



Department for
Digital, Culture
Media & Sport

Rt Hon Oliver Dowden CBE MP
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Dr Robert Hunter
HM Senior Coroner
Town Hall
Rose Hill
Chesterfield
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Cf^{re} May 2021

Dear Dr Hunter,

I am writing to you in response to the regulation 28 report dated 10 March 2021, following the inquest into the death of Edward Lewis Bilbey. I am sorry to hear about the tragic circumstances of this case.

There will always be risks associated with participating in sport, but it is vital that robust measures are in place to reduce the risks of major or catastrophic injuries and that procedures are in place to protect athletes' health. Sports must put the safety of their participants first.

The government is wholly committed to doing all it can to ensure children and young people can participate in sport in safe and secure environments. My department is currently engaging across sports to address the issues of concussion and dementia. I have held a number of meetings with current and former athletes, as well as sport national governing bodies, to understand how government intervention could bring about positive change for athletes' safety.

My department works closely with Sport England and the NSPCC's Child Protection in Sport Unit to review and strengthen safeguarding provision wherever necessary.

The Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) is the lead body for advice and standards on safeguarding in sport in England. It works with sports to build capacity around safeguarding children and young people.

All organisations in receipt of public funding from Sport England and UK Sport have been required to meet the standards set out in the Code for Sports Governance since April 2017. The Code contains specific obligations around safeguarding,

including a requirement for national governing bodies to adhere to the Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport, which are issued by the CPSU. The CPSU undertakes an annual review of NGBs funded by Sport England to assess their safeguarding policies and procedures. The results of these reviews are used internally within sports to strengthen practice.

Given these existing measures, we do not currently intend to bring forward any further sport-specific legislation. However, we will continue to work closely with our safeguarding partners to ensure that provision is reviewed and strengthened wherever necessary.

My department will work with Sport England and England Boxing to review and address the specific concerns raised in these reports.

With regard to wider safeguarding concerns, the government welcomed the launch of the Whyte Review which is looking into allegations of mistreatment within the sport of gymnastics. My department will follow the Whyte Review and its findings closely.

Yours sincerely,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Oliver Dowden'.

Rt Hon Oliver Dowden CBE MP
Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport