

BIRMINGHAM COUNTY FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION



CLUB WELCOME PACK SEASON 2022/23

IMPROVING LIVES BY IMPROVING FOOTBALL

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WELCOME TO THE NEW SEASON FROM THE CEO

Thank you for affiliating for the 22/23 season after one of the most challenging periods in football's history let alone for all sport and UK plc. We have seen an influx of new clubs and you are one of over 1,100 football clubs who have affiliated this season which is a testament to the appeal of the game locally and the work of the many volunteers within Clubs and Leagues who provide a safe and enjoyable environment for the more than 4,700 teams and 80,000 players within our County boundary who participate in nearly 50,000 games during a full and 'normal' season.

Birmingham County Football Association is one of the largest, most admired and innovative County FA's in the country. We have an all-inclusive football FOR ALL philosophy and our dedicated team of 24 staff who administer, organise, govern, support, promote and develop all formats of the game in order to help grow new and existing Clubs with the overall aim of increasing participation in our National Game. The BCFA team is also reliant on all elements of the Whole Game System (WGS) so we share the same pain and frustrations as all our customers and we thank you for your patience and understanding and with fingers crossed that future enhancements benefit us all rather than hinder.

Our 'Save Today, Play Tomorrow' initiative recognises our joint responsibility to lead on creating an environmentally friendly and sustainable football model in order to facilitate a positive step change to reduce single use plastic and carbon emissions which stain our game, our football facilities and the wider environment. With this in mind, I ask you and your committee and club members to think about how your players, coaches and spectators can help to clean up 'your' game with some quick wins and positive interventions so that the game can be enjoyed for future generations to come.

The social and economic impact of the game across the West Midlands is an incredible £522m each year which is why it is so important for people's wellbeing as well as the local economy that the game flourishes at every level especially after a long period with no football being played. There are 1,100 qualified referees who include FIFA, Premier League and EFL officials in our ranks, and over 90% of all the matches played are covered by a qualified match official. We have 14 local authorities whom we work closely with alongside seven professional clubs and their charity foundations - just some of the many delivery partners we engage with to support all the local and national participation initiatives.

We continue to work towards the FA's new Code of Governance as well as the Advanced Level of Equality Standard for Sport, having already proudly attained the Intermediate Level back in 2019. We take all allegations of discrimination seriously as part of the rigid discipline procedures which we follow and are working with West Midlands Police and community groups to make positive inroads on eradicating the disgraceful hate crimes which blight our game. Our experienced Designated Safeguarding Officer works closely with the statutory agencies and with our leagues and clubs on their compliance and best practice in order to make the game safer for children and vulnerable adults.

We have a highly innovative and pro-active approach to developing football and, along with the FA grants, we reinvest an additional £100k of our own surplus back into the game which yet again includes free club affiliation and our very own Grass Pitch Grant and Green Innovation Fund which Clubs can apply for throughout the season.

We hope you have an enjoyable season and we wish you and colleagues every success, whatever level you are involved in both on and off the pitch. Above all else and following the previous challenges of the pandemic, please remain safe, enjoy all the health & wellbeing benefits that the game offers and please RESPECT all participants as we move to a new normal.

We are here to help so please contact us via Support@BirminghamFA.com and we will do all we can to guide and support you and colleagues in your football endeavours.

Kevin Shoemake

CEO of Birmingham County FA

SAFEGUARDING

We are proud of our Club and League Welfare Officer network which provides support for volunteers, parents and children. Each youth club has at least one trained Club Welfare Officer (CWO) who is there to assist the member club in the provision of safeguarding. Each youth competition has at least one League Welfare Officer (LWO) that support our CWO network.

Sarah Willis is the Birmingham County FA Designated Safeguarding officer and the main point of contact for all Safeguarding concerns across the County. Our role is to support both CWO and LWOs through FA training and courses, welfare officer forums, and updates. Any Welfare Officer can also join the '**Birmingham County FA Welfare Officer Forum**' on Facebook. If you would like to know more about this support, or you feel you are missing out, please contact us on the details below.

Anyone working within regulated activity with children is required to have a Disclosing and Barring Service Check (DBS) carried out through The FA. Going through this process allows all clubs to adhere to their safer recruitment policies, ensuring that the right people are working within football. Each CWO has the ability to manage their own DBS checks so they are always aware who is clear to work in regulated activity. In addition to this, Birmingham County FA operate a 90, 60, 30 automated email reminder service for individuals, highlighting any pending expiry dates. Once a DBS certificate has expired, the individual is unable to hold any role of regulated activity within football and the Association hold the right to suspend the individual, team and club should this found to be breached.

Birmingham County FA, as with all County Football Associations, is regulated by the National Football Association in line with the Child Protection in Sport Unit of the NSPCC. The County FA regularly meet with the local authorities and local safeguarding children's boards, moreover we have active dialogue across all County Councils to ensure we remain compliant to all legislation. For the third year Birmingham County FA have complied with and passed a recent independent Safeguarding Operating Standard Assessment which is a mandatory requirement for all County FA's.

We offer various Safeguarding/Welfare Officer Courses for learners:

- Online Committee Members Course
- Safeguarding Children Course
- Welfare Officer Workshop
- Safeguarding Adults

These and other online courses offer learners a greater understanding of Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults for anybody that works within football, regardless of your involvement. The Welfare Officer Workshop will give all Club Welfare Officers the relevant knowledge of how to deal with any safeguarding issues within their club, ensuring that the club is safeguarding compliant.

**For further information please contact Sarah Willis,
Designated Safeguarding Officer & Respect Lead
Email: Sarah.Willis@BirminghamFA.com
Mobile: 07791 120 829 | Telephone: 0121 357 4278**

SUSTAINABLE FOOTBALL

SAVE TODAY, PLAY TOMORROW

Birmingham County FA is committed to pioneering the way in which football minimises the impact of its activities on the environment. The award winning Save Today, Play Tomorrow Programme is the first project of its kind for a County FA, offering access to services, education and fundamental resources that support clubs, leagues and teams to make simple, practical changes to help positively benefit themselves and their local community.



The programme consists of four workstreams where, with the support of local and national partners, we believe we can make the greatest impact.



We will create an environment where the Health (Physical and Mental) and Wellbeing of all participants and volunteers is at the heart of what we do.



We will develop educational resources on the environmental challenges specific to football to help make informed decisions around reducing the environmental footprint, particularly on waste, energy and plastic.



We will responsibly support all clubs and leagues with innovative ideas that reduce, re-use and recycle.



We will lead on educating leagues, clubs and facility operators to consider the use of their green spaces, creating protected areas that can reconnect communities with natural habitats.

Last season our clubs pledged to save over 64,000kg of co2e through our Sustainability Pledge, by committing to make small changes in how they travel, eat, consume energy & water, minimise waste and engage with their local community on the planet. This season we have changed how the pledge works, you can now sign your club up at any point during the season. Engage your members to make pledges and each month the club with the most pledges will win £500 towards their running costs this season. If you would like to sign up, please email: SaveTodayPlayTomorrow@BirminghamFA.com.

NEWSLETTER

Receive the latest sustainability news directly to your inbox by signing up to the Save Today, Play Tomorrow supporters club [here](#).

SOCIAL MEDIA

Follow our new #SaveTodayPlayTomorrow social channels to stay up to date with the latest information.



@savetodayplaytomorrow



@savetodayplaytomorrow



@STPT2021



Birmingham County FA



SUSTAINABLE FOOTBALL

SAVE TODAY, PLAY TOMORROW

Football Rebooted We now have over 30 'boot bins' in operation across the county, collecting & redistributing pre-worn football boots supporting the goal of keeping one million pairs in circulation for longer and out of landfill. Our aim is to have 100 'boot bins' by the end of the 22/23 season, but we need clubs to get involved. If you are interested in becoming a collection centre, then please [click here](#).

Liftshare Birmingham County FA's Save Today, Play Tomorrow programme has partnered with Liftshare, the UK's largest car sharing organisation, to offer all of its members the opportunity to join the 750,000 likeminded people across the country reduce their emissions footprint and save money. Liftshare currently work with the English Football League (EFL) helping fans from across the 72 clubs make matchday travel better for the environment and more affordable. Informal car sharing is already happening at many clubs up and down the county. We are asking members to join the Liftshare community and formalise their travel arrangements via the app to help the Association record the journey distances, CO2e savings and the cost effectiveness of car sharing during this ever increasingly expensive time. The most active users will be entered in to our monthly draw to win top flight matchday tickets. To join Liftshare, [click here](#).

Green Innovation Fund During the 21/22 season our Green Innovation Fund supported 76 clubs with grants of up to £750 towards eco-friendly infrastructure changes like;

- Reusable water bottles (saving an estimated 7000 plastic bottles per week being purchased)
- Drinking water fountains
- Cycle racks
- Electric vehicle charge points
- Solar/battery storage equipment

This year the fund will open in September with grants awarded in November. All clubs are eligible to apply, so please follow our social channels to keep up to date.

Football & Climate Education Coming Soon - Football & Climate Education Course! In association with the Carbon Literacy Group, we are development the first of its kind grassroots football & climate change introductory course that will give those in the game the knowledge, confidence, tools & resources to help transition their club to a more sustainable future. The course will be available online & in person and further details will be released via our social channels.

We are delighted to inform you that we have partnered with the **Birmingham & Black Country Wildlife Trust** to help support the Reconnecting Football with Nature workstream. Further details will be released on our social channels, and we are so excited to share with you how your football club can get involved. Find out more about the BBC Wildlife Trust by clicking [here](#).

Focus Group We are actively recruiting volunteers from within the grassroots game to form a Save Today, Play Tomorrow focus group that will give a voice to the game on matters relating to climate change, social injustice and sustainability as a whole. You do not need to be a climate scientist or an environmental activist to be part of the group, all we ask is you that you have an interest in supporting a cleaner, greener game and are prepared to share your opinions via various platforms including video. To express an interest please email SaveTodayPlayTomorrow@BirminghamFA.com with Focus Group in the subject.

EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

In May 2019, Birmingham County FA were awarded the Intermediate Standard for Equality & Inclusion, making them only the second County FA to meet this standard. Attaining this award further galvanises the good work the Inclusion Advisory Group (IAG) are doing in the County, driving improved standards and policy at all levels of the game.

We clearly demonstrate below our commitment to making football **FOR ALL** with targeted interventions across:

- Extended Ramadan Football League
- Refugee Football Programme
- Extensive Disability Football Programme
- Women & Girls Football
- Dementia Friends Café



We picked up our Award for achieving Intermediate Standard for Equality & Inclusion at Wembley Stadium in May 2019

KICK IT OUT

“Kick It Out” is primarily a campaigning organisation which enables, facilitates and works with the football authorities, professional clubs, players, fans and communities to tackle all forms of discrimination. The campaign has been pivotal in persuading and supporting the game’s stakeholders to take their equality responsibilities seriously.

Kick It Out announced the launch of their new campaign, Take A Stand in 2020. It is a call to action initiative, encouraging people across the football community to take an action or make a pledge, in the fight against discrimination. It is the first digital campaign where individuals and organisations will be invited to publicly commit to their own pledge. The initiative marks a new chapter in the fight against discrimination in football, which will give fans the confidence, the tools and the means to confront discrimination and make a change.



Realising the essential role played by grassroots clubs in their local communities, Kick It Out aims to develop understanding between different backgrounds, cultures and beliefs so they can help make football more accessible and equal for all. The organisation is willing to provide assistance in any shape or form which will enhance inclusive practices either at a local or national grassroots level. Kick It Out can also help bridge the gap between local groups and the leading bodies within the game, who historically may have felt excluded or overlooked.

For further information, please contact: info@kickitout.org

FA CUP TICKET BALLOT INFORMATION

The application process for FA Cup Tickets opens on the 1st April, or the first Monday if this falls on a weekend, each year. The application window closes on the Friday after the second semi final is held.

The application form will be released on the Birmingham County FA website and social media channels. Each club is entitled to apply for two or four tickets in the end of the stadium of their choice. Applications for odd number of tickets will not be accepted.

Four price ranges will be available to purchase and the applicant will be able to rank the order of prices they would like to be considered.

All tickets provided will be in either the home or away end – No neutral tickets are available.

All successful applicants will be contacted via email approximately one week after the ballot closing date. The number of tickets issued to each applicant will be subject to demand, and meeting the strict criteria outlined in the application form.

Tickets must be paid for in full, either via card or cash before they can be released - Cheques will not be accepted.

All successful applications will incur an admin charge of £3, which will be added to the cost of the transaction at the payment stage. If tickets are to be posted out to the applicant, they will be dispatched by secure postage and the applicant will have to cover this cost at the relevant special delivery postal price at the time of application.



AFFILIATION & COUNTY CUPS

ONE CLUB AFFILIATION

After the sudden termination of the 2019/20 season, Birmingham County FA were delighted to offer free affiliations for the 2020/21 season. With the curtailment of the 2020/21 season and the overwhelming success of 'One Club Affiliation', this option was available again during the 2021/22 season. Continuing the success, this has again continued for the 2022/23 season.

This gives club's the opportunity of affiliating all teams under one main club. By doing this, one lead secretary will oversee the general administration of the club. This secretary can then give access to other assistant secretaries, who will be able to access the online affiliation form as well as the club's main dashboard.

HOW IS AFFILIATION PROCESSED THROUGH WGS?

To do this you will need to login to Whole Game System, click on the club tab before navigating to affiliation on the left-hand bar which will open the relevant form. You will then need to work through the eight stages, amending them accordingly before selecting your preferred Personal Accident Insurance. After submitting your affiliation, this gets validated by Birmingham County FA and will be invoiced subject to all mandatory safeguarding requirements being fulfilled by youth teams and payment being received. Once this is completed, approval will be given.

PLAYER REGISTRATION

Player Registration can be done online via the WGS subject to competing in a participating league. To do this, your players must be added on to Whole Game to then be assigned to teams, consent granted, prior to submission to the league who will then approve the registration.

Birmingham County FA can provide assistance with this process.
Please contact, Support@BirminghamFA.com.

AFFILIATION PACK 2022/23

We were pleased to provide an affiliation pack ahead of the 2022/23 season for all clubs and leagues to identify the support that Birmingham County FA will give before, and during the new season.
Click [here](#) to view.

FINANCE

There are different payment methods available when you need to make a payment to Birmingham County FA. See below for the details:



WHOLE GAME SYSTEM

To make a payment, your first port of call should be the Whole Game System and you can find the guidance that explains the steps you need to take in order to make payments [here](#).



If you experience any issues with the Whole Game System, please follow the steps to use our external payment system [here](#).

Please remember when making a payment on WGS, you must acknowledge the case first to be able to complete it.

CONTACT

If you have any further finance queries or issues, our Finance Officer can be contacted between 9am – 5pm (Monday - Friday) on 07815 003823.

Our support portal is live and colleagues can be contacted on: **Support@BirminghamFA.com**.

The **Birmingham County FA Payment Portal** can be accessed by scanning the QR code below.



ENGLAND FOOTBALL ACCREDITATION

Football leagues and clubs accredited by The FA have positively changed the football landscape over the last 20 years, creating the ideal environments to nurture players, coaches and volunteers. The result is greater diversity and inclusivity throughout football. England Football Accreditation replaces The FA Charter Standard and is the next chapter in this amazing story as we unite even more communities by supporting Leagues and Clubs over the next 10 years.

In addition, The FA recognise Clubs that provide one or more of the accredited player pathways, either for male, or female, or for disability players.

The star that a club achieves and is then recognised for, demonstrates that they have football teams within their set-up that support the three accredited player pathways. It helps us to align the relevant support and services you need to become the best version of your Club.

THE TRANSITION

All existing FA Charter Standard Leagues and Clubs will automatically become England Football Accredited.

Clubs will be given until the 2023/24 season to build their pathways before determining initial stars rating.

The transition will take time and we look forward to connecting and working with leagues and clubs to help provide best possible standard of football up and down the country.

HOW TO GET ACCREDITED

Becoming an England Football Accredited club or league is a simple process. We have put together an application walkthrough guide to show you just how simple it is.

[Click here](#) to find out how you can become England Football Accredited.



ACCREDITED
PART OF ENGLAND FOOTBALL

COACH EDUCATION

In March 2021, The FA announced that all coaching courses would now be delivered and managed by England Football Learning. The FA provides a range of learning opportunities for you to engage with, and the courses are suitable for coaches of all levels. For more information, [click here](#).

We would like to remind all clubs, coaches and volunteers that all queries regarding these courses must go to Education@TheFA.com or via the FA Support Portal.

COACH DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

Due to The FA's recent changes to the course programme, Birmingham County FA have launched our Coach Development Workshop programme. This includes both face to face and virtual workshops to support our football volunteer workforce. The sessions help people develop their skills and allow attendees to better understand the next steps in their own coaching journey.

START YOUR COACHING JOURNEY

STEP 1: **EE Playmaker** (FREE)

STEP 2: **Introduction to Coaching Football** – (previously known as FA Level 1)
(includes FA Safeguarding Children & Introduction to First Aid in Football)

STEP 3: **UEFA C** (previously known as FA Level 2)

STEP 4: **UEFA B** (previously known as FA Level 3)

WANT TO GAIN, RENEW, OR EXPLORE?

FA Safeguarding Children

FA First Aid

FA Welfare Officers Workshop

WANT TO UPDATE YOUR KNOWLEDGE?

FA Concussion Guidelines / Sudden Cardiac Arrest

Guide to Safeguarding Adults

Safeguarding for Committee Members

COURSES TO BE CONFIRMED

FA Goalkeeping / Futsal / Disability

DO YOU WANT TO BECOME A REFEREE?

Complete the three pre course requisites and submit an express your interest form for our Referee Courses by [clicking here](#). You will then receive a booking link when all steps are confirmed.

OTHER USEFUL LINKS

The Boot Room

FA Support Portal

Online Resources

REFEREES

Birmingham County FA are proud to have 1,100 referees who operate across a number of competitions around the County and nationally. Our referees range from the FIFA match officials who cover the Premier League, Women's Super League and International Competitions to mini soccer referees who operate across under 8's grassroots football every Saturday and Sunday morning.

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

The first step to get into refereeing is to complete the Referees Course (You need to be 14 or older to enrol onto this course). This course takes place across a number of dates and involves practical assessments.

HOW ARE REFEREES APPOINTED?

Appointments to fixtures are made by referee secretaries and appointment officers across the County FA. Referees at grassroots level would be allocated an appropriate appointment based on leagues in their area.

THE FA NATIONAL REFEREE STRATEGY

The National Referee Strategy demonstrates the FA's commitment to maximising opportunities for inclusion, participation and development at all levels of the refereeing pyramid across a range of roles in refereeing. The strategy incorporates all parts of refereeing from how to recruit from all communities in the country to how referees are developed from the Referees Course.

FA CORE

The FA Centre of Refereeing Excellence (CORE) aims to provide a certain amount of identified referees at all levels with quality training, education and development opportunities which are delivered both centrally and across a number of regional locations. FA CORE is for those referees who are demonstrating that they have clear 'potential' and 'opportunity' to progress in refereeing regardless of which part of the country they are from, their gender or age. The CORE programme is a national program for which the County FA's can identify potential referees who have the attributes to progress across the different levels.

NEW INITIATIVES

Birmingham County FA have introduced five new initiatives ahead of the 22/23 season including Transition Accredited Leagues, Early Development Scheme, Potential Development Programme, New Promotion Pathway and Women's Game Support Group. You can find out more by [clicking here](#).

TRAINING EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (TED)

Each season, Birmingham County FA identifies referees with the potential and drive to progress in the game. They are invited to an evaluation evening where they are tested on the laws of the game and on the field of play. The group is made up of 30 referees from Level 7 to Level 3 who are given quality training and specialist coaching on how to progress in the game.

DISCIPLINE

The below covers the basic information you should be aware of with regards to discipline matters dealt with by the County FA. There are seven categories for Match Based Discipline:

- Saturday
- Sunday
- Midweek
- Veterans
- Youth
- Representative
- Further Education

Automatic suspensions for dismissals are aligned to one of the seven categories – meaning that if you are dismissed in a game, you are unable to play again in the same category of football until the automatic match based suspension is served. This means that a player sent off in Sunday football would still be eligible to play for a Saturday team as the suspension would apply to Sunday football only.

Having a category based approach is a fairer and more consistent system – for example under the previous system, a player sent off for their Sunday team may have received a one match ban, but because of bad weather he or she may not have been able to serve the suspension for six weeks. During this time his or her Saturday team may have been able to play matches, but the player would have missed out as they were waiting to complete the one match suspension from his or her Sunday team. Any player who is dismissed from the field of play in a friendly fixture is suspended automatically for 1 match from the next friendly fixture for that team, irrespective of the offence committed.

Should Birmingham County FA deem that the offence committed warrants further disciplinary action, they do have the ability to raise a misconduct charge if they feel the standard punishment is insufficient. A misconduct charge will be issued for a reported incident that does not fall under a standard dismissal offence or serious offence. If you receive a misconduct charge and it is found proven, any suspension will usually be from all football at County level (Step 5 and below).

FAQ'S

Q: How much is the administration fee?

A: The Administration Fee is £15.00 for non-caution offences (sending-off and all misconduct). The administration fee for a caution is £12.00.

Q: If a player is sent off or cautioned, who is liable for the Fine/Administration Fee?

A: If the player is involved in youth football the club is liable for the fees. If the offence is in open aged football it would be the player's responsibility to pay the fine, but the club are responsible to ensure this does get paid in the first instance.

Q: I have recently signed a player and I need to check if they have any unspent suspensions, how can I check this?

A: County Associations provide weekly statements of participants who are currently serving suspensions or have a pending suspension on their website. There is also a facility within the Whole Game System to search for players and attach your club which will show the status. If after checking you are still unsure or unable to find the player you can contact the County FA and provide their name, address and date of birth, who will then inform you of the current status.

DISCIPLINE

FAQ'S CONTINUED

Q: If a club plays a player who is under suspension, who gets charged?

A: It is both the responsibility of the club and player concerned to ensure that the player does not participate whilst under suspension. Therefore both the club and player would be charged.

Q: When will a suspension start for a player who has been sent off?

A: All suspensions commence seven days after the date of the sending off. If the club have not heard or received confirmation within two working days they should make contact with the County FA.

Q: I have to write an extraordinary incident report. What do I include?

A: 1. Minute of the game

- 2. Who (best practice is to provide a name, if not accurate descriptions or shirt numbers)
- 3. What happened (be factual, 'I saw this', 'I was told this')
- 4. Include exact wording ('abusive language' is not always enough)
- 5. Where were you positioned
- 6. You have told the individual that they are being reported

Q: How do I deal with misconduct from managers, coaches and other non-playing participants?

A: You can issue yellow or red cards for misconduct.

E.g. Yellow - Regularly not staying in their technical area, shouting dissent to you, throwing/ kicking drink bottles, sarcastic clapping or gestures that show lack of respect, gesturing for a yellow or red card

Red- Leaving the technical area to show dissent to you, leaving the technical area to act in a confrontational manner, coming onto the pitch to confront you at half or full time, using offensive, insulting, or abusive language and/or gestures, receiving a second caution.

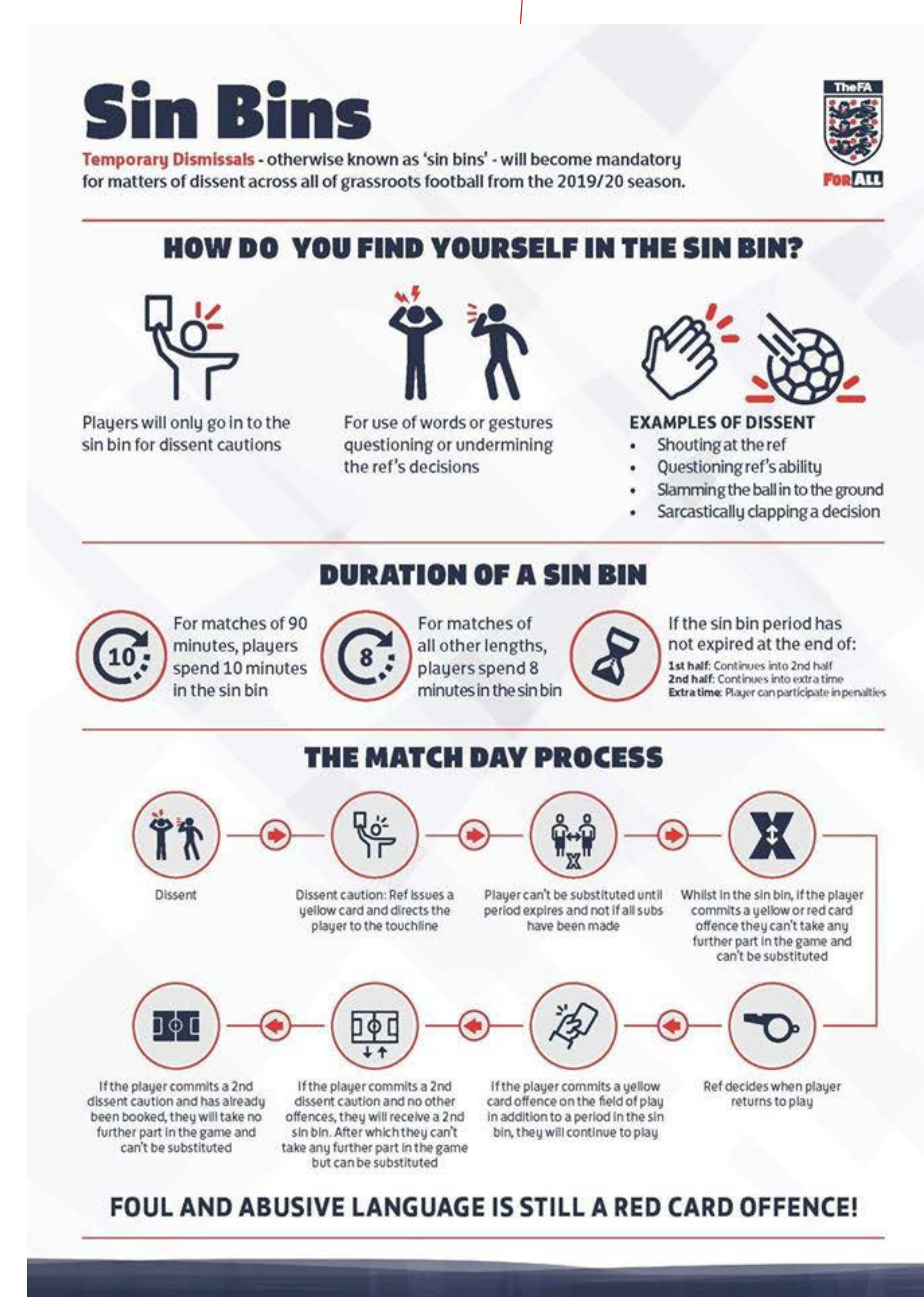
TEMPORARY DISMISSALS

As you may be aware, the implementation of the Sin Bin Programme for all on-field incidents of dissent are now mandatory across all grassroots football since the beginning of the 2020/21 season.

Please see below to access resources that should assist you with this process, which includes this helpful infographic with key information.

[Click here](#) for more information via our website.

[Click here](#) to watch our Temporary Dismissals Presentation.



WOMEN'S & GIRLS FOOTBALL

Weetabix Wildcats Centres are introductory fun football sessions for girls 5-11. You can play your part if you are a club, school or organisation and by becoming a Weetabix Wildcats Centre you can earn funding, kit and equipment. You must complete an application process which is open twice a year. Please refer to our website for the application process and any updates, or alternatively email **Support@BirminghamFA.com** to be added to the communication list.

Squad Girls is a brand new programme launched in early 2022, for girls aged 12-14. This is essentially for girls, who again have an interest through school provision but don't have a team, it's based on non-competitive, but leading to a hopeful exit route into local teams. Again, this works on an application process, and its for clubs, schools or organisations to help grow the game.

Partners We are working to support local clubs in partnering with the relevant education and community groups to ensure the player pathway is well connected in the County. If you want to build your links with local schools, colleges or universities delivering FA programmes or the other community groups engaging with females (Uniform Groups, Faith Groups etc.) please let us know your location and the age you are looking to work closer with.

AFFILIATED FOOTBALL

Available leagues in the County for players are:

- The Central Warwickshire Girls League (U7-U18)
- The Stourbridge & District Youth Girls Football League (U8-U12)
- Birmingham County Womens League (Adult)

League football is not the only avenue, with there being more ways than ever to play:

- Over 30's
- Mum's Play
- Turn Up and Play
- Women's Walking Football

There are small pots of funding available for the above although please note that the sessions must have a plan to be self-sustainable after 12 weeks, run through the regular season and for the Walking Football have the potential to move to a league format. For further details on this, please contact:

Vicky.Mitchell@BirminghamFA.com.

NEWSLETTER & SOCIAL MEDIA

We want the good news stories and positive work you are all doing to be heard as far and wide as possible. To do this, we encourage you all to send in material for our brand new quarterly female football newsletter called **ROAR!** Please send any details you would like included to **Vicky.Mitchell@BirminghamFA.com** at any time during the season.

Socially connecting us is **@BCFAWG** - Make sure you like and follow the new Facebook & Twitter channels, dedicated to all things women's & girls football to keep up to date with everything in our County.

Click here to view more information on our website.

DISABILITY FOOTBALL

From grassroots to the elite game, whether you are a coach or a player, here is how you can participate in disability football.

Whatever your ability level, there has never been a better time to get involved and play disability football in the Birmingham County FA region, with there being more opportunities than ever.

For more information on disability football, please contact:
Jasbir.Batt@BirminghamFA.com or **Support@BirminghamFA.com**

The FA have a Para Football Performance Pathway, right from Grassroots to the Elite game.

One Player, Two Journeys, Three Lions.
If you have always dreamed of playing for England, then the dream is on!

Find out more by [clicking here](#).

What could the Disability Rec Pathway look like?



BUSINESS LEAGUE

Building morale in a workplace is paramount to the success of any organisation. The Birmingham County FA Business League is designed to get colleagues to keep fit and socialise outside of the workplace in a flexible, relaxing and competitive environment.

The league runs using a flexible format where teams have the option to play 7, 9 or 11-a-side, with the 11 a-side format being the most popular. We are also the first County FA to pilot the league as mixed gender, allowing males and females to participate.

We are pleased to confirm that following positive feedback from all teams we will continue to offer these formats for the 22/23 season. The league runs from September to May with a final hosted at BCFA HQ.

Previous winners include:

Ash Green School (2015)

Jaguar Landrover (2016)

Dudley Police (2017)

Firearms Operation Unit (2018)

Jaguar Landrover Solihull (2019)

DSC United (2022)

At this time, expressions of interest are being accepted so if this is something you think your workplace would be interested in, please contact **Harley.Hetherington@BirminghamFA.com**.



The Business League Final 22/23 will take place at the BCFA Excellence Arena.

VETERANS FOOTBALL, OVER 45'S & WALKING FOOTBALL

Here at Birmingham County FA we are keen to keep people playing the beautiful game for as long as possible. We are constantly exploring opportunities for those in or around their 50's to continue in the player pathway before reaching Walking Football. Most recently we have created the Birmingham County FA Over 45's League, which is a 9v9 format running bi-weekly on Sunday evenings at Boldmere St Michaels.

Birmingham County FA are proud to have a full pathway for players who wish to continue playing throughout their 30's onwards. We have a number of Leagues who operate over 35's divisions alongside a bespoke 9v9 over 45's league and a Walking Football League which includes an over 50's, over 60's and over 63's division.

We were pleased to register 429 Walking Football players across the 2021/22 season.

For further details or to find out more about the above provision within your local area, please contact: **Harley.Hetherington@BirminghamFA.com**.

ASPIRING CLUB-COORDINATORS

Birmingham County FA have launched a new Aspiring Club Coordinators programme which is aimed at individuals between the ages of 16 and 24 who want to make a positive impact within their football club.

The individuals will be tasked with three projects over the course of the 2022/23 season, which will benefit both themselves and their club.

The projects are as follows:

- Environmental Sustainability (August to December)
- Facilities & Investment (January to March)
- What does your club need? (April to June)

Find out more on the programme by contacting **Harley.Hetherington@BirminghamFA.com**.

RECREATIONAL FOOTBALL

SNICKERS JUST PLAY

"A recreational form of football providing access for adults to affordable, fun, organised kickabouts in suitable facilities with trained organisers in their local area."

Snickers Just Play is purely for adults, for men, for women, for those who think they're talented and for those who think they aren't. It's also for those with a disability, 16–25's, women only or even veterans; there is a kickabout designed specifically for you, whatever your age or ability.

The Snickers Just Play scheme is recreational football in its purest and simplest format. It's about turning up for an hour of exercise, socialising and having fun. It is football for those who do not or cannot commit to a long arduous season of training and weekend matchdays.

Funding of £200 is available to groups who run recreational sessions for adults (16+), if applying to run one of these centres, one individual must undertake the online FA Playmaker Course.

Just Play sessions can be added to The FA's website which will enable people searching for local kickabouts to sign up to your session which helps the Centre to grow in numbers.

For more information please contact: Harley.Hetherington@BirminghamFA.com.



GRASS PITCH PROGRAMME

The Grass Pitch Programme is around strategically delivering natural grass pitch improvements across the West Midlands with the help and support from clubs, leagues, and volunteers. As part of the National Game Strategy, by 2024, collectively we need to ensure that there are 361 grass pitches that are at a 'GOOD' or better quality within the Birmingham County FA area.



PitchPower (PP) is a web app that puts the power in your hands, making it easy to sign up and carry out pitch inspections. You'll then get a detailed assessment report from the grounds management experts at the Grounds Management Association (GMA) with recommendations on improving the quality of your grass pitches.

Once downloaded, PitchPower:

- Allows you to self-assess your pitches
- Significantly reduces the time it takes to receive the report compared with site visits
- Provides seasonal, ongoing advice about how to improve your pitch
- Works via a combination of photographs (site condition and soil sample) and information input
- Is FREE to use
- Provides an opportunity to apply for funding to support your pitch work improvements
- Further information and a User guide with , instructional videos can be found on Football Foundation website.

Please ensure you complete PP on all your pitches if you want to apply for funding.

To start your PP submission you must create an account [here](#).

PP is your gateway to access further funding through the Football Foundation (FF), whether that's the Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund (GPMF), a larger scale capital bid or to access funding to support with grass pitch or ancillary improvements via the Small Grants Scheme.

Football Foundation The Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund is a six year tapered grant that provides much needed funding for grass pitches at your site. The funding rate for year 1+2 at 100%, 66% years 3 + 4, 33% years 5+6 – thereafter the pitch is required to be sustained at the GMA's PQS standard of 'Good' or above.

Funding is available, on a sliding scale depending on pitch size, to either enhance or sustain pitch quality. It can be used to employ contractors, purchase materials, and purchase a soil sampler. The funding available per pitch will depend on the Performance Quality Standard (PQS) rating received via the PP Report.

Grants are to improve grassroots community pitches. Pitches used for Step 7/feeder leagues are eligible so long as the predominant usage is for grassroots community teams. The Premier League Stadium Fund (PLSF) is a fund which may be available for clubs playing at a higher step within the football pyramid. More information about the PLSF can be found on the next page. For more information on the GPMF please [click here](#).

Grass Pitch Grant (GPG) Birmingham County FA has created a funding pot for all affiliated clubs to access who are part of the Grass Pitch Programme. The Fund is designed to help towards much needed equipment and/or extensive renovation works that has been highlighted as a beneficial following a PitchPower report. The clubs involved can apply for up to £5000 and to date Birmingham County FA have supported grassroots clubs with over £60k. To find out more, contact Joe.Robinson@BirminghamFA.com and to apply [click here](#).



PITCH IMPROVEMENT PARTNERS

Birmingham County FA has entered into a number of partner relationships to support local clubs access services at preferential rates.

Lakeside Maintenance are our contractor services partner, providing a wealth of expertise and knowledge with regards to natural turf maintenance. Affiliated clubs can benefit from reduced rates on their services that have been identified within your PitchPower report. [Click here](#) for more.

Campey Turf Care are our machinery partner, providing affiliated clubs with discounts on maintenance kit and equipment that has been identified within your PitchPower report. [Click here](#) for more.

Origin Amenity Solutions (Rigby Taylor) are our Pitch Improvement Consumables partner and supply grassroots football clubs across the region with grass seed, fertilizer, chemicals and line marking products and paints. [Click here](#) for more.

Support Pitch Advisors

With the introduction of PitchPower, the volume of pitch inspections has naturally increased, and the process changed significantly. Birmingham County FA has a number of Support Pitch Advisors (SPA) who are available to provide an extra resource by being on the ground to support local clubs, and organisations complete the Pitchpower assessment process. The SPA's all have experience of sports ground management. Their services on offer include:

- Supporting clubs/organisations with PitchPower inspections. This is an optional paid service at £100*
- Support clubs/organisations with further advice following PitchPower report. This provides the option of discussing any findings and/or recommendations in more detail. SPA will document any findings to the RPA and update PitchPower report accordingly. £100**

* Cost is based on up to 4 pitches. £20 per additional pitch. Expenses are chargeable

** Cost is per site visit/inspection

We are able to subsidise your first SPA visit. For more information contact Joe.Robinson@BirminghamFA.com

Small Grants Scheme

The Football Foundation's (FF) Small Grants Scheme is designed to support with funding applications up to £25k that sit outside of the Local Football Facility Plans (LFFP). Whether it's goalposts for one of your junior sides or machinery equipment for your ground staff to keep your grass pitches looking pristine, the FF offer a range of small grants to support the grassroots game. In summary, the scheme can support with grants of up to 75%.

[Click here](#) for more information on the Small Grants Scheme.

Premier League Stadium Fund

This funding is for clubs who play in Steps 1-6 of the National League System or Women's Football Pyramid Tiers 1 - 4. The eligibility of projects and the grant limits available are dependent on the step of the National League System your club plays at. Dependent on the club's place within the football pyramid and historic investment received from the Football Stadium Improvement Fund in the last five years, you may be able to apply to the Premier League Stadium Fund (PLSF) for a grant up to the maximum cumulative grant value. There are a number of eligible projects ranging from floodlighting to turnstiles. To find out more about this fund, please [click here](#).

THE FA & MCDONALD'S GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL AWARDS

The FA & McDonald's Grassroots Football Awards recognise how grassroots leagues, clubs, volunteers and community projects play their part in making the nation's favourite game happen week in, week out up and down the country.

McDonald's has been a partner of the FA for 18 years. As the longest standing supporter of grassroots football in the UK, McDonald's continues to champion those selfless volunteers who enable everyone to play and enjoy grassroots football in a safe, fun and inclusive environment regardless of age, gender, race, religion or disability.

Every year, the awards receive thousands of nominations and are backed by leading football legends such as Casey Stoney, Sir Geoff Hurst, Ryan Giggs, Kenny Dalglish and Pat Jennings.

The 2022 Winners:

Rising Star of the Year: Rory Budge, Redditch United

Grounds Team of the Year: Martin Sutton, Coventry Sphinx

Project of the Year: Adam Sweeney, Southam Albion

Match Official of the Year: Andrew Nicol

Sustainability in Football: Cradley Town DC

Coach of the Year Adult: Martyn Brookhouse, Stratford Town Colts

Volunteer of the Year: Christopher Heath, Coton Green Minor

Coach of the Year Youth: Richard Horwell, Sutton Coldfield Town Juniors

Club of the Year: Coundon Court FC

Spirit of Grassroots Football: Bryan Wattley, Bustleholme

Nominations capture the FA's 'For All' ethos and will be judged upon the FA's values of Progressive, Respectful, Inclusive, Determined and Excellent, or PRIDE for short.

Nominations for the McDonald's Grassroots Football Awards 2022/23 will open in the Spring, where further details will be released on our website on how you can nominate.



ENGLAND
FOOTBALL



MATCHDAY

In July 2018 the FA launched the new Matchday app to all affiliated football managers and players/parents of players that participate in leagues that use Full-Time and registered players via the Whole Game System for affiliated football.

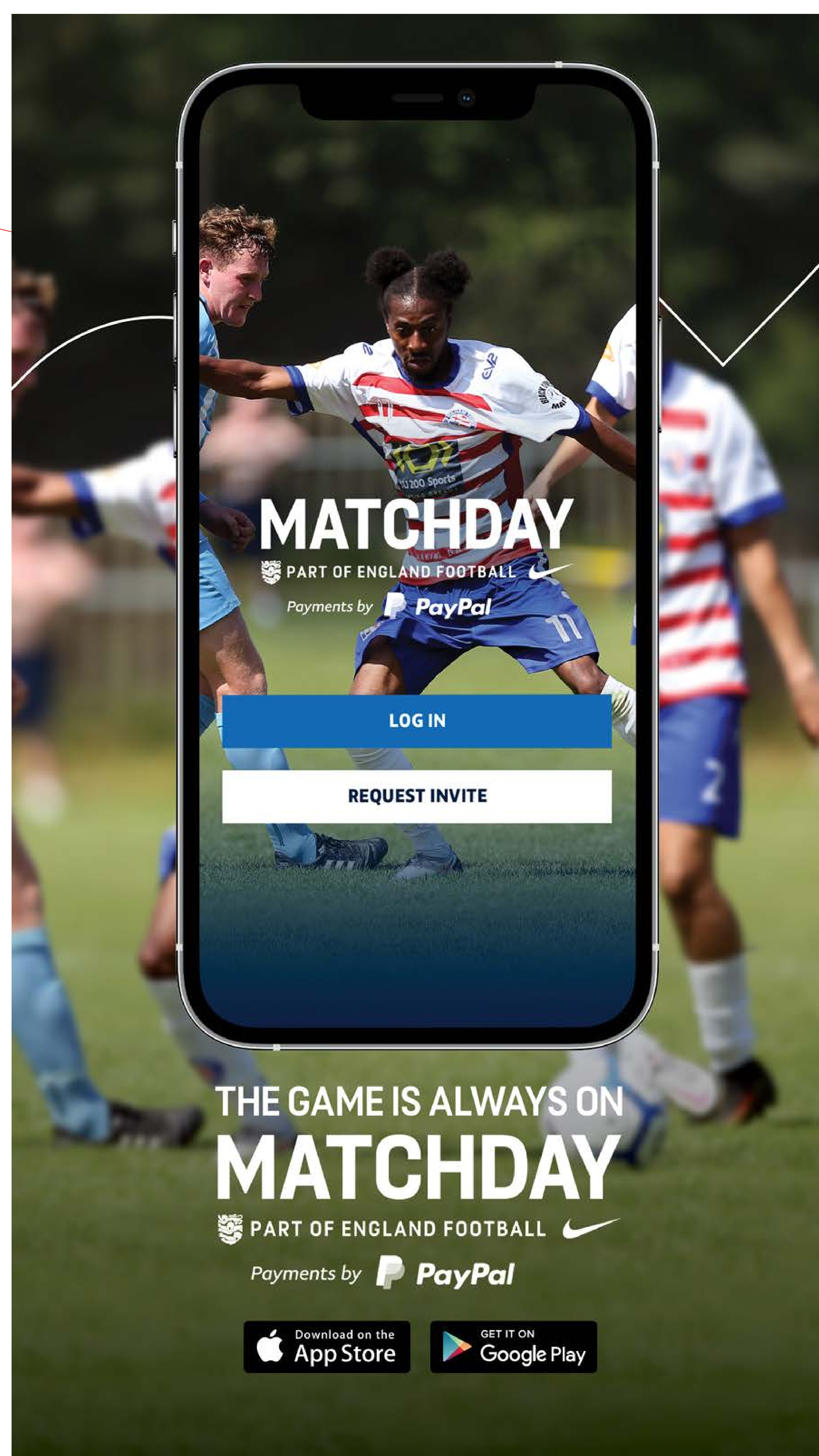
The first release of Matchday included a fantastic set of features that gave eligible managers and players a chance to organise training, games, player availability, whilst giving them the ability to pick squads and submit scores all through their smartphone.

In June 2019 the FA launched their partnership with Paypal and Matchday with a series of roadshows and competitions, including winning a “Matchday Masterclass” at St. George’s Park.

Everything you need to be Matchday ready

- Your league needs to be using our Whole Game System (WGS) to register players. This is because squad and disciplinary data is on the WGS. All this data will appear in your Matchday app, allowing managers to pick their squad for each game based on availability and eligibility.
- Your league needs to use our Full-Time service. This service drives fixture lists. Once your league enters fixtures in Full-Time, Matchday will automatically add them to the app. If your league doesn't use Full-Time, you won't be able to see your league fixtures in the app.
- As a club, you need to ensure all your team managers have a ‘manager’ role in the WGS. This could be team manager, assistant team manager, coach or assistant coach. They also need to have an email address in the WGS.

Click here to find out more about Matchday.



GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS (GDPR)

What is GDPR?

The rules that govern data protection have evolved and are now referred to as The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). As part of the FA's commitment to share knowledge and best practice, the following advice has been provided to help all leagues and clubs remain compliant.

Does GDPR apply to us?

GDPR applies to all data controllers and data processors, so if you collect any personal data in running your club (which you definitely will do if you have any members) then GDPR will apply to you. There are no exclusions for CASCs, charities or not for profit organisations. It doesn't make a difference for example if you are structured as an unincorporated organisation or company limited by guarantee – the requirements are concerned with the data you hold and how you handle this.

What is Personal Data?

Any information relating to an identified or identifiable data subject who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that person. Examples include: name, address, telephone number, IP address, membership numbers etc.

What if we choose not to use FA Systems?

The FA will not be undertaking any review or compliance activities in respect of non-FA systems. In addition, The FA will not be undertaking compliance activities in respect of leagues' use of data on FA systems for their independent purposes or, to the extent that it falls under the provisions of the regulation, personal data processed by leagues in hard copy forms.

Any non-FA systems or applications which leagues use to collect personal data or processing which is carried out by leagues for independent purposes will need to be reviewed and updated (as necessary) by each league. Each league will need to consider if it needs to update its notices to participants, create internal data protection procedures or spend time considering its information security procedures.

Where Can I Find Further Information?

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has also produced guidance for all UK businesses on GDPR. You can find this document on its website: [**The ICO Guide to GDPR**](#)

In addition please see below links to example documentation that has been verified by the FA's legal team as meeting the statutory compliance level:

[**Data Protection Policy for Leagues & Clubs**](#)

[**Privacy Notice Clubs**](#)

[**Privacy Notice Leagues**](#)

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SAVE TODAY, PLAY TOMORROW PARTNERS

We are pleased to have partnered with various organisations which will help us to achieve our ambitious goal of creating a low carbon, greener game. You can find out more by clicking on the logo's below.

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FUNDING DIRECTORY 2022/23

You can access a list of funders who your club may be able to apply to, to support your project, subject to meeting the criteria. Just [click here](#) to see what support could be available to you. The list includes funding nationally, locally, and direct from Birmingham County Football Association. If you come across a funding pot that is not on our list, please get in touch to let us know on Support@BirminghamFA.com.

**IMPROVING LIVES BY IMPROVING FOOTBALL
IN THE HEART OF ENGLAND**



BIRMINGHAM COUNTY FA
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