision arrangements. For teams with under 18s not accompanied by parents/guardians, this will require having multiple approved responsible adults. For parents/guardians this could be an informal arrangement with a friend/other parent. Please ensure that all parties (child/young person, parent/guardian/lead responsible adult and the new responsible adult) is aware who is responsible at any given time.

A note on changing rooms: Please ensure that at no time are under 18s in a changing room without their parent/guardian or responsible adult. Responsible adults, please ensure you are never alone with the under 18s in your care.

Should you see, hear or have any concerns regarding under 18s, please contact the Safer Spaces volunteer (Katie Haigh). The volunteers (Welcome desk, Refreshments etc) or any committee member will point you in the right direction.

**Getting Help**

If you are injured and require medical attention or if you feel unsafe or threatened and would like to make the organisers aware of inappropriate behaviour, visit a committee member or Safer Spaces volunteer.

If you would like to make a complaint or pursue a concern, please contact: Samantha Schad (Chair) on [samantha.schad@oup.com](mailto:samantha.schad@oup.com) or 07903 315614. If Samantha Schad considers the situation to be more serious than her experience can deal with, the Newcastle Festival Committee will take appropriate action to refer the issue to appropriate professionals and act on their guidance.

**Sexual Harassment**

The [Equality Act of 2010](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/26) outlines the definition of sexual harassment under UK law.

We strongly encourage anyone who has experienced any sexual harassment to report it to the police. The official advice from Northumbria Police is to dial 999 if an incident has just occurred or someone is in immediate danger. If possible, keep the clothes the victim was wearing and don’t wash them. Also try not to shower as there may be evidence the police can use. If there is no immediate risk or the incident was in the past they advise you call 101 for non-emergencies or report in person at a police station. You can also report a crime online at any time via the [Northumbria Police website](https://beta.northumbria.police.uk/our-services/report-it/report-an-incident/) (orange Report Now button) at any time after the incident has happened.

If you would like impartial advice, we recommend contacting an organisation such as one of the below:

[**S.A.R.C. Northumbria –**](https://sarcnorthumbria.co.uk/)The Northumbria SARC offers free support and practical help to anyone in Northumbria who has experienced sexual violence and/or sexual abuse, no matter when it happened. You can report what happened to the police or contact the Northumbria SARC direct. You will need an appointment before attending the SARC. They can be contacted by phone [01922 929295](tel:0808%2016%2089%20111) Monday – Friday, 9am-5pm, or out of hours, via the Pathway and Support Service on[0330 2230099](tel:0330%202230099). You can also send an email to [Newcastle.sarc@nhs.net](mailto:Newcastle.sarc@nhs.net)

[**NVWS**](https://victimsfirstnorthumbria.org.uk/)Northumbria Victim’s and Witness service - The Northumbria Victim’s and Witness Service provide free, confidential support and advice to anyone affected by crime. They can be contacted on [0800 011 3116](tel:0800%20011%203116) Monday – Friday 9am-4pm or via email on [NVWS@northumbria.police.uk](mailto:NVWS@northumbria.police.uk)

[**Rape Crisis Tyneside and Northumberland**](http://rctn.org.uk/)

For women who need to talk to someone about rape or sexual abuse. They can be contacted on [0800 035 2794](tel:0800%20035%202794) Tuesday – Thursday 6pm – 8:30pm and Friday 11am – 2pm.

**The Terrence Higgins Trust** aims to end the transmission of HIV in the UK and improving sexual health in the county. To find out more, and to get local help, [please click here](http://www.tht.org.uk/).

[**Brook**](http://www.brook.org.uk/) gives people under 25 help and advice regarding sexual health.

[**Rape Crisis**](http://rapecrisis.org.uk/) offer help and support to women who have experienced rape or any kind of sexual violence.

**Victim Support** is an independent charity that helps people affected by crime and traumatic events. They are not part of the police or any other criminal justice agency. Call Freephone [0808 16 89 111](tel:0808%2016%2089%20111).

[**The Disrespect NoBody**](http://www.disrespectnobody.co.uk/) campaign helps young people to understand what a healthy relationship is and re-think their views of controlling behaviour, violence, abuse and sexual abuse, as well as what consent means within their relationships.

[**The Criminal Compensation Authority**](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/criminal-injuries-compensation-authority/about) deal with compensation claims from people who have been physically or mentally injured because they were the blameless victim of a violent crime.

**Sexual Health Clinics** offer treatment against or help to prevent against sexually transmitted diseases, there are lots of sexual health clinics across the Northumbria Police force area. Find your [nearest clinic.](https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/sexual-health-information-and-support/locationsearch/734)

(above links taken from the Northumbria Police Website)

**Thank You**

Thanks for reading this far, it shows us that you take these issues seriously. The committee and our Safer Spaces volunteer have worked hard to develop these policies and it’s a continual learning curve for us. We will happily listen to any suggestions you have so we can continually improve and monitor this part of our community. We love our Newcastle Festival family and nothing is more important to us than ensuring our dancers and musicians feel safe and can love their music and dancing and the community of incredible people.

Newcastle Festival Committee