

Code of Conduct

Royal Scottish Country Dance Society Cambridge and District Branch

Formally adopted at the Branch Committee Meeting on 6 February 2026. This document will be reviewed annually in May or at any time an issue arises or it is deemed necessary by the Branch Chair. Reviewed on 2 September 2026.

Introduction and Affiliation

Welcome to the Cambridge and District Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society (Cambridge RSCDS); we are delighted to have you as part of our Group. To ensure that you and all of our dancers have a safe and enjoyable time, we require you to adhere to the following code of conduct. We hope that most of what is written below is common sense, but we ask that you take time to read through and to direct any questions to a member of the Cambridge RSCDS Committee. The following guidance applies to weekly classes and to events organised by Cambridge RSCDS.

Cambridge RSCDS is affiliated to the Royal Scottish Country Dancing Society (RSCDS), so their Code of Conduct applies automatically. We have done our best to include everything mentioned in their Code of Conduct below, but if you would like to have a look at the RSCDS document for reference, it can be found at: <https://rscds.org/about/safer-spaces/code-conduct>

Point of Contact

At evening dances a member of the Cambridge RSCDS Committee, will be nominated to act as the Primary Point of Contact and pointed out. If you have any safety or safeguarding concerns, or need assistance, this person should be your first port of call. In an emergency, or if you cannot find the point of contact, please contact any member of the Cambridge RSCDS Committee. Someone you have seen recapping dances should be able to direct you.

During classes a formal Point of Contact will not be nominated. Please speak to either the teacher or a member of Cambridge RSCDS Committee if you have any concerns.

Dancers Under 18

Dancers of all ages are welcome at Cambridge RSCDS classes and events. To ensure everyone is appropriately looked after, we ask that:

- ❖ Dancers under the age of 16 are accompanied by an adult, who will be primarily responsible for their welfare.
- ❖ Dancers between the ages of 16 and 18, who are not accompanied by an adult, make themselves known to a Committee member (as there are some greater safeguarding responsibilities on our end).
- ❖ Dancers over the age of 18 make special effort to accommodate the younger dancers, for example by avoiding coarse or sexual language around them and by generally encouraging their participation.

Our full safeguarding policy can be found on our website, but in short, if you have concerns about the treatment of anyone under 18 years old you are **required to report them** to the Point of Contact or a Committee Member. Do not allow the worry that you may 'get it wrong' to prevent you from acting. Your concern will be assessed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead; you do not need to assess how serious the concern is yourself. If the concern does prove to be a false alarm, nothing bad will happen.

Physical Safety

We ask that you look out for your own safety and the safety of others. For example:

- ❖ If you are injured, stop dancing. Often sitting out for a few dances will be sufficient, but please look after your body! At classes it is a good idea to let the teacher know you are sitting out deliberately, so they do not try to find you a partner! If you need assistance, please alert the Point of Contact.
- ❖ If a doctor or physiotherapist has given you advice to help you recover from or avoid injury, please follow their advice.
- ❖ Ensure that you are dressed appropriately for dancing. In particular, ensure that any jewellery and accoutrements (including sgian-dubhs) will not pose a hazard to you or dancers around you. If a shoelace comes undone, it is always okay to stop and tie it before continuing.
- ❖ If a collision occurs on the dancefloor, apologise and ensure that the other person is not seriously hurt. If they are injured, accompany them to seek assistance.
- ❖ Variations (birls, twirls, spins etc.) on well-known dances are welcome and encouraged at evening dances, but please be sure to add these in a way that will not confuse newer dancers or cause collisions and that your partner is happy to participate (they may have a health condition which precludes these added extras).

Social Safety

Cambridge RSCDS strives to be an inclusive society that is safe for everyone. This means that:

- ❖ We welcome everybody regardless of sex, gender identity, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, religion, physical appearance or employment status. Abuse based on these characteristics is unacceptable.
- ❖ We do not tolerate sexist, homophobic, transphobic, ableist or racist language.
- ❖ We do not tolerate bullying (including name-calling, belittling, uninvited negative feedback, hitting, shoving, stealing, damaging belongings, spreading rumours, making threats or sending/posting hurtful messages).
- ❖ We do not tolerate harassment (including unwelcome or unexpected touching, unwanted advances or objectifying comments about someone's body).

If you experience discrimination or bullying, whether targeted towards yourself or another dancer, you should:

- ❖ Challenge the behaviour if you feel comfortable to do so.

- ❖ ‘When in doubt, defer upwards’. Whether or not you feel comfortable to challenge the behaviour, seek the support of the Point of Contact or a member of Cambridge RSCDS Committee.

If you feel harassed or are made to feel uncomfortable:

- ❖ Find the Point of Contact, or a member of the Committee, who will be happy to help you.
- ❖ Make a note of the incident, including the date, what happened, and how you felt about it. Recording what happened and how you felt as distinct but connected items is the best practice.

If you see someone who looks uncomfortable or upset:

- ❖ Ask them if they are okay, and see if they need your help.
- ❖ Respect their reply.

Etiquette

The guidance above is intended to create a safe environment for everyone, and is an absolute priority. In addition, Scottish Country Dancing is a traditional art form with a strong history of manners and etiquette. As a secondary priority, we ask that you continue this heritage by:

- ❖ Listening to teachers’ and recappers’ instructions. If you would like to clarify something, ask politely.
- ❖ Asking someone to dance before joining from the bottom of the set. You may wish to clarify which side they would prefer to dance.
- ❖ At evening dances, waiting for the music to begin, or for the recapper to announce the dance, before forming sets. This helps dancers to intermingle throughout the hall.
- ❖ Being open to dancing with people you have not met before, it is a social dance form after all! That said, if you would feel uncomfortable dancing with someone you can say ‘no thank you’ when asked to dance (and can then ask someone else if you like). If you ask someone to dance and they say ‘no thank you’, please respect their decision and ask someone else.
- ❖ Waiting for sets to form and be counted before asking to change positions, for example if you would like to be 1st couple to walk the dance through, or 4th couple to watch.
- ❖ At evening dances, not giving constructive feedback unless it is asked for. Compliments, on the other hand, are welcome!

Disciplinary Action

The overwhelming majority of dancers at Cambridge RSCDS events have had no problem following this Code of Conduct. As with any physical activity, there will always be some accidental collisions and moments of awkwardness, all of which are quickly annulled with an apology. The intention of this Code is not to hold anyone to an impossible standard, but simply to make explicit what being a good and considerate dancer means.

In the very rare event that someone behaves in a consistently or grossly antisocial way, they can be expelled from the Branch and / or barred from Branch events. In order to be fair and consistent, the precedent is as follows:

- ❖ In this section, '**member**' refers to anyone who is a member of Cambridge RSCDS and / or anyone who attends Cambridge RSCDS classes at least semi-regularly. Anyone who attends classes extremely rarely, or who attends dances / events only is a '**guest**'.
- ❖ 'Antisocial behaviour' refers to a significant and deliberate breach of the Physical Safety, Social Safety or Safeguarding sections of the Code of Conduct, or other similarly unacceptable behaviour. We do not expel people for a breach of etiquette.
- ❖ If a Cambridge RSCDS **member** behaves in an antisocial way:
 - They should be given a verbal warning by either a class teacher or a member of the Committee.
 - They should be given the opportunity to correct their behaviour.
 - If they fail to do so, they should be given a written warning, signed by the Chair.
 - If they still fail to correct their behaviour, they should be expelled from the Branch and barred from Branch events.
 - A permanent expulsion or ban must be agreed on in a minuted meeting of the Branch Committee. The expulsion or ban should be communicated in a written letter or email, signed by the Chair. This notification will give the recipient the opportunity to appeal the decision if they think it was passed unfairly and the process for doing so.
- ❖ If a **guest** behaves in an antisocial way:
 - They should be given a single verbal warning by a member of the Committee.
 - They should be given the opportunity to correct their behaviour.
 - If they fail to correct their behaviour, they should be barred from Branch events.
 - A permanent ban must be voted on in a minuted meeting of the Branch Committee. The ban should be communicated in a written letter or email, signed by the Chair. This notification will give the recipient the opportunity to appeal the decision if they think it was passed unfairly and the process for doing so.
- ❖ If a **Member** or **guest** behaves in an extremely anti-social way, one or both warnings may be bypassed and they may be expelled and barred immediately. This is left up to the discretion of the Committee. We strongly believe that as far as possible people should be given the chance to improve and an immediate expulsion or ban should only be used in extreme cases, to protect the safety of others.

- ❖ Information pertaining to a possible ban or expulsion is by nature sensitive and beyond the Committee, should be shared only on a need-to-know basis.
- ❖ The Branch Secretary will maintain the minutes and correspondence in relation to any disciplinary matters to ensure this code was adhered to and to preserve this information for future Committees.

Document Control: Code of Conduct. Original editable document located on the RSCDS Cambridge Google drive.

Version	Date Approved	Changes Made	
1.1	Feb 2026	Original	
1.2	Sept 2026	Footer and document control table added. General tidying up.	