

PLEASE NOTE THIS NEWSLETTER HAS BEEN SENT TO ALL SOGB SWO'S
SWO March 2026 Newsletter

Hi all, not long now until the Spring Equinox where we will see the world waking up and coming back to life, along with it easier access to the outside, lighter and longer evenings and a lot of gearing up to the National Summer Games 2026!!

Firstly, some news...

I will be leaving Special Olympics GB on Thursday 19th March to take up a new training role in a different sector.

I feel incredibly privileged to be able to say that SOGB has been part of my life since 2018. I have attended National Games, Regional Events, Local Events, and World Games and during all of this, I have seen the incredibly inspiring stories of so many Athletes and Volunteers and witnessed the hugely positive impact Special Olympics GB activity has for all those involved. I have been in awe of the achievements of Athletes and Volunteers and feel honoured to have been part of this journey that has benefited so many people.

It is with a heavy heart that I am stepping away from Special Olympics GB, and more specifically away from the safeguarding sector. It has been a difficult decision to step away, but the time feels right for me to explore a new path in a different sector. I would like to thank everyone who has supported me in my role as Safeguarding Lead at Special Olympics GB. I leave with some incredible memories and experiences that I will cherish forever.

In terms of continuation of workstreams and getting safeguarding advice, guidance, and resources, the safeguarding@sogb.org.uk email is always managed. We have Anna Nash in the role of Safeguarding Support Officer, and Vanessa Snell SOGB's Director of Operations who oversees safeguarding matters. There has been a thorough handover of all safeguarding work, ongoing cases, and future planning so the change will be a smooth one.

CPSU Framework Submission

We have now achieved a "Fully Met" rating with the CPSU level 1 safeguarding framework. This puts us in a great position nationally with our safeguarding standards on which we can now build. The framework has identified a pathway for improvement that has fed into our internal safeguarding plans, and our upcoming Safeguarding Strategy which maps out the next few years of safeguarding work for

the organisation.

ACT Framework Submission

The Ann Craft Trust Framework submission feedback has arrived, and we have achieved a “Conditionally Met” rating. The Ann Craft Trust Framework doesn’t have levels of review like the CPSU; therefore, we are marked against the highest possible standards for adult safeguarding during this review. The Ann Craft Trust informed us that we are in a really good position with our safeguarding standards and that we are well on the way to above and beyond safeguarding practice organisationally. Similarly to the CPSU framework, this feedback will feed directly into development such as our Quality Improvement Plan, and our Safeguarding Strategy.

I would like to say a huge thank you to you all for all the work you do in the safeguarding space. It really made a difference and being able to showcase the work as part of our evidence contributed hugely to our success with both framework submissions.

Internal Updates

National Summer Games

With the National Summer Games Prep well under way, the SOGB Safeguarding Team has developed a safeguarding framework for the games which includes recruiting several Event Safeguarding and Welfare Officers. If this is something you are interested in taking on, get in touch with the team at safeguarding@sogb.org.uk for more details. Training will be provided for the role if you do not have up to date training.

Volunteer Update – National Summer Games

As you will be aware, the National Summer Games are fast approaching. The National Office has seen a huge increase in applications from volunteers wishing to support this exciting event.

To ensure that all volunteers are fully registered and able to participate, it is a requirement that everyone holds a valid DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check or PVG (Protecting Vulnerable Groups) membership. As these checks can take several weeks to process, it is important that they are arranged as soon as possible.

Please take a moment to check that your DBS or PVG is up to date. If it has expired or you do not currently have one in place, we kindly ask that you submit your request promptly to avoid any delays in your registration.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment. We look forward to

working together to make the National Summer Games a fantastic and successful event for everyone involved.

Safe Touch Guidance

Anna Nash from our Safeguarding Team has recently been delivering safe touch awareness sessions to athletes, locally and some online with the Athlete leadership Team. The sessions focus on things like appropriate touch, communication, and consent. To compliment this, and to provide some helpful guidance to staff and volunteers we have been working on a safe touch guidance document which outlines key messages around safe touch and communication, how to address issues, how best to talk to athletes about safe touch, and also what to do if you have concerns. This guidance is in review but should be released fairly soon.

E-learning

There are now two new safeguarding e-learnings available to members (or will be very soon). They are an Introduction to Safeguarding, and a Safeguarding Refresher.

The Introduction to Safeguarding course is designed for first time learners, such as new volunteers, or those who have not yet completed a safeguarding awareness course. This will also be utilised for the National Summer Games as a base level expectation for all volunteers attending. The course is approximately 30-40 minutes long and gives you a basic overview of need-to-know safeguarding such as types of abuse, indicators of abuse, and what to do if you have a concern.

The Safeguarding Refresher course is designed for those who have already completed an introductory safeguarding course, and covers the basics similarly to the introduction course, but builds on this with the theme of “Positive Safeguarding Culture”. The course guides you through the six key principals of safeguarding, and how by using them you can create safe, happy, fun environments for all involved.

The courses can be found [HERE](#) on the Special Olympics International Learning platform.

All you have to do is create an account, and select Great Britain as your nation and you should automatically be assigned the SOGB safeguarding course. If you are not assigned automatically, simply search SOGB and they should come up.

SOGB Safeguarding Number

Just a reminder that the SOGB Safeguarding support line has been updated, the new number is: **07383 389663** and is operational Mon-Fri 9-5. SOGB does not have an out of hours Safeguarding line. In the event of an incident that occurs out of

hours, please ensure you follow steps to ensure the safety of all in the immediate, take action to refer to local authority or police where necessary and then pass this information onto the SOGB Safeguarding Team via our reporting form found [HERE](#)

External Updates

CPSU

Using AI in Sport Responsibly

AI is a fast growing tool, that is now being used in almost all sectors. With any new tech or advancement in processes, there is risk to consider, so you're using AI in any of your processes be mindful that you are doing so safely. To support the safe use of AI in sport, the CPSU have developed some guidance in the area. This can be found [HERE](#)

Ann Craft Trust

2025 Reflections

The Ann craft Trust recently completed a completed a piece of work around adaptations of sport to make them more accessible, especially for those with additional mobility needs. While many SOGB clubs are already well under way with adapting sports to suit athlete needs, the Ann Craft Trust explores the deeper implications of doing so specifically in relation to safeguarding. This is a really interesting and important piece of work. To learn more, check out the article [HERE](#)

Shining a Light on Inclusivity in Sport

As part of LGBTQ+ History Month, the Ann Craft Trust have produced an article all about the links between EDI and Safeguarding and how the two work in tandem to promote truly inclusive and safe environments for athletes, volunteers and staff alike. To learn more about this, and check out the Author's blog click [HERE](#)

Policy/Procedure Snippet

Medication Management Guidelines and Procedures for Events and Competitions

As we ramp up preparation for the National Summer Games, getting athletes ready, volunteers up to speed and plans in place, we anticipate an increase in

activity up and down the country.

With this, and the National Summer Games themselves, we will see clubs from all over the country coming together to compete. For many this means long travel days and overnight stays, and a need to support athletes with the administration and management of medication.

SOGB have a guidance document for this, which can be found on our resources page [HERE](#)

The guidance outlines and explains levels of medication administration support, some helpful advice and guidance on administration of medications, and also explores things like athlete refusal of medicine, giving advice, medicine storage and legal information about controlled drugs.

For anyone travelling long distance, and/or staying overnight away from home who has an athlete with regular medication, this guidance is for you. Take some time to identify if you have athletes in your club that have medication, and familiarise yourself with this document and the athlete individual risk assessment and one page profile.

Time to Listen Course

If you are a new SWO, or if you have not yet completed the 'Time to Listen' training course, SOGB may be able to help you access the course.

Having this training or an equivalent is vital in ensuring you are sufficiently trained and skilled to perform the role of SWO at Special Olympics.

Having an appropriately trained SWO at every club will soon be a requirement of accreditation, so make sure you get yourself on this training or an equivalent course as soon as possible.

SOGB can provide funding for you to complete this course, so get in touch if you need it.

There are plenty of online classrooms delivering the Time to Listen course, you can check these out [HERE](#)

If this training is something you're interested in completing and would like to discuss this further, please email me at adam.leathwood@sogb.org.uk

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Sign Off

I will sign off my final Safeguarding Newsletter simply with...

Thank you.

Thank you for everything you do, your care for athletes, your dedication to what is at times an extremely challenging role, thank you for picking up the phone and asking questions, thank you for your emails and feedback, thank you for approaching safeguarding with compassion, calmness, and professionalism every time.

Without you, all of the progress made over the last 18 months simply wouldn't have happened.

You are incredible, thank you,

Best,

Adam