

(This was ratified at AGM Nov'16)

## **The Ladies Scottish Climbing Club Safeguarding Children in LSCC Cottages/Huts**

(adapted from Safeguarding children in Mountain Huts/MCofS Guidelines )

This document is for issue to the parent or nominated adult in charge of any children visiting LSCC Cottages or Huts. Specific rules for individual huts are detailed below.

### **General Points**

Adults can easily note the differences between hut and home and can react accordingly. It is much more difficult for children, especially young ones, for whom this may well be a new environment and who are unlikely to be able to adapt their behaviour to the different environment easily, if at all.

It is not reasonably practicable for clubs to operate their huts like domestic houses and therefore the accommodation and facilities available are likely to differ from those found in homes. It is not reasonable to expect members and their guests to modify their normal behaviour in the hut as soon as they are made aware that a child is present. Parents or Nominated Adults should be aware of these differences and their potential implications for children. They must be responsible for the care and control of their charges and it is in this context that parents should take note of the following:

#### **1. General safety considerations**

- The standards of hygiene and cleanliness may be less than at home
- Stairs may be dark, steep, uneven under foot and even slippery when wet
- There may not be any covers on electrical sockets
- Members may walk about with hot kettles and they may not expect to encounter small children
- Members are likely to leave hot drinks in mugs and cold drinks in glasses on floors or low tables.
- Members are likely to come in late, after some children have gone to bed and they cannot reasonably be expected to their level of speech (or content!).
- Members manoeuvring in congested car parks may drive on the assumption that adults will keep out of their way and they will not expect the presence of small children

Please note that occasionally we have freezing temperatures outside and INSIDE our huts which could be a particular risk to children staying in any of them.

#### **3. Meets**

LSCC members booking for their own use and bringing children under the age of 14 need to book the whole property. The exception is Milehouse where LSCC members may wish to book Milehouse with children under 14 in a small group. If it is at off-peak time it would be possible to book the bed-space at the hut rather than the whole hut at the discretion of the Booking Secretary.

When the hut/cottage is being booked by other clubs, they need to book the whole property if they have children under 14 in the group. In order to safeguard all members the Meet co-ordinator should discuss with all those present on the meet how the sleeping accommodation should be arranged. It may be arranged in family groups or on a single sex basis, according to the ages of the children and the needs of the group.

On any occasion when a parent or adult is accompanied by children they should be mindful of the need to safeguard children by ensuring that the sleeping arrangements are appropriate for the children and for the needs of the other members and their guests in the hut. Ultimately, if a parent is with their child or the Nominated Adult is

with a child, they can decide whether they are satisfied and happy with the sleeping arrangements available for the children for whom they are responsible. Parents need to bear mind that there may well be insufficient appropriate accommodation in the hut and that they may need to review their plans.

In circumstances where adults wish to take children for whom they do not have parental responsibility to a hut, they should get permission from the childrens' parents or Nominated Adult using the parental consent form attached. A copy of this document should also be given to the parent. The consent form enables parents to provide medical details in an emergency and outlines to parents the shared nature of accommodation in mountain huts.

### **Ronnan Cottage**

The cottage can be used by children of all ages under the supervision of their parents or Nominated Adult. The following points must be taken into consideration

- The back garden is very steep and has unprotected steep steps for access.
- There is a narrow open drain for rain water alongside the back path in places.
- Although the front garden is gated it does lead directly out onto a road.
- The kitchen does not have doors on the cupboards.
- There is a bar electric fire in the living room.
- The steps to the first floor are steep and there is no stairgate.

#### **Accommodation**

The sleeping accommodation consists of three bedrooms, one downstairs with two beds and two upstairs each with three beds.

### **Milehouse Cottage**

Milehouse can be used by children of all ages under the supervision of their parents or Nominated Adult. The following points must be taken into consideration.

- The heating stove is free standing and could present a safety hazard. There is a safety guard that can be erected round the stove.
- The upper bunks should not be used by children under 11 years.
- The grounds are not enclosed.

#### **Accommodation**

The sleeping accommodation consists of one dormitory with two layers of platform beds. There is a small room which has two bunk beds and one single beds.

### **Blackrock Cottage**

Blackrock cottage is not suitable for young children. It can be used by children aged 8 and over under the supervision of their parents or Nominated Adult.

The following points must be taken into consideration.

- The grounds are not enclosed and next to a busy thoroughfare to the ski centre.
- There is free access to a stream at the rear of the cottage
- Cleaning chemicals and tools are stored in unlocked locations within the cottage.
- The steps to the first floor are open and very steep.
- There is an open fire in the sitting room and an unguarded stove in the kitchen.
- Some cupboards in the kitchen do not have doors
- The toilet block is in an adjacent area with separate entry, the access to which necessitates exiting the main cottage area.
- The toilet block is in an adjacent area with separate entry, the access to which necessitates exiting the main cottage area.
- The cottage is in a relatively isolated location which might lead to difficulty in accessing help in any emergency eg. severe winter conditions.

#### **Accommodation**

Sleeping accommodation is split between three rooms. Two upstairs rooms sleeping four each in single beds and one bedroom downstairs sleeping two in a bunk

## **MCOFS HUTS CONSENT FORM FOR NOMINATED ADULTS**

### **Parental Consent Form**

I give consent for my child (full name) .....

to accompany (name of adult\* and his/her family) .....

To (location) .....

On these dates: From..... to .....

1. I have read a copy of the MCoFS guidance: Children & Vulnerable Adults on Meets: Guidance for Clubs available on the MCoFS website and understand that huts have communal facilities and that these include communal sleeping arrangements.
2. I understand that the above adult will endeavour to ensure that appropriate sleeping accommodation will be arranged for my child with regard to its age and sex and with regard to the needs of other members present.
3. In the event of illness or an accident requiring emergency hospital treatment, I authorise the adult named on this form to sign on my behalf any written form of consent required by the hospital authorities, if the delay required to obtain my signature is considered inadvisable by the doctor or surgeon concerned.

Signed (parent) ..... Date .....

Address.....

Tel ..... Mobile .....

E-mail .....

Signed (Nominated Adult as indicated above\*).....

Date .....

### **Details of any medical condition and current medication –**

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**N.B.** This form must be completed in duplicate and signed by both parties and a copy given to the Nominated Adult before the visit to the hut takes place