



FOR ALL



SURVIVE. REVIVE. THRIVE.

THE FA GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL STRATEGY 2020-24

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Grassroots football is any football where the main driver is the love of the game and all the social and health benefits from playing, coaching, refereeing and volunteering. Essentially, this covers all non-professional and non-elite football.

Specifically, the term excludes professional football played in the Premier League, English Football League (EFL) and top two tiers of the Women's Football Pyramid. The National League System holds a unique position as the transition point between the men's grassroots and professional game.

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SURVIVE. REVIVE. THRIVE.

The breadth and depth of grassroots football in England means it is uniquely placed to change people's lives by bringing communities together and improving the health of the nation.

The impact of Covid-19 means that the social need across the country is greater than ever. In the face of the pandemic, the grassroots football sector's response to the crisis has been tremendous. It is testimony to the place clubs hold at the heart of communities, particularly reflected in the support shown to individuals, community groups and the NHS. It also illustrates the important role football can play.

This new four-year strategy for the grassroots game is therefore timely. It is focused on the needs of those who participate in the game, shaped by evidence and insight.

Our immediate challenge, and in light of Covid-19, is to get grassroots football back on its feet. This means continuing to focus on providing financial and business support to those that need it most whilst ensuring football can continue to be played in a safe and secure environment through The FA's Covid-19 guidance.

We must also revive the game by addressing the areas that need particular attention whether as a result of Covid-19 or more pertinently, because of a lack of focus in the past. Specifically, this relates to anyone either thinking of dropping out of the game or who used to play and cannot now find an opportunity to suit them or their lifestyle. For example, girls who don't have easy access to football in their school or club. We must

also improve the quality of pitches, alongside strengthening every aspect of our club network and supporting the efforts of the football workforce, providing training where necessary.

Finally, we must look ahead to ensure the game thrives. This means not only encouraging new participation at every age group and from historically under-represented groups, but also harnessing the power of digital to better connect participants to the game they love. It also means ensuring the game is played in a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment.

Many of these aims go beyond the time period covered by this strategy. But in the next four years we have a set of tangible outcomes to focus on and demonstrate our progress, working with our funding, commercial and delivery partners.

Crucial to our success is a partnership between The FA and County FAs. This partnership is committed to serving those that participate and are involved in the game, and providing the leadership needed to ensure future generations benefit from it as much as those that have gone before. In doing so, we will collaboratively and positively impact society in all parts of the country.



James Kendall
FA Director of Football Development

HELPING DELIVER THE FA GROUP STRATEGY

The FA strategy 2020-24 is based on six 'game-changer' objectives and eight 'serve' objectives, as shown in the chart below.

The highlighted objectives are those where The FA Grassroots Division takes the lead. The ones with dotted lines around them indicate where the Division can positively influence and support these areas, even though not taking the lead role.



You can read the full FA strategy 2020-24 [here](#).



OUR PURPOSE

Underpinning the strategy you're reading is our constant aim for the grassroots game in England:

TO HARNESS THE POWER OF FOOTBALL TO UNITE COMMUNITIES AND IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF THE NATION

The game has huge reach, and therefore power, as the statistics on the next page show. We want to translate this reach into bringing people from every background together to enjoy a lifelong relationship with football and with each other, to the benefit of our society.

With everything that's happened in our country in recent times, we believe grassroots football can be a re-igniting force for community life everywhere – towns, cities and rural villages. In the process, the game can be a catalyst for improved physical and mental health, whatever role people play.

The digital age also gives us a wonderful opportunity to unite the segments of grassroots football as never before, so that players, coaches, referees, league/club officials and volunteers all feel part of a connected family to take the game confidently forward.

Our purpose is bold and ambitious because football is a proven powerful force for good.

THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC VALUE OF GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL IN ENGLAND

Our purpose talks about ‘the power of football’. These are not idle words, as the statistics on this page show.

The 14m+ people who play the game equates to a quarter of the population. It means the scale, reach and interest in grassroots football in England makes it uniquely placed to have a positive impact on the nation.

The FA’s latest commissioned report on the social, health and economic value of grassroots football in England provides the evidence that this is the case, with the grassroots game contributing more than £10bn to our society per annum.

All these statistics and the narrative behind them appear in the full report, which you can read [here](#).

14.1m people play grassroots football in England across all forms and frequencies, including **13.5m** regular participants, contributing **£10.16bn** to society each year. This includes:

£7.74bn
direct economic value



£1.62bn
total healthcare savings



£780m
social value



Children

Childhood football participation contributes to the reduction of

66.5k cases of depression and anxiety, and **213.5k cases** of childhood obesity.

Children who play football are more **confident and more resilient than** those who do not play sport.

Adults

Adult football participation contributes to the reduction of

203.3k cases of physical and mental health disorders, including the reduction of chronic disease, depression and anxiety.

Adults who play regular football are also **happier** than non-footballers. This impact is **three times greater in adults from low socio-economic groups** compared to high socio-economic groups.

Older adults

Walking football is an important offering for older adults. Of players surveyed:

88% report improved mobility or co-ordination.
74% agree it has provided them with a sense of belonging.
65% say it provides them with a sense of purpose.

These benefits are achieved through approximately **two hours per week of social interaction** that individuals receive on average through playing.

This is supported by

1.4m & **£1bn**
volunteers

investment into facilities by the National Football Facilities Strategy, of which **10% is in the 10 most deprived areas** in England.



MESSI PITCH



OUR 2024 GOALS

Everything we plan to do in the next four years is centred on those who actually play the game. We want to make the experience as fun, safe and inclusive as possible. That's why players are consciously at the centre of the graphic on the opposite page.

In the male game, we want to respond to the needs of players by providing more flexibility and better access to football opportunities to encourage their retention in the game. In the female game, the push is to ensure girls have the same access as boys to football opportunities in schools and clubs, and that women have choice too.

We are also committed to ensuring the pathways into and through the male and female games include disability provision, with bespoke participation opportunities as needed.

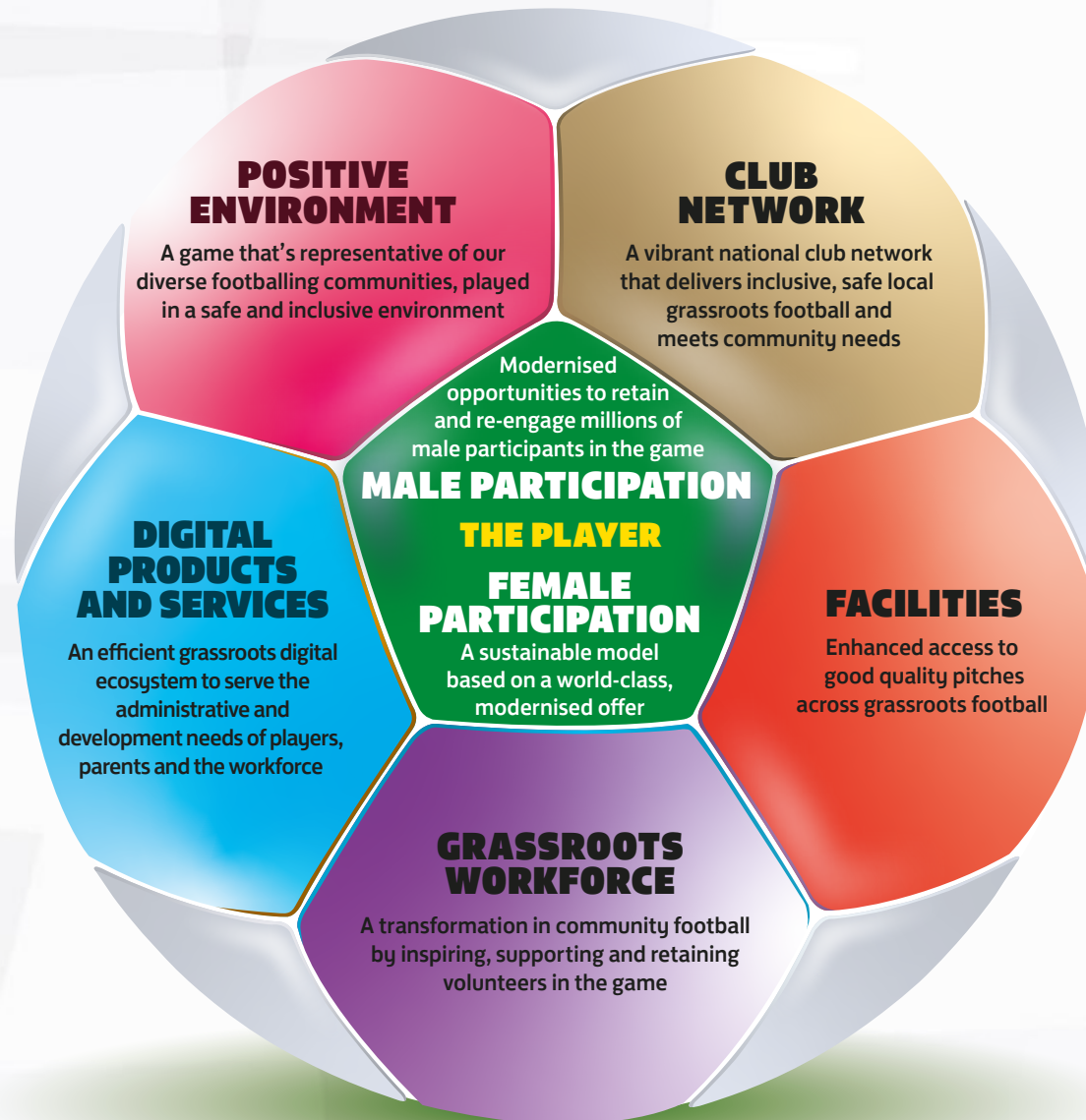
To deliver our goals for male and female football, we must have a vibrant, best-in-class club network around the country. We will work to encourage as many clubs as possible to achieve FA-Accredited status, assuring quality in everything they offer, including ever-safer and stronger player pathways. This will be coupled with a commitment to improve the quality of thousands of pitches up and down the country, with a particular focus on grass pitches.

A strategy with players at its heart

We will also focus on the grassroots workforce, providing the support and encouragement needed to serve the game in local communities.

All the above will be enabled by a suite of cutting-edge digital products and services to make running the game as easy as possible – and critically, a safe, positive and inclusive environment that is free from discrimination and tackles inequality, particularly in disadvantaged communities.

There should be no barriers to joining in the grassroots game and benefiting from all it has to offer.



Note: The strategic objectives and the key success measure of each of the above focus areas are shown on the relevant pages.

THE FA AND COUNTY FAS – ONE TEAM WORKING TOGETHER FOR THE GOOD OF THE GRASSROOTS GAME

Delivering this strategy requires the seamless collaboration of one team, comprising The FA and the County FAs. Together, our role is to lead and serve the game nationally, regionally and locally. Here are the remits of each:

The FA



The FA is the not-for-profit governing body of football in England. It is responsible for promoting and developing every aspect of the game, from professional to grassroots.

Within the grassroots game, The FA provides the strategic direction for the game nationally and invests tens of millions of pounds into it annually.

It is responsible for development across male, female and disability football; harnessing the club network, workforce volunteer and facility infrastructure across the country; and ensuring The FA's digital ecosystem is developed to provide for the administrative needs of the game.

The FA also leads on national discipline, safeguarding and anti-discrimination initiatives to ensure grassroots football is safe and inclusive for all.

The County FAs

The County FAs are the independent, local governing bodies of football in England, responsible for spearheading the strategic development of the game in their area and providing administrative functions, while ensuring the game is diverse and inclusive. Funding is received centrally from The FA, as well as driving their own revenue streams through local commercial opportunities, which together are reinvested into serving the grassroots game.

Administrative functions include club affiliation, ensuring safeguarding compliance and managing local discipline processes. County FAs also have responsibility for developing grassroots pathways, running cup competitions and sanctioning grassroots football leagues. They ensure local coaches, referees and volunteers are supported to meet the needs of the game. You can find a full list of County FAs [here](#).



Our partnership

At the heart of our partnership is the same shared ambition for the game, with different roles to achieve it.

The FA provides funding and support – whether through guidance, knowledge-sharing, digital tools and training – to help County FAs drive the game forward in the parts of the country they serve, specifically:

- Participation (male, female and disability);
- Coach and referee education and development;
- Quality grass pitches; and
- Equality, diversity and inclusion.

Supporting all County FA work is a series of FA-produced guidance manuals on various topics. Paramount among these are the Safeguarding Operating Standard and the Code of Governance, shown alongside. Both are intended to ensure County FAs are best placed to offer a high-quality service to football in their area.





Focus area 1:

MALE PARTICIPATION

Our 2024 goal:

Modernised opportunities to retain and re-engage millions of male participants in the game

While football continues to be by far the most popular team sport for men and boys in England, it is not without its challenges. For example, players continue to drop out at key points and we need to retain them if the male game is to flourish in the future.

Similarly, we need to create really positive, fun experiences for young boys getting into football for the first time, along with specific safeguarding guidance for these ages. We also need to encourage older players to stay in the game, including playing different formats that suit their lifestyle, e.g. small-sided or walking football.

At key life stages, we want everyone, man and boy, to be looking forward to the next chapter in their football journey. In addition, we want to ensure under-represented groups, such as disabled players and the Asian community, are welcomed into the game at every age stage.

Ultimately, we want individuals to build a lifelong relationship with football and all the personal and community benefits it brings. This means we need to be able to provide flexible formats and provide easy access to opportunities to ensure our football offering is relevant and modern.

In everything we do, we will ensure safeguarding practices and procedures are embedded so the game is fun, safe and enjoyable for all.

Strategic objectives:

- To ensure an inclusive, quality introduction to the game, maintaining the popularity of football amongst 5-11-year-old boys;
- To diversify the 12-18 male player pathway to meet modern player needs;
- To launch relevant opportunities to halt the decline in participation for men over 35;
- To increase the number of men over 50 participating in the game;
- To improve the player experience of competitive recreational football¹.

¹ **Competitive recreational football** is the midpoint between the traditional club-based game (often 11-a-side and at weekends) and purely social football, such as a kickabout in the park or an ad hoc game of five-a-side. It covers a wider range of formats and is delivered by various different organisations.

WHAT WE WANT TO HEAR BY 2024:

“ My league is really flexible. So after my son cheers me on I can get to his game in time to return the favour!”

Dad, age 38

“ I was thinking of stopping playing football halfway through secondary school, as I wasn't in the school team and there didn't seem much point. Then I found opportunities to play out of school which were really fun, and now I'm looking for a club to join.”

Schoolboy, age 15

Key success measure:

By 2024 we want to **improve male player retention**, with **25% fewer leaving football** at specific life stages when they have traditionally stopped playing².

² Between 12-18 years old or when aged over 35.

“

The provision of football for men and boys cannot stand still. We have to be innovative if the game is to grow and be fit for a diverse, modern generation.”

David Reeve

FA Senior National Development Manager





Focus area 2:

FEMALE PARTICIPATION

Our 2024 goal:

A sustainable model based on a world-class, modernised offer

Female football has seen phenomenal growth at all levels in recent years. However, we're fully aware that rapid growth must have structure and direction if it is to be sustainable.

While we are progressing every aspect of women's and girls' football in the next four years, there's one particular focus:

We want girls to have the same access to football at schools and clubs that's currently enjoyed by boys. Normalising the entry point to football for girls is the foundation on which future participation levels will be built. Every young girl wanting to play football should have the opportunity to do so at school or at a local club.

Our four-year strategy for the women's and girls' game – [Inspiring Positive Change](#) – sets out our plans to ensure access and opportunity for every woman and girl to play, coach, spectate, officiate, manage or administer – and that the game is truly representative of all aspects of our society.

In the short term, we will be harnessing the inspirational power of a home UEFA Women's EURO Championships in 2022 as a catalyst for continued growth in every area.

In all our programmes for women and girls, driving safer working practices will be a priority.

Strategic objectives:

- Build a national network of school football partnerships to cover the majority of primary, secondary and special schools in England;
- Establish a national network of community organisations to deliver Football for Fun offers to key audiences;
- Deliver girls football programmes and competitions in schools across England, focusing on football in PE lessons;
- Develop the women's football workforce by creating a rich pipeline of diverse leaders;
- Ensure 5-16-year-old girls have easy access to an inclusive club with a pathway to develop.

Key success measure:

By 2024 we want to see equal access to football for girls in **90% of primary and secondary schools¹**, and in **75% of clubs²**.

¹ i.e. girls' football within PE lessons, lunchtime and after school.

² Youth clubs only. Requires a minimum of one youth team within a youth club to be female.

“

We're committed to football playing its part in this country's young women becoming physically and emotionally healthier, more resilient and self-confident.”

Louise Gear
FA Head of Development

WHAT WE WANT TO HEAR BY 2024:

“ I play each week in school as well as getting involved in my local club.”

Schoolgirl, age 9

“ I never expected to be playing football at my age – I'm so much more active and have made new friends too.”

Retired grandmother, age 65





Focus area 3:

CLUB NETWORK

Our 2024 goal:

A vibrant national club network that delivers inclusive, safe local grassroots football and meets community needs

The 18,500-strong club network is the cornerstone of grassroots football. Clubs field the teams that play the game and provide all the necessary support – arranging fixtures, booking pitches, organising transport and innumerable other tasks.

The Covid-19-enforced hiatus in grassroots football has emphasised its challenges. To keep the network in great shape, we must support clubs to retain, recruit and train volunteers, without whom the grassroots game simply would not operate.

But it goes deeper. In every aspect of running a club, the shared role of The FA and County FAs is to provide clubs with resources, tools and guidance. For example, on the field we want to see the holistic development of male, female and disability players, so as many people as possible enjoy our national sport, irrespective of their ability or background.

Off the field, we must continue to embed a safeguarding culture in every club, reflected in working policies and practices. We must also support our bigger clubs to be sustainable businesses.

Ultimately, every aspect of running a club should be as easy as possible, giving everyone more time to enjoy the game itself.

Of course, grassroots clubs mean so much more than playing football. They are community focal points, providing huge social benefits. We are committed to ensuring they thrive.

Strategic objectives:

- To establish a club network which supports the future needs of the game and harnesses the reach of the National League System;
- To embed a broader set of playing opportunities at clubs to meet the needs of male, female and disability pathways;
- To support and guide clubs in operating as effective and efficient organisations;
- To support the recruitment and development of the club workforce, recognising and rewarding every individual's importance;
- To support leagues to deliver modern, safe and inclusive competitions to meet the needs of the game and maximise playing opportunities.

Key success measure:

By 2024 we want to see an increase in the proportion of affiliated¹ teams playing within FA-Accredited² clubs. In adult clubs, we're targeting an increase from the current **49.7% to 70%** and in youth clubs from the current **87.6% to 90%**.

¹ Affiliated: Approved by the relevant County FA to play in leagues and competitions they have sanctioned.

² FA-Accredited: The club has reached an FA-assessed quality standard in all areas of its operation.

“

We want to see clubs that collectively offer competitive playing opportunities for all male, female and disabled players in their local community, provide a quality experience for players, volunteers and members, and are sustainable.”

Mick Baikie

FA Senior Leagues & Clubs Services Manager

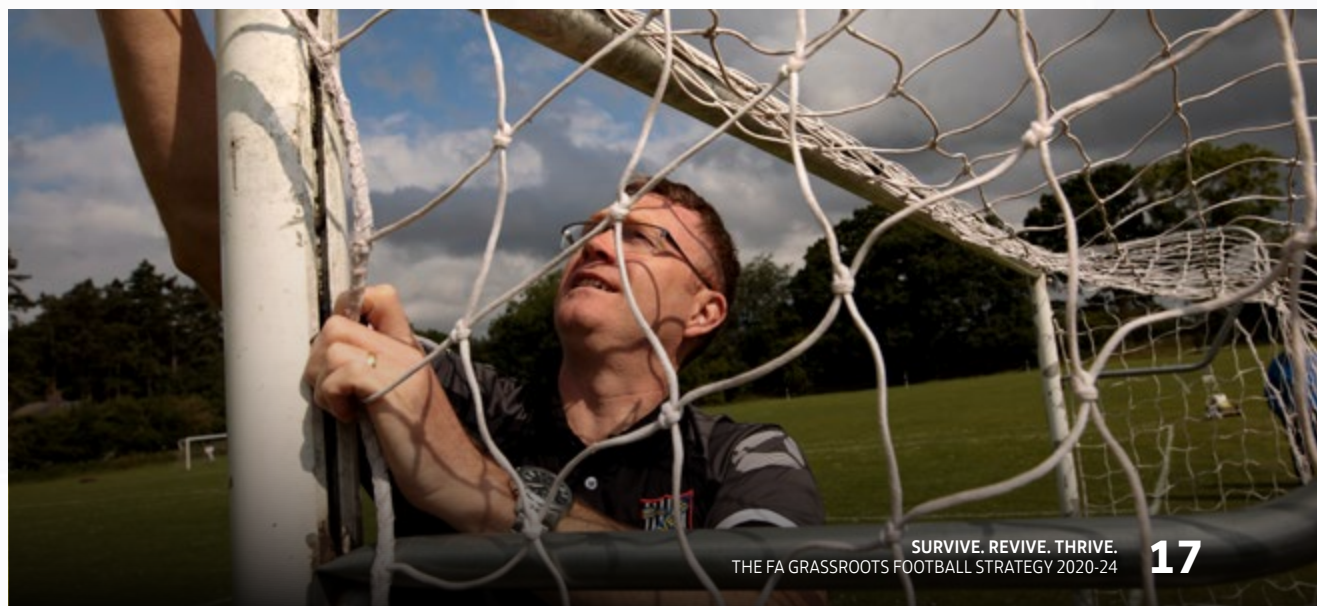
WHAT WE WANT TO HEAR BY 2024:

“ The training and support provided means I feel more confident in doing my role.”

Club Secretary

“ We feel like an essential part of the community and that we will be here for a very long time.”

Club Chairperson





Focus area 4:

FACILITIES

Our 2024 goal:

Enhanced access to good quality pitches across grassroots football

Without a pitch, no-one gets to play. And without better quality pitches, it's really tough to improve and enjoy playing.

The general state of grassroots football pitches in England has been very poor in the past. It's significantly improved in recent times through our investment – alongside the Premier League and Government – in the Football Foundation, football's independent grant-funding body. That investment has been over £1bn since the millennium. But there is much more to do.

Over the next four years, our aim is to revolutionise the quality of pitches throughout the country, particularly grass pitches. We want to demonstrably respond to what those across the grassroots game tell us is their number one challenge and ensure no-one looking forward to the weekend suffers from the disappointment of matches being postponed because of the poor state of pitches.

The good news is, we now have an investment approach for the entire country – represented by 317 plans, one for every local authority area in England. Individually, each plan identifies priority projects at a local level and collectively, these plans represent our long-term plan to continue to transform grassroots football facilities.

We want to make the playing experience enjoyable for everyone that plays the game and improving the playing surfaces is fundamental to that aspiration.

Strategic objectives:

- To deliver the right pitch mix (grass and artificial) to meet the most pressing needs of the game in England – as set out in the Local Football Facility Plans¹ drawn up for every local authority;
- To optimise our Football Foundation investment to provide efficient capital distribution and maximise return on investment;
- To secure new investment to leverage existing commitments to accelerate the availability and improvement of playing facilities;
- To provide first-class development and operational support to the grassroots facilities' workforce, especially in County FAs;
- To provide digital tools and services that support a modern capital distribution framework and allow facility owners to improve and sustain the quality of grass and 3G pitches.

¹ Local Football Facility Plans (LFFPs) = detailed reports that map out the football facilities needed across every local authority area in England. You can read more about them [here](#).

Key success measure:

By 2024 we want to see **5,000 good-quality pitches²** added to the current number. With the Football Foundation, we will prioritise the areas and communities where these new pitches are most needed.

² i.e. grass or artificial pitches that meet the quality standards for grassroots football.

“

Poor quality pitches are the grassroots game's biggest issue. That's corroborated by research we've undertaken. We must – and we will – play a lead role in creating a national inventory of pitches of which England can be proud – and which collectively takes the grassroots game to another level of quality.”

Phil Woodward
FA Senior Lead – Facilities

WHAT WE WANT TO HEAR BY 2024:

“ I love turning up and playing football on an ace pitch each week.”

Schoolboy, age 15

“ With the investment and guidance we've received, we no longer have to worry about missing fixtures every winter due to a waterlogged pitch.”

Groundsperson





Focus area 5:

GRASSROOTS WORKFORCE

Our 2024 goal:

A transformation in community football by inspiring, supporting and retaining volunteers in the game

Supporting everyone in football's nationwide grassroots workforce is essential for the game to be played up and down the country. The workforce numbers some 1.4m people, comprising those who are paid and those who volunteer their time, energy and expertise. They are the lifeblood of the game.

We have an obligation to support them in their roles, of which many hold more than one. Such support can be direct tools, resources and services to every part of the game's workforce, e.g. league/club officials, first-aiders, groundskeepers and volunteers. We also want to encourage individuals to join the football workforce by making it easier to do so.

When it comes to the qualification and development of coaches and referees, support is provided in partnership with The FA's Education and Football Operations Divisions. The goal is to offer everyone personalised, connected support from the moment they first coach or pick up a whistle to wherever they want the game to take them.

But in everything we do, the aim's the same: to provide consistent, continuous support so every member of the workforce feels valued and can perform their roles with confidence and expertise. And of course, given safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, there is a strong safeguarding education element to The FA's support programmes.

Strategic objectives:

- To help retain the existing football workforce by providing support tools and services, offering reward and recognition, and reducing administration requirements;
- To support the identification and recruitment of the next generation of a diverse and representative football workforce;
- To enable the continuous development of all those involved in delivering football via central, local and peer-to-peer learning.

Key success measure:

We are currently **developing a detailed plan** with an **associated key success measure** for our volunteer workforce, to ensure they receive effective support alongside that already offered to >27k referees and >127k active coaches.

WHAT WE WANT TO HEAR BY 2024:

“ Being on The FA’s mentor scheme has been such a positive influence – I want to continue refereeing and reach the highest level possible.”

Teenage referee

“ Taking the entry-level BT Playmaker coaching qualification means I can really play an active role in my club. Now I’m thinking about taking more advanced coaching qualifications. I really feel I’m putting something back into football and learning new skills at the same time.”

Club volunteer

“

Achieving our goals for grassroots football and fulfilling our purpose can only be possible by creating a truly inclusive volunteer movement that has an impact on communities and personal wellbeing.”

Louise Gear
FA Head of Development





Focus area 6:

DIGITAL PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Our 2024 goal:

An efficient grassroots digital ecosystem to serve the administrative and development needs of players, parents and the workforce

If we are to be a world-leading organisation in our field, we must harness digital technology to deliver a high-quality service to every player, coach, referee, volunteer, fan and parent in grassroots football.

We have already come a long way, but the challenge is ever-present. We want digital technology to save time for those playing or organising the game, as well as connecting the grassroots football community in new and exciting ways.

A great example is FA Matchday – a free app gaining ever-wider usage in the grassroots game. It enables coaches to pick teams, players to check results and administrators to collect match fees, among many other functions. Ultimately, we want digital technology to link everyone involved in running football, whatever their role, so people can automate tasks that in the past were time-consuming and uninspiring.

We also want technology to better signpost and provide information about playing opportunities and drive our push to welcome under-represented communities into the game – the easier the game is to get into, the more appealing it will be.

To push ahead with our digital ambitions, we are in the midst of a huge overhaul of our digital products and services, as well as the way to use data and insight to guide our planning. The digital age means we can reward and modernise the grassroots game with simple, safe and secure solutions as we've never done before.

Strategic objectives:

- To launch an improved digital administration system to support simple, safe and efficient grassroots football administration;
- To offer a suite of market-leading digital products and services for clubs and community groups, working with relevant technology partners;
- To enhance the existing FA Matchday app to make organising and playing football ever more easy, accessible and engaging;
- To launch a digital search tool to make it as easy as possible for everyone to find the information they need to participate and engage;
- To launch a grassroots football membership proposition that engages, rewards and supports the retention of players and the workforce.

Key success measure:

By 2024 we want to see **2m people**¹ involved in grassroots football engaged² and benefiting from our digital products and services.

¹ Includes players, parents, coaches, referees, league/club officials and volunteers.

² Logged into an FA digital platform within the current season.

“

With the right use of technology and digital products, we can give the grassroots game the services and information they need to spend less time at a computer and more time out on the pitch.”

Daniel Goodacre

FA Head of Strategy and Business Services

WHAT WE WANT TO HEAR BY 2024:

“ I love that all my personalised performance stats are always available in The FA Matchday app – this week I moved from sixth to third top scorer in the league. It also helps me to run my team without having to use another app.”

Adult player and coach

“ Using The FA’s Find Football service, I quickly found a team that was right for me, and also learned about the benefits of joining an FA-Accredited club.”

Late-teenage player





Focus area 7:

POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT

Our 2024 goal:

A game that's representative of our diverse footballing communities, played in a safe and inclusive environment.

Like any game, the primary purpose of football is for it to be enjoyable to play. However, as the game's governing body in England, we also have a responsibility to ensure football is played in environments that are inclusive and where everyone is welcome and feels safe.

The FA is here to ensure everyone who participates has a great experience – across all protected characteristics and social backgrounds.

To live up to our responsibility, we are committed to providing grassroots football with the tools to drive best-practice behaviours that encourage people to get involved – and stay involved. The grassroots game is for anyone, anytime, anywhere; we are committed to creating chances for everyone.

In terms of safeguarding, policies and procedures for the grassroots game are in place, including clear ways to report concerns. There is a network of Designated Safeguarding Officers across the game, with training available for everyone and mandatory for coaches, welfare officers, core committee members and referees. You can read about The FA's wide-ranging safeguarding work here.

Our For All commitment also means we will continue to work with a variety of partners to sustain and grow opportunities for disabled people to participate and excel through football.

Equally, it means we will investigate and take appropriate action when poor or abusive behaviour is reported and proven, whether on or off the pitch.

Strategic objectives:

- Ensure inclusion is at the heart of our grassroots football programmes and at other echelons of the game;
- Maintain and enhance robust safeguarding standards and drive child-centred culture and practice across the grassroots landscape;
- Sustain and grow opportunities for disabled people to participate and excel through football;
- Use our influence and launch initiatives to promote positive behaviours that deliver a game free from discrimination in youth and adult grassroots football.

Key success measure:

By 2024 we want to see a **six percentage point increase** in those involved in grassroots football² experiencing a positive environment, meaning that it is safe, inclusive and enjoyable.

² Includes players, parents, coaches, league/club officials and volunteers. This will be measured via a bespoke, quarterly FA Positive Football Environment Survey.

WHAT WE WANT TO HEAR BY 2024:

“ We haven’t experienced any discrimination this season but our referees, clubs and The FA have clearly outlined where to report any concerns and we’re confident any issues will be dealt with.”

Teenage players

“ I have greater confidence to ask questions about what safeguards are in place at the club my children play at and to challenge anything I’m not happy with.”

Parent/carer of youth players

“

We can and will provide the framework, but creating positive football experiences is everyone’s responsibility. If we want more people from all backgrounds and cultures to get involved in football – in whatever capacity and whether non-disabled or disabled – the doors must always be open to everyone. Then what’s inside must be enjoyable and safe at all times.”

Sue Ravenlaw

FA Head of Safeguarding





PARTNERS

While The FA and County FAs may take national and local leadership roles, enabling grassroots football to survive, revive and thrive would simply be impossible without the support of a wide spectrum of external partners.

For example, in the educational world, we rely on the knowledge and reach of national bodies such as the English Schools Football Association (ESFA), the Independent Schools Football Association (ISFA), the Association of Colleges (AoC) and British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS).

To reach some audiences and deliver engaging programmes, we also need the expertise of organisations such as Age UK, Wheelchair Football Association, the Activity Alliance and Cerebral Palsy Sport, to name but four.

Our inclusion initiatives could also not run without partners such as Kick It Out and others you'll see listed on the next page.

We also need and are grateful for the financial input of organisations such as Sport England and UEFA. In addition, commercial partnerships provide publicity, customer engagement and funding that amplifies the impact of many of our programmes – for example from world-leading companies such as Nike and BT.

Finally, there is our important relationship with the Football Foundation, football's own grant-funding charity, primarily focused on improving facilities and pitches. Alongside the Premier League and Government, we fund the Foundation, but rely on their expertise to ensure grants go where they are most needed. Our aim to create 5,000 new quality pitches by 2024 will be delivered via the Foundation.



Commercial partners:

Support from the business community is vital to expand the scope of key programmes:



If you are interested in partnership or commercial opportunities to take grassroots football forward, please contact partnershipsales@TheFA.com

National delivery partners:

The game's infrastructure and general development is supported by:



Educational delivery partners:

Within the education sector, grassroots football would not happen without:



Disability delivery partners:

Key to providing opportunities for people who are disabled to play football are:



Inclusion delivery partners:

To ensure grassroots football is accessible to everyone and is used to combat societal issues, we work with:





FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

To find out what's happening in grassroots football in your area, contact your County FA. There's a full list of County FAs, their website addresses and key personnel [here](#).



FOR ALL

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