



The Evolution of Safeguarding in Sport

And the Crucial Support Provided by the LADO
Function at Brighton & Hove Albion FC



Evolution of Safeguarding in Football

Historical Context: From Unregulated Sport to Modern Statutory Frameworks



1980s – 1990s

Unregulated Era & Early Crisis

- **Lack of Statutory Regulation:** Sport lacked independent standards, relying on unchecked authority.
- **Watershed Prosecutions:** High-profile 1990s convictions exposed systemic institutional failures.
- **Initial Reforms:** National Child Protection Task Force (1999) & CPSU launch (2001).

2010s

Public Disclosures & Inquiry

- **Woodward Disclosures (2016):** Players spoke out, revealing academy abuse.
- **IICSA Truth Project:** Examined groomer tactics, authority abuse, and cover-ups.
- **FA Review:** Mandated overhaul of youth coaching, vetting, and reporting.

2020s – Present

Modern Standards & Empowerment

- **Premier League Standards:** Board accountability, full-time DSOs, and audits.
- **Legislative Mandates:** Expanded positions of trust (2022) & mandatory reporting (2026).
- **BHAFC Peer Pilot:** Pitch-side education empowering youth to support teammates.

Club Make-Up & Youth Operations

Equal Operational Pillars: Player Care, Stadium Operations & Community



Academy

Holistic Development

- **Education & Welfare:** Comprehensive dual-career pathways and mental health support.
- **Safeguarding Standards:** Premier League compliance and dedicated full-time officers.
- **Peer Support Pilot:** Empowering young athletes through pitch-side education.



Amex Stadium Events

Operational Excellence

- **Matchday Logistics:** Hosting 30,000+ fans with elite safety and crowd management.
- **Multi-Use Venue:** Enterprise conferences, private events, and international matches.
- **Community Integration:** Local employment and sustainable event operations.

BHAFC Foundation

Community Impact

- **Inclusive Sports:** Disability football, walking football, and health initiatives.
- **Schools Engagement:** STEM and literacy programs across Sussex classrooms.
- **Social Inclusion:** Targeted interventions for youth development and wellbeing.









Strategic Statutory Partnership: The LADO Relationship

Collaborative Governance across West Sussex, Brighton & Hove, and East Sussex



LADOs are close partners who know the Club to understand risk effectively.

- 'People with names, not put on a pedestal for HR.'
- Regular consultation and proactive ongoing dialogue.
- Multi-agency trust across West Sussex, Brighton & Hove, & East Sussex

Critical oversight for a complex, dynamic sports environment.

- High proportion of casual, matchday, and agency staff.
- Rapid evaluation of behavior crossing professional boundaries.
- Immediate 24-hour notification for allegations meeting thresholds

Leveraging broader statutory expertise across disciplines.

- Informing Club protocols with LADO insights from schools, health, & social care.
- Continuous refinement of Club & Foundation risk assessments.
- Joint training alignment with local safeguarding partnerships (BHSCP).

Specialised welfare management for accommodated youth.

- Direct LADO collaboration ensuring strict adherence to Private Fostering standards.
- Oversight for 44 young academy players residing with 50 host families.
- Safe recruitment, DBS vetting, and host family home risk assessments.





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