

Wellbeing & Protection (Safeguarding) Strategy

2024–2030



Scottish
Swimming



Foreword

Nothing is more important than your safety, wellbeing and ultimately your enjoyment of our sports and Scottish Swimming continually review all we do to ensure you feel supported no matter how you take part – as an athlete, volunteer or employee – and that you can freely express any concerns. The strategic approach detailed in the following pages and subsequent action plan will be regularly reviewed and will evolve over time as we seek to continually improve our support and guidance as society changes.

We all have an active responsibility in developing, embedding and living a culture that is positive, safe and inclusive within each of our clubs, at all our events, indeed across each sport. This will take time, is a continuous effort and owned by us all, with the goal that the strategy and positive culture is realised.

**Euan Lowe (CEO) &
Graeme Marchbank (Chair of the Board)**

Our Vision: **everyone can swim!**

Safeguarding Mission Statement:

Scottish Swimming is committed to fostering a safe and positive culture within our aquatic sports by:

Driving a rights-based approach to ensure our athletes and young people are placed at the heart of everything we do

Providing support to our coaches and volunteers, ensuring they have the opportunities to develop and excel

Involving the voices of athletes to ensure their views are central to decision-making within our sports

Creating appropriate opportunities, safe spaces, and supportive environments to enable all our members to achieve their full potential whatever their involvement in our sports

Guiding Principles

This strategy has been shaped by an internal review of the current Scottish Swimming policies, procedures and resources along with learnings that have been highlighted from previous case management practices and feedback from Scottish Swimming Staff and Board members. The outcomes and learnings of the Whyte Review (2022) in Gymnastics and the Swim England Weston (2023) and Listening (2024) reports have also been useful in shaping this strategy. These have been invaluable in helping Scottish Swimming identify areas for improvement and the need for a holistic approach to safeguarding across our aquatic sports.

This strategy also aligns with the Standards for Wellbeing & Protection in Sport (Children 1st) and the Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) framework. By adhering to these standards, we aim to ensure everyone involved in our sports has confidence that Scottish Swimming is doing all it can to keep our members safe.

This strategy also draws influence from the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC). Upholding the UNCRC principles reinforces our commitment to creating an environment where the rights of every child involved in aquatics are acknowledged, respected, and protected and that we are operating in line with the UNCRC Incorporation (Scotland) Act 2024. Recognising the importance of involving the voice of athletes in consultations and embedding them in the decision-making processes within the sports is paramount to creating safe and progressive environments.

Safeguarding Strategic Priorities

Our Environments

We are committed to fostering a positive, collaborative and supportive wellbeing culture in our aquatic sports, following a rights-based approach that is athlete focused. Our spaces are safe and welcoming for members to participate, train, and perform.

Our Members

We ensure that our coaches and volunteers receive ongoing training, development, and support to maintain safe environments in our clubs, backed by strong case management practices and procedures.

Our Operations

We maintain strong governance, policies, and leadership in wellbeing and protection within our aquatic sports. Regular reviews of documentation and procedures ensure that each sport remains safe and suitable for its purpose.



Scope, Application, Oversight & Review

Scope

Scottish Swimming is committed to providing safe spaces and fostering a positive safeguarding culture for all members participating in aquatic sports. Creating an environment that supports our vision of "everyone can swim" is essential. Scottish Swimming staff play an important role in shaping this positive culture and supporting members. This strategy encompasses our existing work and future goals to safeguard children, young people and adults by championing their rights, including their voices in decision-making, and nurturing their wellbeing and development.

This strategy brings to life the safeguarding threads that are woven through the Scottish Swimming Corporate Plan, Volunteer Strategy, and the internal Aquatics Plan. It outlines our actions to embed proactive wellbeing and safe sport into everyday aquatic activities, prevent abuse in all its forms, and manage concerns robustly. It challenges Scottish Swimming and reflects our commitment to continuously develop and improve our approaches within aquatics.

Application

The strategy applies to and seeks to develop a positive safeguarding culture across all of our:

- members
- member clubs and composite teams
- performance programmes
- national squad programmes
- national events and activities across all aquatic sports

The strategy does not extend to unaffiliated aquatics clubs and swim schools (private or Local authority/leisure trust) or aquatics activities delivered via third parties or private providers who are not official Scottish Swimming partners.

Oversight & Review

With regards to the oversight of this strategy, the Scottish Swimming Board has overall responsibility for safeguarding, wellbeing, protection and safe sport. Quarterly safeguarding reports are submitted to the Board for review and feedback. Having a Board Director with specific knowledge and skills in this area, who assists in the review and management of the strategy, is beneficial for the Safeguarding Team. The Safeguarding Manager and the Management Team will regularly monitor and report on progress against the objectives.



Delivery of the Strategy

The Scottish Swimming Safeguarding Team will lead the delivery of the strategy with implementation through the wider Scottish Swimming Aquatics Team, who will then cascade the information and actions to members and affiliated clubs and programmes. It is also important that Scottish Swimming works collaboratively with our partners and wider staff to facilitate and drive the actions from the strategy.

The Club Wellbeing & Protection Officer (WPO) network plays a vital role in receiving, processing and implementing the information and actions associated with this strategy and the safeguarding policies. Support for WPOs is available from the Safeguarding Team, Regional Swimming Development Managers (RSDMs) and the National Aquatics Sport Manager.

To facilitate change across our sports we need to focus on how well we operate, and not just on what we do. This will ensure that the safeguarding culture improves over time and the outcomes associated with this strategy are more significant and longer lasting. The Scottish Swimming club accreditation scheme, Aquamark, will be essential in supporting the implementation and delivery of safeguarding best practice and the development of a safer more positive culture across our clubs and sports.

Our specific programme of work is a three-step approach, progressing when each action/project is ready and not in a prescribed year or timeline. This ensures what we do is effective, consistent and sustainable. Some of the actions/projects may not pass through each of the three stages detailed below by 2030, but progress will be made towards all the strategy outcomes and the associated action plans will be regularly reviewed to ensure significant progress is made across all areas.

Step 1 - Review & Strengthen

Assess the current support, policies, processes, and resources to identify areas for improvement. Strengthen and reaffirm existing practices, encouraging members and clubs to follow best practice.

Step 2 - Progress & Consistent

Implement a plan to advance the identified actions, sharing improvements and updates with members and affiliated clubs. Raise the minimum standards and embed best practice across all clubs. Strive for consistency throughout all clubs, aquatic sports, events, and activities, ensuring a positive experience and enhancing the overall culture.

Step 3 - Refined & Sustainable

Progress each initiative until outcomes are sustainable and each club's culture becomes positive, supportive, and progressive. As safeguarding standards reach consistency and sustainability, the focus shifts to embedding best practice and driving the highest safeguarding standards across the aquatic sports.

Enablers

The Scottish Swimming Corporate Plan states that success in aquatics relies on having the right people, partnerships, programmes, and places to achieve our vision: that everyone can swim. Our ambition focuses on four vital aims: more swimmers, stronger clubs, supporting athletes, and active communities. Successful implementation of this strategy across our aquatic sports also depends on having these elements embedded in our activities.

- **People:** Having the right people involved helps develop a positive safeguarding culture driven by the implementation of safeguarding policies, procedures, and resources that members follow.
- **Places:** Ensuring that our members have access to the right places is essential. These places must be safe and supportive environments where athletes, coaches, and volunteers can participate and excel in their roles.
- **Programmes:** Implementing the right programmes supports and develops members, helping them progress towards fulfilling their potential. This applies to athletes, coaches, volunteers, technical officials, and parents/guardians.
- **Partnerships:** Establishing the right partnerships ensures that Scottish Swimming, its clubs, programmes, and members receive appropriate support, enabling opportunities for access, growth, and development.

Culture

Culture is the fundamental element that will help us achieve this strategy and is also a key component of the Club Development Framework. Developing and embedding a culture that is positive, safe and inclusive within each of our clubs and across each sport is essential but will take time. As part of this strategy all of the objectives and outcomes contribute to progressing towards the desired culture which Scottish Swimming is committed to achieving. It will take us some time to develop and embed a positive and safe culture across all of our aquatic sports and clubs.

Everyone has a role to play in this journey.



Focus Areas

In order to achieve the Safeguarding Strategic Priorities, this strategy for Scottish Swimming is structured around four focus areas, each with specific objectives that inform operational plans, measurable objectives, and resource allocation. These focus areas guide Scottish Swimming in creating a safer environment across aquatic sports, supporting athletes, coaches, volunteers, and clubs. The following table details a summary of the focus areas and their core elements:

Focus Area 1 — Engage & Protect

Engage & Communicate: Scottish Swimming prioritises engaging its members, embedding a rights-based approach across our clubs and sports, and involving athletes of all ages in decision-making. This ensures that young people have the opportunity to contribute to the direction and management of their club, sport and activities.

Protection & Safety: Effective systems and processes must be in place for members to raise concerns safely and ensure these are addressed appropriately. Clubs are encouraged to provide supportive environments for coaches and volunteers, which are essential for sustaining aquatic sports.

Focus Area 2 — Support & Organise

Policies & Compliance: Scottish Swimming commits to developing and updating safeguarding policies and resources to ensure safe practice in clubs and across our sports. A robust safer recruitment process is implemented to ensure that only suitable individuals are engaged in regulated roles within our clubs. Specific standards and compliance measures relating to the safer recruitment process for regulated roles have been developed.

Case Management: Clubs are supported in following the recommended procedures for case management when concerns arise. Emphasis is placed on adopting low-level concern policies, effective investigation and disciplinary practices and establishing case review practices to foster a strong safeguarding culture. Providing clubs with the tools to ensure they provide safe and supported environments is essential for the development of safe sport.

Focus Area 3 — Learn & Develop

Safeguarding Culture: Establishing and embedding a positive safeguarding culture across clubs and our sports is essential to creating environments where athletes, coaches, and volunteers can thrive and perform their roles effectively. This approach will help members feel confident in raising concerns about poor practice and that these will be managed appropriately.

Support & Development: Ensuring that Wellbeing & Protection Officers and Club Chairs are well-supported is vital. Coaches need access to learning and development opportunities to enhance their safeguarding knowledge and coaching practice. Education for parents, guardians, and club members regarding safe sport practice is prioritised to enhance the overall environment for athletes. This includes the signposting to sources of mental health support and helpful resources.

Focus Area 4 — Lead & Review

Governance & Leadership: Strong governance structures are required to ensure the safety of aquatic sports. An annual review of safeguarding governance helps ensure its effectiveness and that it adapts to any necessary changes. This includes creating and utilising a case management review group (CMRG) which will provide assurance that the correct case related decisions are taken.

Case Management & Organisational Risk: It is important for Scottish Swimming to have an appropriate leadership structure to manage safeguarding effectively and allocate sufficient resources to support clubs and members. Implementing an effective case management system (e.g. Globocol) and regularly reporting safeguarding trends to the Board is crucial. Regular assessment of safeguarding risks allows Scottish Swimming to implement appropriate mitigations.

Monitoring & Reporting

Each of these focus areas includes six objectives that will be tracked and reported to the Scottish Swimming Board and Management Team regularly, ensuring the effectiveness of the strategy and continuous improvement in safeguarding efforts. The following table details each of the focus areas and outlines the objectives, what success would look like, and how success will be measured for each:



Focus Area 1 — Engage & Protect

	Objectives	What success would look like?	How will it be measured?
Rights-Based Approach	To champion the rights of athletes and young people by embedding a rights-based approach into decision-making processes in clubs across the aquatic sports.	Clubs fully embed the rights of athletes and children in their activities and place their young people at the heart of decision making.	• Feedback from members and club surveys • Club environment checks • Internal annual review of activities
Athlete Voice	To ensure the voice of the athlete is championed throughout our aquatic sports, by providing appropriate opportunities for athlete engagement, representation, and involvement in the decision-making processes.	Athletes' views are regularly sought and influence the decision-making processes within clubs and the wider aquatic sports. This includes having youth representation on Scottish Amateur Swimming Association (SASA) Council and National Sport Committees.	• Number of opportunities at National level created • Feedback from young people & clubs through surveys • Young Volunteer Programme activities and reporting • Young person representation on SASA Council and National Sport Committees
Raising Wellbeing & Protection Concerns	To develop accessible and effective ways for members to raise concerns with WPOs and Scottish Swimming, allowing them to access the support they require.	Members feel confident that they can raise concerns and are reassured that concerns will be correctly managed.	• Feedback from clubs and members • Number of concerns received and managed
Events & Programmes	To deliver a range of events and programmes that operate in a safe and controlled environment.	A range of safe and controlled events and programmes enable members to develop and excel in their roles.	• Regular review of event and programme schedule • Feedback from members and club surveys
Volunteer Experience	To ensure volunteers receive sufficient support, resources and development opportunities, through consolidation and collaboration to ensure their roles are manageable and they are not overwhelmed by workload.	Volunteers have sufficient support, manageable workloads, effective succession planning, and access to necessary resources.	• Feedback from members and club surveys • Club environment checks • Shared evidence from Volunteer Strategy Action Plan
Member Communication	To effectively communicate appropriate wellbeing & protection information to all our members on a regular basis through a range of mediums.	Wellbeing updates are communicated regularly to members in an accessible and child-friendly format.	• Communication plan developed • Child friendly materials available and communicated • Feedback from Chairs and WPOs

Focus Area 2 — Support & Organise

	Objectives	What success would look like?	How will it be measured?
Safer Recruitment	To support WPOs to embed the safer recruitment policy into every club.	All clubs have a robust safer recruitment process in place that is followed consistently.	• Reporting from the JustGo database for regulated roles • Club environment checks • Annual review of policy and process
Standards & Compliance	To maintain high standards of safeguarding compliance within regulated roles, enabling members to access safer spaces to participate and applying appropriate sanctions where necessary.	No sanctions applied, indicating full compliance with safer recruitment requirements across all clubs/members. Timeline and communication plans developed for any new required compliance measures.	• Reporting from the JustGo database for regulated roles • Club environment checks • Report of sanctions issued by club/trend reporting
Case Management Processes	To embed a robust case management process across all clubs for investigations and disciplinaries, and additionally support the WPOs with managing the recording, reporting and decision-making aspects of case management.	WPOs are confident in the use of a robust case management process and are sufficiently supported.	• Feedback from WPOs • Analysis of cases recorded and reported • Annual review of processes
Low Level Concerns	To prevent concerns/cases from escalating unnecessarily the development and embedding of a low-level concerns policy across every club is essential.	Low level concerns policy in place and effective in reducing the number of higher risk cases. This allows Scottish Swimming to track patterns of behaviour and manage cases more effectively, thereby making clubs safer for members.	• Low level concern policy developed and communicated to Clubs & WPOs • Number of cases being reported/recorded • Reports are developed to track these • Feedback from WPOs
Safeguarding Policies & Resources	To ensure that the safeguarding policies, procedures and resources align with standards, legislation and Scottish Swimming values, and are clear and accessible for clubs and members to utilise.	Policies and resources are reviewed annually, remain current, and are communicated effectively to clubs and members.	• Feedback from WPOs • Review schedule in place • Ongoing compliance with legislation and best practice
Case Review Process	To support clubs in utilising a case review process to ensure that learnings from case management are identified and reflected in future best practice.	A case review policy is embedded and actively used by clubs and Scottish Swimming to identify learnings, improving future practice.	• Process confirmed and communicated to clubs • Feedback from WPOs • Evidence of review outcomes • CMRG operating and reviews completed of Scottish Swimming cases

Focus Area 3 — Learn & Develop

	Objectives	What success would look like?	How will it be measured?
Positive Culture	To embed a positive safeguarding culture across all levels of our aquatic sports and empower and support our members to challenge negative behaviours and practice within our clubs/programmes.	A safe and positive culture is embedded within all clubs and across aquatic sports, empowering members to challenge negative behaviours.	• Feedback from Clubs and Chairs/WPOs/Head Coaches • Number and type of cases reported • Club environment checks
Safe Places	To support our clubs to effectively implement and embed the safeguarding policies and processes to become safe places for our members, ensuring everyone understands their responsibility and obligations for safeguarding.	All clubs and venues are safe spaces for members, with a positive culture and effective processes for raising concerns.	• Club environment checks • Feedback from Clubs and Chairs/WPOs • Number and type of cases reported
WPO Support & Development	To ensure the club WPO network is trained, developed and supported in order to facilitate effective case management processes and provide advice to all members.	A well-supported network of trained and developed WPOs who facilitate effective case management and provide advice to members.	• Attendance record at development opportunities • Feedback from clubs and Chairs/WPOs • Annual WPO survey
Support for Coaches & Volunteers	To develop a package of tools and information for coaches and volunteers to access when they need support during case management processes involving their athletes, or signposting to advice when they are involved in a concern that has been raised against them.	Coaches and Volunteers feel supported by their clubs and Scottish Swimming during case management processes involving their athletes or themselves.	• Feedback from Coaches • Support package/processes in place • Clubs recording usage of resources • Annual needs analysis in place
Membership Education	To ensure all members have the required learning and development opportunities available to support them in carrying out their specific roles, helping to achieve safer sports for all.	Members are well-informed and knowledgeable about safeguarding, helping to achieve safer sports and understanding their specific roles and responsibilities.	• Schedule of learning and development opportunities • Attendances recorded • Feedback from members and club surveys • Club environment checks
Mental Health Signposting	To communicate signposting information for mental health to clubs for distribution and to develop processes to support WPOs in managing mental health concerns effectively (linkage with the Scottish Swimming Mental Health Strategy).	Effective communication and processes for mental health signposting and support for WPOs managing mental health concerns.	• Feedback from WPOs • Signposting resource and information in place • Clubs recording usage of resources

Focus Area 4 — Lead & Review

	Objectives	What success would look like?	How will it be measured?
Effective Leadership & Governance	To ensure Scottish Swimming's governance remains fit for purpose in supporting the safeguarding needs of the aquatic sports, and to ensure the organisation has the required leadership, expertise and resources to provide the correct level of support to members.	Scottish Swimming's governance remains fit for purpose, providing the necessary leadership, expertise, and resources to support safeguarding needs.	• Level of support to clubs sufficient based on advice/case load capacity • Annual governance review process • Feedback from staff and clubs regarding support vs capacity
Globocol Case Management System (CMS)	To expand access to the Globocol Case Management System for all clubs, allowing case information to be more easily recorded, managed and stored, and enabling the identification of trends and patterns of behaviours.	All clubs access Globocol, uploading case information regularly, with effective analysis by Scottish Swimming to identify trends and patterns of behaviour.	• Number of clubs accessing Globocol • Number of cases uploaded to Globocol • Quarterly trend reporting
Case Management Review Group (CMRG)	To recruit a new Case Management Review Group to support with Scottish Swimming's case management decisions and recommendations, as well as the review of closed cases.	The CMRG is fully operational, advising on current cases and reviewing closed cases, with learnings embedded into best practice.	• CMRG in place • Number of cases reviewed • Annual evaluation of group and feedback from CMRG members and relevant clubs
Club Safeguarding Tool (CST)	To encourage clubs to complete the Children 1st Club Safeguarding Tool, supporting them with their action plans to improve their safeguarding health, and identifying trends in actions nationally to tailor support and resources available to clubs and members.	Clubs complete the Children 1st CST and implement action plans, with trends identified to tailor national support from Scottish Swimming. Action plans are reviewed annually.	• Number of clubs completing the CST • Club Action plan completion status • Identification of common actions and areas where support is required
Case Monitoring/ Trend Analysis	To develop effective safeguarding monitoring, reporting and trend analysis mechanisms to help Scottish Swimming remain fit for purpose in supporting the wellbeing and protection of its members.	Regular case monitoring and trend analysis mechanisms are in place to help Scottish Swimming target interventions and remain fit for purpose.	• Quarterly trend reporting to management team and Board • Monthly case monitoring reports analysed
Safeguarding Risk & Mitigations	To continually evaluate the safeguarding risks to Scottish Swimming and its clubs, while managing and reviewing the mitigations that are in place across the aquatic sports.	Quarterly assessment of safeguarding risks are conducted, and mitigations are managed and reported to the Board and Management Team.	• Quarterly assessment reports in place and notified to management team. • Biannual risk and mitigations report to Board

Summary & Next Steps

By 2030, Scottish Swimming is committed to achieving the objectives and priorities of this strategy. However, we also realise that developing such a robust culture may take longer and we need all the component parts to be sustainable to allow the culture to continue to grow and develop. The priorities and objectives of this strategy will be reviewed annually and may change depending on any relevant current issues or legal requirements that are required to be implemented across the aquatic sports.

To effectively achieve and sustain the positive and safe culture which our sports are striving for, achieving our strategic priorities is essential:

- **Our Operations** need to be effective and progressive,
- **Our Environments** need to be positive, safe and inclusive
- **Our Members** need to feel involved, respected and protected

This strategy helps deliver the Scottish Swimming Corporate Plan. It does not sit in isolation but links to the outcomes of the Aquatics Plan, the Mental Health Strategy and the Volunteer Strategy. Scottish Swimming will continually monitor, review and adjust action plans when required as our sports, clubs and members develop to ensure that the correct support is provided by the right people, places, programmes and partnerships that enable us to drive the change towards safer aquatics.

Scottish Swimming commits to ensuring that our staff continue to display high standards in their approach to safeguarding and wellbeing in their roles, the support they provide to our clubs and members and that they live by our team values: Aspire, Support, Focus. A calendar of regular learning and development opportunities will be developed for the organisation, to allow our staff to remain up to date on best practice and informed of any updated policies, projects and priorities in safeguarding, wellbeing and protection.



Scottish Swimming Safeguarding Team Contacts

The generic Safeguarding Team inbox which is monitored office hours daily – wellbeingprotection@scottishswimming.com

The Scottish Swimming safeguarding policies and supporting information can be found on the [Scottish Swimming Website](#)

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