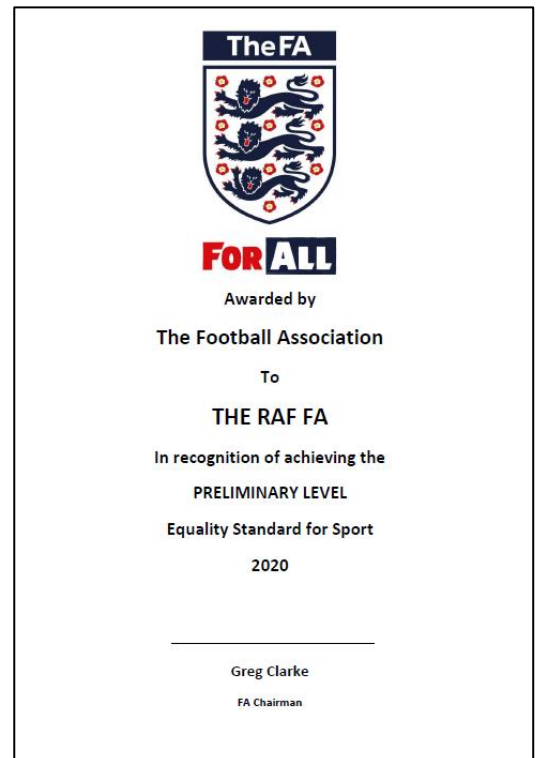


## RAF FA – Equality and Diversity Award

Congratulations go to the RAF FA, who have just been awarded the Preliminary Level for the Equality Standard in Sport. This important framework guides community organisations towards achieving diversity, equality and inclusion within sport, and aims to make sport accessible to all regardless of any protective characteristic. The RAF FA successfully completed the Foundation Level in less than 12 months, and were praised for their swift response to the issue and were noted as the quickest county to achieve this first and important level. The Preliminary Level is the second stage out of four and is much more demanding in terms of objectives to achieve; noting that only 11 other County FAs (of 51) and no other military sports organisations have yet achieved this outcome.

As part of the Preliminary Level, the RAF FA conducted an equality and diversity survey of all coaches, referees, players and board members; this data set led to the compilation of a full analytical report and comprehensive action plan which clearly articulated all issues within the RAF FA from grass roots up to the Board of Trustees. Additionally, a bespoke equality policy was written, a RAF FA trifold was created advertising the RAF FA's commitment to the cause and initiatives like 'Rainbow Laces' and 'Kick it Out' were supported. This admirable work undertaken by the RAF FA has demonstrated that it understands the issues surrounding equality, diversity and inclusion and the barriers faced by under-represented groups in football.

The RAF FA now has a comprehensive action plan to take forward into the next level of the Equality Standard in Sport, and all staff and volunteers fully understand the principles of equality and their role in delivering these aims against this plan. This 'Intermediate Level' comes with many objectives and challenges to undertake of which very few counties have managed to achieve. The RAF FA are proud of their significant accomplishments so far and are excited to undertake the challenges posed at this next level; further reinforcing the commitment the RAF FA has to being the standard bearers for equality in sport.



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