

Active Partnerships – Sport Welfare Officers

Active Partnerships is a nationwide network of organisations working across sport and physical activity to make active lifestyles the norm for everyone in England.

They partner and connect with local and national stakeholders to transform lives and affect widespread social change. Their focus is on creating conditions in communities that enable sustainable positive impact.

To find out more about the Active Partnership in your area please visit: [The Network - Active Partnerships](#)

Sport Welfare Officer Network

The [Sport Welfare Officer \(SWO\) Network](#) is a national network of 63 SWOs providing free local, and professional support for Club Welfare Officers and their organisations. Funded by Sport England through National Lottery investment, the network works alongside National Governing Bodies, the Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) and the Ann Craft Trust (ACT) to help clubs create safer, more inclusive environments for everyone involved in sport.

Wherever you are based, your county will have at least one dedicated Sport Welfare Officer supporting clubs and volunteers. Find your local SWO [here](#).

What SWOs Do

SWOs are here to support clubs, organisations and volunteers by offering practical, locally based welfare guidance. This is primarily club-focused and includes:

- Working directly with clubs and societies to help develop safer, more inclusive cultures.
- Offering in-person 1-to-1 visits for tailored support
- Signposting universities and clubs to the right guidance, advice and safeguarding policies
- Hosting online and face-to-face training, learning sessions and local events
- Creating networks and opportunities for students, volunteers and staff to feel better connected and informed
- Sharing, recognising and developing best practice to support clubs and societies to embed positive welfare approaches
- Raising awareness of safeguarding and welfare within universities and sporting environments.

What SWOs Do Not Do

SWOs do not manage or investigate safeguarding concerns.

Sport Welfare Officer Commitment

Safeguarding in sport is essential so as to protect individuals from harm and ensure that children, young people and adults, regardless of their background, circumstances or ability can take part in physical activity without fear of abuse.

SWOs recognise that welfare and safeguarding roles can feel challenging or even isolating. The network exists to provide reassurance, practical guidance and a connected community of support, helping clubs and societies deliver safe, inclusive and positive sporting experiences for all.

Explore real examples of SWO impact [here](#).

SWOs across the country are keen to reach out and support the higher education sector. Examples of support and training may cover aspects such as wellbeing, initiations and club culture. Your local Sport Welfare Officer may be able to help with bespoke education and training. Examples of where this is already happening are as follows:

Rise (Northumberland, Tyne & Wear and County Durham)

For the past three years, the Sports Welfare Officer has worked with the Newcastle University Students' Union Opportunities team to deliver safeguarding and sport welfare workshops as part of their club committee training day for all new and returning club committee members. They have also supported with a series of workshops throughout the year to compliment and build on committee training, including creating a positive club culture; safer sport socials; and challenging behaviour with active bystander training. In addition, this year, the Sport Welfare Officer has worked with the University Sports team to deliver training to 175 Intra-mural sports teams from football, rugby, and netball.

Wesport (West of England)

The Sport Welfare Officers recently delivered a workshop titled 'Welfare and Club Culture in University Sport' to 61 club captains at the University of the West of England Students' Union and 37 club captains at Bath Spa University Students' Union. The workshop developed from an initial conversation with Students' Union staff, demonstrating how a single engagement can lead to wider delivery and reach. The Sport Welfare Officer reflected that engaging universities at the start of the academic year and integrating their offer into existing training days for university sports clubs was an effective way to reach and support large numbers of students.

Greater Manchester Moving

The Sport Welfare Officer supported both the University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) with their committee induction training, delivering workshops on safer sport socials and creating positive club cultures. The workshops

reached more than 170 sports clubs across the two universities. They are also supporting MMU with its men's mental health awareness campaigns and events.

To explore how the network could support your university and sports clubs, find your local SWO [here](#).