



Fighting Fit Football SAFEGUARDING ADULTS POLICY

This policy and procedures document outlines what safeguarding adults is and how we actively safeguard adults in our football teams.

Fighting Fit Football Club endorses and adopts The FA's Safeguarding Adults Policy.

1. Inclusive Culture

We commit to ensuring our club is inclusive and provides a safe and positive experience for all participants, regardless of age, gender, gender reassignment, disability, culture, language, race, faith, belief or sexual orientation. We expect everyone in the club to share this commitment.

As a club focussing on Parkinson's football, our goal is to promote the welfare and wellbeing of people with Parkinson's at all times. This means offering football to anyone with Parkinson's irrespective of their age, gender, experience or ability. We want to ensure that all present and future members receive fair and equal treatment, in a way that ensures they feel included, their views are always heard and they enjoy their time at the club at all times.

The values set out in our [Club Charter](#) underpin these safeguarding goals and everything we do and strive to achieve at Fighting Fit Football. Everyone involved with the Club - officials, coaches, players, family members and volunteers - should always strive to follow the values set out in the [Club Charter](#).

2. Definition of an adult at risk

- Over 18; and

- Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs); and
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

In the context of Parkinson's football this could also mean an individual who needs extra support in order to access our club's activities and to keep them safe.

3. Our commitment to safeguarding adults

Adult safeguarding means protecting the adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. We recognise we all have a responsibility to safeguard adults who are experiencing, or are at risk of, abuse and neglect and expect everyone in our club to share our commitment to this.

This means ensuring that our activities are modified in a way to ensure everyone involved can access them safely. By way of example we will ensure:

- All activities are **low contact** with tackling kept to safe minimum. All participants will be made aware of this prior to accessing our sessions and reminded of this regularly.
- All matches & drills will be played with the **ball below head height**. Heading the ball will be avoided at all times.
- Activities will be paced appropriately with **no expectation or pressure to compete** in all activities. All individuals can go at their own pace and activities will be adapted accordingly.
- We will ensure we use a venue which has a **suitable playing surface** for our participants. This includes using indoor astroturf (3G / 4G) wherever possible as this typically provides a flat, non-slippery, dry and cushioned surface to play on. Venues with hard court or wooden playing surfaces will be avoided at all times to reduce the danger of injury through falls.

- As part of the **member registration** process the club will collect the information deemed necessary for medical and safeguarding purposes. Each new member will be required to register prior to commencing activities , with subsequent registration at least once per and always before the start of each season (September). Members will be required to update the club with any important changes to their information arising following registration.
- We will endeavour to have a minimum of 2 trained **first aiders** on site for our sessions. The club will also use a venue that holds a defibrillator on site.
- We will conduct a **risk assessment** for any individual we believe may be at risk of harming themselves or others due to their symptoms whilst engaging in our activities (e.g. a player who faces an increased risk of serious injury because of poor balance and / or a tendency to fall). While we adapt our sessions to maximise safety, there may be limitations to what the club can do to ensure the safety of certain individuals - particularly given the nature of Parkinson's and the senior age of some participants. If despite making adaptations to our activities, the risk of serious injury persists, the club may be unable to offer a place to that individual. Although we will work with the player to limit the risk, the decision of the Club Welfare Officer will be final.
- We will use **footballs** with a weight and design that helps cushion the ball and increases playability, which will help minimise the impact on muscles, joints and balance. Balls will be inflated to their minimum recommended pressure (eg: no greater than 0.5 BAR) to also reduce risk of injury through being hit by a ball.
- All participants, volunteers, coaches etc will be **fully supportive** of each other and the club will promote a friendly and enjoyable experience for all, underpinned by our [Code of Conduct](#). A strong supportive community will be key to the success of helping with everyone's wellbeing.

4. Safer Recruitment

We endorse and adopt The FA's safer recruitment guidelines for working with adults. When

we recruit people to work or volunteer at the club, we:

- Specify what the role is, what tasks are involved and the skills and experience required to do the role;
- Interview applicants to explore their experiences, skills and motivation;
- Where possible involve players in this process;
- Check relevant qualifications or knowledge (including relating to Parkinson's);
- Invite them to stay for a session and try out the role, whilst supervised;
- Ensure new staff or volunteers are welcomed and given an induction into safeguarding in our club, including knowing how and when to contact the Club Welfare Officer;
- If we have concerns about the appropriateness of an individual who has approached us to become part of our club, we seek advice from the County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer;
- We will request DBS Checks for anyone working with our adults at risk

5. Appointment

We have appointed a Club Welfare Officer (for Adult Disability Teams) in line with the FA profile, person specification and safer recruitment guidance. The Club Welfare Officer sits on our committee, works to ensure that safeguarding adults is everyone's responsibility and is the first point of contact for any safeguarding concerns.

6. Training

We strongly encourage everyone who works or volunteers in our club to complete The FA's free 'Safeguarding Adults' online course to develop an understanding of adult safeguarding concerns.

6. Reporting

Safeguarding adults can be complex, so our Club Welfare Officer will seek guidance and advice whenever necessary from our County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer.

We will follow the framework below around reporting:

- Whenever possible, we will discuss any safeguarding concerns with the adult to establish their views and wishes before reporting;
- Whenever safe to do so, the adult will be advised that information about poor practice or abuse will be shared with the Club Welfare Officer (Adult Disability Teams);
- No-one in our club will keep safeguarding concerns to themselves and everyone must report poor practice, abuse and any concerns that an adult may be at risk, to the Club Welfare Officer (Adult Disability Teams). Holding back reports can leave adults at risk or allow poor practice to continue;
- We will take all reports seriously;
- We will address poor-practice concerns;
- If there are concerns that might be about abuse, the Club Welfare Officer (Adult Disability Teams) will report the concern to the County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer (CFA DSO) within 24 hours and follow their advice;
- In an emergency, club members will contact the Police, call an ambulance or seek advice from local adult services. Advice from the statutory agency will be followed. In these circumstances the Club Welfare Officer (Adult Disability Teams) must be informed and they will report this incident to the County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer (CFA DSO) within 24 hours;

If we cannot contact the CFA DSO, we will contact the safeguarding team at the FA can also be contacted via safeguarding@TheFA.com.

7. Action We'll Take

We will act regarding poor practice, repeated or serious misconduct at club level in line with the club's complaint procedures and Safeguarding Adults policies. The club acknowledges the possibility of sanctions which may be implemented by the County FA or The FA in more serious circumstances.

8. Whistle Blowing

We support The FA's Whistle-Blowing Policy. Whistle-blowing is an important, accepted practice. No-one should feel guilty about using it. It allows anyone to raise a concern, if they feel an incident has not been properly managed or reported in line with the relevant club procedures, or that a colleague's conduct is not appropriate. To whistle-blow, email The FA at safeguarding@TheFA.com.

9. Key Contacts

Our Club Welfare Officer (Adult Disability Teams):

Name: NICHOLAS LIGHT

Email: contact@fightingfitfootball.co.uk

Tel.: 07561 421701

Our County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer:

Name: Lilly Michael

Email: safeguarding@hertfordshirefa.com

Tel.: 07538 990836

Local out-of-hours adult services:

Online reporting <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/adult-social-services/report-a-concern-about-an-adult/report-a-concern-about-an-adult.aspx>

Tel.: 0300 123 4042 (24 hours a day).