



Scottish Association of Young
Farmers Clubs

Substance Misuse Policy

Substance Misuse Policy

Introduction/Policy Statement

The vision of the **Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs (SAYFC)** is to ensure that young people in rural Scotland are supported to achieve their full potential. In addition to our vision, SAYFC has a legal responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of our members, office bearers, volunteers and staff.

It has long been recognised that SAYFC events and activities provide opportunities for members to broaden their social network and create new, life-long friendships. At the same time, SAYFC clearly recognises that the misuse of alcohol, drugs and substances may cause harm to people and can adversely affect performance, conduct and relationships at home, at work and at SAYFC activities or events, as well as having longer term effects on physical, mental and emotional wellbeing.

This policy is part of the SAYFC's approach to promoting a safe, healthy and supportive environment in which to learn, develop, socialise and work. It aims to support the early identification of issues that can arise from the misuse of alcohol, drugs and substances and to encourage members, office bearers, volunteers and staff to seek advice, obtain help and assistance. SAYFC office bearers and staff will, where appropriate, provide advice and assistance while also offering onward support from other organisations or individuals as required. This includes contacting the emergency services if needed.

In looking to promote a safe, healthy and supportive environment in which to learn, develop, socialise and work, the SAYFC will adopt a pragmatic '3 P' drug and substance misuse policy. Essentially, SAYFC's 3 Ps policy (Prevent, Pursue, Protect) will focus on:

- **Preventing** drugs from being used at SAYFC events.
- **Pursuing** those suspected of supplying drugs at SAYFC events.
- **Protecting** those that attend SAYFC events from drug-related harm.

Aims and Objectives of the Policy

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Promote a safe, healthy and supportive community for all SAYFC members, office bearers, volunteers and staff.
- Prevent drugs from being used at SAYFC events.
- Pursue those suspected of supplying drugs at SAYFC events.
- Protect those that attend SAYFC events from drug-related harm.
- Inform SAYFC members, office bearers, volunteers and staff about drug and alcohol use and define 'misuse'.

Document Name:	Substance Misuse 2025	Written By:	Development and Wellbeing Committee 2025-26
Date of Issue:	July 2025	Approved By:	Senior Leadership Team 2025-26
Supersedes:	Substance Misuse 2024		
Next Review Date:	July 2026		

- Provide guidance and advice to SAYFC members, office bearers, volunteers and staff on support and guidance options that are available.
- Enable SAYFC members, office bearers, volunteers and staff to make informed and healthy decisions about drug and alcohol use.

Definitions

What is the definition of ‘drugs’?

For the purposes of this policy, the definition of ‘drugs’ is any substance which, when taken, has the effect of altering the way a person behaves, feels, sees or thinks. Such substances can include:

- alcohol
- ‘over the counter’ medicines
- prescribed controlled drugs such as methadone or benzodiazepines (e.g. Valium) when held without prescription
- volatile substances such as glues and aerosols
- all drugs listed as illegal under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, including, but not limited to heroin, ecstasy, cocaine LSD, cannabis and amphetamines.
- new psychoactive substances (NPS) previously referred to as ‘legal highs’ and any substances under a temporary class drug order
- other substances which are illegal for human consumption within medicines legislation; this may include so-called dietary supplements, such as dinitrophenol (known as DNP).

What do we mean by ‘misuse’?

The term ‘substance misuse’ relates to all illegal drugs, all legal drugs (including alcohol, tobacco and volatile substances) and all over-the-counter and prescription medicines (when used without a prescription for the person concerned). In addition to acknowledging the legal definition of misuse, the SAYFC’s policy includes within that definition the habitual or intermittent use of alcohol or any drug or other substance that causes detriment to an individual’s health, social functioning or work performance.

Who is covered by the policy?

The policy applies to all members, office bearers, volunteers, visitors and staff involved with, or attending events and activities organised, arranged or associated with SAYFC or SAYFC member clubs.

Document Name:	Substance Misuse 2025	Written By:	Development and Wellbeing Committee 2025-26
Date of Issue:	July 2025	Approved By:	Senior Leadership Team 2025-26
Supersedes:	Substance Misuse 2024		
Next Review Date:	July 2026		

Legal Context

The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 is the main law to control and classify drugs that are 'dangerous or otherwise harmful' when misused.

The act lists all illegal (or controlled) drugs in the UK and divides them into one of three 'classes' – A, B and C – loosely based on the harm they cause to individuals and society. Class A drugs are generally considered the most harmful. This is commonly known as the 'drug classification system'.

Under this Act, the term 'misuse' covers the supply, possession and use of illegal drugs and the misuse, whether deliberate or unintentional, of prescribed drugs and substances such as solvents. Supply or possession of an illegal drug is unlawful. It is an offence for an employer, an occupier of premises or persons concerned in the management of premises to allow the supply, use or production of drugs to take place on their premises. The penalties for offences involving controlled drugs depend on the classification of the drug.

The Government has introduced powers, meaning they can place a temporary ban on any potentially harmful substance, while they await a recommendation from the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD), an independent group of experts, on whether it should be permanently controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

When it is used, the temporary ban will come into immediate effect, but it will have to be agreed by Parliament within 40 days. The drug will not be Class A, B, or C, but called a temporary class drug. It is not illegal to possess a temporary class drug for personal use, but the police can confiscate it and destroy it. It is illegal to import, distribute and sell the drug, and anyone caught could be fined, sent to jail or both.

The Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 came into force on 26 May 2016, making it illegal to produce, distribute, sell and supply any new psychoactive substances (NPS) previously known as 'legal highs'. Police will take action where they find people committing these offences. Punishments range from a prohibition notice, which is a formal warning, to seven years in prison.

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires the SAYFC to do what is reasonable to protect the health and safety of staff, office bearers and members. Alcohol, drug and substance misuse can have an impact on the health and safety of an individual and others, for example office bearers or members involved in SAYFC activities having to handle illegal substances and drug-related paraphernalia.

The Road Traffic Act 1988 states that a person is guilty of an offence if driving or attempting to drive a motor vehicle in a public place while unfit through drink or drugs. Under licensing laws, it is illegal to sell alcohol to someone who is inebriated.

Document Name:	Substance Misuse 2025	Written By:	Development and Wellbeing Committee 2025-26
Date of Issue:	July 2025	Approved By:	Senior Leadership Team 2025-26
Supersedes:	Substance Misuse 2024		
Next Review Date:	July 2026		

Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 – Maximum Penalties

Possession	Supply
Possession Class A 7 years imprisonment or a fine or both	Supply Class A Life imprisonment or a fine or both
Possession Class B 5 years imprisonment or a fine or both	Supply Class B 14 years imprisonment or a fine or both
Possession Class C 2 years imprisonment or a fine or both	Supply Class C 14 years imprisonment or a fine or both

Conduct at SAYFC events and activities

Preventing drugs from entering or being used at SAYFC events is a core aim of the SAYFC drug and alcohol policy.

The use of alcohol, drugs and substances can affect an individual's perceptions and behaviours. It is expected that members, office bearers, volunteers, visitors and staff will consider these effects before using alcohol and/or drugs and/or substances at SAYFC events or activities. Members, office bearers, volunteers, visitors and staff must:

- Behave in a manner consistent with their membership of the SAYFC community and with their status within it. At all times, whether on or off SAYFC premises, members, office bearers, volunteers, visitors and staff are expected to avoid conduct likely to bring the SAYFC into disrepute.
- Act within the law of Scotland, or the country they may be visiting (e.g. international trips).
- Behave in a considerate manner towards fellow members, office bearers, volunteers, visitors and staff.
- Familiarise themselves with and observe all the Health and Safety regulations of the SAYFC and for venues which they use.

The SAYFC also has a responsibility to uphold the law. In accordance with the law, the SAYFC prohibits the possession, taking or supply of drugs or other illegal substances at SAYFC activities and events, or premises used for SAYFC activities and events.

Any breach of this policy will result in exclusion from SAYFC events, and/or expulsion from the SAYFC. They will be regarded as offences under the SAYFC rules for member conduct and the Police may be notified.

Document Name:	Substance Misuse 2025	Written By:	Development and Wellbeing Committee 2025-26
Date of Issue:	July 2025	Approved By:	Senior Leadership Team 2025-26
Supersedes:	Substance Misuse 2024		
Next Review Date:	July 2026		

Dealing with alcohol, drug and substance misuse related incidents

The SAYFC recognises that there is a broad range of potential alcohol, drug and substance misuse related incidents, all of which vary according to the specific set of circumstances associated with each incident. The SAYFC's aim is to deal with all such incidents in a way that balances our welfare, educational, confidentiality, health and safety and legal responsibilities.

To support members, office bearers, volunteers, visitors and staff in dealing with such incidents, we have developed a set of guidelines. These guidelines are not a prescriptive list of actions that must be taken. Instead, they provide suggested considerations that are designed to support members, office bearers, volunteers, visitors and staff to address potential incidents in an effective, appropriate and supportive manner.

Confidentiality and first steps

When dealing with a substance misuse incident, there can be a temptation to seek advice and counsel from office bearers and committee members in other SAYFC districts, or even to discuss it within the local club.

It is important to highlight that SAYFC has a duty to respect the confidentiality of all parties involved in potential substance misuse incidents. In seeking to avoid misrepresentation, misinformation and breaches of trust and confidentiality members, office bearers, volunteers, visitors and staff should at the earliest instance consult the Substance Misuse Flowcharts to guide them in taking appropriate action. Additionally, contact the SAYFC Youth Development Manager for further information, support and guidance on taking appropriate and proportionate action if needed.

The SAYFC guidelines for addressing potential alcohol, drug and substance misuse related incidents are included as **Appendix A**.

Alcohol, drug and substance misuse information

Whilst the policy makes clear potential sanctions for the possession, consumption or supply of drugs or other illegal substances at SAYFC activities and events, the policy is equally clear on the SAYFC's commitment to promote and maintain the health, wellbeing and welfare of members, office bearers, volunteers, visitors and staff.

It is important that members, office bearers, volunteers, visitors and staff make informed and healthy decisions on alcohol, drug and substance use. Information will be made available throughout the year at SAYFC Office Bearer training sessions. This will include information on:

- the short and long-term effects of alcohol, drug or other substances

Document Name:	Substance Misuse 2025	Written By:	Development and Wellbeing Committee 2025-26
Date of Issue:	July 2025	Approved By:	Senior Leadership Team 2025-26
Supersedes:	Substance Misuse 2024		
Next Review Date:	July 2026		

- identification of potential hazards
- drugs and the law
- information on associated health hazards, e.g. transmission of HIV and hepatitis
- identification of national and local support agencies

Training & Awareness

Guidance and training on alcohol, drugs or substances will be available to all SAYFC staff and office bearers. The SAYFC will work in partnership with relevant organisations to provide information and awareness sessions for office bearers and members during SAYFC events and other appropriate forums.

Other Related SAYFC Policies

- SAYFC Rules for Member Conduct.
- SAYFC Office Bearer Manuals
- Office Bearer Guidance documents

Monitoring and Review

The SAYFC Alcohol, Drugs and Substance Misuse Policy will be reviewed by the SAYFC Chief Executive, Penny Montgomerie and the Emily Simpson.

Appendix A

The purpose of SAYFC's policy on drug and alcohol misuse is to:

- **Prevent** drugs from being used at SAYFC events.
- **Pursue** those suspected of supplying drugs at SAYFC events.
- **Protect** those that attend SAYFC events from drug-related harm.

SAYFC aims to provide office bearers with the ability to respond to alcohol, drug and substance misuse related incidents at SAYFC events in a safe, healthy and supportive manner. Our policy is designed to enable SAYFC office bearers to proactively protect people attending our events, whilst still continuing to maintain security policies, uphold the law and meet licensing conditions.

Dealing with substance misuse related incidents can be emotive, stressful, and complicated. In the immediate aftermath of handling a substance misuse incident, there can be a temptation to seek advice and counsel from office bearers and committee members in other SAYFC districts, particularly with regard to next steps and potential disciplinary ramifications.

Document Name:	Substance Misuse 2025	Written By:	Development and Wellbeing Committee 2025-26
Date of Issue:	July 2025	Approved By:	Senior Leadership Team 2025-26
Supersedes:	Substance Misuse 2024		
Next Review Date:	July 2026		

In promoting a culture of non-judgemental trust and support, SAYFC has a duty to respect the confidentiality of all parties involved in potential substance misuse incidents. In seeking to avoid misrepresentation, misinformation and breaches of trust and confidentiality, office bearers and committee members should contact the SAYFC Youth Development Manager for information, support and guidance on taking appropriate and proportionate action.

Telephone: 01313 332 445

Email: incidents@sayfc.org

Issues to consider when dealing with alcohol, drug and substance misuse related incidents

There are generally four broad types of drug and alcohol related incidents:

- **Emergency Intoxication/Influence:** where intoxication/influence involves a perceived threat to the health, well-being and/or safety of the individual(s) involved and others.
- **Non-Emergency Intoxication/Influence:** where no immediate danger is apparent but referral for support is advised.
- **Discovery:** where an individual finds a person in possession of, or using what is thought to be, an illegal drug or drug-related paraphernalia (e.g. a syringe).
- **Disclosure, Suspicion or Rumour:** where an allegation is made by a third party that person is misusing drugs and/or alcohol, where this allegation may be substantiated by evidence.

Key Stages for Dealing with a Drug/Alcohol/Substance related Incident

Initial Assessment of the Incident and Immediate Action

Any staff, office bearers, members or visitors who becomes aware of an alcohol/drug/substance related incident will need to make an initial assessment of the situation and take any necessary immediate action. This action may involve:

- Assessing the incident
- Responding to the incident
- Reporting and recording the incident

Assessing the incident

Assess the incident with the aim of considering what steps to take next.

Document Name:	Substance Misuse 2025	Written By:	Development and Wellbeing Committee 2025-26
Date of Issue:	July 2025	Approved By:	Senior Leadership Team 2025-26
Supersedes:	Substance Misuse 2024		
Next Review Date:	July 2026		

In assessing the incident, it is important to assess what sort of incident is occurring. Is it:

- **Emergency Intoxication/Influence:** where intoxication/influence involves a perceived threat to the health, well-being and/or safety of the individual(s) involved and other?
- **Non-Emergency Intoxication/Influence:** where no immediate danger is apparent?
- **Discovery:** where a person is in possession of, or using what is thought to be, an illegal drug or drug-related paraphernalia?
- **Disclosure, Suspicion or Rumour:** where an allegation is made by a third party that a person is misusing drugs and/or alcohol, where this allegation may be substantiated by evidence?

Considerations when responding to non-emergency and emergency intoxication/influence

- Does a member of staff from the venue, or an SAYFC office bearer, need to be involved?
- Should the person be removed from the venue, event or from the initial area of risk?
- Is medical assistance required?
- Should information be gathered from any witnesses?
- Have all reasonable efforts been made to ensure that the person can leave safely for an appropriate place, such as their home or accommodation?
- Is the person accompanied by friends that are able to look after them?
- Should a taxi company be contacted to provide transportation?
- Do the police need to be involved?
- Should the person be advised of the potential consequences of their behaviour?
- Should the person be signposted to appropriate information and support?
- How will the incident be recorded?

Considerations when responding to discovery: where a person is in possession of, or using what is thought to be, an illegal drug or drug-related paraphernalia.

The SAYFC recognises that when considering possession of, or usage of what is thought to be, an illegal drug or drug-related paraphernalia, the appropriateness of each response will be shaped, informed and led by the specific circumstances for each case.

Rather than a provide a prescriptive list of actions, we have highlighted key considerations that should help office bearers to deal with such incidents in a way that

Document Name:	Substance Misuse 2025	Written By:	Development and Wellbeing Committee 2025-26
Date of Issue:	July 2025	Approved By:	Senior Leadership Team 2025-26
Supersedes:	Substance Misuse 2024		
Next Review Date:	July 2026		

balances our welfare, educational, confidentiality, health and safety and legal responsibilities.

For example, key issues to consider when responding to an incident involving larger quantities of illegal substances, with a suspicion of intent to supply, would include:

- Informing a fellow office bearer, member of staff or venue manager.
- Contacting the police and obtaining an incident number.
- Do not approach the individual without the support of a security officer and / or the police.
- Once the police or venue security have arrived ask the individual to surrender the illegal substance.
- Take appropriate precautions regarding sharp objects.
- Do not attempt to remove an item yourself.
- Do not attempt to search such a person or their property.
- Office bearers and staff may be asked to make witness statements to the police, in order to maintain the continuity of evidence.

When responding to an incident where there is suspicion of possession of small quantities of illegal substances that are likely to be for personal use, important considerations would include:

- Is a member of staff from the venue, security, or an SAYFC office bearer available to assist?
- Should the person be removed from the venue, event or from the initial area of risk?
- Ensure confidentiality of the person is maintained.
- Do not attempt to remove an item by force or by searching.
- Is it appropriate for possession of small amounts of illegal substances to be reported to Police?
- Does the person know of the potential consequences of their behaviour and what action will be taken?
- Has the person been signposted to appropriate information and support?
- How will the incident be recorded?

Considerations when responding to disclosure, suspicion or rumour: where an allegation is made by a third party that a person is misusing drugs and/or alcohol, where this allegation may be substantiated by evidence

Document Name:	Substance Misuse 2025	Written By:	Development and Wellbeing Committee 2025-26
Date of Issue:	July 2025	Approved By:	Senior Leadership Team 2025-26
Supersedes:	Substance Misuse 2024		
Next Review Date:	July 2026		

- Should an office bearer interview the person in order to investigate the situation further, gather further information and/or evidence relating to the disclosure?
- Should the Youth Development Manager arrange to meet with person concerned to discuss the allegation?
- Do the police need to be involved?
- How will the person be advised of the potential consequences of their behaviour and what action will be taken?
- Should the person be signposted to appropriate information and support?
- How will the incident be recorded?

If needed, SAYFC will appoint an Incident Review Panel to deal with any breaches of the code of conduct. If any breaches occur, they must be passed to the National Office as soon as possible. This can be done by contacting incidents@sayfc.org / 07747 865291.

The Incident Review Panel will consist of three individuals whose identity will remain anonymous and will be handled as quickly and efficiently as possible given the constraints of Panel Representatives availability, date of reporting and staff working patterns.

Document Name:	Substance Misuse 2025	Written By:	Development and Wellbeing Committee 2025-26
Date of Issue:	July 2025	Approved By:	Senior Leadership Team 2025-26
Supersedes:	Substance Misuse 2024		
Next Review Date:	July 2026		