

Job Description and Person Specification

Post Title:	Project Officer (Sport Welfare)
Salary:	£27,922 - £28,761 per annum
Hours:	Full time (37 hours per week)
Responsible to:	Project Manager (Sport Welfare)
Responsible for:	No line management responsibilities

Organisational Context

The West of England Sport Trust (Wesport) is the Active Partnership for the West of England area (Bath & North-East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset, and South Gloucestershire). We are a registered charity and aim to build additional local, regional and national collaborations that will enable more (and better) sport and physical activity opportunities. We deliver national programmes as part of the Active Partnership network alongside local initiatives.

Our mission is:

Establishing the conditions for long-term change, enabling more people to be physically active, inclusive for all.

Wesport has adopted values that are used to guide our work and our decisions:

- We are a team of people with a passion for sport and physical activity, which is at the heart of all we do.*
- Collaboration is key; we know when to take the lead and understand when someone else is better placed to do so.*
- We are proud to work for Wesport and we place value in the work we do. We are always seeking new ways to make a difference.*
- Teamwork is vitally important – we support one another to get the job done, with honesty and commitment.*
- We are people-centred; aiming to improve local communities by working with them.*

Wesport embraces & champions equalities, diversity, equity, and inclusion. We are committed to building a team that represents a variety of backgrounds, perspectives and skills to help keep us relevant to the communities that we work within.

Project Officer (Sport Welfare) – Purpose & Summary of Role

Sport England's policy response to the Whyte Review (July 2022), published with UK Sport in January 2023, included a proposal to fund a professional, national network of Sport Welfare Officers in England.

A new, national network of Sport Welfare Officers is being created across England to support National Governing Bodies (NGB) and their local clubs to promote good practice and safe sport for children, young people and adults on a local level. The Sport Welfare Officers 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. They will work closely with other Sport Welfare Officers, National Governing Bodies of sport, and wider organisations; to connect people working on welfare and safeguarding, both inside and outside sport.

The network is being funded by Sport England using National Lottery grants.

These posts are located within Active Partnerships (APs) who have a high level of knowledge of their locality.

The Project Officer (Sport Welfare) will work alongside the Wesport Project Manager (Sport Welfare) with National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and their local clubs to promote good practice and safe sport on a local level. This new role will help further understanding of safeguarding in local sport clubs (e.g. how safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented).

The Project Officer (Sport Welfare) will complement the work of the existing safeguarding structure inside and outside sport. They may champion national safeguarding campaigns with local clubs, for example Keeping Your Child Safe in Sport week (inside sport) and Safeguarding Adults Week (outside sport).

They will also support the Project Manager (Sport Welfare) in building & maintaining relationships with statutory services e.g. Local Authority Designated Officers (outside sport). They will raise awareness of safeguarding with parents/carers and participants either inside or outside sport. The roles will share good practice locally and provide feedback to NGBs either sub-regionally, regionally or nationally (on either good or poor practice). This network of sport welfare officers will not replace the existing safeguarding work of Active Partnerships and NGBs but instead add capacity and expertise to it.

At national and local level the new role will contribute to the establishment of good welfare practice with safer club environments for participants and sports clubs, moving from welfare compliance to effective safeguarding culture. These safer club environments will lead to inclusive, improved experiences for children and adults, narrowed inequalities and consistent, best practice across sport.

Key Duties & Responsibilities

- Promote safe sport and welfare for both children and young people's and adults.
- Support the Project Manager (Sport Welfare) in training (or facilitating training for) club welfare officers (prioritising new Club Welfare Officers).
- Communicate with Club Welfare Officers using existing or new forums/networks.
- Promote best practice to Club Welfare Officers.
- Support the Project Manager (Sport Welfare) in providing consultation and advice about children's and adults welfare, including if there are concerns around abuse, referring concerns to the relevant body (Club Welfare Officer, NGB, LADO).
- Provide guidance on referring concerns to the relevant local authority Social Care departments.
- Provide guidance on responding to allegations, concerns and complaints about the actions of members of the club towards children or adults.
- Facilitate and support reporting and referral of safeguarding cases from local to national (and, if appropriate, support resolution of lower-level concerns).
- Work with the Project Manager (Sport Welfare) to prioritise club visits to support Club Welfare Officers
- Work with the Project Manager (Sport Welfare) to prioritise event visits (to raise welfare awareness with parents/carers and participants).
- Connect people working on welfare within and across sports (national, sub-regional and local).
- Share best practice and work within Wesport, other Sport Welfare Officers, and Active Partnership National Team.
- Work with the existing safeguarding team within Wesport

Person Specification Requirements

Knowledge / Qualifications:

- A degree or equivalent qualification in a related field or ability to demonstrate equivalent knowledge through experience in professional roles
- Professional welfare experience – children and young people, adults, or both
- Knowledge of welfare issues, priorities, and policies outside of sport
- Knowledge of sport & welfare issues, priorities, and policies inside of sport
- An understanding of the welfare infrastructure inside & outside of sport

- Evidence of supporting on successful resource and project management and an understanding of the techniques required through experience of managing, planning, implementing and evaluating projects.
- Experience of cross-sector stakeholder working, developing strong and successful partnerships. Ideally within the welfare / sport & physical activity sectors.
- Awareness of the inequalities faced by key audiences (in focus communities) to being physically active
- An understanding of sports equity, safeguarding children and adults at risk policies, planning, implementation and evaluation, including welfare procedures (such as those followed in response to safeguarding concerns)
- An understanding of case management thresholds & what constitutes lower-level and serious concerns
- Awareness of current issues and legislation regarding to equalities, diversity, equity, and inclusion (EDEI)
- An understanding of the requirements of key partners, agencies and organisations in demonstrating the value of physical activity to the achievement of objectives (local – national organisations)
- Experience in developing working partnerships with other professional organisations and the voluntary sector, including volunteers.
- Knowledge around the workforce – both development & deployment
- Proven ability to move initiatives forward

Skills / Experience:

- Group support, e.g. supporting a group for cultural change in welfare
- Relationship building at both a local and sub-regional level
- Networking & supporting a network of welfare volunteers
- Training – supporting volunteers to have the right welfare knowledge, and signposting to appropriate training where applicable
- Dispute resolution, negotiation, and mediation – if applicable in relation to the resolution of lower-level concerns
- Strong prioritisation skills to prioritise NGBs and local clubs for welfare support

Communication:

- Excellent communication skills via a range of methods, including digital technology, to enable the effective sharing of welfare resources
- Evidence of the ability to motivate, enthuse, persuade, negotiate with and influence others
- Proven ability to communicate effectively with people on all levels and from a variety of organisations

Self motivation:

- Proven ability to meet objectives on own initiative
- Committed to continuous self-development
- A willingness to work long and unsociable hours when required

Teamwork:

- The ability to work as part of a team and a willingness to make an effective contribution to the work of the team.
- Understanding the dynamics of team work when this incorporates other organisations and individuals that need to be influenced / supported in achieving the team goals

Organisation:

- Excellent personal organisation skills
- Able to prioritise/meet deadlines as and when required
- Able to cope with unexpected and stressful situations
- An ability to chair and organise meetings, seminars, conferences and other related activities

Response to change:

- A willingness to keep abreast of developments and contribute to the planning and implementation of change

- A willingness to work towards a wide range of agendas, and enable the linking together of individuals from different organisations into an effective team with shared goals and responsibilities
- Able to support the implementation of change in relation to role responsibilities in line with Wesport's strategy, vision and mission and a constantly changing national / local sector landscape.

Physical:

- Able to undertake all the physical requirements of the job, such as frequent travel to a variety of external locations
- Able to work occasional evenings and weekends as required, in particular for engaging with welfare volunteers

This job description sets out the duties of the post at the time it was drawn up. Such duties may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the duties or level of responsibility entailed. Such variations are a common occurrence and cannot of themselves justify a reconsideration of the grading of the post.