



# Sport Welfare

## Impact Report 2023-24

Joe Gamble, Sport Welfare Officer  
April 2024



## Introduction

**A new, national network of Sport Welfare Officers has been created across England to support National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and their local clubs to promote good practice and safe sport for young people and adults on a local level. The Sport Welfare Officer network will add capacity and expertise to the existing safeguarding work of NGBs and Active Partnerships. They will help further understand safeguarding in local clubs e.g. how policies and procedures are cascaded and help share good practice.**

## Project background

Sport England's policy response to the Whyte Review, published with UK Sport in January 2023, included the proposal to fund a professional network of Sport Welfare Officers using National Lottery grants.

In this project, Sport Welfare Officers are being employed by, and based in Active Partnerships. Recruitment began in October 2023, with the Herts Sport & Physical Activity Partnership recruiting the first in the country. Recruitment nationally is being phased, with officers still to be recruited in various counties. The funding for this project will be in place until March 2027.



# Implementation

Initiating the project in November 2023, the Sport Welfare Officers met with a variety of NGB safeguarding leads, as well as the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to gain insight and guidance on the current landscape of safeguarding in sport.



Following this, in early 2024 the Sports Welfare Officers began connecting with the Club Welfare Officers (CWOs) to gain a valuable understanding of the thoughts and perceptions of the role. This shaped a quarterly welfare newsletter, a welfare blog, and training courses which were ran for sports clubs and CWOs specifically, helping the project engage with 50 new sports clubs.

Utilising these new connections, a further database of Hertfordshire CWOs was collated, forming the foundation of the project's target audience. This database can showcase the number of CWOs engaged within the project, the level of engagement, and which sports and districts in Hertfordshire have the most engagement.



**“Safeguarding is always first on the agenda at our team meetings. If there is ever an incident, we confidentially discuss it as a team so that everyone knows what to do if a similar situation occurred. We also have our safeguarding guidelines on a coaching noticeboard for reference as well as key phone numbers” – CWO**

# Training Opportunities

Opportunities included:

- Safeguarding Children and Adults
- Duty to Care
- Time to Listen
- SEND Inclusion
- Mental Health Champion
- Play Their Way
- Clubs Clinic

11

Welfare Related  
Courses Delivered

193

Attendee's  
across courses

# Ongoing Plans

Ongoing plans for the project include the regular release of a newsletter, with important updates to safeguarding and training, as well as a blog covering important welfare topics. In addition, a training package is being formed, collectively by the East Region Active Partnership SWOs, for CWOs to upskill them in areas not already covered by current training opportunities.

The purpose of these plans is to equip CWOs with the necessary resources to thrive in their roles, including training, best practices, and up-to-date guidance in a rapidly changing environment.

## Key Insight and Learning

Upon reviewing the project's progress over the initial six months, there remains a degree of hesitancy from some Governing Bodies to fully engage with the programme which has provided unforeseen barriers. This hesitancy has influenced our ability to engage with some sports clubs, leading the project's direction towards sports that are currently more engaged.

## Next Steps

1

Increase connection with CWOs around the county to grow the database.

2

Enhance the visibility of the Newsletter and Blog to sports clubs

3

Expand the training programme to offer a wider variety of opportunities.



## Conclusion

---

From its initiation, the Sport Welfare project has developed several new relationships with various stakeholders. These connections have amplified the visibility of the project to sports clubs within Hertfordshire, increasing our reputation and influence in this new area of work.

Further plans to extend its reach and influence will come through the development of ongoing resources and training. The introduction of a quarterly newsletter and blog are there to ensure that CWOs remain well-informed on the latest developments in safeguarding and welfare.

The offer this project aims to bring will address the gaps in existing provision, empowering CWOs to advance their skills and knowledge, further increasing their confidence in ensuring a safe and inclusive community within their club.





***SPORT  
ENGLAND***

