



Staffordshire FA



UNITING THE KNOT

STAFFORDSHIRE FA 2021 – 2024 STRATEGY

SUPPORT | DEVELOP | UNITE

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INTRODUCTION – CEO ADAM EVANS



'Uniting the Knot' sets out our strategic priorities for the period of 2021-2024, where we will focus on Supporting, Developing and Uniting Staffordshire Football, ensuring that this is underpinned through safe and inclusive environments where the game can flourish.

This strategy follows on from our 2018-2021 strategy 'Untying the Knot', which focused on breaking down barriers, simplifying, and supporting the bespoke needs of Staffordshire Football. There were a number of key successes which will lead us into 'Uniting the Knot', which focuses on recovery following the Covid-19 pandemic and bringing Staffordshire Football together to collaborate and thrive.

We will promote unity and build a renewed sense of togetherness as the game gets itself back onto its feet following the pandemic. This is an opportunity to reset, to consider what we are doing well and what we can do better to support the game and encourage growth.

For this strategy to be truly impactful, we recognise that we will not be able to achieve this in isolation, emphasising the need for collaboration with key partners to achieve the desired outcomes. The game must be accessible for all and we should be doing more at every level to achieve equality.

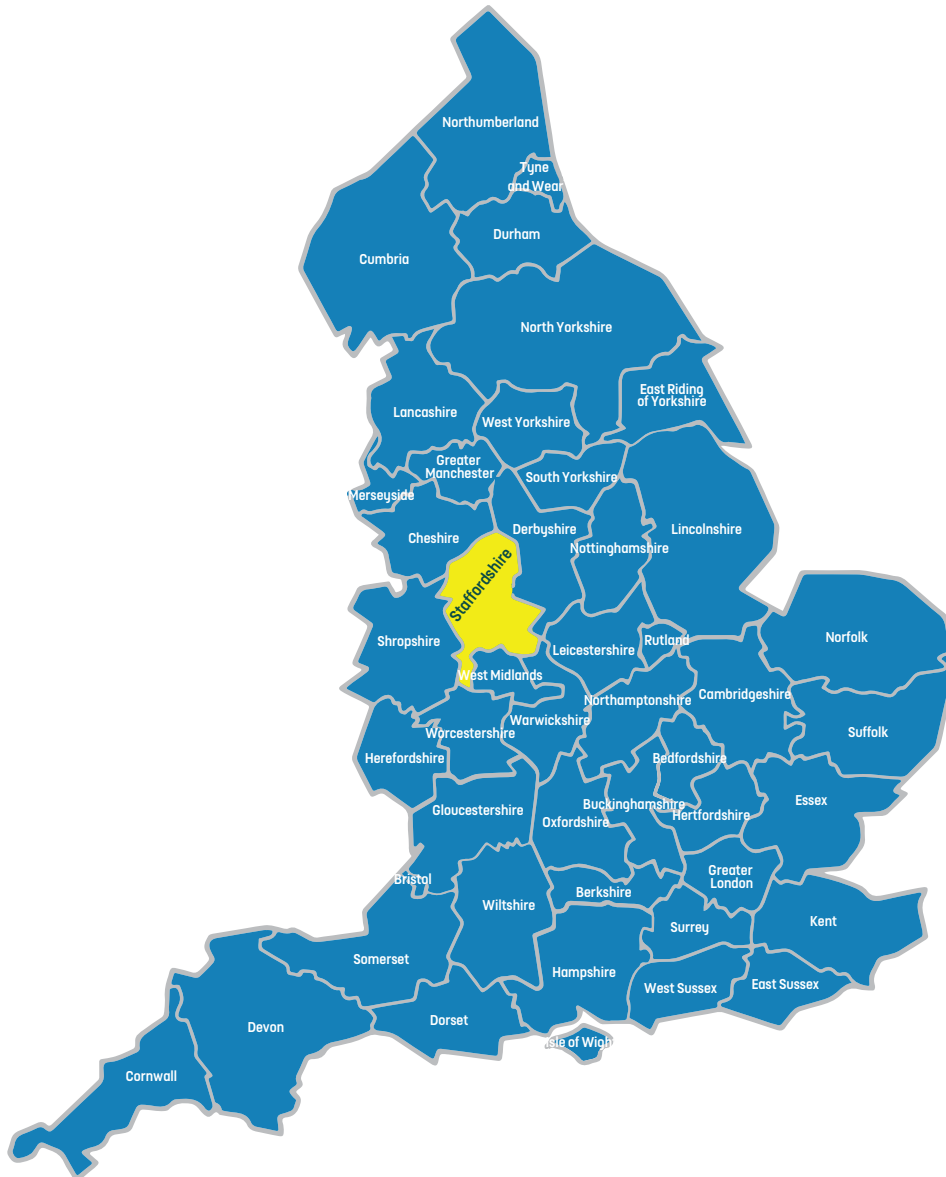
Following the impact of Covid 19 there will be new challenges and greater emphasis on a digital world. This will require us to rethink, work with greater efficiency, and to provide to appropriate support for Staffordshire Football. We will work with less resource than our previous strategy, so it is more important than ever that we use insight, evidence, and local knowledge, to focus our key areas of work. We will need to be effective in our communication and work closely with our key stakeholders, to provide the necessary support which will enable the game to grow.

All of this will be done whilst ensuring that Safeguarding, Inclusion, Customer Excellence and Communication, are at the core of our work.



Adam Evans
Chief Executive Officer

STAFFORDSHIRE



Situated at the heart of the UK, Staffordshire's heritage is steeped in innovation and home to numerous national landmarks, including The FA's National Football Centre at St. George's Park.

A place of national gems, including the National Memorial Arboretum near Lichfield, a National Park in the Peak District, the National Forest in East Staffordshire, National Brewing Centre in Burton-on-Trent, and the world capital of ceramics in Stoke-on-Trent. Staffordshire is a nationally significant and centred county at the heart of the UK.

Staffordshire is a largely rural area with a growing population and increasing average age. The Staffordshire FA membership also includes areas of Walsall and the numbers below are reflective of this.

POPULATION:
1,412,900
(Staffordshire & Walsall combined)

GENDER:
Males = 49.8% (Staffordshire) **49.2%**
(Walsall)

Females = 50.2% (Staffordshire)
50.8% (Walsall)

ETHNICITY
Staffordshire = 94% White,
6% Ethnic Groups other than White
Walsall = 78.9% White,
21.1% Ethnic Groups other than White

AGE
Staffordshire = 56% Aged under 49
Walsall = 64.5% Aged under 49



Staffordshire - home to the National Football Centre,
St. George's Park



STAFFORDSHIRE FOOTBALL



27,413

Players



525

Clubs



2069

Teams



6000

Coaches & Volunteers



702

Match Officials



2021-2024 KEY TARGETS:

RETAIN

24,473 Male Players

Ensure that

1000 MATCH OFFICIALS
are available to support the
Grassroots Game

GROW

the Female Game by 30%

Provide extensive CPD
opportunities for
1500 COACHES

REIGNITE

the Disability Game by 30%

Improve

200 GRASS PITCHES
across Staffordshire

IMPACT OF PREVIOUS STRATEGY 2018-2021



KEY HEADLINES AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- Governance changes which have enabled our Council to be more reflective of Staffordshire Football.
- Three independent Directors appointed to the Board.
- Passed the Football Association's Safeguarding Standards and continue to be a leader nationally in this area.
- Growth of flexible formats across the male and female games, receiving national recognition.
- Improved customer service, over 50,000 emails resolved, with a satisfaction rate of 94%.
- Improved financial management systems.
- £40,000 invested into the Club Loan Scheme.
- Improved brand awareness and recognition, resulting in improved perception of the County FA.

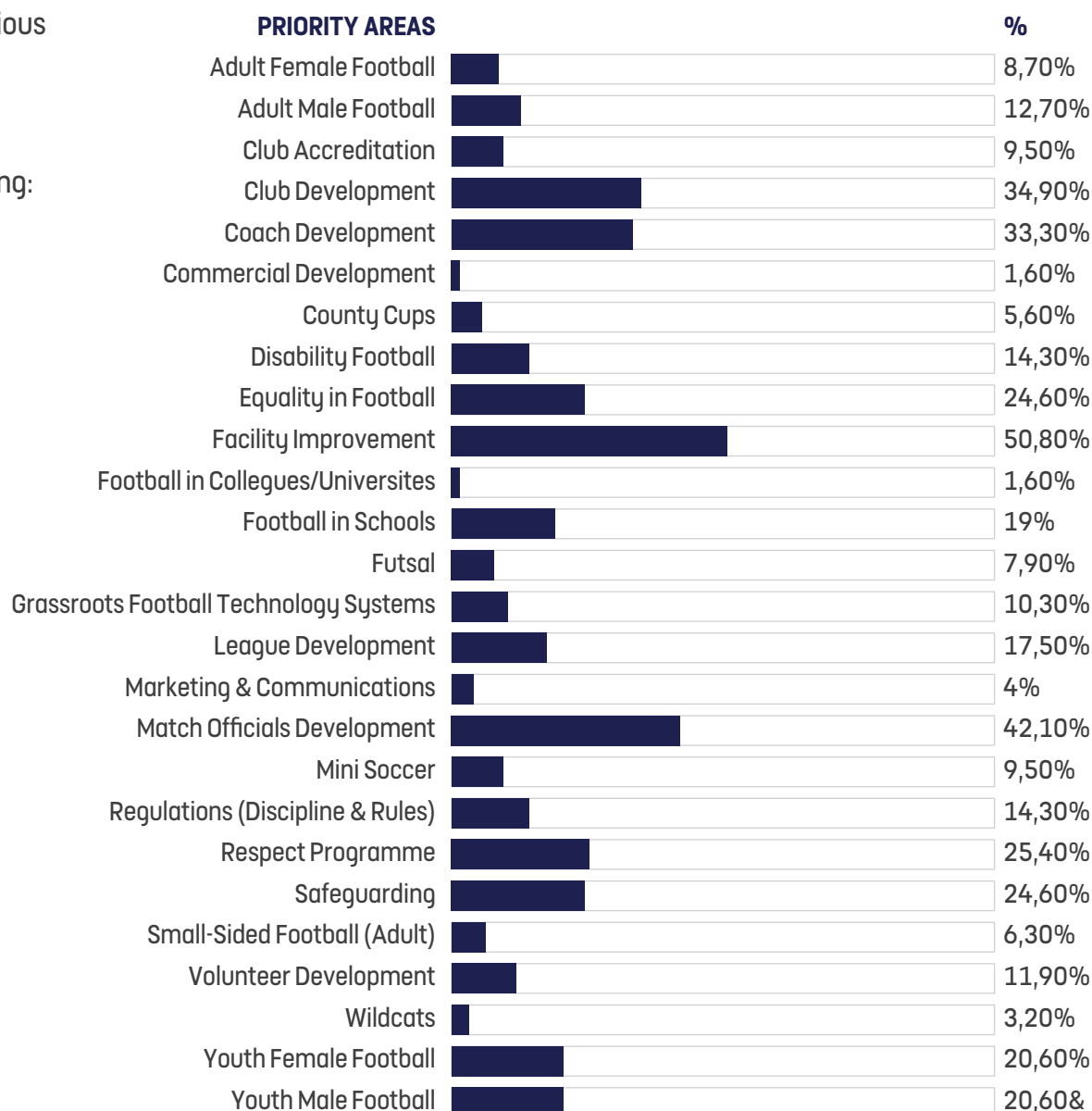
Area of the Game	2018	2021	Change
Mini-Soccer Teams	452	582	+130
Youth Male Teams	736	820	+84
Adult Male Teams	406	407	+1
Youth Female Teams	65	102	+37
Adult Female Teams	29	47	+18
Disability Teams	20	41	+21
% Youth Charter Standard Clubs	64%	81%	+17%
% Adult Charter Standard Clubs	25%	52%	+27%
Player Registration Coverage	73%	88%	+15%
Youth Teams with a Qualified Coach	82%	85%	+3%
Referees	820	702	-118
Good Quality Grass Pitches	9	107	+98

STRATEGY CONSULTATION 2021



Throughout 2021, significant consultation was carried out with various stakeholders across the Staffordshire Football community, to assist us in the production of the 2021-2024 Strategy, ensuring that all key stakeholders had the opportunity to provide some valuable and impactful feedback. These groups included the following:

- Active Through Football Consultation
- Board of Directors
- Customer Service Feedback
- Equality & Diversity Training Needs Survey
- FA Regional Manager
- Inclusion Action Plan Working Group
- League Forums
- Members of Council
- Members of Staff
- Staffordshire FA Focus Groups
- Staffordshire Football Open Survey
- The FA Grassroots Survey
- The State of Play Survey
- U18's Referees Survey
- Young Person Return to Football Survey





UNITING THE KNOT

STAFFORDSHIRE FA 2021 – 2024 STRATEGY

SUPPORT | DEVELOP | UNITE



PURPOSE

Providing a safe and inclusive environment where everyone can achieve their football aspirations.

VISION

Support, Develop, Unite.



VALUES

Insightful, Innovative, Inclusive, Inspirational.

FOUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

**SUPPORT
THE GAME**

**DEVELOP
THE GAME**

**UNITE
THE GAME**

**SAFE & INCLUSIVE
ENVIRONMENTS FOR
THE GAME**

To provide strong leadership and a strategic workforce that underpins the needs of Staffordshire Football. Utilise data, insight, and member feedback to support our decision making, to ensure investment and structure is in place to serve the game.

Objective 1:

Ensure continued high levels of customer excellence, ensuring solid support services are in place to serve the game.

Objective 2:

Generate greater data and insight into our members, to better serve their needs and to focus our resource appropriately.

Objective 3:

Support and develop inclusive and sustainable leagues and clubs, to be the best they can be and create vibrant, safe environments for all participants.

Objective 4:

Invest in a strong, diverse, skilled, and caring staffing team, who can provide the appropriate support for the great work and efforts of our members.

Objective 5:

Lead and support the return of the game following the coronavirus pandemic and monitor participation trends, working together with partners to act upon trends.

WHAT WILL SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

- Ensure all customer service SLAs are met by all staff, with a minimum 90% satisfaction rate.
- To integrate the telephone system and one public facing system by 2022-2023.
- Establish a data partnership with key partner.
- To achieve external accreditation for Customer Excellence.
- To hold a minimum of three league forums per season.
- All member leagues to gain England Football Accreditation, and 90% of Clubs by 2023-2024.
- Deliver a comprehensive workforce development programme, with all staff attending a minimum of two external training courses.

Working with all key stakeholders across the game, to sustain opportunities for communities to play, participate and volunteer in. Work to secure investment, raise standards, and improve the health of Staffordshire people.

Objective 1:

Supporting a diverse, well-educated, voluntary workforce, to sustain clubs and leagues for the future.

Objective 2:

Develop effective and integrated pathways for players, coaches, and match officials.

Objective 3:

Secure investment to enhance Staffordshire facilities and provide financial support where possible.

Objective 4:

Establish key partnerships with local providers to deliver Staffordshire FA and FA projects and initiatives.

Objective 5:

Utilise the power of football to engage communities and reach beyond the game.

WHAT WILL SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

- Recruitment of a Recreational Football Lead, establishing 16 central venue locations for adults and veterans (male & female) 11v11 Leagues.
- Confirm two major partners to enhance opportunities across the game, through re-investment and enhance corporate and ethical image.
- Partner with all leagues to host a minimum of two referee courses per season to support their recruitment.
- Staffordshire Football Partnership Group to lead key areas of the game – Burton Albion, Port Vale, Stoke City, Together Active.
- Club pathways to be representative of their communities and offering strong, stable club structures.
- Lead the Active Through Football project in Stoke-on-Trent.
- To increase our Loan Scheme ringfenced monies from £20,000 to £50,000 as provided in the 2020-2021 season.

To be the vehicle to unite the grassroots game in Staffordshire, driving inclusivity, diversity, and transparency, to enable a collaborative approach enabling the game to be stronger together.

Objective 1:

Provide strong leadership and transparent governance that drives great culture and exhibits the right behaviors for Staffordshire Football.

Objective 2:

Commercialise our assets to maximise funding and diversify income to re-invest back into Staffordshire Football.

Objective 3:

To be a fully inclusive organisation that embeds representation of Staffordshire Football in all that we do.

Objective 4:

Enhance and shape a strong Staffordshire Football brand to promote and celebrate the local game.

Objective 5:

Be the focal point for Staffordshire Football and be the leaders of the grassroots game.

WHAT WILL SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

- Opportunities for more people to have their say on Staffordshire Football (Focus Groups, Committees, Club and League Forums).
- To achieve the Code of Governance by 2022-2023 season.
- To achieve Charitable Status by 2022-2023 season.
- Employ a minimum of one Apprentice position annually.
- To achieve the Preliminary Level of the Equality Standard for Sport by 2022-23 season.
- To appoint an Inclusion Lead to sit of the County FA Board for the 2021-2022 season.
- Provide an annual wellbeing survey for staff and ensure 100% response to FA State of Play survey.
- Promote the Staffordshire Football brand alongside England Football via communications plan and all media platforms.



We must ensure everyone who participates feels safe and protected. Creating secure environments for people of all ages to flourish in the game, regardless of background and personal circumstances. Providing a supportive, inclusive network across Staffordshire Football.

Objective 1:

Rejuvenate the Respect agenda at all levels of the game, by creating shining examples of good practice with strong Staffordshire role models.

Objective 2:

Embed further the FA Safeguarding Standards to continue to drive improvement and create safer environments.

Objective 3:

Utilise the voice of young people to help drive positive change and support decision making. Deliver the SFA Youth Engagement plan.

Objective 4:

Ensure abuse, discrimination and poor behavior reporting. Instill confidence in processes and implement FA regulation consistently across the game.

Objective 5:

Deliver Staffordshire Football's Inclusion Action Plan, to ensure an inclusive workplace culture and accountability for everyday inclusion.

WHAT WILL SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

- Work with leagues to implement Respect Marshalls for all fixtures.
- Ensure all U18 Referees utilise the Yellow Armband Campaign.
- Establish key vehicles for young people to have a voice in the game – players, referees, and youth council.
- Deliver the SFA Youth Engagement Strategy.
- Achieve the FA's Independent Safeguarding Assessment on an annual basis.
- Maximise opportunities to enhance awareness of safety campaigns and help secure investment.



STAFFORDSHIRE FA STRUCTURE - GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP



For this 2021-2024 Strategy to be achieved, it is imperative that we provide strong leadership and transparent governance – fully representative of Staffordshire Football – which is underpinned by clear and effective communication throughout the structure.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors will oversee the delivery of the 2021-2024 Strategy. The Board comprises of up to seven members who are all volunteers. The Council is responsible for appointing the Board Members from within their membership, and in addition to that, the Board can appoint three Independent Non-Executive Directors, who are elected by the Board and have specific skillsets to help the Association to achieve our objectives.

COUNCIL

Our Council is the guardian of the grassroots game in Staffordshire and plays a vital role in how the Association is governed. Its main responsibility is to ensure that the Board are delivering against the strategy, by monitoring and supporting their work. The Council is made up of representatives from affiliated bodies, specific areas of the game, Independent Members, Life Vice Presidents and Life Members. In total the Council is over fifty in number, and these members give up their valuable time to support the local game.

COMMITTEES

Our Council Members can sit on the following Standing Committees, which the Board of Directors delegate specific tasks. These Committees are pivotal to the working of the Association and support the executive workforce to deliver the strategy. The Committees run alongside the staffing structure, namely: Business, Participation, Regulation, and Workforce. The Inclusion Advisory Group and the Staffordshire Football Partnership Group also reports into the Board of Directors.

FOCUS GROUPS

Focusing on key areas of the game are several needs-led working groups, all of which have a representative who sits on the Council to represent that respective area of the game in Staffordshire. The focus groups draw on the experience and expertise of volunteers operating within their respective area of the game.



STAFFORDSHIRE FA STRUCTURE - EMPLOYED WORKFORCE

We have developed a staffing structure that covers the key areas of our core objectives, which will be critical to the delivery of this strategy and providing support to our members. We have four staff hubs that service our members, which are linked directly to their respective Committees and Focus Groups.

WORKFORCE:

to support our voluntary workforce, including club & league administrators, match officials, mentors, and coaches.

REGULATORY:

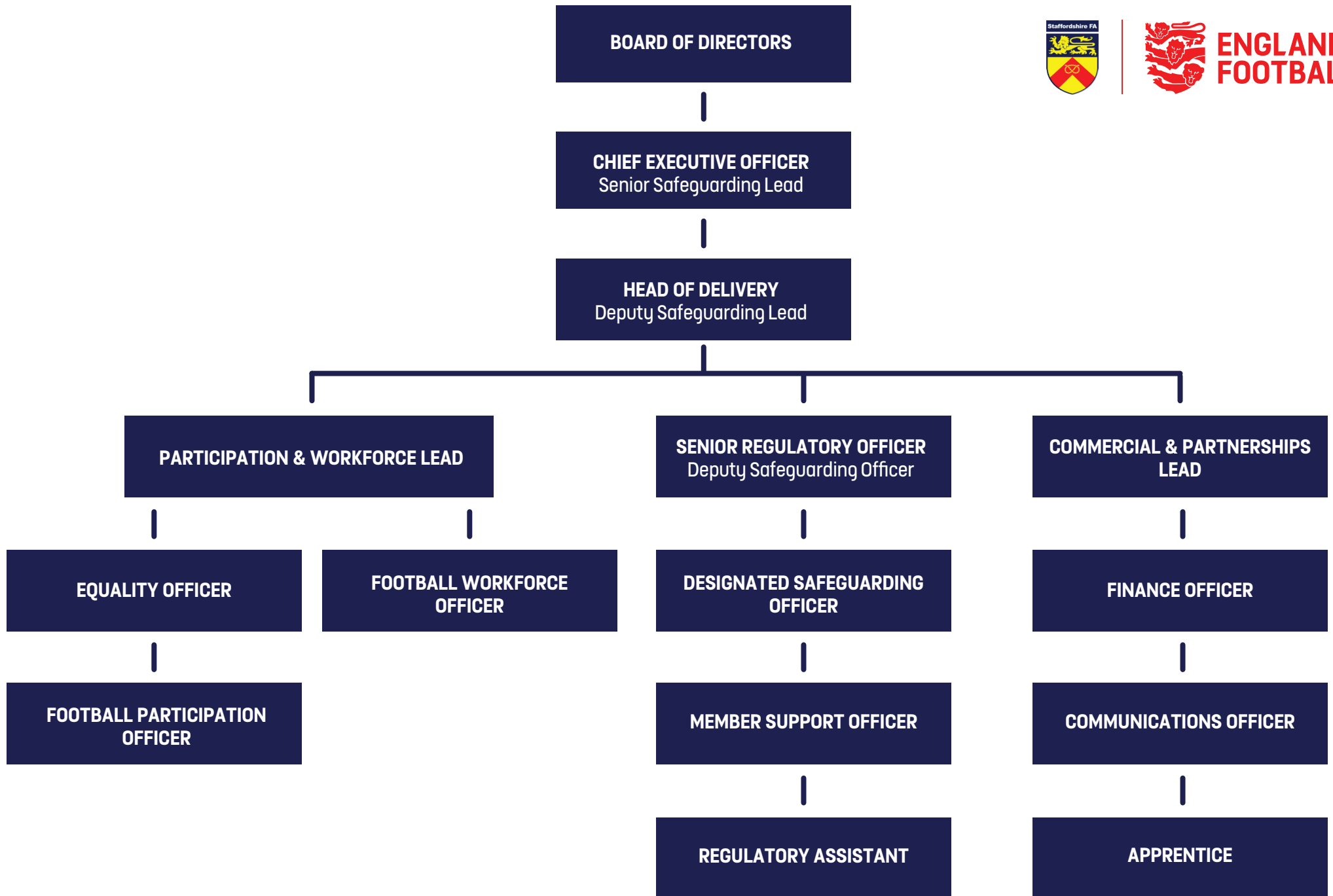
to provide member support and ensure the effective regulation of the game and all aspects of safeguarding.

PARTICIPATION:

to sustain and increase participation opportunities for everyone across Staffordshire.

BUSINESS:

to focus on commercial, compliance, marketing, communications, financial and facility development.





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