



THE LONDON FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

# HARNESSING THE POWER OF GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL

STRATEGY 2020 - 2025



# LONDON FA'S STRATEGY 2020 – 2025: ONE YEAR ON



**When we launched our strategy in early 2020, we committed to reviewing and refreshing it on an annual basis.**

More than one year on, I can safely say that we never expected to face the scale and variety of challenges that we have experienced over the past year. In March 2020 the world was gripped by the COVID-19 pandemic, which brought all normal activity to a sudden halt.

Football was no exception. The 2020 grassroots football season was curtailed and what has followed has been a real rollercoaster of hope and anxiety. As restrictions were eased over the summer of 2020, we saw a very encouraging increase in demand for affiliated football in London. This is a continuation of the growth across the men's and women's game in London that we have been able to drive over the past two years. Alas, as the virus escalated over the winter months, we then had to adapt to further lockdowns and a wide variety of complicated rules and restrictions, with only limited football being played to date in 2021. Throughout this period, we have all been inspired by the amazing work that has been carried out by our clubs and leagues in response to the measures put in place, making sure that grassroots football is played in as safe an environment as possible.

Alongside the COVID-19 pandemic, on 25th May 2021, George Floyd, a 46-year-old black man, was murdered in Minneapolis, Minnesota, United States, by a white police officer, Derek Chauvin, whilst under arrest. This incident sparked protests across the world and further emphasised the continued racial inequality in our society.

Over the course of the year the London FA Board and staff team have regularly reviewed this strategy as these seismic events unfolded. We strongly believe that our vision, mission, headline goals and objectives are more important now than ever before. Football will be an incredibly powerful force for good as we learn to live with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and our equality, inclusion and diversity plans

have gained even greater prominence. These strategic goals and objectives are also now very well aligned to the FA's new strategy – Time for Change 2020 - 2024 and their specific grassroots football strategy – Survive-Revive-Thrive, 2020 - 2024

What has been clear over the course of this year, however, is that the order in which we deliver our objectives will need to change dramatically. In response to the events described above we have prioritised our plans to become a more efficient business (Goal D) and this has been driven by a decrease in our income of approximately one third. This decrease has largely been as a result of long-term changes to the delivery of coach education and reductions in our FA grant, due to the pandemic. In response to these changes we have restructured the business, created greater efficiencies by modernising our customer service and discipline processes and reduced the size of our staffing team. These changes ensure that we approach next season in a strong and sustainable position to continue to deliver on this strategy.

We have also accelerated our inclusion and diversity work, in particular our work on racial inequality, by driving further governance reforms, establishing a new racial equality group and launching a consultation with our members on this subject. Further detail on this is contained on page 18.

In the following pages, our direction of travel, strategic goals and objectives remain unchanged. What has changed are the specific actions that we originally set out to deliver on these objectives. These have all been reviewed and revised and we have also updated our targets and measures. We are very much looking forward to the new 2021-22 grassroots football season, cautiously optimistic that it will be less interrupted than the last but also confident that we are ready to support our members with whatever challenges we all face.

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# 1. FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIR

**When I was appointed in 2019, I was clear that the London FA needed a bold new ambition – to not just govern but serve the game, become better connected with our members and truly lead the development of grassroots football in our capital city.**

The challenges currently facing grassroots football, which is all football that is non-professional and non-elite, are well documented. People are migrating to shorter, more bite-sized forms of football, particularly in London, and this is having an impact on our traditional 11-a-side leagues. The importance of embedding the right safeguarding standards has quite rightly increased but we are largely reliant on a voluntary workforce to deliver these and many other standards. And whilst there is plenty of money at the elite end of the game, local clubs and leagues at a grassroots and community level are struggling financially.

These challenges should be of concern not just to those people who care about football but to everyone. Local clubs and leagues do far more than just provide safe and enjoyable footballing experiences. They improve the physical and mental health of people in the local community, create employment and personal development opportunities for all and bring diverse groups together like no other sport can. The volunteers running grassroots football are the unsung heroes of our sport.

This new strategy is not about the elite few; it's about the many whose lives have been and will be transformed by football. This is the start of an incredibly exciting journey for the London FA and I do hope you will join us.

**James Middlehurst**  
Chair – London Football Association



## 2. FOREWORD FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

I feel enormously proud and privileged to introduce the London Football Association's new strategy: harnessing the power of grassroots football. This strategy sets out our vision and plans over the next five years, marking a major change in the way the organisation will work.

Our vision is to harness the power of grassroots football to enrich more lives in London. As a player, coach and team manager myself I know first-hand the difference that this great sport has made to my life. At London FA we are passionately committed to ensuring that many more people in London have this opportunity.

Focusing on the wider benefits that football can bring represents a very significant change for this organisation - from an administrative body that governs and regulates to one that goes much further than this, seeking to promote, develop and recognise more widely the positive impact that football has on this great city and its local communities. We believe this will help to ensure that grassroots football in London is safe, enjoyable and thriving again. To do this we must change our mindset and culture. We are no longer an organisation that only sets and enforces rules, we are here to serve grassroots football and meet the needs and expectations of the whole football community.

Working with our volunteers, members, football clubs, leagues, local authorities and many other non-football organisations in London, we have set out an ambitious but deliverable plan. This document will take you through each of the four headline goals that we have set ourselves over the next five years, as well as the specific objectives and actions we have identified to turn these goals into reality.

We are indebted to all those people who have helped us develop this strategy and are looking forward to working with you all to make it happen. Let's get started.



**Paul Bickerton**  
Chief Executive Officer  
London Football Association

# 3. INTRODUCTION

## Responding to new challenges and opportunities

At the heart of this strategy is the need for the London FA to adapt to changing societal and economic changes in our wider society, changes that are affecting how people spend their leisure time. The sport and physical activity sector overall is experiencing a shift in which people are moving from more organised team sports to shorter individualised activities and pastimes, in keeping with their busier lifestyles. The latest Active Lives survey shows that over the past year, the number of people participating in team sports has declined from 3.4m to 3.1m, whereas the number of people taking part in fitness activities has grown from 13.2m to 13.4m.<sup>1</sup>

Government policy in relation to sport and physical activity has also changed. In December 2015, the Government published Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation.<sup>2</sup> This was followed by Sport England’s strategy and the FA’s strategy, both published in 2016, and then the London Mayor’s strategy for sport and physical activity, launched in December 2018. All these plans have set out a different direction for sport policy, looking beyond simple participation to how sport changes lives and becomes a force for social good.

The London FA’s new strategy - harnessing the power of grassroots football – aligns itself directly to these societal, economic and government policy changes. It ensures that as an organisation we start to recognise the impact that our wonderful network of clubs, leagues, volunteers, referees, coaches and administrators have already had on people’s lives in London and seeks to maximise this impact by supporting, collaborating with and developing this network further.

The outcome of this will be a stronger, more sustainable and modernised grassroots football infrastructure in London and this is what we, at London FA, are all about.



# 4. LONDON FA STRATEGY 2020 – 2025



## VISION

Harnessing the power of grassroots football to enrich more lives in London

## MISSION

To govern, safeguard and develop the grassroots game to ensure the best and most welcoming football experiences for all across the capital

## GOALS



1

Safer environments for people to thrive



2

Lead the growth of structured football in London



3

Develop a workforce that is as diverse as the city itself



4

Improve the business, to better serve our members

## VALUES

Leadership, Collaboration, Professionalism, Integrity, & Performance

# 5. HEADLINE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



## SAFER ENVIRONMENTS FOR PEOPLE TO THRIVE

**1.1**  
Embed safeguarding into all of London FA's work

**1.2**  
Increase safeguarding awareness across the London football network

**1.3**  
Faster and more robust processing of poor on-pitch discipline



## LEAD THE GROWTH OF STRUCTURED FOOTBALL IN LONDON

**2.1**  
Halt the decline in the male affiliated game

**2.2**  
Double the number of female players by 2025

**2.3**  
Drive growth across the recreational game

**2.4**  
Provide more opportunities for specific under-represented groups



## DEVELOP A WORKFORCE THAT IS AS DIVERSE AS THE CITY ITSELF

**3.1**  
More active and diverse coaches

**3.2**  
More active and diverse referees

**3.3**  
More active and diverse administrators



## IMPROVE THE BUSINESS, TO BETTER SERVE OUR MEMBERS

**4.1**  
More engaged and satisfied members

**4.2**  
Improved management of our finances, to re-invest back into the game

## A. SAFER ENVIRONMENTS FOR PEOPLE TO THRIVE

### The context:

As the governing body for football in London, it is our duty to ensure that all football played across the capital is a safe, enjoyable and positive experience for the many children, young people and adults who regularly play, watch, coach, referee and volunteer.

In 2018 the Football Association introduced the Safeguarding Operating Standard for County Football Associations (amongst several other reforms<sup>3</sup>). This sets out 71 specific standards that a County FA should have in place before it can be declared fit for purpose, monitored at regular intervals by independent external assessors. In November 2018 and March 2019 London FA passed this assessment with 100% of the standards being met.

Alongside this assessment the London FA commissioned a significant piece of research into young people's attitudes and perceptions of football in London<sup>4</sup>. The findings from this research was reviewed alongside Sport England's young people research<sup>5</sup> and several other documents such as the NSPCC's 2016 Strategy: 5 goals to make 5 million children safer<sup>6</sup>. This review made clear that in order to drive up safeguarding standards across the game, awareness and visibility of good safeguarding procedures is key. Crucially, identifying and then reporting any safeguarding concerns is a collective duty, not just the responsibility of a smaller number of specialist safeguarding experts.

Alongside the right standards and procedures off the pitch, an enjoyable footballing experience also requires players on the pitch to behave appropriately. Managing on pitch discipline is a central function of a County Football Association and this is an area our members have specifically asked us to improve.

The volume of investigations in London has increased substantially recently, from 476 cases in the 2017-18 season to 626 last season (2018-19)<sup>7</sup>. If we are going to serve our clubs and leagues better, it is vital that we administrate discipline issues faster, more efficiently and more robustly, focusing on developing a workforce that can respond to these changing demands.



## SAFER ENVIRONMENTS FOR PEOPLE TO THRIVE CONTINUED



### Our objectives:

To achieve our goal of creating safer environments for people to thrive, we will be focusing on three specific objectives:

- 1.1 Embed safeguarding into all of London FA's work
- 1.2 Increase safeguarding awareness across the London football network
- 1.3 More robust and efficient processing of discipline incidents

### Turning this into reality – the specific actions we will take (updated May 2021):

<b>EMBED SAFEGUARDING INTO ALL OF LONDON FA'S WORK</b>	<b>INCREASE SAFEGUARDING AWARENESS ACROSS THE LONDON FOOTBALL NETWORK</b>	<b>MORE ROBUST AND EFFICIENT PROCESSING OF DISCIPLINE INCIDENTS</b>
<p>We will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measure the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures internally via our staff survey and the wider football network externally through our stakeholder survey</li> <li>• Promote best safeguarding practice to internal and external stakeholders through demonstrating safeguarding scenarios, proper compliance procedure and raising active cases correctly</li> <li>• Deliver safeguarding CPD to comply with The FA Safeguarding Operating Standard</li> <li>• Implement compliance procedures that meet National FA standards both internally at London FA and externally for grassroots clubs and partners</li> <li>• Identify clear safeguarding actions and requirements for both internal and external stakeholders, to increase accountability and responsibility in London</li> <li>• Externally identify and partner with charities and organisations for victim support across the London FA network</li> </ul>	<p>We will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set out an annual action plan to respond to the safeguarding feedback in the annual stakeholder survey</li> <li>• Create and deliver an annual safeguarding campaign, focusing on Club Welfare Officers and parents and supported by CPD</li> <li>• Promote the network of safeguarding ambassadors across the London FA and deliver safeguarding children and adults at risk workshops for Board, Council, and wider London FA members</li> <li>• Internally implement a Victim Support process to support individuals / clubs progressing through the discipline process (Reviewed through discipline / safeguarding raising standards team meetings)</li> </ul>	<p>We will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Openly recruit, train, and increase the diversity of independent discipline panel members.</li> <li>• Widen and support the training of independent Chair members at the London FA, including working alongside the FA and their members from the FA National Serious Cases Panel.</li> <li>• Communicate and engage successfully with clubs, match officials, leagues, and other key stakeholders.</li> <li>• Deliver a campaign to promote more widely the London FA's discipline procedures.</li> <li>• Reduce the case resolution time and costs of hearings by ensuring these are heard virtually (where appropriate).</li> <li>• Externally explore and partner with charities and organisations for victim support in relation to misconduct cases across the London FA network. With a particular focus on providing support for cases concerning allegations of discrimination, youth participants and vulnerable adults.</li> <li>• Analysis of the different types of misconduct cases we are receiving and identify and respond to any trends which are arising throughout the season.</li> </ul>

## B. LEAD THE GROWTH OF STRUCTURED FOOTBALL IN LONDON

### The context:

There are approximately 500,000 people who play football on a regular basis in London and many of these do so informally in parks or in the school playground. It is not possible for the London FA to influence all of those players but we have taken a strategic decision that structured grassroots football in London (any football that involves playing in an organised and competitive format, be that 11 a-side, small sided, indoor or even futsal) is our responsibility.

Across the country there has been a gradual decline in more traditional affiliated football, driven by a sharp drop in the adult male game. In 2015 49% of all structured adult male football played nationally was 11 a-side affiliated football whereas in 2018 this number had dropped to 37%<sup>8</sup>. This drop has been particularly pronounced in London, which saw a 7% decline last season<sup>9</sup>. If we are to grow the structured game in London, we must start by stemming this decline.

Following on from this, the women and girls' game is clearly a major growth opportunity. The visibility of the sport has increased significantly through the success of the England women's team and the new super-league. The gender gap nationally is still significant (in July 2019 it was 35% male to 12% female<sup>10</sup>) but this is reducing quickly, and London has seen sizeable increases in the number of women and girls playing football over the past few years.

A further growth opportunity is the recreational and small-sided game. There are specific points at which players are dropping out of the game, such as the transition from youth to adult football, or players coming into their early 30s when they start to have a family and move out of the city<sup>11</sup>. The London FA needs to capture these players and offer them more suitable alternatives.

Finally, there are two demographic groups that stand out as being particularly under-represented in sport; people with a disability and people from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Football can have a major impact on the lives of people from those communities and removing barriers for these specific under-represented groups is key if we are to lead the growth of the structured game in London.



## LEAD THE GROWTH OF STRUCTURED FOOTBALL IN LONDON CONTINUED



### Our objectives:

To achieve our goal of leading the growth of structured football in London, we will do this by focusing on four specific objectives:

- 2.1 Halt the decline in the male affiliated game
- 2.2 Double the number of female players by 2025
- 2.3 Drive growth across the recreational game
- 2.4 Provide more opportunities for specific under-represented groups

### Turning this into reality – the specific actions we will take (updated May 2021):

HALT THE DECLINE IN THE MALE AFFILIATED GAME	DRIVE GROWTH ACROSS THE RECREATIONAL GAME	DOUBLE THE NUMBER OF FEMALE PLAYERS BY 2025	PROVIDE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SPECIFIC UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS
<p>We will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the access to, quality and safety of existing facilities</li> <li>• Influence the development of more high-quality grass pitches, rated as 'Good' through the Football Foundation PitchPower app</li> <li>• Explore a different funding model for football facilities, working with the FA and Football Foundation</li> <li>• Support leagues to modernise the player experience to better retain teams and incentivise them to grow</li> <li>• Support clubs to raise standards and create safer and more enjoyable environments via a recognised accreditation scheme</li> <li>• Implement technological solutions to make administration easier for clubs and leagues</li> <li>• Continue to develop the London Cup Competitions to improve the player experience year on year</li> <li>• Make our clubs and leagues safer and more.</li> </ul>	<p>We will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the affiliation package for small sided providers, incentivising them to grow and to deliver high quality, safe experiences</li> <li>• Better promote existing football opportunities via new technology (apps, web-based tools)</li> <li>• Build strategic partnerships with relevant stakeholders, targeting growth opportunities and creating safe new formats</li> <li>• Support the existing network and develop new futsal leagues to improve the quality and safety of the experience.</li> </ul>	<p>We will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Match supply and demand for existing provision for the women's game in London, identifying potential areas for growth</li> <li>• Prioritise access to, quality and safety of existing facilities for the female game</li> <li>• Promote and publicise this existing provision more widely, to drive growth</li> <li>• Develop an improved league infrastructure for the female game in London, to ensure safer and more sustainable playing opportunities</li> <li>• Work with a wider variety of stakeholders to target new audiences, to not only grow but also maximise our impact on wider social outcomes</li> <li>• Support new and existing teams and clubs to find safe and suitable facilities to play</li> <li>• Deliver targeted marketing and promotion campaigns around key events and the professional game, maximising visibility but aligned carefully to existing provision and opportunities</li> <li>• Develop a London FA female County Cup.</li> </ul>	<p>We will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase and sustain the number of disability recreation centres and affiliated disability teams</li> <li>• Support the disability network in London to recover and adapt to the challenges brought on from the COVID-19 pandemic</li> <li>• Create talent identification hubs and more competitive opportunities for disability football, to encourage player progression</li> <li>• Develop a comprehensive training programme to attract quality coaches into disability football</li> <li>• Use impact surveys to measure participation in the game for people from lower socioeconomic groups</li> <li>• Identify community leaders and local role models and work with them to encourage specific groups into the game</li> <li>• Partner with non-sporting organisations to access new and different audiences in specific geographical locations</li> <li>• Work with Community Trusts in identified areas of deprivation, via the Just Play model.</li> </ul>

## C. DEVELOP A WORKFORCE THAT IS AS DIVERSE AS THE CITY ITSELF



### The context:

London is widely recognised as one of the most diverse cities in the world. It has an overall population of 8.8 million and 41% of these are from a BAME background, making it over four times more diverse than any other part of England<sup>12</sup>. It currently has a larger number of women living in the capital than men, with the latest data showing a 48% male to 52% female split<sup>13</sup>. However this diversity is not represented in the coaching, refereeing and administrative workforce across London. We know that only 7.3% of referees and 4% of coaches trained last year were female. More encouragingly 41.6% of referees trained last year were from a BAME background, but for coaches this number drops to 24.7%.<sup>14</sup>

Diversity is a key focus but there are many other challenges in developing and improving this workforce. There is a significant shortage of referees across London and the process by which a referee is qualified and then gains experience across the grassroots game is not as seamless as it should be. Inexperienced coaches and referees are not always offered the support they need to stay in the game, and this can result in a poorer experience for players across our clubs and leagues.

Regarding the administrative workforce, we have made significant gains over the past few years. One third of the London FA Board is now female and 42% come from a BAME background, a set of statistics that we should rightly be proud of and that is unusual in the sports sector. 42% of our professional staff team are female and one third is from a BAME background, encouraging statistics again but with room for improvement.

Regarding the London FA Council, which acts as a vital consultative and advisory body for the London FA, diversity is clearly an area we need to address. There are now 11 females and 18 BAME representatives amongst a Council of 50 members, following a recent recruitment drive. This is positive progress but there is clearly still a lot of work to be done if the London FA Council is to be more representative of London and its football playing population.

An Inclusion Advisory Group (IAG) has been established to directly tackle these issues, led by the equality and diversity lead on the London FA Board. This group has set out a plan and is already starting to deliver on these diversity objectives.



## DEVELOP A WORKFORCE THAT IS AS DIVERSE AS THE CITY ITSELF CONTINUED



### Our objectives:

To achieve our goal of developing a workforce as diverse as the capital city itself, we will do this by focusing on three specific objectives

- 4.1 **More active and diverse coaches**
- 4.2 **More active and diverse referees**
- 4.3 **More active and diverse administrators**

### Turning this into reality – the specific actions we will take (updated May 2021):

MORE ACTIVE AND DIVERSE COACHES	MORE ACTIVE AND DIVERSE REFEREES	MORE ACTIVE AND DIVERSE ADMINISTRATORS
<p>We will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connect to a wider group of sporting and non-sporting stakeholders, to target new audiences to come into coaching</li> <li>• Develop and implement a coach membership scheme to increase the engagement and quality of delivery for coaches in London</li> <li>• Increase promotion of coaching CPD (including face to face, online and mentoring) to retain existing and develop new coaches</li> <li>• Identify safe and suitable coaches to progress to the next qualification, ensuring appropriate support is in place to reach that level</li> <li>• Develop a coaching working group to provide feedback on increasing the quality and diversity of the workforce</li> <li>• Continue to evolve the 100FC Women's programme to ensure a route into coaching and retention in the game for females</li> <li>• Promote and market the FA qualification and course programme, to increase the number and diversity of qualified coaches in London</li> <li>• Implement the findings of the racial equality group in relation to coach education and development.</li> </ul>	<p>We will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Match safe exit routes and refereeing opportunities in academies and leagues more directly to course provision</li> <li>• Ensure there are sufficient courses to meet the referee demand</li> <li>• Support referees from all backgrounds through the pathway to ensure the workforce to as diverse as the city itself</li> <li>• Develop and grow the referee development group with a remit to improve the pathway for new referees</li> <li>• Work with identified partners such as professional club foundations and local charities to maximise employment opportunities for young people in London</li> <li>• Establish a female development group with safe and suitable senior role models</li> <li>• Develop the tutor workforce by identifying and recruiting new tutors to support the referee training programme and that act as safe, high-level role models representative of the city itself.</li> <li>• Implement the findings of the racial equality group in relation to referee education and development.</li> </ul>	<p>We will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve the new FA Code of Governance for County FA's, to create a more diverse, transparent, and open organisation for our volunteers</li> <li>• Provide the football network with tools and resources to support the attraction of new and diverse volunteers</li> <li>• Provide support and peer mentoring schemes for newly recruited staff and board / council members</li> <li>• Create groups of ambassadors and champions to promote the London FA via word of mouth</li> <li>• Deliver engaging and regular content relevant to specific audiences, through a wide variety of channels</li> <li>• Create regular feedback loops with a range of relevant stakeholders (e.g. Women in Football) to improve corporate knowledge in this area.</li> </ul>

## D. IMPROVE THE BUSINESS, TO BETTER SERVE OUR MEMBERS

### The context:

At London FA, our members are our most important asset. They are the clubs and leagues that deliver grassroots football throughout the capital, driven by volunteers who willingly give their time outside of often busy day-jobs. The administrative demands of the game have become more numerous, not least as a result of the vital safeguarding responsibility we have, and we need to make these day-to-day tasks easier and less frustrating.

Throughout our consultation, two themes came back very strongly from the volunteer workforce. Firstly, our members want us to improve our basic customer service, as the organisation is not currently easy enough to engage with. This means responding promptly, professionally and effectively to the many queries we receive daily. To do this we are going to have to invest in technological solutions that can track these many queries and provide different ways in which these can be answered (e.g. through FAQs on our website rather than just by phone as we do currently).

Secondly, we need to improve our communication, as many volunteers are simply unaware of the support and guidance the organisation can offer. Our website is the front face of our business but just as important is generating more relevant and captivating content through a wider variety of social media channels and increasing our face to face contact between professional staff at London FA and our network of clubs and leagues.

A further pressing business challenge for the London FA is to manage our finances more effectively. It is important that over the next few years the organisation diversifies its income and reviews operating costs, to ensure that it can balance its budget. We are committed to doing this without jeopardising our performance.

Success in this area will be hugely beneficial for London FA's members. We are a not-for-profit organisation and will be reinvesting any surplus generated back into the grassroots game



## IMPROVE THE BUSINESS, TO BETTER SERVE OUR MEMBERS CONTINUED



### Our objectives:

With all this in mind, the London FA needs to improve as a business and it will do this by focusing on two specific objectives:

- 5.1 More engaged and satisfied members
- 5.2 Develop and implement an annual grant income generation plan, to gradually diversify the organisation's sources of income and create new partnerships

### Turning this into reality – the specific actions we will take (updated May 2021):

MORE ENGAGED AND SATISFIED MEMBERS	IMPROVED MANAGEMENT OF OUR FINANCES, TO RE-INVEST BACK INTO THE GAME
<p>We will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver an annual member survey, to generate direct member feedback and measure satisfaction and engagement year on year</li> <li>• Improve the experience for customers by creating and continually refreshing a knowledge bank for common queries</li> <li>• Provide appropriate training, development and support to London FA staff to deliver outstanding customer service</li> <li>• Invest in the Freshdesk email management system to track our response rates, set agreed response times and resolve customer queries more effectively</li> <li>• Transform the London FA website, from a site that simply provides access to information to one that more pro-actively interacts and engages with our members</li> <li>• Support and educate all our clubs to transfer from the Whole Game System to the new Platform for Football, to make administrative tasks smoother and easier for our volunteers</li> <li>• Use the reach and power of virtual communication to create significantly more touch-points between London FA members and the organisation's professional staff, board, council and youth council</li> <li>• Work with a specialist communications agency to bring greater consistency and quality to our overall communications</li> </ul>	<p>We will...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to improve the London FA's internal financial management practices, by developing and executing an annual operational plan in this area</li> <li>• Develop and implement an annual grant income generation plan, with specific grant income targets, to gradually diversify the income into the organisation and create new partnerships</li> <li>• Review our assets for sponsorship and seek to significantly grow sponsorship income into key areas such as our cup competitions and through our social media channels</li> <li>• Grow affiliation, cup competitions and referee education to match the significant demand across the city</li> <li>• Launch our coach membership programme and pro-actively market FA Coach Education opportunities</li> <li>• Continuously review the way the London FA operates as a business across its people, process, and data &amp; technology, identifying year on year efficiencies</li> <li>• Invest in and explore alternative options to London FA's current office requirements, to bring down operating costs and create a better working environment for London FA staff</li> <li>• Embrace the increased flexibility provided by virtual technology and significantly reduce overhead costs for travel and meeting room hire</li> </ul>

# 6. MEASURES AND TARGETS FRAMEWORK



GOAL	OBJECTIVE	MEASURE	BASELINE	TARGET – 2025
Safer environments for people to thrive	Embed safeguarding in everything we do	Embedding safeguarding metric (internal staff survey)	90%	100%
	Spread the word – increase safeguarding awareness	Safeguarding awareness metric (external stakeholder survey) *	77% strongly agree	90% strongly agree
	More robust and efficient processing of discipline incidents	Average number of days to investigate cases	27 days from submission to charge	15 days from submission to charge
Lead the growth of structured football in London	Halt the decline in the male affiliated game	Number of male players affiliated to London FA	54,523	56,496
	Double the number of female players by 2024	Number of female players affiliated to London FA	3,397	6,794
	Drive growth across the recreational game	Number of affiliated small sided and Just Play male and female players	0	11,000
	Double the number of disability players by 2024	Number of disability players affiliated to London FA	340	680
	Increase the number of players from low SEG backgrounds playing football	County FA Power BI dashboards	Set in 2022-23 season	
	Increase the number of quality grass pitches	County FA Power BI dashboards	88	231
Develop a workforce that is as diverse as the city itself	More active and diverse coaches	County FA Power BI dashboards	Set in 2022-23 season	
	More active and diverse referees	County FA Power BI dashboards	866 total referees 62 Female Referees 307 BAME Referees	1000 total referees 160 female referees 550 BAME referees
	More female and BAME administrators	Diversity matrix (survey)	Set in 2021-22 season	41% BAME diversity split 50% Female diversity split
Improve the business to better serve our members	Improved management of our finances, to re-invest back into the game	London FA annual accounts	Deficit (£)	Surplus (£)
	More engaged and satisfied members	Net Promotor Score (external stakeholder survey) *	73%	90

\* Answering strongly agree or agree to the question 'I know what to do if I have a safeguarding concern / I would recommend the London FA to other people' in the annual external staff survey

# EQUALITY, INCLUSION & DIVERSITY



**London FA is committed to governing, safeguarding and developing the grassroots game, to ensure the best and most welcoming football experiences for all across the capital.**

We truly believe that football should be for everyone, regardless of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, ability or disability, faith or age. This is why equality, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of this strategy.

Our priority in this first year of delivering our strategy has been to transform our hiring processes and change our governance arrangements, to ensure that our people fully represent the communities that we serve. We are compliant with the Sports Code for Governance launched in 2016 and are working towards reaching the new FA Code of Governance for County Football Associations in the coming year. Equality, diversity and inclusion are central to these two codes of governance.

This process has already resulted in the appointment of a new Board, Council, Youth Council and Senior Management team. At its highest levels, the London FA is now much more representative of our wonderfully diverse city. We've also set up a specific Racial Equality Group, drawn from our Board, Youth Council and staff team, with the purpose of identifying the issues surrounding race in football in London and delivering an action plan to address these issues.

It's a good start but we know we have so much more to do. We're lucky to have such a fantastic and diverse football community in the capital and it is vital that we listen to these communities. At London FA we know we don't have all answers and so have launched a consultation on racial equality with our members and several key expert partners. This consultation will be followed by the creation of a racial equality action plan that we are determined will lead to real and lasting changes.

Alongside this, over the past year we have also been working with the FA to pilot a new Regional Discipline Officer programme to improve the management of discrimination cases, have invested in some great training for our staff, Board and Council and are transforming how we capture inclusion and diversity data across our workforce, to better monitor the progress we are making.

This is about the London FA engaging properly with its grassroots clubs through open, honest and safe conversations. We've got a lot to learn - and with the help of our members - we pledge to keep learning. To keep fighting racism and discrimination, and to emerge a better, stronger, more welcoming football association, and a voice for all our communities.



# 7. INTRODUCTION TO THE LONDON FA BOARD

In 2017 the London Football Association changed its Articles of Association to become compliant with the highest tier of sports governance, as set by Sport England and UK Sport through the Code for Sport Governance<sup>15</sup>. The Code was launched in October 2016 as the gold standard for sports governance and is widely recognised to be amongst the most advanced governance standards in the world.

The code sets specific goals in relation to transparency, independence and diversity and the London FA was the first County Football Association in England to reach these standards. The London FA also boasts one of the most diverse Boards in sport and you can meet them here:



**James Middlehurst**  
Independent Chair

James lives and works in London and is an experienced Chair & Non Exec with over 25 years' experience in Board Governance.



**Ian Wallis**  
Deputy Chair

A Council Member since 2002 Ian joined the London FA Board in 2012. Currently Deputy Chair and Chair of the Cups & Competitions Committee.



**Alistair Morgan**  
Independent Director - Finance & Risk

Finance & Risk Director at London FA, Ali is Director at the National Audit Office with Responsibility for Consumers & Competition Regulation.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE LONDON FA BOARD CONTINUED



**Sir Simon Hughes**  
Senior Independent Director

Formerly Minister of State for Justice and Civil Liberties and the Liberal Democrats Deputy Leader and President, Simon was appointed in November 2015 as the London FA's first Independent Director and oversaw the adoption & implementation of the Governance Code for Sport.



**Jill Berry**  
Independent Director

Jill is an experienced HR Director who has worked for several global brands, both profit and non-profit. Jill started her career working for Richard Branson at Virgin and more recently has been HR Director at Save The Children, Christies and now Amnesty International.



**Roger Fox**  
Football Director

Involved in Grassroots football since 1972, a referee and former Director at London FA Roger re-joined the Board as a new Football Director in 2019.



**Christina Oshodi**  
Football Director

A former football player who was part of Nigeria's national team training camps, Christina has a wealth of experience in the sports industry. She is a qualified coach and coach educator, working for the FA from 2014 to 2020 as an FA Coach Developer, and is a member of the Lawn Tennis Association's Safeguarding & Protection Committee.



**Karen Greene**  
Football Director

Karen is currently secretary to one of London's largest youth leagues – the Camden and Islington Youth League. She is also a Partner and Retail Manager at Waitrose in Holloway Rd in Islington, responsible for a team of 40 staff.



**Yashmin Harun**  
Football Director

Yashmin is Chair of the Board of Trustees for the Muslimah Sports Association delivering footballing participation opportunities for Muslim women.



**Mark Deveney**  
Football Director

Mark has been Chairman of Erith Town FC since 2017, taking the club from near collapse to a thriving community club that encompasses the adult teams, an academy and 6 youth teams. The club works across the local community, running a weekly community scheme and raising money for local charities.



**Beth Archer**  
Football Director

Former player and President of Southampton University Women's Team. An active LFA referee and member of the Referees Committee Beth helps recruit, support & mentor female referees.



**Paul Mortimer**  
Football Director / Safeguarding Champion

A professional footballer Paul is the London FA Board Safeguarding Champion working across the Association to ensure the highest standards of safeguarding for all.

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