



**ENGLAND
FOOTBALL**

Connecting People. Changing Lives.

Berks & Bucks Football Association Annual Report 2021-22

CEO's Report

NUMBER OF
TEAMS



BY
2024

4500

END OF YEAR 1
(JUN 22)

4696

% OF
TARGET

4.3%
OVER



Welcome to the annual review for season 2021-22. It has been a successful year in terms of our collective full return to football following the pandemic and while we are continually faced with problems outside of football, we continue to all show resilience. This is credit to the thousands of volunteers within Berks & Bucks working hard to continue to provide football to their members.

Changing Lives Connecting People

Our purpose, and why we do what we do, is to champion the value of sport to an individual's physical and mental health. We know that football has an incredible power and a responsibility to bring people together and to improve lives. Football as a team sport teaches us life lessons, resilience, teamwork and social skills.

The 2020-21 season saw the launch of our new 3-year strategy **"Connecting The Game"** a strategy that gives the Association clear direction and priorities for the year ahead under 5 main strategic headings:

Objective 1 - Develop a Workforce Diverse in thought voice and action

Significant progress has been made in this area, starting with improved education opportunities for staff and through raising awareness of inclusion campaigns across the football community. To support the County FA, it was important to ensure that the Inclusion Advisory Group, led by our new chair, Rich Howgill, was reintroduced after Covid-19. The inclusion Advisory Group gives us, as an organisation, a variety of views and opinions to check and challenge our work in the Inclusion area. We envisage that this relationship will continue to develop and thrive.

Objective 2 - Use Football to Develop, safe, healthy environments

As an organisation, we are proud of this area of work, bringing alive the vision of "Connecting People, Changing Lives." During and following Covid, the importance of mental health grew in awareness. Berks & Bucks FA supported Mental Health Awareness Week and developed a partnership with our now Charity Partner Sport in Mind. This is an area of the organisation that will continue to grow and develop in to the 2022-23 season.

We are currently awaiting our Safeguarding 365 assessment – this is our annual visit to ensure we are continuing and improving our already excellent safeguarding provision. We are confident that that the assessment will continue to showcase the work that we, and the football community, are doing to keep our children, young people and vulnerable adults safe.



Objective 3 - Lead footballs' response to Covid-19

As an organisation, we were fortunate that we were able to adapt to a change of working, we were agile, we had the tools and technology to support football without being together. Reacting and reflecting on this, has led to the adaptation of our hybrid working environment to support working remotely, removing the need for staff to be in the office everyday as we, and many other organisations had traditionally supported. We were also able to re-engage with our clubs via the our re-vamped County Cup programme, a programme that had been curtailed during Covid.

Objective 4 - Improve our ability to serve the game

I am proud to have led several changes in our governance structure, as we near completion of the Code of Governance – The FA kite-mark for good corporate governance, we have seen our new articles adopted which has led to new independent positions on the board being created, our traditional BBFA Council being reviewed and subsequently disbanded and a workforce review which has increased our staff resource to close to pre-covid numbers. All of this is supporting our ability to assist our clubs, leagues, volunteers, referees, and officials and most importantly, the opportunity for more players to be involved in the game.

Objective 5 Strengthen our game across the County

Finally, the work in this area has been extensive. Following the change of Coach education structure, with online qualifications being provided directly by the Football Association, we were able to keep close contact with coaches via the launch of both our BBFA Coaches Network, our Female Coaches Community, and the continuation of our highly successful Coaches Podcast. The pre-Euro 2022 legacy work also created numerous opportunities for females to get involved in the game. The re-introduction of our Flexi leagues has also contributed to the increase in male participation across the County.

The year has been busy, rewarding and successful, achieving against the benchmarks set out in the strategy. A thank you to the staff and board, who, like you have had to continually adapt to change. Most importantly, however, a thank you to all of our players, referees and volunteers for your tireless effort to provide a safe and positive environment in football.

I am pleased to present the annual review to you, we have hand picked some of the work we have led and been involved with over the 2020-21 season. I wish I could capture all of the work of the Association within the report. Please visit our website www.Berks-BucksFA.com and or subscribe to our [What's App service](#) and/or [Newsletter](#) to get regular updates and progress on the work we are involved in.

Thank you

Liz Verrall - Chief Executive Officer & Senior Safeguarding Lead, Berks & Bucks FA



Finance Report



Please see below the report and observations of the Finance Director in respect of the accounts for year-end 30th June 2022.

It is good to see that after two years of Covid affected figures the accounts are now back to something like normal.

The headline news is that we made a surplus for the year of **£44,462**. This is down on last year but is mainly attributed to the reduction in the value of the investments which have seen a loss of £55,000 on the year.

The war in Ukraine, supply chain issues, inflation and world economics in general have all contributed to this but this is no time to panic, we just need to wait for the recovery. To put things in perspective we are still £42,000 up on the original investment.

In terms of the account let's look at some of the areas of interest.

Page 4 – this shows that income is up to nearly £1m and after deducting the Cost of Sales we are showing a Gross Surplus of £640,000. Once the Admin Expenses and Other Operating Income (Furlough) have been deducted it leaves an operating surplus of £99,579. Deduct the loss on the investments and we get a Surplus Before Taxation of £44,462. Please ignore the taxation wording, this is just standard accountancy talk and no tax is due because of our non-profit making status.

Page 12 – this breaks down all of the different sources of income and Cost of Sales.

Turnover

- Affiliations are up substantially to nearer the pre Covid levels. The difference is down to the fact in 2020-21 the FA subsidised Affiliation.
- Fines and Costs are also up substantially due to the fact we had a full playing season.
- FA Grant money is down mainly due to the fact we were heavily subsidised centrally from the FA during 2020-21.
- Coach and Referee Education are up simply due to the fact courses were again being held
- FA Cup and International tickets are up again due to the fact these games were played.
- Sponsorship. This was a deal we had with Mars for £15,000 per annum, this has now stopped.

Cost of Sales

- County Cup – there were obviously no finals in 2020/21 which is why the 2022 figure is so much higher
- Football Development Salaries. Due to the lower head count during Covid, salary costs were obviously down but as our staffing levels have increased, so has the cost.
- Referee Education. As we have held courses during 2021/22 the cost to hold these has increased.
- FA Cup and International tickets – see above under turnover



Page 13

Overall we have managed to keep our overheads in check with just a few small points to note.

- Salaries in all areas have increased due to the increased staffing levels.
- Insurance is a lot higher but is far nearer the figure it should be. There was an item that was accrued elsewhere in the accounts last year that should have been reported here, that would have made the figures far more similar.
- Motor Vehicle costs are up and this is mainly fuel due to the staff being out and about more.
- Telephone is down due to the better deal we have struck with our supplier and because we had a termination charge last year.
- Legal and Professional fees are up mainly due to an employment tribunal and setting up a Health and Safety contract with Howarth's

Page 5

You will see that even though the investments dropped substantially the actual Members Funds is showing an increase to £532,859.

Fixed Assets – these are items that are purchased for long-term use and are not likely to be converted quickly into cash, such as buildings and equipment

Investments – this is the value of the investments on the 30 June

Debtors – this is mainly invoices that had been received but weren't due for payment until the new financial year, the main contributor was £28,000 for the rent.

Cash at bank and in hand – self explanatory

Creditors – £28,000 trade creditors i.e. people who had invoiced us and we had not yet paid. £11,000 to due to HMRC, this is the PAYE/NI for June that isn't paid until July. £146,000 other creditors mainly rent accrual until the next break clause in 2024.

This is just a snapshot of what is contained in the accounts and covers most of the areas that are of interest. There isn't anything that concerns me greatly and it was good to be back to a 'proper' year so we are able to make historical comparisons.

All in all, after a couple of very tough years, a satisfactory set of accounts.



Geoff Cardno

Geoff Cardno

Finance Director

Corporate Governance Structure



Our structure is fundamental to making informed decisions for the business and in turn for football across the County. The decision by our Council to disband in November was a brave and demonstrates our focus on improving representation and engagement to support our decision making above self-interest.

Replacing the Council are representative networks. All networks will feed in to the Grassroots Football Board. This is where, delegated by the Board of the Association, key football decisions will be made.

2021-22 also saw the introduction of 2 new Independent Non-Executive Board positions. We welcome Nikki & Munnawar to the board. Nikki is the portfolio holder for People and HR and Munnawar is portfolio holder for commercial development.



Nikki Measures

Nikki joined the Board as People Director in July 2021, providing a strategic lead on all Human Resources related matters.

She previously volunteered as an Independent Disciplinary Commissioner for the Berks & Bucks FA and maintains a strong interest in grassroots football through her children, who play for a local club.

Nikki brings a wealth of HR experience from both the public and private sectors, having worked at the National Audit Office for 25 years, before taking a short career break to focus on her family, and joining Heathrow Airport as a Senior HR Business Partner in 2019.

Nikki is passionate about delivering people solutions that achieve a high performance and inclusive culture. She is delighted to be working with the Board to help the County FA achieve its aims of connecting people and changing lives through football, ensuring that all communities are able to benefit from the grassroots game.



Munnawar Chishty

Director of Commercial at Berks & Bucks FA, Munnawar joined the Board of Directors because she was motivated by the purpose of connecting people and changing lives through football and the inclusive nature of this purpose. She is also passionate about the physical and emotional benefits team sports can bring to all, such as; personal development, team work & collaboration, mental health and well-being.

Munnawar felt she could bring a wealth of expertise from her professional experience to help the Berks & Bucks FA team and our commercial strategy and activities.

She hopes to help the team deliver a compelling and focused commercial strategy that will drive stronger engagement with everyone the Berks & Bucks FA team work with and support.

John Martin was also appointed as a second Grassroots Football Director, alongside our existing Board member, Ron Bennett. In the backdrop of the potential changes to Council.

On the decision to disband BBFA Council, the following Representative Structure was put in place. The Board recognising the importance, as a membership organisation, for voices to be heard, for feedback to be received and to add value to the decision making process deployed by the Association.

Our purpose and why we do what we do, is to connect people and to change lives and we know we can only do this by working together.

We often talk about football being FOR ALL, our challenge as an organisation is to ensure that this is central not only to our thinking and our voice but also in our actions.

As part of our aspiration to be diverse in thought, voice and action; we need to change how we interact, how we listen to views and how we ensure that our decision-making processes are representative of our communities. The process to recruit passionate and committed members to the networks has begun.

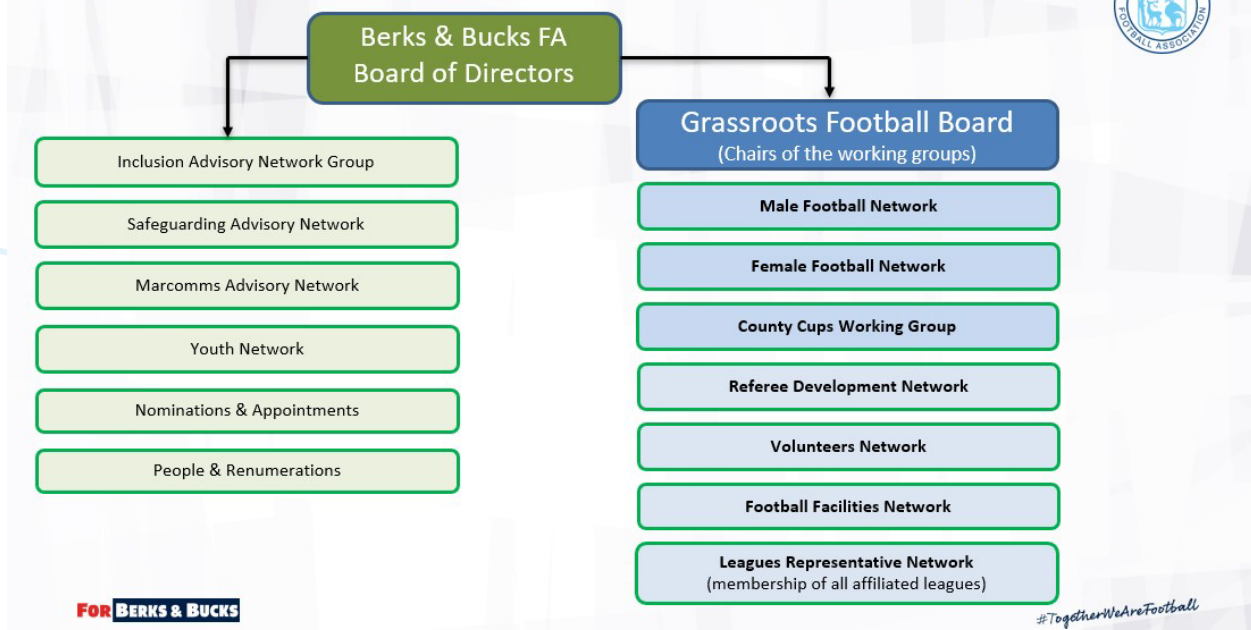
John Martin

Whilst teaching in Newbury I was made Manager of the Newbury U15 schools' team and gained considerable success in the ESFA 'Trophy'. At this time, I also did a great deal of coaching within the Reading & Newbury areas, often for Reading FC players in the summer holidays. I went on to become secretary of Newbury SFA for many years. After playing senior cricket for Falkland CC in the Home Counties league and Football for Thatcham Town F.C. (recent FA Vase winners) I became a qualified Football referee. I was Chair of Berkshire CSFA for 8 years before being asked to join the National ESFA Council. I was chairman of the ESFA for season 2018 -19. In this role I had considerable contact with national officials at Wembley with the main focus being on the growth of the woman's game and Futsal.

During this time, I became a Discipline Panel chair and eventually was appointed to the National Serious Case panel. I have to regularly attend training sessions and take assessments to maintain and develop these roles for the County FA.

I joined the Berks & Bucks FA council as the education representative. It is a great privilege to be a Berks & Bucks FA director with the myriad of opportunities and experiences that will come with the role. My position with the Grassroots sector mirrors my football past. It is extremely important that we leave a lasting legacy for future generations, so we must continue to discuss, develop and manage all situations and issues with our partners to sustain the future success of the Berks & Bucks FA.

The Berks & Bucks FA Network



Jon Martin



Our Board of Directors



Liz Verrall



David Grainge



John Horsley



Geoff Cardno



Rich Howgill



Jon Martin



Ron Bennett



Kulbir Brar BEM



Nikki Measures



Munnawar Chishty

Grace Jacca, not pictured above was in a Director for the 2021-22 season and resigned on 1st July 2022 – Rich Howgill, was appointed as a replacement



The Staff Team

Between 1st July 2021 and 30th June 2022 the following BBFA Team “Transfers ” took place

IN

Sam Myatt – Referee Development Officer

Alex Pratt – Football Development Officer

Emma O’Hara Community & Inclusion Officer

Carly Dennison – Investigations Officer

Hans Cook – Business Support Administrator

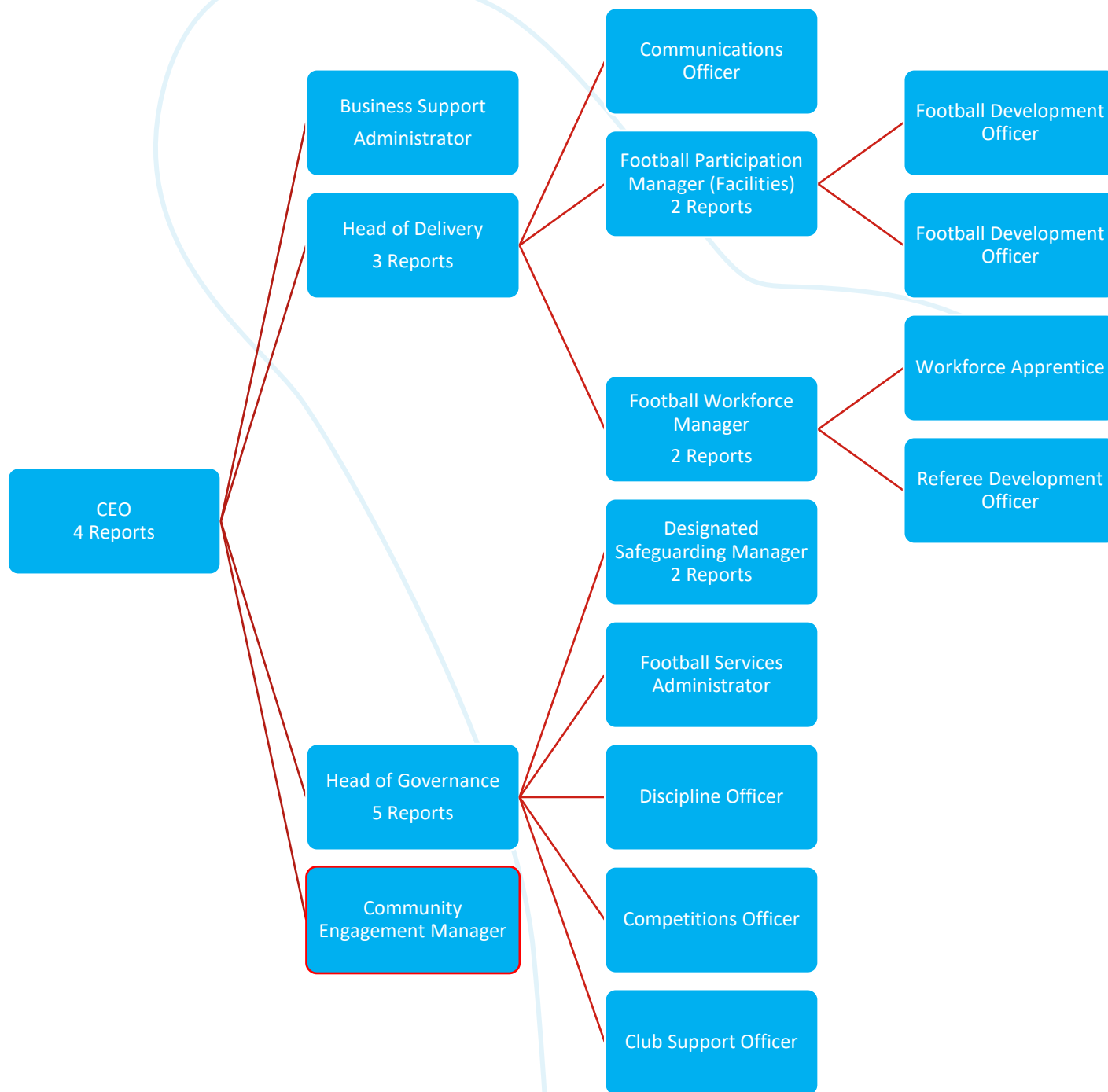
Pedro Vierios – Football Participation Manager

OUT

Lisa Benn – Referee Development Officer

Jon Coles – Football Development Officer





Current Staffing Structure

To ensure this is useful to the reader, this is as of November 2022 and is not in line with the end of the reporting year.

Your Support Team

To ensure this is useful to the reader, this is as of November 2022 and is not in line with the end of the reporting year.



LIZ VERRALL
Chief Executive Officer

Responsible for leading and managing the overall operations and resources of the organisation. Responsible for the overall success of the company vision and aspirations for grassroots football across Berks & Bucks.

01235 558457
Liz.Verrall@Berks-BucksFA.com



HANS COOK
Business Support Administrator

Responsible for supporting the CEO and staff with administrative tasks across areas including Finance, Process Management, HR, Office Management and Communications.

01235 544890
Hans.Cook@Berks-BucksFA.com



ALEX PRATT
Football Development Officer

Women & Girls Football lead responsible for supporting & sustaining female football provisions across the county, including league support & the Wildcats programme. Additional responsibilities included overseeing all recreational/non-traditional formats of football including: Just Play, Small-sided, Flexi, Walking Football.

01235 544898
Alex.Pratt@Berks-BucksFA.com



ROD NOBLE
Football Development Officer

Responsible for 11v11 adult male football including veterans, disability football and club & league support.

01235 558451
Rod.Noble@Berks-BucksFA.com



JAMES PARKER
Community Football Activator (Apprentice)

01235 544890
Development@Berks-BucksFA.com



STEPH CLARK
Communications Officer

Responsible for maintaining and developing the company website and social media platforms as well as content creation, design, branding, media/press enquiries and supporting local and national FA campaigns/projects to provide key information/updates for our members and assist in the promotion of football opportunities For All.

01235 544891
Steph.Clark@Berks-BucksFA.com



JON WOOD
Head of Delivery

Leads the development department to successfully deliver the FA's National Game Strategy locally. Also responsible for supporting investment and facility projects across the area.

01235 544896
Jonathan.Wood@Berks-BucksFA.com



KELLY SUTTON
Football Participation Manager (Facilities Lead)

Responsible for improving and increasing the quality of grass pitches and supporting clubs and organisations with the development of 3G Artificial Grass Pitches and other capital projects. Also responsible for managing the Football Participation Team.

01235 544890
Kelly.Sutton@Berks-BucksFA.com



RICHARD BRANT
Football Workforce Manager

Responsible for Coach Development including providing a comprehensive CPD programme for coaches to participate. Responsible for supporting and sustaining Youth football in the County, Youth Leadership including Youth Council and the ongoing development of Futsal.

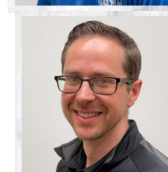
01235 558459
Richard.Brant@Berks-BucksFA.com



SAM MYATT
Referee Development Officer

Responsible for the training, education and development of referees and referee work force across the county. Working with various stakeholders leagues and clubs to promote refereeing.

01235 558455
Sam.Myatt@Berks-BucksFA.com



ALASTAIR KAY
Head of Governance

Provide leadership to the Football Services team overseeing the governance of the game, including the annual registration and affiliation of clubs, leagues and officials, the management of County Cup competitions and Representative Squads, and the ongoing application of disciplinary and Safeguarding procedures.

01235 544895
Alastair.Kay@Berks-BucksFA.com



GRAHAM FISHER
Designated Safeguarding Officer

Responsibility for the safeguarding of children, ensuring safeguarding operating standards are met and to work collaboratively with, and support, the Club Welfare Officers and Youth League Welfare Officers.

01235 544894
Safeguarding@Berks-BucksFA.com



CARLY DENNISON
Discipline Officer

Responsible for investigating and raising charges for on-field disciplinary incidents, including supporting clubs, victims and match officials through the misconduct process.

01235 544890
Discipline@Berks-BucksFA.com



CHRIS PENNY
Competitions Officer

Oversees and administers all County Cup Competitions for the County FA.

01235 544892
Chris.Penny@Berks-BucksFA.com



STACEY HAMER
Club Support Officer

Responsible for building relationships with clubs and assisting with general enquiries regarding various administrative aspects of running a club such as affiliation, England Football Accreditation, player registration, volunteer support, grant applications and more.

01235 558452
Stacey.Hamer@Berks-BucksFA.com



Female Pathway

NUMBER OF REGISTERED
FEMALE PLAYERS



BY
2024

END OF YEAR 1
(JUN 22)

% OF
TARGET

7,890

7,723

97.8%



It was identified that the Southern Region Women's League was dominated from teams based in the southernmost County of the region (Hampshire) and those achieving a high finish at the Thames Valley County Women's Football League often opted against applying for promotion due to the significant increase in travelling demands and associated costs. This caused a large bottleneck of teams at the top of the County League, but unfairly restricted the upward motion via promotion due to external factors rather than footballing considerations.

The creation of the new Southern Region Division 1 North addressed the issue, as teams were able to compete at an appropriate standard but without the concern of incurring large additional costs or travel commitments.

Following considerable research and the engagement of several stakeholders, the new division came to fruition. A new division and mass promotion of teams via the FA promotion pool made the division possible.

This work has shown that the County FA can work with their leagues, through research and mapping to support them to ensure that the provision is the best it can possibly be for local clubs, and find solutions by working together to seemingly impossible issues.

It has also shown that the clubs are ambitious and want to strive to be the best they can be, and the support to remove some of the barriers are essential to see teams develop their potential.

POS	Team
1	Carterton
2	Caversham United
3	Eversley & California
4	Kidlington Youth
5	Long Crendon
6	Milton United
7	Penn & Tylers Green
8	Woodley United

This move created opportunities for 5 teams to play at a higher level without significant increase in costs/travel.

Male Pathway



NUMBER OF REGISTERED
MALE PLAYERS

BY
2024

END OF YEAR 1
(JUN 22)

% OF
TARGET

51,307

56,450

**11%
OVER**



The most recent Season of the BBFA FlexIs League at Ryeish Green came to an end on Monday 7th February, seeing Saints FC clinch the title with a 3-0 win over bottom of the league, Dynamo Castrol.

BBB FC were also in action taking victory in a friendly against Maidenhead Town XI, to round off a successful season for them culminating in a runners-up spot, pipping reigning Champions, Caversham United. This season has seen some fiercely competitive games, such as the six goals shared between Maidenhead and BBB in their 3-3 draw and another six-goal thriller for Maidenhead, that time ending in a 4-2 win against Dynamo Castrol.

But there has also some shock results, including Harchester's 5-0 victory over Caversham, which toppled 'The Goats' off the summit, following their 3-1 victory against eventual winners Saints FC in the previous week – the only loss recorded by the new champions. Saints themselves recorded a handsome 6-0 win against runners-up BBB FC, and BBB FC also got in on the action, inflicting a heavy 4-0 defeat on Caversham, which put paid to last seasons winners' chances of ending the season with a positive goal difference.

We would like to thank all teams involved in another enjoyable season of Flexi Football and congratulate Saints FC and BBB FC on finishing in first and second place, respectively.

Finally, we would like to thank our matchday co-ordinator Paul Gutteridge, and our Referee, Aaron Baker, who have made sure games have run smoothly throughout the season.

READING FLEXI LEAGUE TABLE

Autumn 2021/22

#BBFAFlexI



POS	TEAM	P	W	D	L	GD	PTS
1	Saints FC	7	6	0	1	13	18
2	BBBFC	7	5	1	1	4	16
3	Caversham United	7	5	0	2	-3	15
4	Harchester Hawks FC	7	3	1	3	3	10
5	Murder on Zidanes Floor	7	3	1	3	-1	10
6	Maidenhead Town XI	7	3	1	3	-2	10
7	Burghfield CSA Casuals	7	1	0	6	-4	3
8	Dynamo Castrol FC	7	0	0	7	-10	0

Football. Designed to suit you.

Disability Pathway



NUMBER OF PLAYERS
WITH A
DISABILITY

BY
2024

677

END OF YEAR 1
(JUN 22)

666

% OF
TARGET

98.4%



Despite COVID having a significant impact on individuals with disabilities participating in sport, we continued to successfully grow disability football in the area, exceeding our target number for player numbers for the year by over 40%.

Whilst continuing to see more participants playing each year is a great achievement, ensuring that as many people have the opportunity to have access to suitable football provisions remains essential.

Pan-Disability football enables individuals with a range of learning disabilities and physical impairments to participate together, with two notable exceptions; those who are blind and wheelchair users. We were fortunate enough to have two Powerchair teams, but have never had a provision for blind individuals.

A partnership was formed with both Reading FC & Berkshire Vision to deliver the first regular blind football sessions in our area. The sessions are for both young people and adults, and a 2 v 2 format enables flexible delivery even with traditionally low numbers. Expectations for the sessions were far exceeded with over 50 individuals registered blind having attended the session, which for many was their first experience of a community session. The group even received a surprise visit from the then Reading FC Manager, Veljko Paunovic





Referees

NUMBER OF
REFEREES



BY
2024

END OF YEAR 1
(JUN 22)

% OF
TARGET

1,200

829

69.1%

The 2021-22 season saw the return of face-to-face Referee Courses following the COVID pandemic. Overall, we ran a total of 16 courses, training a total of 358 new referees.

The following venues were chosen to host our courses during the season;

- Royal Latin, Buckingham (x2)
- Reading City, Reading (x2)
- Flackwell Heath (x2)
- Ryeish Green, Shinfield
- Aylesbury Vale, Aylesbury
- Douai Park, Reading
- Piggott School, Wargrave (x2)
- Burnham Grammar School, Burnham
- Berkshire County Sports Club, Sonning
- Sir Herbert Leon Academy, Milton Keynes
- Newport Pagnell Town FC, Milton Keynes
- Fairfields Sports Hub, Milton Keynes

Courses held at Aylesbury Vale and Newport Pagnell Town FC were standalone courses linked with respective clubs. In addition, the course held at the Berkshire County Sports Club was held alongside the Berkshire Youth Development League.

Our final course of the season at Fairfields in Milton Keynes was a dedicated Female-Only course which had 23 attendees across both days. As part of the funding received from the WEuro 2022 legacy, we were able to offer attendees 50% off the standard booking fee.

As well as the return of face-to-face courses, we also run 2 online Referee Conversion courses. As this element of the course no longer exists, we help 2 online evenings for referees who had only previously completed the Mini-Soccer Referee Course and provided them with the opportunity to upskill themselves and prepare for the world of 9v9 and 11v11 football. Around 10 referees attended these sessions.

Any candidate who had expressed an interest in attending a course before the end of the June 2022 was invited to sign up to our new Expression of Interest form which provides us with greater insight of those on the waiting list, including where we should be hosting courses moving forward.



Coaches



NUMBER OF
YOUTH TEAMS
WITH QUALIFIED COACH

BY
2024

90%

END OF YEAR 1
(JUN 22)

85.3%

% OF
TARGET

94.8%



Following changes to the course structure in the summer of 2021, last season provided us a fantastic opportunity to engage with coaches via our coach development offering. In September 2021, the BBFA Coaches Network was launched with 70 members signing up over the first season. Members were then able to access our offerings of CPD workshops for that season at no additional cost. In addition, Coaches Network members were also able to communicate and share ideas via our online platform.

Across the season we delivered 11 coach development workshops reaching all 4 corners of our County. We delivered a variety of topics including Game Based Coaching, Why our Players Play and Matchday Hints & Tips delivered in both face-to-face and online setting. In addition, we also trialled our bespoke Coach Development workshops offering our clubs the opportunity to run workshops out of their Clubs ensuring their coaches receive development on themes/topics of the Club's choosing to align with their direction and philosophies. Following the successful trial of 4 workshops, this was then launched for 2022/23 season.

We also visited a school early into last season delivering a workshop to 15 teachers who teach across a variety of age groups and hadn't had much exposure to coaching. Through a local BBFA tutor the session was delivered ahead of a new school term. In total there were over 650 instances of CPD by BBFA coaches across all platforms including the FA's offering with 90 coaches accessing face-to-face workshops delivered by BBFA.

Of those instances, 206 BBFA Clubs were represented meaning over 30% of our Clubs last season attended a minimum of 1 CPD workshop.

The first year of this new strategy was extremely positive and enabled us to identify exactly what coaches want and need to continue their development and has helped us prepare for future seasons. Importantly not only will this develop the coaches, but also the players too.



BBFA
COACHES
NETWORK

Facility Development

Facilities have long been one of the key issues highlighted by clubs and individuals, with a reported 1 in 6 fixtures postponed due to unplayable pitches. As a result the FA introduced a new target surrounding improving the number of 'good' quality grass pitches. We reviewed in excess of 300 pitches at over 100 sites via Pitchpower, and eventually exceeded our target.

In order to compliment this grass pitch provision 3G Artificial Grass Pitches (AGP) offer a high quality environment for matches, as well as much needed additional training space. The 2021/22 season saw the completion of 4 new 3G AGP's with a combined project value of £4.2 million. The new 3G AGP's are supporting 196 teams, providing facilities for coach development & referee education as well as a variety of recreational and social sessions designed to support local communities.



NUMBER OF
GRASS PITCHES
CLASSED AS "GOOD"

BY
2024

292

END OF YEAR 1
(JUN 22)

220

% OF
TARGET

75.3%



Safeguarding

Yellow Armbands for U18 Referees

On Saturday 20th and Sunday 21st November 2021, U18 Referees at Moretonville Juniors FC stepped out wearing yellow armbands as part of a pilot scheme with Berks & Bucks FA.

The aim of the scheme is to increase visibility of U18 match officials and improve the behaviour of managers, coaches and spectators towards U18 referees. The introduction of the armbands coincided with the National Football Safeguarding Weekend and the launch of The FA's Play Safe campaign.

Berks & Bucks have over 300 registered U18 referees with many of them trainees off the back of recent courses. Whilst it is important that we support all of our referees, it is imperative that our young officials are given the opportunity to learn and develop in a safe environment.

Every U18 Referee within the club was asked to wear the armband whenever they officiate with the armbands highlighting to all managers, coaches, parents and spectators that their referee is under 18 and they should refrain from making any remarks towards the young official.

Following the success of the initial pilot, Berks & Bucks FA agreed to expand the pilot scheme by working with the Berkshire County Girls Football League.

Berks & Bucks and the League have both been impressed with the number of referees who have come forward in support of the initiative and over 30 referees will now be proudly wearing their armband during all league fixtures.



Welfare Officers Support Sessions

Here at Berks & Bucks FA, we offer a range of safeguarding services and training to help create positive environments and support our clubs, leagues and the wider football community.

Our network of Club and League Welfare Officers have an incredibly important role in supporting our clubs and leagues to keep our players safe.

Throughout the 2021-22 season, weekly newsletters have been sent to our network of welfare officers to support them in their role and to share information. Monthly webinars have also been made available with a core of 20-30 of our 250+ Welfare Officers attending regularly. The sessions are also uploaded to [YouTube](#) for those that are unable to attend.



County Cup Programme



The 2021-22 season saw the welcome return to County Cup action for over 800 of our teams, competing for the honour of being crowned County Champions in their respective football categories. After a 2 season break because of the Covid outbreak, it was great to see players, coaches and match officials, once again enjoying the occasion that comes with cup matches.

Whilst only 18 teams achieved their dreams of lifting the cup, there were many memorable moments and achievements along the way for countless others.

The Men's and Women's Senior Cups went home to Berkshire, with Reading FC claiming both titles, while Wycombe Wanderers drew the biggest crowds with 1900 watching step 6 Long Crendon run them close, before 1200 watched Step 5 Ascot United beat the Chairboys on penalties, before losing out to Reading in front of another four-figure crowd in the final at Arbour Park.

The other adult winners were FC Bapco (Sun Cup) and 116 Exiles (Sun Trophy) to complete another Berkshire double, while Penn & Tylers Green were worthy winners in the Women's Trophy, and Kennington Athletic lifted the Charles Twelftree Trophy.

Our Youth finals were played out at grounds around the County taking in a total of 8 cup final venues. Congratulations to all the finalists and the winners, and many thanks to our superb clubs for hosting our matches.



Discipline

Discipline continues to be a critical business function of the County FA to support the effective governance of the game, protect our members and ensure the smooth operation and integrity of our Competitions.

Match based disciplinary offences have returned to pre-pandemic levels (compared against the 2018/2019 season as the last full season before Covid), however there has been a significant increase in the number of misconduct charges raised by the County FA due to off-field or off-the-ball misconduct. This trend has been seen across the country and raises significant concerns regarding the conduct and behaviour of participants. The County continues to seek to find ways to improve behaviour throughout football and is working with The FA on a number of initiatives including the adoption of Regional Discipline Panels to improve the diversity and training of panel members, and the introduction of yellow armbands for referees under the age of 18. We are committed to ensuring football remains a safe and enjoyable environment for all participants, and will continue to take appropriate action where individuals commit acts of misconduct.

	18-19	20-21	21-22	+/- (vs 18-19)
Cautions	11,484	6,746	11,435	-49
Red Cards	1,220	774	1,111	-109
Misconduct Charges	222	260	425	+203

Operationally, the County continues to perform exceptionally well in ensuring cases are dealt with and resolved in a timely and effective manner. For a large part of the 2021/22 season, the investigation function was outsourced to a third party due to an internal staff vacancy; however despite these disruptions and the increased case load we have improved our response times compared to before the pandemic:

	18-19	20-21	21-22	+/- (vs 18-19)
Cases heard by correspondence	386	231	407	+21
Cases heard in person	33	36	37	+4
Incident to charge (days)	17.49	13.18	17.48	-
Incident to hearing (days)	46.87	35.02	40.87	-6

Of particular concern is the increase – both in number and in severity – of offences against Match Officials. Such behaviour is clearly unacceptable, and the County FA will continue to work with match officials to ensure they are supported through any disciplinary incidents they are victim to.

	18-19	20-21	21-22	+/- (vs 18-19)
Abusive Language Towards a Match Official	61	64	107	+46
Threatening Language Towards a Match Official	7	4	15	+8
Physical Contact on a Match Official	5	6	6	+1
Assault on a Match Official	0	0	4	+4

Discrimination in football

The County FA received a record number of accusations of discrimination in grassroots football, with over 60 separate allegations recorded. Of greatest concern is the volume of allegations received in youth football, with almost half of all complaints resulting from matches involving children.



REPORT IT REPORT DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination has no place in football. If you've seen it or heard it please, Tell Us, We'll Tackle It. You can report discrimination using your phone, tablet, laptop or desktop device by following the below link to our easy-to-complete online form.

Please provide as much information as possible so that we can investigate your concern fully.

REPORT DISCRIMINATION

Characteristic		Football Category		Status	
Race/Colour/Ethnicity	25	Saturday Men	20	Proven	28
Sexuality/Sexual Orientation	17	Sunday Men	13	Not proven	5
Disability	11	Veterans	1	Closed without charge	31
Nationality	9	Women	2	Closed with education order	4
Gender	5	Youth (U12 – U18)	25		
Religion	2	Mini Soccer (U6 – U11)	6		
Unconfirmed	1				



Inclusion

On Saturday 21st May 2022, the Berks and Bucks Football Association, Care4Calais, Reading FC Community Trust, Reading Muslim, Reading Reaching Out and the Reading Refugee Support Group came together to host a Football Festival for Asylum Seekers and Refugees who are currently living in the Reading area.

Football is a brilliant tool for connecting communities and welcoming people to a new place and the day saw over 40 male participants take part in a 5-a-side tournament at the Reading FC Community Trust ground. The event was a great success, and everyone left smiling.

The event ended with lunch being provided for the participants and volunteers which offered an opportunity to connect off the pitch and share stories. Thank you to Share Wokingham and Ateeq from Slamburger Reading for donating food for the event, it was greatly appreciated and enjoyed.

The biggest barrier that had to be overcome was transportation and we thank the volunteers who gave up their time to transport the groups to and from various locations across Reading. Thank you to Nigel Rattue from Wokingham Baptist Church for their support.



"Thanks for putting a lot of extra time and dedication towards us. You are doing a fantastic job of keeping all of us moving. A big thanks to you all for a job well-done!!!! And may the Lord God bless you all 🙏 🙏 AMEN"



"👏 we had a nice day 😊 and enjoyed our time with other teams and we had the good result 😊."

Communication

The second annual Communications Survey received 260 responses, representing a 420% increase on the number of responses received in our inaugural survey. The survey was released publicly, available on our website and social media channels, as well as sent directly to targeted groups, including club/league committee members, match officials and coaches.

It is split into three main sections with users asked to answer questions on their perception of the Berks & Bucks FA, their interaction with Berks & Bucks FA and about themselves and their roles in football.

Interaction:

Email remains the most common and preferred communication channel/method with:

80% reporting it as their most common method of communication, and

72% reporting it as their preferred method of communication.

Of the total number of respondents who indicated they **would 'Yes or Maybe' like more interaction with Berks & Bucks FA (164):**

51% indicated they would like more interaction via email and,

49% indicated they would like more interaction via face-to-face meetings.

Whilst the majority of feedback was positive, some respondents (**7%**) **reported their opinion of Berks & Bucks FA as Not Very Positive/Not At All Positive**. Whilst many of the reasons behind these opinions appeared to be related to specific incidences, the feedback also helped identify a theme of concern around communication as a whole, specifically in relation to ease of contacting the organisation and highlighting responses via email and phone as an area to improve upon.

77% of respondents felt **Very Supported/Somewhat Supported by Berks & Bucks FA**, increasing to **90%** when including neutral responses.

83% of respondents felt that **Berks & Bucks FA was Very Important/Relevant to Somewhat Important/Relevant to their roles**, increasing to **91%** when including neutral responses.

75% of all respondents indicating their **opinion of Berks & Bucks FA was Very Positive/Somewhat Positive**, with that figure increasing to **92%** when including respondents with a neutral opinion of the organisation.





A Sample of what you have said about us

BBFA have been incredibly supportive to our football club through the last 2 years. Every enquiry has been dealt with in a very timely manner, always 48hrs but often 24hrs. I've probably sent over 40 emails and had numerous calls over the year and every time been met with positive attitude to support and help.

.....on a separate note, your organisation does amazing work driving FA across Berks & Bucks FA. I find people don't share often enough praise when its due!

Hi All, Just wanted to say a massive thank you to Graham Fisher for all swift support with a fairly complicated safeguarding concern we had. Graham's advice was invaluable to the club and his ongoing support has meant that a fixture on Sunday will be able to take place without any major safeguarding concerns. His swift and helpful communication has assured the whole club that any subsequent issues can be dealt with quickly, so that all of our teams can experience a safe and comfortable environment for their football without worry. A real credit to the organisation

Just a note to say that the Changes to Discipline sheets are a brilliant innovation. League were always at a loss to find out how discipline incidents were progressing. This is absolutely fantastic, well done to all at B & B who instigated it.

Steph! Just wanted to say I'm absolutely loving all the social media engagement at the moment. 🥰

5:31 PM

Haha brilliant thanks Abi - I really appreciate that! Was only saying to a colleague earlier I've been working on it - good to know people are noticing 😊

5:32 PM ✓

No problem! You can definitely tell, and it's great to see clubs appreciating the efforts too. Please just shout me if there's anything I can do to help as well, more than happy to get involved!

👍 1

5:34 PM

Lovely thank you! Just engaging and getting involved like you do is a great help as it increases the chances of more clubs seeing important messages - so do really do appreciate your support

5:35 PM ✓

My absolute pleasure!

❤️ 1

5:36 PM

Just want to say what a great job Alex Smith is doing.

Thanks for the fast response and helpful attitude I am very grateful.

Outstanding support and help received from Graham Fisher at bucks FA on a very tricky incident. I want to pass on my thanks I am very glad there are people like him in the FA to help us at grassroots level

I just wanted to say a big thank you to the Berks & Bucks FA for their amazing support and their speedy response to all my WGS requests for help. Special thanks to Alastair Kay, Alex Smith and Stacey Hamer. It really made registering a number of the age groups a lot easier! Thank you!

Good morning, Liz, Jon and Alastair, I thought your presentation of last night's League Forum was first class and most useful for all the Leagues that took. It was most interesting to hear what the other Leagues are planning when Grass Roots Football restarts and it has most certainly given us as a League a lot more to think about. With my most sincere thanks for your continued help and support. Best regards