

NORFOLK FA

# UNITING NORFOLK FOOTBALL

NORFOLK COUNTY FA STRATEGY 2024-2028



NORFOLK FA



ENGLAND  
FOOTBALL



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NORFOLK FA  
**UNITING  
 NORFOLK  
 FOOTBALL**



# INSPIRING POSITIVE CHANGE

As Chairman of Norfolk FA, I am pleased to unveil our new strategy, which sets a clear and ambitious direction for the future of football across Norfolk. This plan outlines how we will continue to drive the growth and development of the game, ensuring that football remains a sport for everyone in our County.

Our strategy is built on a commitment to providing opportunities for all, supporting our grassroots game, and enhancing pathways for players, coaches, referees, and volunteers. We are dedicated to fostering an inclusive environment where every participant, regardless of age, background, or ability, has the chance to engage with the sport they love.

We also recognise the importance of working with our partners, clubs, and communities to deliver sustainable growth. By focusing on collaboration and innovation, we will ensure that Norfolk football is well-equipped to face future challenges and seize new opportunities.

This is an exciting time for Norfolk FA, and I look forward to working together to deliver this vision. With your support, we will continue to create a thriving, inclusive football landscape that benefits everyone involved in the game across Norfolk.

My thanks go to our Board of Directors for their input, who oversaw the hard work and due diligence of our dedicated workforce who were committed to bringing this strategy to life.

**Michael Banham, Chairman, Norfolk FA**



As CEO of Norfolk FA, I am proud to introduce our new strategy, which will guide the next chapter of football development across the county. At the core of this strategy are the values of Engage, Inspire, Evolve, and Unify-principles that reflect our commitment to growing and improving football for everyone involved.

We aim to engage by building stronger relationships with our clubs, volunteers, and participants, ensuring that football remains accessible and welcoming. By fostering deeper connections within our communities, we can support the game at every level.

We strive to inspire by fostering a culture of ambition and development across all levels of football. Whether it's players, coaches, referees, or volunteers, we are committed to supporting their growth and helping them achieve their full potential, while encouraging a lifelong passion for the game.

As the football landscape continues to change, we are committed to evolve with it. This strategy embraces innovation and adaptability, helping us stay ahead of emerging challenges and opportunities.

Above all, we seek to unify the football community by promoting inclusivity and respect for all. Football has the power to bring people together, and we are committed to making sure Norfolk FA reflects the diversity and strength of our county.

Importantly, safeguarding remains at the heart of everything we do. We will continue to prioritise the safety and well-being of all participants, ensuring a secure, supportive and fun environment for everyone involved in football.

Strong governance is also central to this strategy. We are committed to upholding the highest standards of governance and maintaining full compliance with the FA's Code of Governance to ensure we are a transparent and accountable organisation.

I look forward to working with you all to bring this strategy to life and to building a future where football in Norfolk continues to thrive, grow, and unite our communities.

**Matt Carpenter, CEO, Norfolk FA**



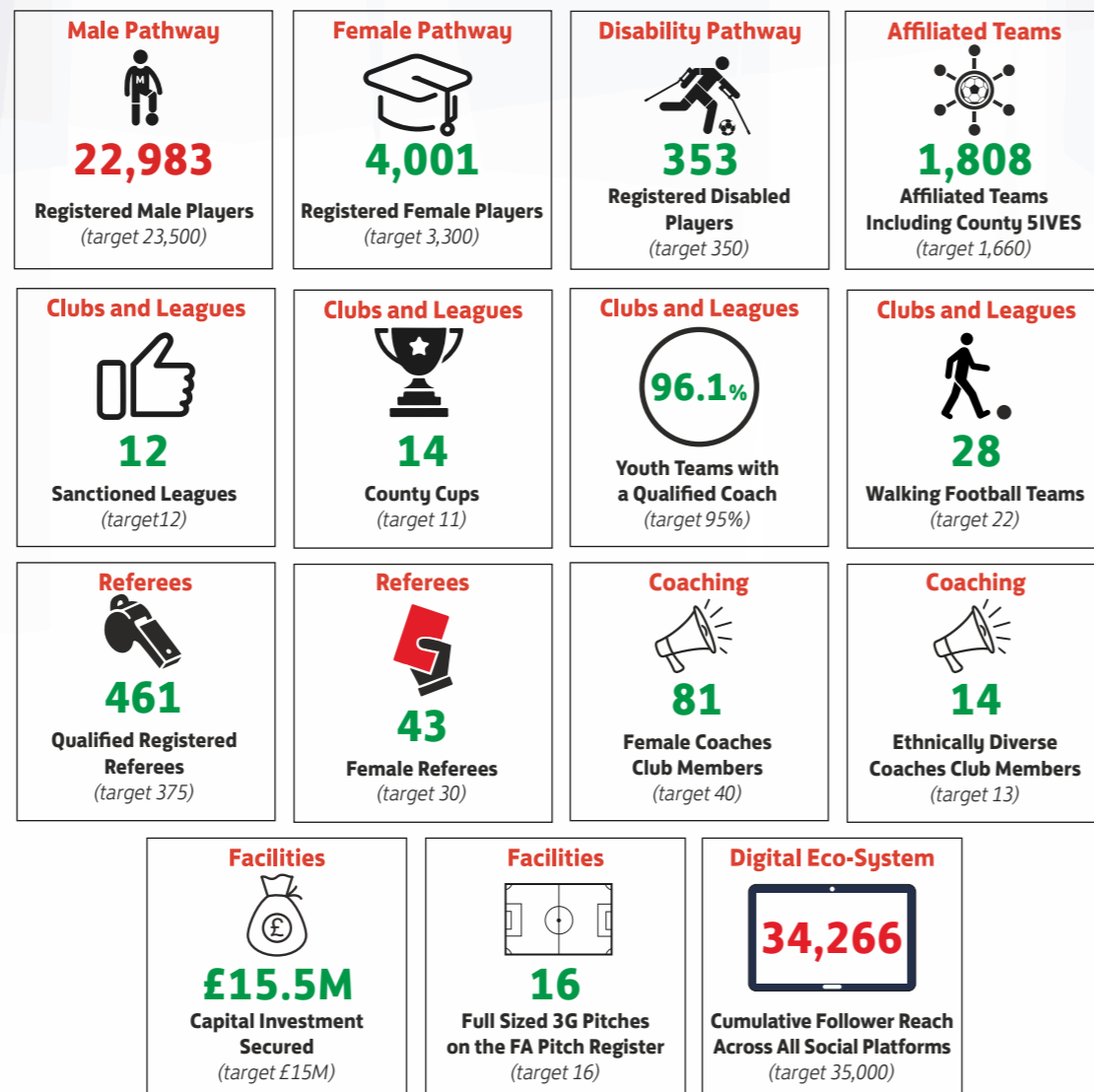
# 2021-24 STRATEGY REVIEWED

## Success against our targets

As part of our 2021-24 strategy, we identified a series of success measures that we would hold ourselves to account to at the end of the strategy cycle and provide a clear view of our progress against those priorities.

As we move into our next strategy period, we are very proud of what has been achieved over the past three years, with all but two of the targets being met or exceeded. This is a great achievement and reflects the healthy state of the game in Norfolk.

However, we cannot afford to relax and this strategy sees us define what our new success measures for 2028 look like as we continue to strive for continuous growth and improvement.

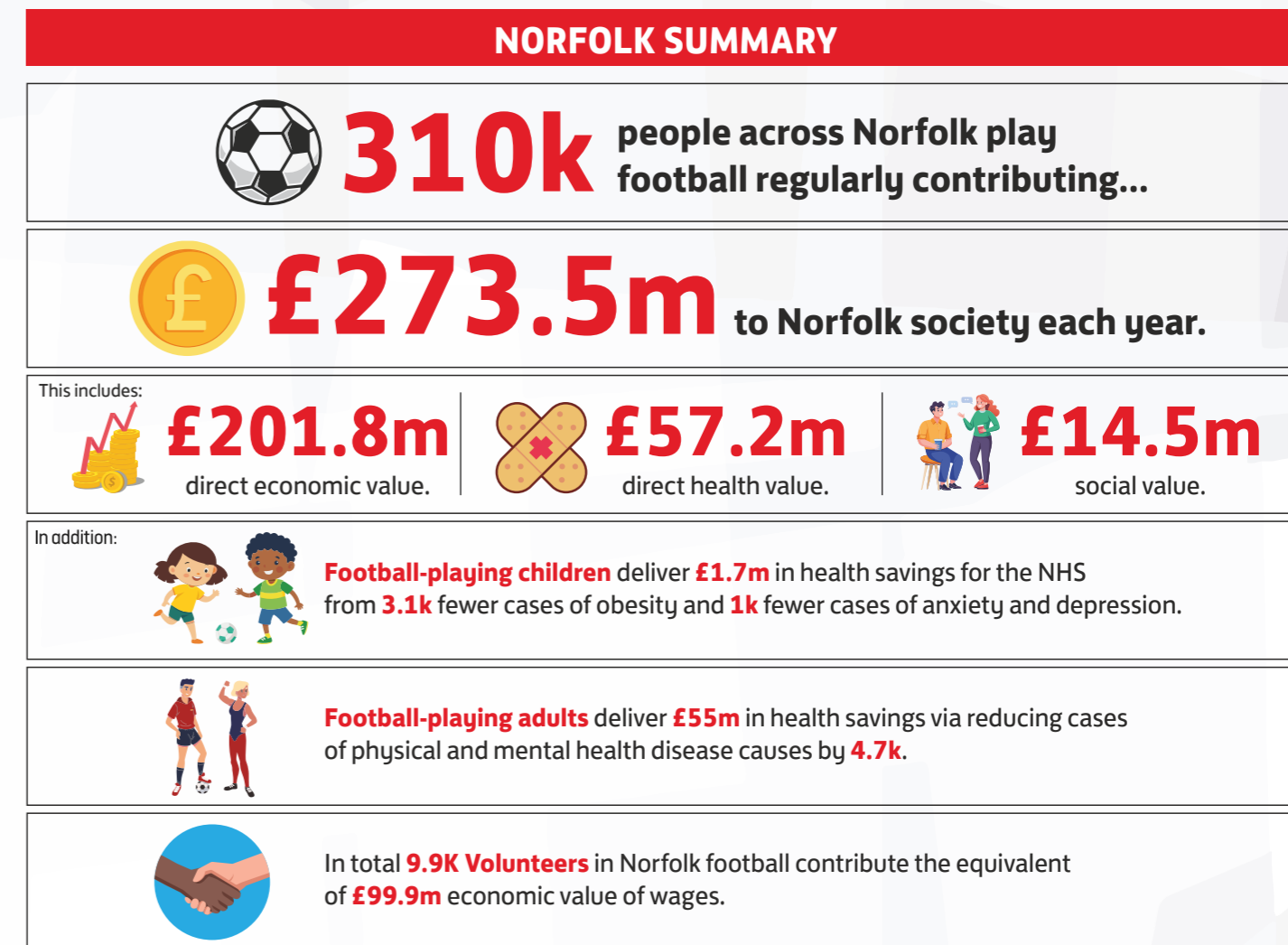


# THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC VALUE OF GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL IN NORFOLK

## Social return on investment (SROI)

We often talk about the unique power of football to improve lives and drive positive social change. This is brought into focus when we look at social, health and economic return on investment from grassroots football in Norfolk. More people than ever - **301,000** - are playing football, creating a growing value to society.

The FA's updated SROI 2024 report provides robust and compelling evidence of the significant value that the grassroots game contributes - over **£15.9bn**. This equates to a value of **£273.5 million** to society in Norfolk each year.





# DEVELOPING OUR NEW STRATEGY

## Uniting Norfolk Football

During the 2023/24 season, we embarked on our most extensive piece of local consultation work to date. Utilising The FA's 'Conversation about our Game' consultation findings as the foundation of our research, we engaged a wide range of voices from across the local game to gain a better understanding of the biggest challenges faced in Norfolk Football.

Those we spoke to included representation from across a broad range of volunteer roles within Norfolk football, the Norfolk FA Board of Directors, our Inclusion Strategy Advisory Group, our Youth Council, Affiliated Leagues, our local Active Partnership, our Senior Leadership Team, and our valued workforce.

Our goal was simple – to build our 2024-28 strategy around the real needs and challenges faced within Norfolk grassroots football – and to bring the Norfolk football family together to deliver it.

We listened closely to the views shared throughout the local consultation events and feedback sessions we delivered, and we gained valuable insights on how to improve Norfolk football for everyone involved.

### Key learnings from our consultation were:

- Poor behaviour in grassroots football, both on and off the field, emerged as the number one challenge, echoing feedback and data at both the local and national level.
- The 2023 State of Play survey highlighted the need to improve staff satisfaction, where we scored below the national average.
- Environmental sustainability remains a priority, with local perceptions indicating that Norfolk football facilities need to become more eco-friendly.
- We've heard loud and clear that while we've made strides, there's more work to do in making Norfolk football truly diverse and inclusive.
- Volunteers, who are the backbone of the game, need better support to manage increasing pressures, as highlighted in discussions with our leagues and clubs.
- Improving our customer service is another area where we've been told we can make significant improvements.

We're incredibly grateful to all those who took part in shaping this strategy. Your insights have laid the foundation for the future of Norfolk football, and we're excited to move forward together.

# THE FRAMEWORK FOR THE FA GRASSROOTS STRATEGY 2024-28

Purpose: **Inspiring positive change through football – by uniting communities, tackling inequalities and improving the health of the nation.**

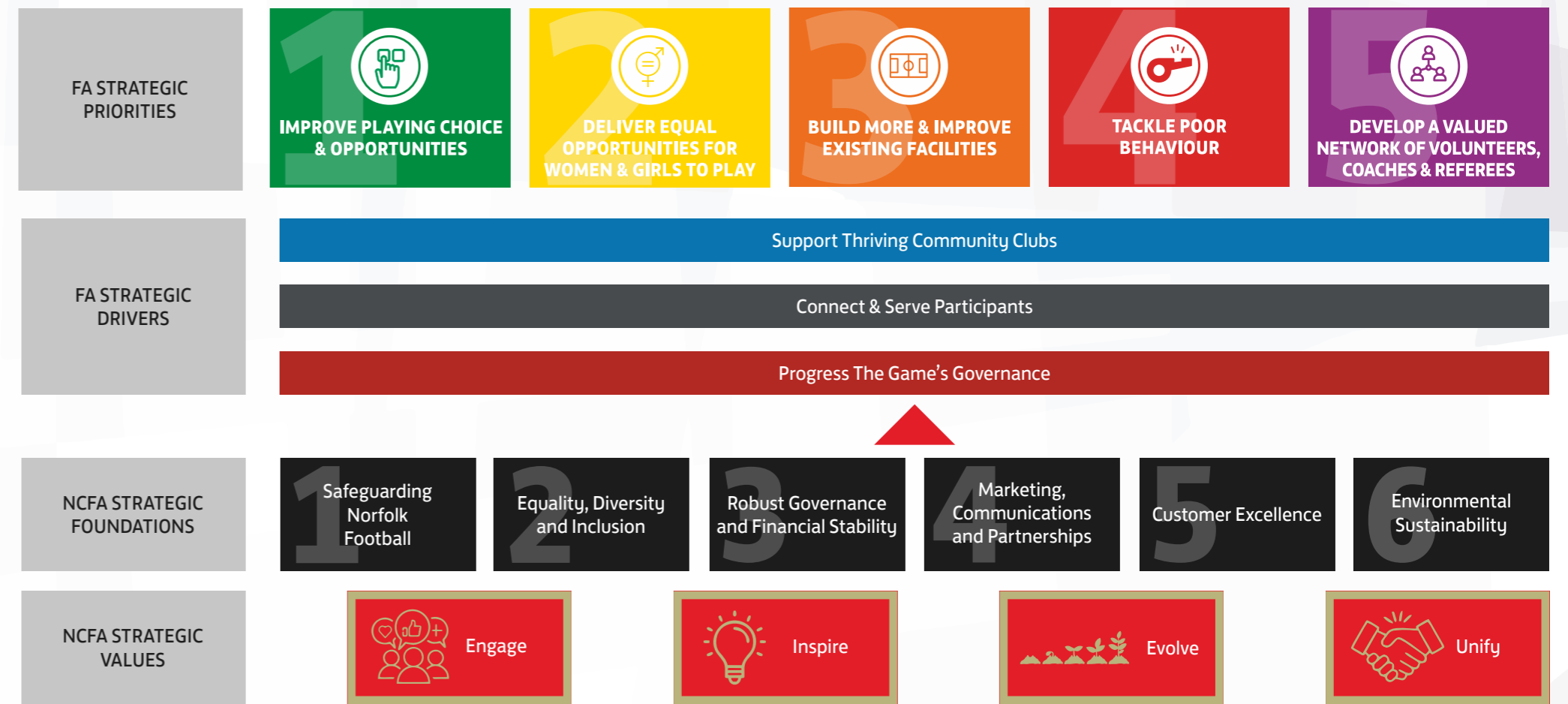
## THE FA FIVE PRIORITIES

- 1 IMPROVE PLAYING CHOICE & OPPORTUNITIES**
- 2 DELIVER EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN & GIRLS TO PLAY**
- 3 BUILD MORE & IMPROVE EXISTING FACILITIES**
- 4 TACKLE POOR BEHAVIOUR**
- 5 DEVELOP A VALUED NETWORK OF VOLUNTEERS, COACHES & REFEREES**

## THE FA THREE DRIVERS

- SUPPORT THRIVING COMMUNITY CLUBS**
- CONNECT & SERVE PARTICIPANTS**
- PROGRESS THE GAME'S GOVERNANCE**

# OUR PURPOSE: Inspiring Positive Change Through Norfolk Football



Priority 1:

# IMPROVED PLAYING CHOICE AND OPPORTUNITIES

**Our 2028 ambition:**

To create new and varied playing opportunities to give everyone a chance to play the game, in a way that suits them best.

## WE WILL:

<b>Evolve the youth game</b>	<b>Improve competitive football for adult male players</b>
<b>Create more opportunities to play safe, inclusive casual football</b>	<b>Support the disability game to grow and thrive</b>

## OUR SUCCESS MEASURES:

- 2643 more male players
- 34% increase in the number of players within disability football
- A significant increase in the percentage of people playing the type of football they want to play

Priority 2:

# DELIVER EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS TO PLAY

**Our 2028 ambition:**

To ensure every woman and girl who wants to play football has an opportunity to do so in a safe and enjoyable setting and in a way that suits every lifestyle.

## WE WILL:

<b>Sustain and grow more playing opportunities in schools</b>	<b>Create more team based playing opportunities</b>
<b>Extend and enhance the right casual opportunities to play</b>	<b>Deliver safe and inclusive environments for women and girls to thrive</b>

## OUR SUCCESS MEASURES:

- 47% increase in the number of female players
- 177 more women and girls only teams & sessions
- 90% of schools delivering equal access in curriculum and equal opportunities in extra curricular activity



Priority 3:

# BUILD MORE AND IMPROVE EXISTING FACILITIES

**Our 2028 ambition:**

To increase the quality and quantity of grassroots football pitches and facilities across Norfolk, to better meet the demand.

## WE WILL:

**Transform grass pitch quality**

**Build more 3G pitches**

**Create inclusive and accessible facilities**

**Improve environmental sustainability**

## OUR SUCCESS MEASURES:

- 61 more quality grass pitches
- 8 more 3G pitches

Priority 4:

# TACKLE POOR BEHAVIOUR

**Our 2028 ambition:**

To see a decline in cases of poor behaviour of any kind, and to increase reporting of discrimination, ensuring enjoyment is at the forefront of playing, volunteering or officiating grassroots football.

## WE WILL:

**Apply tougher sanctions**

**Promote positive behaviours**

**Drive collective responsibility across the game to raise standards**

## OUR SUCCESS MEASURES:

- An improvement in a percentage of games where behaviour is good or better
- Fewer teams breaching the behaviour penalty point threshold





Priority 5:

## DEVELOP A VALUED NETWORK OF VOLUNTEERS, COACHES AND REFEREES

**Our 2028 ambition:**

To grow the number of grassroots volunteers, coaches and referees and ensure they all feel valued and supported to fulfil their roles in the game.

### WE WILL:

**Grow the number of people running the game**

**Improve the diversity of those running the game**

**Support those running the game to learn and develop**

**Celebrate and reward those running the game**

### OUR SUCCESS MEASURES:

- 337 more registered volunteers within the local game
- 353 more registered coaches within the local game
- 78 more registered referees within the local game
- Improvements in the percentage of volunteers, coaches and referees who are satisfied with their footballing experience

Driver 1:

## SUPPORT THRIVING COMMUNITY CLUBS

**Our 2028 ambition:**

To support a network of thriving community clubs to provide a brilliant football offer to their local communities, to grow in a sustainable way, and to be well run.

### WE WILL:

**Ensure clubs grow opportunities and provide a quality experience**

**Help clubs to become more sustainable**

**Support the current and future generation of club leaders**

**Equip clubs to add value to their local communities**

### OUR SUCCESS MEASURES:

- 22 thriving 3\* community clubs
- Sustain the percentage of teams playing within an England Football Accredited Club in line with growth in participation



Driver 2:

## CONNECT AND SERVE PARTICIPANTS

**Our 2028 ambition:**

To improve our digital offering and deliver new online services which are personalised, easy to access and help participants to fulfil their roles and find new opportunities.

### WE WILL:

Make it easier to find information and opportunities to play, volunteer and learn

Improve our customer service and communications

Develop our digital tools to make running the game easier

Explore digital opportunities to enhance the football experience

### OUR SUCCESS MEASURES:

- Sustain and grow cumulative follower reach across all social platforms

Driver 3:

## PROGRESS THE GAME'S GOVERNANCE

**Our 2028 ambition:**

To better serve all football participants through the highest governance standards, at all levels in the grassroots game.

### WE WILL:

Promote the highest levels of governance across Norfolk football

Remain focused on supporting and developing football for all

Support the grassroots game to be financially robust

Support the game to be safe and well run

### OUR SUCCESS MEASURES:

- Compliant with Code of Governance, Equality Standard and Safeguarding 356 Standard



Strategic Foundation 1:

## SAFEGUARDING NORFOLK FOOTBALL

**Our 2028 ambition:**

Safeguarding will remain at the heart of everything that we do and be fully embedded within both the Association and all of Norfolk Football.

### WE WILL:

**Maintain FA Safeguarding 365 compliance for the next four years**

**Implement preventative safeguarding measures to create fun and safe football environments**

**Ensure safeguarding and adult at risk concerns are investigated with required statutory agencies**

**Support our leagues and clubs to ensure that they are skilled and resourced to provide a safe environment for all**



Strategic Foundation 2:

## EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

**Our 2028 ambition:**

We want everyone involved in football to be treated fairly and with respect, ensuring that we have a fully inclusive game that is free from discrimination.

### WE WILL:

**Deliver against our Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan**

**Create environments that are welcoming and inclusive for everyone**

**Develop a diverse football workforce that reflects the population of Norfolk**

**Reduce discrimination across the local game**

Strategic Foundation 3:

# ROBUST GOVERNANCE AND FINANCIAL STABILITY

**Our 2028 ambition:**

Governing the game in Norfolk to the highest standards and built upon a sustainable financial model

## WE WILL:

Maintain the FA Code of Governance standard and promote good governance across Norfolk football

Maximise revenues from our Football Development Centres and maintain compliance with The FA Financial Standards for County FA's

Grow our network of commercial partners to diversify income

Target a 7.5% increase in turnover over the life cycle of the strategy



Strategic Foundation 4:

# MARKETING, COMMUNICATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

**Our 2028 ambition:**

Utilise the power of marketing, communication and partnerships to inspire positive change in football, reaching out to more people, organisations and networks

## WE WILL:

Develop a Communications Plan that includes adoption of innovative technological solutions

Create a content and campaign strategy targeting improved reach and engagement across the game

Expand the Association's commercial partnership portfolio to unlock additional revenue streams

Work with traditional and new stakeholders and partners to support the delivery of the Association's strategic priorities and drivers

Strategic Foundation 5:

## CUSTOMER EXCELLENCE

**Our 2028 ambition:**

Maintaining and improving our customer service standards to ensure that we deliver the best outcomes possible for the local football community.

### WE WILL:

Implement a new Customer Service charter to improve customer service throughout the Association

Seek regular customer feedback on the services that we provide

Define clear principles as to how our staff will conduct themselves when engaging with our customers

Retain and build our customers' loyalty across all aspects of the Association



Strategic Foundation 6:

## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

**Our 2028 ambition:**

Targeting a reduction in the carbon footprint of the Association and ensuring that we play our role in creating sustainable solutions for football in Norfolk.

### WE WILL:

Develop and adopt a new Environmental Policy and a four-year Sustainability Action Plan

Launch the Norfolk Football Community Fund, providing resources to Clubs and Charities to implement projects that will give back to their local communities

Measure the impact of our carbon footprint reduction across the Association

Supporting leagues and clubs in improving their environmental sustainability



NCFA Values

# ENGAGE

Where connection meets action

We aim to prioritise active involvement, meaningful interaction, and impactful connection with stakeholders, audiences, customers and communities. We will strive to create compelling experiences, initiatives and content that captivates and resonates with our target audiences, igniting their interest, participation, and passion while signposting the way to take action. The Engage pillar of our strategy includes seeking and listening to feedback from a wider spread of our audience and customer base, as well as modifying our processes to reach the furthest corners of our county. We aspire to create and strengthen lasting connections that improves accessibility and inclusivity, increases participation and fosters a sense of belonging within the Norfolk Football community.



NCA Values

# INSPIRE

Illuminating the pathway for all

The Inspire pillar of our strategy will see us strive for excellence in all that we do to become the pinnacle of local football and a County FA that fosters pride and belonging to support wide reaching goals around participation and development. Through setting standards and championing a diverse range of role models, we are looking to ignite a fire within the local population around our game. We want grassroots football in Norfolk to be accessible and visible and will strive to ensure opportunities to be involved in local football are clearly evident and effectively marketed to instigate connection. We will fuel the passion within our workforce, empowering the staff who proudly represent our Association to achieve their full potential through cultivating creativity, embracing collaboration and celebrating innovation.



NCFA Values

# EVOLVE

Pro-actively pursuing growth

Through the value of Evolve we will focus on innovation and continuous improvement of our workforce, processes and the Association as a whole. We have the ambition to remain forward thinking and responsive to current trends as well as adaptable to changing circumstances in the world of football. Through improving technology and infrastructure, digital solutions, inclusion and diversity, and workforce development, we aspire to maintain our position as a leading County FA. During the next strategy period we will also look to further develop our commercial and strategic partnership portfolio, make strides in sustainability, and revolutionise our internal and external communications; highlighting the work we do, the progress we make, and the impact we have on communities.





NCA Values

# UNIFY

Together we achieve more

Through uniting Norfolk Football, we as the Governing Body hope to create a cohesive and inclusive community, bringing groups together while celebrating the diversity of the local football landscape. We will bring together various stakeholders to share best practice and undertake reviews of current processes with fairness and objectivity. We aim to have a bigger community presence, with better staff visibility and members of our workforce striving to play their part in creating and maintaining safe and positive football environments. Collaboration and collective action will be key to ensuring that all of Norfolk Football can pull together to have maximum impact, ultimately creating a vibrant football community that benefits all who possess a shared passion for the game.

# OUR STARTING XI

By 2028 we will...

1

Ensure safeguarding continues to be placed at the heart of everything we do, whilst continuing to listen to the voice of young people from within the grassroots game

2

Review all Affiliated League structures and County Cups, ensuring the local player pathway is fit for purpose and is aligned to participant trends and the FA's Youth Format Review

3

Redevelop our Customer Charter, to enhance all customer experiences, and to drive the improvement of our County FA Customer Satisfaction Rating

4

Further evolve the County FA's Financial Sustainability Model to sustain the local game, reduce dependency on central FA funding, increase revenue driven via our two FDC's, and diversify our income streams

5

Deliver countywide capital investment projects to build new and enhance existing football facilities, as identified within our seven Local Football Facility Plans

6

Retain and grow our network of partners incorporating both strategic and commercial organisations, in order to increase revenue to the Association and inspire positive change

7

Develop our workforce, aligned to our people plan to ensure we have the people, skills and knowledge to meet the business needs, and serve the Norfolk grassroots football community with pride

8

Adopt an Environmental Policy to pledge the Association's commitment to reducing our carbon footprint, and implement a Sustainability Action Plan incorporating all aspects of the business

9

Support our Inclusion Strategy Advisory Group to drive and challenge all areas of the business through delivery of our DIAP, to increase engagement and participation from underrepresented communities

10

Maintain The FA's County FA Code of Governance, demonstrating a continued commitment to high quality governance, and trusted leadership to all stakeholders

11

Launch the Norfolk Football Community Fund, which will support grassroots clubs and charitable causes across Norfolk that utilise the power of football to drive positive change



# OUR STRATEGIC PARTNERS



# OUR COMMERCIAL PARTNERS





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