

North Riding FA

Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan 2024-2028



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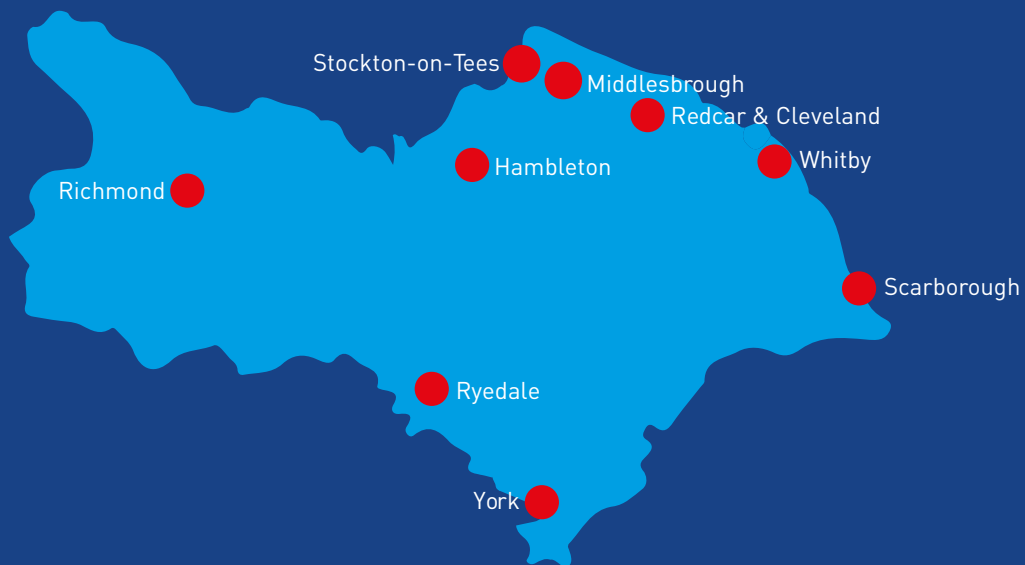
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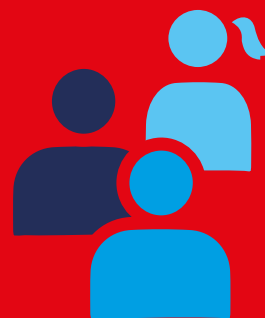
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NORTH RIDING FA



Teams



1298

Male Pathway

236

Female Pathway

41

Disability Pathway

Referees



426

Male Referees

59

Female Referees

485

TOTAL

Players



17,476

Male Participants

3,119

Female Participants

341

Disabled Participants



Local Authorities Population 2024

201,717

York

53,481

Stockton-on-Tees

98,555

Scarborough

47,090

Ryedale

56,738

Richmondshire

139,127

Redcar & Cleveland

146,566

Middlesbrough

93,632

Hambleton

836,906

TOTAL



174

Clubs have adopted
the football leadership
diversity code (70.45%)



19

Leagues



247

Clubs



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Enhance football, by developing an inclusive game that inspires people and communities.

Introduction

Making a difference through football across North Riding since 1881. Founded in 1881, The North Riding Football Association is the guardian of Football in the County.

Responsible for efficiently governing and developing the local game, North Riding FA strives to positively influence participation for all in football regardless of age, ability, sex, sexual orientation, race, religion, and socio-economic status. We aim to ensure the long-term future of the game by providing the best possible environment and infrastructure where football will flourish in the County for all backgrounds and abilities.

Overall, North Riding FA strives to remove barriers across the sport, however, this will take collaboration with stakeholders and constant

re-defining of objectives and requirements to ensure barrier free access. We believe that the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion are central to our work as an effective regulator and employer. They are inherent in our values, which are to work with pride, positivity and respect. Ensuring inclusion and excellence in what we do. As an organisation that prides itself on building positive relationships, we strive to ensure that anyone who engages with us finds it easy to do so and feels supported and treated fairly with dignity and respect.



Enhance football, by developing an inclusive game that inspires people and communities.

Message from CEO Steven Wade

Celebrating diversity and tackling inequality sits at the very heart of our strategy. We are passionate about football's incredible power to bring people together, pull down barriers and act as a force for good. Through our work we will strive to ensure that everyone is welcome, ensuring differences between us do not create barriers to getting into football and staying involved. A key part of our mission is to provide fun, safe and inclusive participation, transforming attitudes, perceptions and accessibility into our beautiful game. North Riding County FA is committed to building an environment that champions diversity and eradicates all forms of discrimination. This applies not just to the work that we do, but the way we go about it.

In this document we set out what we want to achieve, and the steps that we will take to live up to our ambition of being a leading role model in promoting greater diversity and equality in football. As the Chief Executive, I am determined to ensure that the County FA continues to build on our strong position in this area. We will be establishing a succession plan which ensures that the future make-up of the board represents an even greater variety of backgrounds.

It is fundamental to our mission that we have a board that is diverse in its composition and knowledgeable and experienced in equality and diversity. Across the organisation we will review our selection and recruitment policy and procedures and continue to monitor diversity statistics. This extends to our Youth Council among whom we have the opportunity to grow a strong leadership pipeline of diverse talent. We want North Riding County Football Association to be acknowledged as a trusted and influential partner in addressing inequalities and promoting diversity across the game. To achieve this, we will continue to make ever greater strides towards increasing diversity within the organisation and in the game that we care about so much.



Steven Wade
Chief Executive,
North Riding FA.

OUR VALUES

Excellence – Provide and promote the highest standards.

Pride – Love the game, have a sense of purpose and be proud of what we do.

Inclusion – Provide opportunities FOR ALL.

Respect – Listen and show empathy.

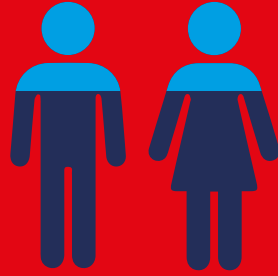
Positivity – Adopt a positive approach at all times.

Board, Staff & North Riding FA Committee & Working Group Members

Work towards achieving

10%

representation on the Board by individuals from culturally diverse communities by 2031



Maintain a minimum of

30%

of each gender on the Board



Work towards achieving

10%

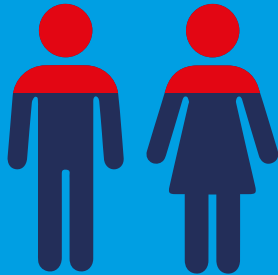
representation on the Board by individuals with a disability by 2031



Work towards achieving a

50%

representation of each gender on the board by 2031



Maintain a minimum of

30%

of each gender on the staff team



Work towards a target of

30%

of North Riding FA Committee & Working Group Members being female in 2031

Work towards a target of achieving

50%

representation of each gender on the staff leadership team by 2028



- The chair of the Inclusion Advisory Group to serve as a Non-Executive Director of North Riding FA.
- All vacancies are to be recruited via an open and transparent process in line with an equitable recruitment policy.

Inclusion Advisory Group



- Develop relationships with community groups and other partners across the county to understand barriers and enablers in accessing football.
- Work through a community development approach to establish key consortium groups that can influence change.
- Work with partners to map the current ecosystem, identifying the needs & current gaps in opportunities for underrepresented communities.
- Identify & secure funding to support the delivery of programmes that will open opportunities for under-represented groups in football.



A minimum of
25%
of the Inclusion
Advisory Group
Members to come
from culturally
diverse Backgrounds
by 2028.



Work towards a target of
50%
of inclusion Advisory
Group members to
be female by 2028



A minimum of
10%
of the Inclusion
Advisory Group
Members to be
individuals with a
disability by 2028

Training & Development



- Embed diversity & inclusion training into our induction programme for all new Board, Staff and North Riding FA Members.
- Deliver a minimum of one training opportunity each season for all staff relating to diversity & inclusion.
- Deliver a minimum of one training opportunity each season for our volunteer workforce relating to diversity & inclusion.
- Continue the delivery of the Referee EDI Support Group to aid the development of referees from under-represented groups.
- Work in partnership with The FA to deliver a subsidised referee course for individuals from culturally diverse communities.
- Work with our FA Equal Game Ambassador to deliver training and support to clubs seeking to provide opportunities for women & girls.
- Work with our Community Champion to provide training and development opportunities for female coaches identified through the programme.
- Support a minimum of 50 female coaches each season through a Female Coach Development Programme.
- Work with our FA Disability Ambassador to deliver training and support to clubs seeking to provide opportunities for individuals with a disability.
- Work with our Community Champion to provide training and development opportunities for coaches from culturally diverse communities.



Communication



- Ensure that we are regularly celebrating diversity and inclusion through projects and people, across a variety of media and channels.
- Deliver campaigns and programmes that help to raise awareness of the impact of discrimination across the grassroots game.
- Encourage clubs to share their best practice around diversity and inclusion, showcasing these across our channels.
- Ensure visibility of under-represented groups in media and communications released by North Riding FA.
- Provide support each year, through our channels, for Black History Month.
- Recognise and support a variety of religious festivals through our channels.
- Support the annual Rainbow Laces campaign through our channels.



Participation



- Active Through Football team to deliver regular sessions supporting participants with a learning disability.
- Active Through Football Team to deliver regular sessions for female participants from culturally diverse backgrounds.
- Active Through Football Team to deliver regular sessions for older participants.
- Deliver single age-band county cup competitions for girls, in line with the boys' competitions.
- Deliver disability county cup competitions across the youth and open age game.
- Currently delivering open-age disability cup competitions.
- Support clubs to deliver Wildcats sessions for girls.
- Support clubs to deliver Squad Girls' sessions.
- Support clubs to deliver Comets sessions for young people with a disability.
- Run a Walking Football League for older participants and those with limiting health conditions.
- Run the North Riding Ability Counts League for young people and adults with a disability.
- Support Local Authorities with their applications to secure the development of Playzones, with successful applications allowing will allow improved access to sport for deprived communities.
- Support clubs to create football development plans that include the creation of new opportunities for female and disability participation.
- Conduct a research project that showcases the demographics of wards within the County so that delivery, initiatives and working groups mirror the local community.
- Run a Women's Recreational League for women aged 16+.
- Work with all partners on new 3G's and facility developments to ensure usage and delivery plans are inclusive and provide opportunities for underrepresented groups.
- Active Through Football team to carry out community engagement in deprived areas using a community toolkit to unpick and understand the barriers to engagement for underrepresented groups.
- Conduct a research project that showcases the demographics of wards within the County so that delivery, initiatives and working groups mirror the local community.

Discipline



- Ensure that all allegations of aggravated breaches are investigated thoroughly.
- Ensure that all alleged victims of discrimination are offered support through Sporting Chance.
- Deliver messaging that highlights the potential consequences for those found guilty of discriminatory behaviour.
- Deliver anti-discrimination workshops in partnership with leagues and clubs.
- Deliver 'Positive Football Environment' workshops to clubs that help to promote inclusion.



Enhance football, by developing an inclusive game that inspires people and communities.



About us

Equality Standard

The Equality Standard: A framework for sport (the standard) is a framework for sports organisations towards achieving equality. The Equality Standard is an independently assessed framework based on developing both the organisation and services provided. There are four levels of achievement, Foundation, Preliminary, Intermediate and advanced.

North Riding FA achieved Foundation level in 2021 and Preliminary Level in 2023.

Find out more - Equality Standard for Sport

<https://www.northridingfa.com/inclusion/equality-standard-for-sport>



Inclusion Advisory Group (IAG)

The purpose of North Riding County FA's Inclusion Advisory Board (IAG) is to provide advice, guidance and make recommendations to our Board on all equality and diversity matters and enhance our operational delivery plan. The Inclusion Advisory Board consists of committed and passionate individuals with a variety of backgrounds, experiences and perspective to help guide and shape the County FA's Inclusion agenda.

Find out more - Inclusion Advisory Group

<https://www.northridingfa.com/inclusion/inclusion-advisory-group>

Enhance football, by developing an inclusive game that inspires people and communities.

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and wider society. There are nine protected characteristics.

The basic framework protects people from direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation regardless of whether the victim holds multiple characteristics or is perceived to have or is associated with someone who has a protected characteristic.

FA Rule E 3.2

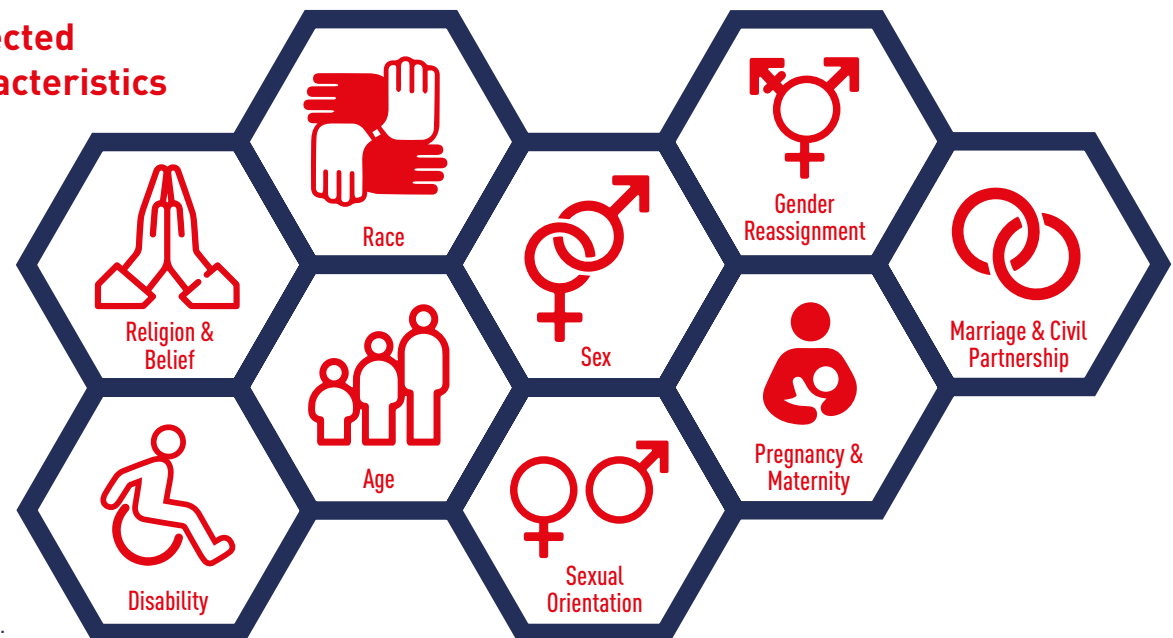
An aggravated breach of FA Rule E3 is when a participant is charged with insulting, abusive or improper behaviour, or brings the game into disrepute, while also including a reference, whether express or implied, to any or more of the following: **ethnic origin, colour, race, nationality, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or disability.**

*E3(2) does not cover Pregnancy & Maternity/ Marriage & Civil partnership.

Rule B5 Football and Religious Observance

- (a) A Participant cannot be compelled to play football on bona fide occasions where religious observance precludes such activity, save where the Participant:
 - (i) has consented to do so on such occasions.
 - or
 - (ii) is registered as a player under written contract, which shall be taken as consent to play on such occasions unless otherwise provided for in the contract.
- (b) Annually, when planning programmes, Competitions shall define and notify agreed dates of such occasions.

Protected Characteristics



Race & Ethnicity



Dates to Consider

- **FEBRUARY** – Chinese New Year
- **MARCH** – International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- **MAY** – World Day for Cultural Diversity
- **JUNE** – Gypsy, Roma & Traveller History Month
- **OCTOBER** – Black History Month

Further Guidance & Organisations to Consider

- Kick It Out
- Show Racism the Red Card
- South Asian Heritage Month
- Black History Month
- Football Unites Racism Divides
- United Nations

In Practice

North Riding FA EDI Referee Group

Our new dedicated initiative to help recruit, support, develop and progress referees from traditionally under-represented communities.

We want to make a difference:

- **Support for all historically under-represented groups**
- **Network opportunities**
- **Training and education and development opportunities**
- **Opportunity to showcase talent and progression opportunities**
- **Link with stakeholders and guest speakers**

All creating an opportunity to provide an honest and open feedback dialog on how we can improve as a county FA to increase representation across all groups.



Sexual Orientation

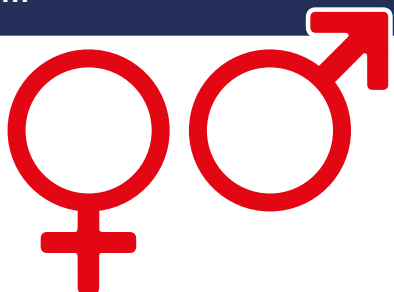


Dates to Consider

- **FEBRUARY** – Football V Homophobia Month of Action
– LGBT History Month
- **MARCH** - Trans Visibility Day
- **JUNE** – Pride Month
- **NOVEMBER** – Rainbow Laces

Further Guidance & Organisations to Consider:

- Football v Homophobia
- Stonewall
- GFSN
- Pride Sports
- Hart Gables
- York LGBT Forum



In Practice

North Riding FA Shape the Play x Hart Gables

North Riding County Football Association, via their Shape The Play programme have developed a fantastic partnership in Stockton-on-Tees with Hart Gables, the local Charity that offers support to the LGBTQ+ community.

Once a month they deliver a One Hart session, increasing physical activity levels through what is described as 'football-inspired' activities.

These sessions are hugely popular and well attended, and recently won an LGBT Alliance Award for 'Positive Impact on LGBT Health'.

Hart Gables have also provided their 'Journey Through Transition' training to both the North Riding County FA staff team and the Shape The Play Consortium.



Age



Dates to Consider

- **MARCH** - Young Carers Action Day
- **MAY** - National Childrens Day
- **AUGUST** - International Youth Day
- **OCTOBER** - International Day of Older Persons
- **NOVEMBER** - Children in Need

Further Guidance & Organisations to Consider:

- Age UK
- Sporting Memories
- Youth Sport Trust
- The FA
- National Young Referee Dev Team



In Practice

NORTH RIDING FA WALKING FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Our walking football league was established in 2023 and has 6 teams participating on a bi-monthly basis at a central venue. The league is for males and females 50+ who are new to the sport and do not have a lot of competitive walking football experience.

NORTH RIDING FA YOUTH COUNCIL

North Riding County FA has a well-established youth council which helps shape and develop the grassroots game for our youngest participants throughout the season. The vision of the Youth Council is to empower and provide a voice for all children and young people, to influence change and develop a legacy in football.



Disability



Dates to Consider

- **MARCH** - International Wheelchair Day
- **MAY** - Mental Health Awareness Week
- **SEPTEMBER** - Colour Blindness Day
 - International Week of the Deaf
- **OCTOBER** - World Cerebral Palsy Day
 - World Mental Health Day
 - World Sight Day
- **DECEMBER** - International Day Of Persons with Disabilities

Further Guidance & Organisations to Consider:

- Level Playing Field
- Wheelchair FA
- Activity Alliance
- Heads Up
- Referee Mental Health Champions
- Referee Mental Health Guidance
- Alzheimer's Society
- FA Disability Dispensation Policy

In Practice

NORTH RIDING FA DISABILITY COUNTY CUP

North Riding FA hosted our first Disability County Cup tournament in the 2022/23 season, which hosted 8 teams across 3 ability competitions: Premiership, Championship and League One. The cup is now embedded within our cups and competitions from the 2023 season onwards.



MENTAL HEALTH CHAMPIONS

At North Riding FA we believe that football does not only positively impact our physical health and fitness, it certainly also improves mental wellbeing.

We all have our own level of mental health, just as we do for our physical health and with the pronounced impact of the pandemic on people's overall wellness, we believe this is an opportune time for every stakeholder in our county to pay just as much attention to their mental fitness as their physical fitness.



**MENTAL HEALTH
CHAMPION**
THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR GOOD MENTAL HEALTH



Our work with our grassroots community enables us to highlight the subject of mental health with our clubs and leagues, leading to the introduction of our Mental Health Champion programme.

We are encouraging all of our clubs to appoint a Mental Health Champion to support their players, coaches and volunteers.

Reporting Discrimination

To ensure our national game is inclusive, we all have a responsibility to step up and blow the whistle on discrimination.

Here's how:

The grassroots game, disability game, women's pyramid and the national league system if you've been the victim of or witnessed an incident of discrimination.

Report it via The FA at **Football.ForAll@TheFA.com**

Report it to Kick It Out through their online reporting form or via their reporting app available on both iOS and Android. Alternatively, email Kick It Out at **report@kickitout.org**

Please note: If the incident occurs outside 'organised' football (i.e. in competitions not affiliated to the County FA), the County FA can still advise on what your next steps should be).

Reporting Discrimination on Social Media

Whether it's in connection with professional or grassroots football, if you see a post on social media you believe is discriminatory, there are three ways to report it.

By reporting it to Kick It Out through their online reporting form or via their reporting app available on both iOS and Android.

Alternatively, email Kick It Out at **report@kickitout.org**

By contacting the police, either:

- In person
- By calling the local police on 101
- By completing the online reporting form you'll find here
- By calling 999 if you are in an emergency







NORTH RIDING COUNTY FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION LTD

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