STOOLBALL ENGLAND

RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS

POLICY AND PROCEDURE (2026 MASTER VERSION)

Organisation: Stoolball England
Applicable to: Stoolball England Board members, elected officers, volunteers, freelance and self-employed coaches, officials and delivery partners
Effective From: January 2026
Policy Owner: Safeguarding & Welfare Lead
Approved By: Board
Approval Date: January 2026
Version: 1.0 (2026 Governance Suite)
Next Review: January 2027
Review Cycle: Annual

1. POLICY

1.1 Statement of Intent

Stoolball England is committed to safer recruitment practices and to ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, that all individuals who work or volunteer on its behalf are suitable to do so and do not present a risk of harm to children, young people or adults at risk involved in the sport.

This policy applies to all Board members, elected officers, volunteers, freelance or self-employed coaches and any individual engaged by Stoolball England in either regulated or non-regulated activity.

Stoolball England recognises that people with criminal records can make a positive and valuable contribution and undertakes to treat all applicants fairly and without discrimination.

1.2 Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy is informed by, and complies with, the following legislation and guidance (as amended):

- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Police Act 1997
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- DBS Code of Practice
- DBS Filtering and Protected Convictions Guidance
- Equality Act 2010
- UK GDPR
- Data Protection Act 2018

1.3 DBS Checks

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks will only be requested where they are lawful, proportionate and relevant to the role.

Roles involving regulated activity with children or adults at risk will normally require an Enhanced DBS check with barred list information, as appropriate.

All recruitment information will clearly state when a DBS check is required.

Stoolball England works with an approved DBS umbrella body to process checks in accordance with current DBS requirements.

1.4 Fair Treatment of Ex-Offenders

Having a criminal record will not automatically prevent an individual from volunteering or working with Stoolball England.

Any information disclosed will be considered on a case-by-case basis following a structured risk assessment.

Only unprotected convictions will be requested, unless the role is exempt under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.

2. PROCEDURE – SAFER RECRUITMENT

Step 1: Role Assessment

Each role will be assessed to determine whether it involves regulated activity and the appropriate level of DBS check required. This assessment will be documented.

Step 2: Advertising and Application

Recruitment materials will include a statement that DBS checks may be required and that applications from ex-offenders are welcomed. Initial selection will be based on skills, experience and suitability.

Step 3: Self-Disclosure

Where a DBS check is required, applicants invited to interview will be asked to disclose relevant information confidentially to the Safeguarding & Welfare Lead or a designated officer.

Step 4: Interview and Discussion

An open and proportionate discussion will take place regarding any disclosed information. Failure to disclose relevant information may result in withdrawal of an offer.

Step 5: DBS Check

A conditional offer will be made subject to a satisfactory DBS check. Applicants will be informed of their rights under the DBS Code of Practice.

Step 6: Risk Assessment

Where information is disclosed, a written risk assessment will consider:

- Relevance of the offence to the role
- Seriousness and nature of the offence
- Time elapsed since the offence
- Pattern of behaviour
- Safeguarding implications
- Evidence of rehabilitation

Step 7: Decision-Making

Decisions will be recorded and communicated sensitively. Applicants will be given the opportunity to discuss outcomes.

3. HANDLING AND STORAGE OF INFORMATION

Disclosure information will be kept confidential, stored securely and accessed only by authorised individuals.

DBS certificates will not be retained.

A record of the date, type and outcome of the check will be held securely.

Disclosure information will normally be destroyed within six months in line with the Storage, Handling, Use, Retention and Disposal of Disclosure Information Policy (2026).

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Safeguarding & Welfare Lead
Oversight of DBS risk assessment and safeguarding decisions.

Recruiters / Managers
Responsible for compliance with this policy.

Volunteers and Coaches
Responsible for honest and accurate disclosure.

5. ASSOCIATED POLICIES

- Recruitment & Selection Policy (2026)
- Safeguarding Children & Adults at Risk Policy (2026)
- Storage, Handling, Use, Retention and Disposal of Disclosure Information Policy (2026)
- Disciplinary Policy & Procedures (2026)

APPENDIX A – RISK ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

1. Role applied for:
2. Nature of contact with children/adults at risk:

3. DBS level required:
4. Details of disclosed information:
5. Assessment against risk factors:
6. Mitigating factors / evidence of rehabilitation:
7. Safeguarding decision and rationale:
8. Assessor(s):
9. Date:

APPENDIX B – BOARD ASSURANCE SUMMARY

This policy ensures Stoolball England:

• Meets DBS Code of Practice requirements
• Applies fair and lawful recruitment of ex-offenders
• Embeds safeguarding-led decision making
• Aligns with good governance and Sport England expectations

Last Updated: January 2026

APPENDIX C – CLUB-LEVEL ADAPTATION GUIDANCE

This policy applies to all affiliated clubs and delivery partners operating under Stoolball England.

Clubs must:

• Adopt this policy or a locally adapted version that is consistent with its principles
• Identify a Club Safeguarding Officer responsible for safer recruitment
• Ensure all roles are assessed for regulated activity
• Use Stoolball England-approved DBS processes
• Escalate complex or high-risk cases to Stoolball England's Safeguarding & Welfare Lead

Stoolball England reserves the right to review club compliance as part of affiliation, audits or safeguarding reviews.

APPENDIX D – RECRUITER & MANAGER GUIDANCE NOTE

This guidance is for anyone involved in recruiting volunteers or freelance coaches.

Key principles:

• Always assess the role before recruiting
• Never request more criminal record information than you are legally entitled to
• Treat disclosures confidentially and sensitively
• Focus on risk, not punishment
• Record decisions clearly and factually

Red flags requiring escalation:

• Sexual or violent offences
• Offences involving children or abuse of trust
• Patterns of repeat offending
• Failure to disclose relevant information

In such cases, contact the Safeguarding & Welfare Lead immediately.

APPENDIX E – SPORT ENGLAND & CPSU ALIGNMENT STATEMENT

This policy aligns with:

• Sport England Code for Sports Governance (Safeguarding & People pillars)
• CPSU guidance on Safer Recruitment
• Expectations for National Governing Bodies regarding suitability checks

Key alignment areas:

• Risk-based decision making
• Transparency and fairness
• Safeguarding-led culture
• Clear accountability

APPENDIX F – SAFEGUARDING POLICY CROSS-REFERENCE

This policy should be read alongside the Stoolball England Safeguarding Children & Adults at Risk Policy (2026).

Cross-referenced areas include:

• Safer recruitment and selection
• Roles involving regulated activity
• Managing concerns and allegations
• Information sharing and confidentiality

Any conflict between policies must be referred to the Safeguarding & Welfare Lead.