



# Respect



## Welfare Officer Information Pack



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## Glossary

Various abbreviations are used in this document:

- CFA:** County Football Association
- CFA WO:** County Football Association Welfare Officer
- CWO:** Club Welfare Officer
- CRB:** Criminal Records Bureau
- FAQs:** Frequently-asked questions
- SC:** Safeguarding Children
- The FA CRB Unit:** The Football Association Criminal Record Bureau Unit
- WOW:** Welfare Officer Workshop
- YLWO:** Youth League Welfare Officer



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## Welcome on board

Firstly, Hertfordshire FA would like to thank you for coming on board as part of the County's network of Welfare Officers. As you know The FA requires every league and club with youth teams to have a Welfare Officer, so you are not alone – and you have a really good support structure around you.

This pack comes in printed form so you can place it in a ring binder. This means information can be updated or replaced as necessary and you can add your own notes and information.

We will automatically send you updates and extra materials as they become available.

Overall, the pack aims to give you a brief introduction to your role, where to get support and advice and how to find out more.

### For your information

Hertfordshire FA has a network of over 200 volunteer welfare officers in place.

- Your County FA Welfare Officer is Richard Drake.
- [www.TheFA.com/footballsafes](http://www.TheFA.com/footballsafes) has information on safeguarding for you.
- [www.hertfordshirefa.com](http://www.hertfordshirefa.com) has local safeguarding information for you.
- The FA has a team of seven full-time staff to promote safeguarding who are working with 45 dedicated staff across England's County Football Associations.
- Hertfordshire FA runs specific Welfare Officer Workshops so you can get a better understanding of your role and the support that's available to you.
- The FA has a specialist Unit to deal with Criminal Record Bureau checks and provide advice and support for you.
- The FA's **Respect** Programme is aimed at addressing poor behaviour and can support your role as Welfare Officer.
- Your club/league could work towards gaining Charter Standard Status

## Section 1: Start points

### 1.1 Frequently-asked questions (FAQs)

No doubt you will have lots of questions about what you are expected to do, where to start and what to do next.

There have been a number of FAQs which Welfare Officers have asked us over the past months so we've collected these together to make the answers available to everyone:

#### **What does a Welfare Officer do?**

He or she has two fundamental roles:

1. Taking the lead in being informed and aware of the league or club's responsibilities when running football activities for children and young people.

This involves:

- Ensuring these responsibilities are well-understood by others
  - Developing best-practice processes
2. Helping league and club personnel understand what their 'duty of care' towards children and young people actually means and entails on a day-to-day basis. For example:
    - Ensuring all relevant people complete The FA's 'Safeguarding Children' training programme
    - Helping to make sure trips away are organised properly
    - Assisting those with regular contact with children and young people to complete the FA CRB paperwork

#### **What type of person makes a good Welfare Officer?**

Someone who:

- Always puts children's welfare first
- Is a good communicator
- Has a common-sense approach
- Is willing to learn and seek advice
- Is over the age of 18

#### **Why does football have to have Welfare Officers when other sports don't?**

All sports have a responsibility to ensure they provide a safe and fun environment for children and young people.

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Through the 'Every Child Matters: Change for Children' programme, the Government makes it very clear that sport has to put safeguards in place.

Football along with other sports such as cricket, rugby and swimming to name a few, believe the best way to do this is to appoint a Welfare Officer. For more information on what is expected of sport go to [www.thecpsu.org.uk](http://www.thecpsu.org.uk) or to [www.everychildmatters.co.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.co.uk)

## **Why is having a Welfare Officer so important?**

Because football has a clear responsibility towards young people.

As we all know, there have been some tragic cases resulting from the wrong type of people working with children, both in wider society and within football.

Making sure everyone knows how to report concerns about a child's welfare is essential. Knowing how to deal with poor practice issues is also vital.

Lots can be done very simply – but football needs Welfare Officers.

## **Do you need qualifications for this role?**

You don't need to have a professional background in safeguarding children, but you do need to:

- Have the interests of the child at heart and the ability to maintain this perspective when dealing with sometimes difficult situations.
- Go through The FA's three-hour 'Safeguarding Children' Workshop and specific three-hour Welfare Officer training.
- Have an accepted FA CRB Enhanced Disclosure in place.

## **Can more than one person take on the role?**

Yes – we welcome this in clubs/league with large numbers of teams. Why not get two or three people to share the responsibilities, learn together and support each other? It's also good to have a male and female Welfare Officer if you have both boys' and girls' teams. However, The FA only needs one named person for its main database, so we can communicate effectively through one person in every league and club.

## **Is there anyone who can't become a Welfare Officer?**

Yes – anyone with a significant criminal history. Please contact your CFA Welfare Officer for more information about what this means and/or read the 'CRB: Frequently-asked questions' section at [www.TheFA.com/footballsafes](http://www.TheFA.com/footballsafes)

Remember to be a Welfare Officer you must be at least 18 years of age.

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## **How much time will I need to give to the Welfare Officer role?**

This will depend on your club or league's current situation, ie:

- How many youth teams there are;
- If there anyone else willing to act as a welfare officer to support you;
- The numbers of volunteers who need to complete an FA CRB check;
- If you already have an up to date Safeguarding Children Policy;
- How aware your club or league is to their responsibilities when running activities for children.

## **How can I ensure everyone knows who I am and what my role is?**

- Ensuring you are on the committee is a good start point – and making sure your name and contact details are included in the club or league handbook;
- The FA believes it is best practice to hold an information evening/session at the start of the season. This is the ideal place to be introduced;
- Arrange to meet with the clubs coaches and team managers so they know who you are and can introduce you to the players;
- Find out when newsletters or other communications are sent to parents/carers – can you use these materials to introduce yourself and your role?

## **I'm not clear about what a CRB actually is. Where can I find out more?**

You have three options:

- Speak to your CFA Welfare Officer;
- The FA has a series of CRB Frequently-asked questions on: [www.TheFA.com/footballsafe](http://www.TheFA.com/footballsafe)
- You can also contact The FA CRB Unit on 0845 210 8080 or email [crb@TheFA.com](mailto:crb@TheFA.com) for an information and application pack.

## **Why do I need to do an Enhanced CRB check via The FA CRB Unit, when I already have one?**

The FA has taken advice on this and there are real risks in carrying Disclosures from one job to another. The CRB check may not be at the level required by The FA. The CRB, an Executive Agency of the Home Office, no longer facilitates portability and details the risks involved at [www.crb.gov.uk](http://www.crb.gov.uk) with a quick link to Portability.

## **How do I become a CRB-verifier for my club/league?**

To be authorised to verify ID documents as a Club Welfare Officer you must have an accepted FA CRB-check linked to your specific club.

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You will only be authorised to verify for other members of your club. Please contact The FA CRB Unit to ensure your CRB record is updated to authorise this, as your club may be required to complete a written authority.

To be authorised to verify ID documents within your league, your County FA must authorise this and issue you with a PIN number supplied by The FA CRB Unit. For further information contact your County FA or The FA CRB Unit.

### **What and when should I report to the County FA Welfare Officer?**

Remember the CFA Welfare Officer is there to support you, so please don't hesitate to ask any questions you may have.

However, as a general rule, please follow your club/league policy to deal with poor practice issues (such as poor spectator behaviour). If this doesn't solve the problem, or you don't have a policy to deal with the issue, contact your County FA Welfare Officer for advice and support. You can then put this policy in place and deal with these issues in future.

The FA's Safeguarding Children and Welfare Officer Workshops will help you to understand what action you need to take yourself, and when it's advisable to ask for some guidance from your County FA Welfare Officer.

If you have a serious concern about a young person's welfare, follow The FA's reporting procedures detailed in The FA's Child Protection Policy, Procedures and Implementation Guidance for Grassroots Football downloadable from [www.TheFA.com/footballsafes](http://www.TheFA.com/footballsafes) under the Policies and Procedures section.

### **Do I have to attend every match?**

No – this will not be necessary.

Part of your role as the Welfare Officer is about helping members in your club/league understand what their responsibilities are. Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility – your job is to provide a framework for everyone's efforts.

You will be expected to ensure everyone knows you are the Welfare Officer, what your role is and how you can be contacted.

### **Could I be a Club Welfare Officer and the League's Welfare Officer?**

This is something you would need to talk to the league's committee about. This is to ensure that there is not a conflict of interest if you were required to deal with a situation about your club on behalf of the league.

### **Will I be expected to be on the Club/League Committee?**

Yes, The FA recommends all Welfare Officers sit on their club or league committee.

It's important that you are in a position to influence decisions that are in line with the club/league's safeguarding children policy and develop an environment of awareness.

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## **What happens if my club/league doesn't put a Welfare Officer in place?**

You won't be able to affiliate your club or league. This policy is in place in every County FA in England.

## **Is there anyone I can talk to about this role?**

Of course. You can either:

- Contact your County FA Welfare Officer. Their contact details are provided in 3.1. They will definitely be able to give you further insight into the role. They can also direct you to someone who is currently holding that position locally, so you can talk to someone about what the role entails day-to-day.

or

- Speak to your league and see if they have other registered clubs who have appointed Welfare Officers, and again make contact to have a direct discussion.



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## 1.2 Roles and responsibilities

### The Youth League Welfare Officer (YLWO)

#### Your two key responsibilities are:

1. To be clear about the league's responsibilities when running activities for children and young people. This involves:
  - Ensuring these responsibilities are well-understood by others
  - Working with your CFA Welfare Officer
  - Working with the Club Welfare Officers (CWOs)
  - Promoting The FA's **Respect** Programme and helping to develop best-practice processes
2. To help league and club personnel understand what their 'duty of care' towards children and young people actually means and entails day-to-day, working closely with the CWOs to achieve this.

To carry out your responsibilities you need to follow these two simple steps:

#### Step 1 – Promote and support by:

- knowing who your CFA Welfare Officer is and how to contact them;
- knowing who every CWO is and how to contact them;
- encouraging all CWOs to complete The FA's Safeguarding Children and Welfare Officer Workshops;
- knowing why certain roles require an Enhanced CRB check and how The FA CRB process works;
- knowing what the **Respect** programme requires of everyone;
- highlighting the benefits of the Safeguarding Children education programme for club officials and parents.

#### Step 2 – Monitoring:

- that all your clubs have a Safeguarding Children Policy and an anti-bullying policy
- the level of buy-in to the **Respect** programme (especially the distribution of Codes of Conduct and adherence to these);
- repeated incidents of poor behaviour and liaising with your CFA Welfare Officer about these;
- individual clubs use of The FA's Safeguarding Children best-practice guidelines (e.g. Responsible Recruitment, Travel, Trips and Tournaments, Anti-bullying policy);
- that all CWOs are assisting those in their clubs who require a CRB check to do so via The FA CRB Unit.

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## The Club Welfare Officer (CWO)

### Your two key responsibilities are:

1. To be clear about your club's responsibilities when running activities for children and young people. This involves:
  - Ensuring these responsibilities are well understood by others;
  - Working with the Youth League Welfare Officer (YLWO);
  - Working with your CFA Welfare Officer;
  - Promoting The FA's **Respect** programme and helping to develop best-practice processes.
2. To help club personnel understand what their 'duty of care' towards children and young people actually means and entails day-to-day.

To carry out your responsibilities you need to follow these five simple steps:

### Step 1 – Put in place:

- a Safeguarding Children policy and anti-bullying policy;
- responsible recruitment processes, including the taking up of references (so we ensure we get the right people into the game);
- the **Respect** Codes of Conduct.

### Step 2 – Understand:

- what **Respect** aims to do;
- the benefits of implementing the **Respect** Codes of Conduct;
- the quick wins to be gained by using The FA's Safeguarding Children best- practice guidance (e.g. Travel, Trips and Tournaments, Photography guidelines, Anti-bullying policy and club Safeguarding Children policy template);
- why certain roles require an Enhanced CRB check and how The FA CRB process works;
- how to refer a concern about the welfare of a child.

## Step 3 – Communicate with:

- club officials about **Respect** and its aims;
- parents/spectators and get them to sign up to the **Respect** Codes of Conduct;
- parents and new players by getting involved with running 'start of season' welcome sessions for members;
- coaches and managers about the importance of being consistent role models for their players;
- your YLWO - introduce yourself, find out how they can support you and let them know what you are doing to safeguard children in your club;
- your CFA Welfare Officer if you need help or advice;
- The FA by taking part in surveys, questionnaires, focus groups as and when asked.

## Step 4 – Encourage:

- parents to complete the **Respect** education programme;
- coaches, team managers, first aiders/medics to complete The FA's Safeguarding Children Workshop;
- coaches and team managers to listen to their players thoughts, ideas and views;
- the committee to make use of the Designated Spectators' Area at all games.

## Step 5 – Monitor:

- repeated incidents of poor behaviour and liaise with your committee (and where necessary, your YLWO or CFA Welfare Officer)
- compliance with Enhanced CRB checks through The FA CRB Unit for those who require one.



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## Section 2: Guidance notes

### 2.1 Where to find more information and support

#### Visit [www.TheFA.com/footballsafes](http://www.TheFA.com/footballsafes)

This is The FA homepage for all Safeguarding Children information and guidance. You will find downloadable policies and procedures as well as best practice guidance on topics such as:

- Travel, Trips and Tournaments
- Choosing a club for your child
- Anti-bullying policy
- Photography and filming guidelines

#### Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures

The FA's Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures can be viewed by visiting [www.TheFA.com/footballsafes](http://www.TheFA.com/footballsafes) and clicking on 'Downloads' under the Policy and Procedures section. Then click on 'Safeguarding Children and Young People in Football'. This policy has been written specifically for grassroots football. It provides The FA's Child Protection policy statement and key principles as well as information on:

- Responsible recruitment
- Promoting best practice
- Poor practice and abuse
- Responsibility for Safeguarding in football
- Responding to concerns, allegations and disclosures

This policy document is given to every Welfare Officer who attends the Welfare Officers' Workshop – if you haven't yet been on this workshop then consider doing so as soon as possible; it's really helpful. More information on The FA's Safeguarding Education Programme is given overleaf.

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## **Safeguarding Children Education Programme**

Hopefully you will already have completed The FA's Safeguarding Children Workshop (formerly known as 'Child protection and best practice'). If you haven't then speak with your CFA WO as soon as possible to enrol for one of these workshops. They provide a sound and engaging introduction to Safeguarding in football and are a must for every Welfare Officer.

Once you've completed this workshop, get yourself booked onto a Welfare Officer Workshop. This three-hour session builds on what you will have covered in the Safeguarding Children Workshop and provides you with the necessary tools to carry out your role as Welfare Officer. It makes helpful use of the Policy and Procedures and explores what leagues and clubs need to have in place to demonstrate best practice in relation to Safeguarding Children. It looks at the Welfare Officer role and the help and support in place to assist you.



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## 2.2 Some tips to establish the value of your role

### Ensuring you are on the committee

This is a good start point and will allow Safeguarding/**Respect** to be on the agenda of committee meetings, which is really important. Make sure your name is included in your club and or league handbook along with your contact details (but remember to think about what you are willing to have made public).

### Meetings and newsletters CWOs are advised to...

Contact their club coaches and team managers so they know who you are, what your role is and how you may be able to support them. They in turn will be able to introduce you to the players. This will help build a rapport and allow everyone to share ideas, agree issues that need tackling and offer each other solutions.

A pre-season meeting with parents and new players is a great way for the club to explain what it has to offer and what it expects from both parents and players. It's also an ideal time to explain about:

- **Respect** Codes of Conduct;
- The club's Safeguarding procedures (eg: when dropping-off and collecting players, consent forms for activities/trips);
- Introducing the coaches, so parents/carers get to know who's looking after their child;
- Asking for support from parents to perhaps become first-aiders, coaches, referees etc.

Find out when club newsletters or other communications are sent to parents – hopefully, you can you put some information into this about you and your role, and perhaps introduce other Welfare Officers who assist you in your club if you have lots of youth teams. Why not use future issues to provide reminders about keeping to the **Respect** Codes of Conduct?

### YLWOs are advised to...

Initially contact your CWOs so they know who you are.

Arranging a meeting with CWOs at least once a season will allow you to build up a supportive network, share ideas, agree issues that need tackling and offer each other solutions. You might like to ask your CFA Welfare Officer if they can attend a meeting.

Find out when league newsletters or other communications are sent to clubs - can you put some information into this about you and your role, dates for CWO meetings or league best-practice guidance?

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## **Remember a good Welfare Officer is someone who:**

- Always puts children's welfare first
- Is a good communicator
- Has a common-sense approach
- Understands confidentiality
- Is willing to learn and seek advice
- Is over the age of 18

As we all know, there have been some tragic cases resulting from the wrong type of people working with children, both in wider society and within football.

Making sure everyone knows how to report concerns about a child's welfare is essential. Knowing how to deal with poor practice issues is also vital.

Lots can be done very simply – but football needs the support of Welfare Officers. Working together Club and League Welfare Officers can make a real difference.

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## 2.3 Putting your role into the wider context of Safeguarding Children

**CWOs** - If you are going to be successful in your role you need to work with the members of your committee as well as coaches/team managers, parents and the players at your club. If they need it, you need to help them understand what your role is and what Safeguarding Children really means.

**YLWOs** - If you are going to be successful in your role you need to work with the members of your committee, referees, your CFA WO and all the CWOs. Ensure your committee members understand what your role is and what Safeguarding Children really means. Be clear about what support you can offer to your CWO, but be realistic – seek advice and guidance from your CFA WO.

**The FA's Safeguarding Children Strategy** is underpinned by the principle that Safeguarding Children is everyone's responsibility. The appointment of a Welfare Officer in all clubs and leagues with youth teams is a fundamental part of this strategy. The strategy itself is based on three core elements:

### 1. Getting only the right people involved

This means promoting the importance of interviewing, taking up references and carrying out the relevant checks.

### 2. Creating a safe environment

ie: an environment within which people work appropriately with children and young people. The Safeguarding Children Education Programme is designed to raise awareness of best practice, and is done through:

- our online course – targeted at parents;
- The FA's Safeguarding Children Workshop, which is targeted at those who take FA qualifications and have 'leadership' roles, e.g. welfare officers, coaches, referees and medics;
- our Re-certification programme, which can be taken three years after first completing the Safeguarding Children Workshop. It's not compulsory, but in effect 'renews' the original certificate and brings attendees up to date with any improved practices, legislation etc;
- the Welfare Officer Workshop which builds on the Safeguarding Children Workshop, because designated persons by their very nature take on greater responsibility for Safeguarding Children, so it provides specific support and guidance for them.

### 3. Promoting clear systems to deal with any concerns

This is the process for referrals, which is handled by The FA Case Management Team and requires involvement from Welfare Officers at all levels of football. This work is guided by the Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures, 2006.

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## 2.4 Training you'll need to complete

### **From season 2008-09:**

All leagues and clubs with youth teams must have appointed a named Welfare Officer, who has an 'accepted' or as a minimum an 'in progress' Enhanced CRB check via The FA CRB Unit.

### **From season 2009-10:**

All leagues and clubs with youth teams must have appointed a named Welfare Officer, who has an 'accepted' CRB check via The FA CRB Unit and who has completed The FA Safeguarding Children workshop.

**Please note:** it is not sufficient to have completed The FA's online Safeguarding course as a Welfare Officer. You must have attended the FA three-hour workshop Safeguarding Children Workshop (formerly known as Child protection and best practice).

### **From season 2010-11:**

All leagues and clubs with youth teams must have a named Welfare Officer, who has an 'accepted' CRB check via The FA CRB Unit and who has completed The FA Safeguarding Children *and* Welfare Officer Workshops.

### **Enrolling on The FA's Safeguarding Children and Welfare Officer Workshops**

Dates of both Safeguarding Children and Welfare Officer Workshops are detailed in 'Diary dates' (3.2) and will also be on the County FA website [www.hertfordshirefa.com](http://www.hertfordshirefa.com) If you have any questions about these Workshops or as a YLWO, you would like to organise a Welfare Officer Workshop for all the CWOs in your league, then contact your CFA WO for further information.

## 2.5 Integrating your work with The FA's Respect programme

**Respect** is The FA's programme of activities to combat unacceptable behaviour in our game at every level – on the pitch and from the sidelines.

This was the no.1 priority emerging from the biggest opinion survey to date of grassroots football in England. It was carried out in late 2007 and directly informed The FA's National Game Strategy, published in March 2008.

We hope **Respect** will ensure a safe, positive environment for everyone to enjoy football.

From the start it will have an impact on the following areas:

- **Referee recruitment and retention:** By tackling abuse towards match officials, we hope to reduce the stream of referees understandably leaving the game.
- **Participation within youth football:** Abuse and pressure from the sidelines needs to stop if we are to ensure young children enjoy, stay and progress in the game.
- **Coaching and player development:** An encouraging and player-centred approach is vital if we are to improve coaching standards – particularly for the key 5-11 age-group. It's simple: better coaches produce better players.
- **Safeguarding Children:** Everyone in football has a duty of care towards children – ensuring they are able to play football in a safe, enjoyable environment, free from abuse, bullying and discrimination.

### **Respect and the role of the Welfare Officer**

**Respect** is aimed at helping us all work together to change the negative attitudes and unacceptable behaviour on the sidelines and on the pitch. It's a long-term commitment.

**YLWOs can make a real difference by** helping committee members to understand what **Respect** is all about. If it has not been considered by your league yet, get it on the agenda. Getting people talking about it is just the start – for more information on how to obtain the **Respect** programme League Information Pack visit [www.TheFA.com/Respect](http://www.TheFA.com/Respect)

**CWOs have the chance to make a significant contribution** to creating positive change by ensuring the objectives of **Respect** are clearly understood, and its steps are fully implemented. This means it needs to be taken on board by the committee, coach, team manager, members and supporters. Make sure you display the **Respect** posters in the changing rooms or at the club house. If the **Respect** programme has not been taken on board at your club yet, speak to your YLWO find out when they will be signing up to **Respect** and then raise this at your clubs committee meeting so you can work with your League to implement the **Respect** Programme. Getting people talking about it is just the start – for more information on the **Respect** programme Club Information Pack visit [www.TheFA.com/Respect](http://www.TheFA.com/Respect)

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**Respect** outlines for everyone – league official, player, parent/carer, club official, coach and referee – that a certain standard of organisation and behaviour is expected in football. For this to be successful we need your help.

**Respect** is all also about creating a fun and safe environment and its core principles work in tandem with Safeguarding Children.

**Respect** will help you carry out your role, because it's something everyone can understand, participate in – and most importantly, see positive results.

Refer to the guidance provided about your role in 1.2 to see how you encourage everyone to sign up to the **Respect** programme.

**Respect** is not a short term campaign but a long term programme of change to bring about a change in attitude to referees and of the conduct of some supporters on the sidelines. As such as the programme develops The FA will be providing a range of practical supportive resources and courses that can be used in a club or League setting to support welfare officer's in the implementation and understanding of **Respect**. These resources and courses will also be of use in educating those that frequently break or flout the **Respect** Codes of Conduct.

For further information on all aspects of the programme, visit [www.TheFA.com/Respect](http://www.TheFA.com/Respect)



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## Section 3: Key information

### 3.1 Contacts

You can contact your CFA WO Richard Drake either by:

Email: richard.drake@hertfordshirefa.com

Telephone: 01462 650215 or 07738284200

Or post: County Ground Baldock Road Letchworth Herts SG6 2EN

**Please add the contact details for your Youth League Welfare Officer**

First name.....

Surname .....

Email.....

Telephone .....

Address .....

.....

Postcode .....



# Respect



**Please note:**

- There are only 24 places per Workshop so make sure you book early.
- All workshops last three hours and are interactive.
- You must have completed a Safeguarding Children Workshop before you can attend a Welfare Officer Workshop
- You will receive a certificate of attendance for each workshop.

Hertfordshire FA charges £23.50 for a Safeguarding Children Workshop and £23.50 for a Welfare Officer Workshop.

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