

Cornwall County Football Association



Annual Report 2023

Football for onen hag oll - 'one and all'

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Chief Executive's Report

County FA Overview

We support and deliver playing opportunities to over 10,000 people on a weekly basis - male, female, adult, youth, veteran, walking and disability teams, and in addition over 100 small 5 and 6 a-side teams.

We also have a network of over 1100 registered coaches, over 200 registered referees and a huge number of registered volunteer officers at clubs and leagues across the county that we also support.

Internally, we have intrinsically strong governance from board level down, we are well organised, well run, well-structured and therefore well placed to accurately assess our football communities needs and their required support to continue to develop and move forward.

We have strong financial controls which have enabled us to remain a highly effective business over the last 12 months. We have continued our recovery from the impacts of Covid and now moved on to dealing with impacts of world-wide events alongside managing the continued ongoing and substantial funding cuts from The FA.

We have a highly effective, proactive staff that understand the needs of our football community and work closely with them. Their understanding of both the business needs and the community needs is reflected in their flexibility in adapting and realigning roles and responsibilities as needed. Community engagement throughout last 12 months has remained strong with all staff active and available.

We have this year achieved the Sport England and The FA's gold standard 'Code of Governance' compliance award and also the 'Equality Standard for Sport Preliminary Award'. A huge achievement, not only making us one of the first in the country to comply but a massive achievement based on the size of County FA, being one of the smallest. Our ability to achieve both of these awards has only been made possible by the significant contribution of time from both Steve Carpenter and Rachel Williams, volunteer directors who have worked diligently to support Cornwall FA and for which we are very grateful.

We continue to advance well and achieve against all aspects of our current business strategy 2021-2024 and are due to present our 2023-2024 business strategy to the FA NGB Project Board in early July. Successful presentation and approval is required to maintain our current FA funding grant for the next 12 months.

County FA Vision

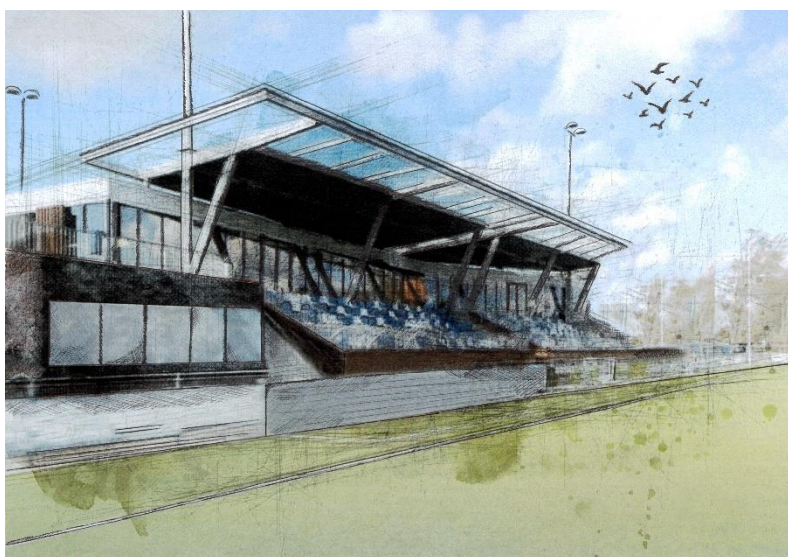
To use the power of football to improve lives providing opportunities for "one and all" whilst growing, supporting, developing, and safeguarding the game.



County FA Facility Vision

We remain focused on achieving our new flagship headquarters and facilities but have received a number of significant setbacks over the last 12 months. Our funding partners remain on board with us and we will endeavour to progress these plans over the next year.

Our proposal is to have our own flagship headquarters offering suitable workspace for our staff, enable us to offer and deliver a comprehensive education programme, offer full conference and community space facilities, create 3G pitch facilities, seating and suitable changing facilities to become more relevant and accessible to our football community.



County FA Review

The county office is back up to full strength having experienced a significant number of staff changes over the last 12 months. Whilst it is always difficult as a small business with a small team to manage change, we do encourage career progression and this unfortunately cannot always be undertaken internally. However, we are delighted to welcome Matt Liddle - Marketing & Communications Officer, Chloe Harris - Women, Girls & Disability Development Officer and Will Snapes - Male Participation Development Officer. We also, due to a successful funding bid submission to The FA, welcome Ami Dickens as Youth League Coordinator.

We continue year on year to have to manage significant grant funding cuts directly from The FA and this is expected to continue into the foreseeable future. Whilst The FA's expected financial deficit has not in its entirety come from its projected Covid impacts corporate sponsorship opportunities remain difficult and continue to affect the future projections of income disseminated into counties. We do however operate strong financial planning and governance policies and procedures which have enabled us to continue realigning and streamlining our operations to match our own financial position.

Our Team

Dawn Aberdeen	Chief Executive
Daniel Greenough	Football Development Manager
Richard Pallot	Football Services Manager and Senior Safeguarding Lead
Claire Summers-Evans	Designated Safeguarding Officer and adult competitions
Chloe Harris	Football Development Officer – Women, Girls & Disability
Will Snapes	Football Development Officer – Male Participation
Joseph Hocking	Football Services Officer and youth competitions
Matt Liddle	Marketing and Communications Officer
Lee Swabey	Referee Development Officer
Luke Wilkes	Referee Appointments Officer

These are perhaps the headline areas of the business that each member of staff manages but there are many, many different facets that are encompassed within the roles and the necessity for staff to understand, cover and support each other is paramount in a small office.

What should never be overlooked or criticised (but often can be in the football community) is the outstanding commitment of our supporting network of volunteers.

Our Board of Directors are all volunteers. They are the legal custodians of Cornwall FA Ltd; they direct and organise the affairs of the Association and progress a number of strategic objectives committing their time to us free of charge and willingly, but they are still 'legally' responsible as volunteers for the actions taken within the Company. They each have a formal role and area of responsibility but in addition to their formal responsibilities they are also great supporters of our working groups, events and initiatives around the county.



There were no changes this season so our current Board of Directors are:

Geoff Lee	Chairman	
John Fabby	Vice Chairman	Senior INED
Peter Stevenson	Finance Director	INED
Dawn Aberdeen	Chief Executive	Ex Officio
Gaynor Baldwin	HR Director	INED
Rachel Williams	I & D Director	INED
Steve Carpenter	Compliance Director	FMB Chairman
Steve Lawrence	Safeguarding Director	FMB

We have significant progressions and changes in our support structures for the new season. The Football Management Board (FMB) will cease at the AGM. A large element of volunteers on the FMB came from league structures which are also changing for the new season. We will shortly be recruiting from the wider community for roles to support the staff and directors on specific working groups (Football Advisory Working Groups). We are looking forward to welcoming interested parties to join our professional, dedicated team.

There are also various additional coaching staff and volunteers that work and support Cornwall FA out in the community. We would like to thank each and every one as each one has been a part of what makes 'Cornwall FA', and very much a part of our enthusiastic team that are working very hard to raise standards of service and provide opportunities to the football community in Cornwall.

Through our Director of Inclusion & Diversity and our Inclusion Advisory Group we aim to strengthen our support to everyone in our football community to ensure we provide inclusive environments, treating people openly, honestly, with respect and according to their needs, so people feel they are engaged and a welcomed part of our footballing community.

The IAG helps to support CFA on the ways to reach people who may feel excluded or find it difficult to access football. This could be on the basis of age, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status or civil partnership, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief, ability or disability, pregnancy and maternity. Every IAG is different depending on specific demographics and priorities. Here in Cornwall we recognise that the rural nature of Cornwall sometimes makes it hard for individuals to access football, with very different diversity profiling to that of highly populated inner city areas. The IAG works to raise awareness of inclusion matters, support solutions to break down barriers to participation and help CFA build on some of the important work already taking place across the county around the inclusion agenda.



2022/23 County Cup Winners

Adult Cup Competitions	Winner
Senior Cup	Helston Athletic
Women's Cup	Liskeard Athletic Women
Intermediate Cup	Illogan RBL
Junior Cup	Falmouth DC
Sunday Cup	Tremough Sunday
Youth Cup Competitions	Winner
U18 Rathbone	Torpoint Athletic Youth
U16 Luke	Helston Youth U16
Boys	Winner
U13	Helston Athletic Dynamos
U14	Helston Hornets
U15	St Agnes Boys U15
Girls	Winner
U11	St Dennis AFC Girls U11
U13	St Agnes AFC Whites
U15	Troon Hornets

Annual reports from our football services, safeguarding, refereeing and development departments are included to provide a wider overview of the activities undertaken this year.

Dawn Aberdeen

Chief Executive Officer



Football Services Report

Overview

The 2022/23 season has seen the implementation of many changes which are due to take place at the start of the 2023/24 season. The mergers of the Adult Saturday League has been a project which has seen all existing leagues merge to come under the banner of the St Piran League. The aim of these changes is to create a more fluid pyramid and to support a more stable league structure. Thanks must go to the officers of The Cornwall Combination League, East Cornwall Premier League, Duchy League and Trelawny League for their years of service and support as we move towards the new structure.

In addition to this the existing youth leagues will merge to form the new Cornwall Youth Football League. This project has been supported by funding by The FA which will allow a full-time secretary to administer the league. These changes should see less of a burden on the volunteer committee members and will support the long-term sustainability and growth of youth football in the County. Thanks again must go to the existing officers of The Kernow Youth League, East Cornwall Youth League and Cornwall Girls League for their support in overseeing the merger.

On the field we have seen amazing progress by some of our clubs. Mousehole will be playing at Step 4 next season following their wonderful achievement of winning The Western League. Truro City have been promoted to the National League South and St Blazey will start a new adventure in The Western League. Several clubs have seen improvements to their facilities and we hope to see more clubs moving up the football pyramid in the coming seasons.

Technology

More new systems have been introduced this season as we begin the transition from Whole Game System to Platform For Football. This has started with the affiliation and Accreditation processes and will continue int next season with discipline. The systems will hopefully enable clubs to spend less time on administration and more time developing the clubs. All the changes are developed to ease admin burden and make processes easier.

County Cups and Rep Teams

Altogether across adult and Youth competitions we ran 8 Youth Cups and 5 adults cups.

The competitions ran smoothly, and it was especially pleasing and exciting to see a huge crowd at St Blazey for the Senior Cup Final. A huge congratulations must go to all the winners and finalists of, and of course the clubs who hosted Finals and Semi-Finals. Thanks also to our sponsors Bond Timber, MH Goals, Bluefin and Western Counties Roofing for their continued support and sponsorship.

A special mention must go to Helston Athletic who not only won the Senior Cup but also several of our youth cups as they continue to flourish across all elements of the club.



Equality

Cornwall FA continues to support and promote the important of Equality, Inclusion and Diversity across the game and we were awarded the Equality Standard for Sport Preliminary Level. Creating a fully inclusive safe and welcoming environment for all people to be able to enjoy football across the County is at the heart of what we as an Association want to provide for our football community. This season we have seen growth in our disability section and the creation of Stargazy FC, Cornwall's first LGBTQ inclusive club. With several exciting initiatives in the works for 2023/24 football in Cornwall will become even more inclusive and supportive for all who want to play, volunteer and participate.

2023/24

Moving forwards Cornwall FA and the staff will be hoping to visit and engage with as many of our Volunteers, players, coaches, referees and clubs and leagues as possible as we strive to listen to feedback to shape football in the County to fit the needs of all those involved.

The implementation and delivery of the merger projects and the continued growth of our Walking Football, Flexi-Football and development programmes mean we can look forward to the continued growth of Cornish Football in what is an exciting time for football in the County.

Richard Pallot

Football Services Manager



Football Development Manager Report

As we come to the end of the season it feels like a good time to reflect on what has been delivered across Cornwall linking to the FA strategy 2021-24. Football across Cornwall is performing well given the staff changes during this season. Please see figures in table 1 for results against The FA National Game Strategy Outcomes/Targets.

The development team have been supporting football in any way they can to allow football to flourish this season. As you will be aware Chloe Harris replaced Andrew Heapy as the new Women and Girls and Disability Football development Officer in early 2023 and has been working hard to try and build relationships with key partners. You may or may not be aware Will Snapes has now replaced Robert Finnamore who will look after male youth and adult along with Accreditation.

Sine their arrival, Will Snapes (Football Development Officer, male), Chloe Harris (Women and Girls and Disability Football development Officer) and Matt Liddle (Marketing and Football Development Officer) have worked tirelessly on supporting clubs, teams and leagues especially when the Accreditation renewal reopened (replacing the Charter Standard Programme). We are now supporting the remaining clubs and leagues to achieve this kite mark. This also then links to the safeguarding operating standards ensuring football is as safe as possible for our young players. Because of this, our Accreditation results are some of the best in the Country with the aim of achieving 100% in all clubs/leagues given all the recent league mergers. We have also launched our Youth Leadership Academy which will provide a voice to the youth of Cornwall in football.

We are continuing to support our clubs, teams and leagues with a number of different funding/grant opportunities. We have continued to update our funding opportunities booklet to help support our partners attract and apply for additional funding which is so key to the delivery of any project. The Football Foundation grants have also played a big part. Additionally, we have submitted a bid into The FA Innovation fund to support a few different programmes.

I have been supporting various facilities and projects in partnership with the Football Foundation and The FA to help develop and sustain our vital amenities which enable our game to be played. We are still working proactively to deliver our key priority projects as identified in the Local Football Facilities Plan (LFFP) in partnership with the Football Foundation. This vital piece of work is still evolving as we start to complete the highlighted projects, Cornwall Council have also started the process to complete a Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) which is great news for Cornwall.



The FA Level 1 has now been replaced with the Introduction to Coaching Football, which is completed online with a mixture of elements, to access this you need to have completed the FA First Aid and FA Safeguarding, both online. The FA Level 2 has been replaced with the UEFA C which we have delivered 1 in Cornwall with more to be rolled out in the coming months along with another UEFA B license course. Additionally, a number of online courses which will help increase accessibility across the Country are available. As part of the renewed structure our focus has turned to supporting coaches via our Coach Development Programme. We have run a number of events for this season with over 279 people attending in total.

Cornwall FA has applied for the license to run an Emerging Talent Centre (ETC) (replacing the girls 'Advanced Coaching Centre') as part of the FA player pathway for the 2023/24 period and are planning the new season. We have continued to develop and improve our boys and girl's player pathway to ensure relevant and suitable competitions and opportunities exist across Cornwall.

We have also continued to make strides in our marketing and communications to try and keep the football family and wider audiences updated on important information along with inspiring them to either remain or be attracted to the beautiful game.

Daniel Greenough

Football Development Manager



Key Performance Indicators			
KPIs	Base line March 21	Target 2022-23	Current Position
# registered male players	13,528	13,528	14,774
# registered female players	1,642	1,970	2,131
# registered disabled players	128	161	144
Referee Education and Development	Base line	Target 2022-23	Current Position
1st March Baseline All Referees	199		
1st March Baseline All L5-L7 Referees	164		
Recruitment Measure Target 2022/23	N/A	46	55
Conversion Measure Target 2022/23	N/A	28	39
Retention measure target 2022/23	N/A	148	149
Progression measure target 2022/23	N/A	14	16
Coach Education and Development	Base line	Target 2022-23	Current Position
1st March Baseline Youth Teams	641		656
1st March Baseline YTWAQC	94.50%	89%	92.1%
2022/23 CPD Target	N/A	226	279
Quality Grass Pitches	68	83	88
Secondary KPIs	Base line	Target 2022-23	Current Position
Weetabix Wildcats	30	26	27
Youth Clubs with Female Teams	Removed by The FA		
Female Youth Competition Pathway	No	Yes	Yes
1000 clubs with a female pathway	2	6	4
England Football Accreditation – Adult Clubs	78%	65%	76.4%
England Football Accreditation – Youth Clubs	96%	89.5%	93.7%



Designated Safeguarding Officer Report

Safeguarding 365

Safeguarding 365 requires every County FA to demonstrate they have structured processes in place and that they embed safeguarding in all aspects of the County FA's operations, thus creating the most safe and positive football environments for our young players and adults at risk.

Every County FA must comply and are independently assessed by the NSPCC's Child Protection in Sport Unit on 6 key areas as below:

1. Governance and Leadership
2. Operational Delivery driving a culture of safeguarding
3. Listening to the Voice of and Supporting Under 18's
4. Football Disciplinary
5. Case Management
6. Compliance and monitoring

We are pleased to confirm that following the assessment which took place in September 2022 Cornwall FA yet again met the Safeguarding 365 standard. We now wait for our next assessment which will take place sometime in 2023.

Play Safe/National Safeguarding Weekend

Led by The FA and run-in partnership with the NSPCC, Play Safe is an ongoing campaign to raise awareness of the importance of safeguarding in football. Play Safe has the full backing of the Premier League, EFL, Barclays FA Women's Super League and the FA Women's Championship as well as the County FAs.

Taking place on the weekend of **Saturday 30th September/Sunday 1st October** this year's Play Safe message is simple and direct, "Everywhere, Every time, Everyone. We all have a role to play to keep children safe."

Clubs and leagues will be encouraged to take an online pledge to demonstrate their support, sharing what they plan to do to make a positive difference. In mid-August The FA will:

- Send Play Safe captains' armbands for every youth team captain, along with a Play Safe pin badge for the coach and Club Welfare Officer.
- Provide a range of digital assets to use in support of Play Safe




16/17 years old in Open Aged Football

The importance on open-age clubs and their safeguarding responsibilities for 16/17-year-old players remains a key focus area for both The FA and Cornwall FA. Educating both Clubs and Leagues on the importance of safeguarding those 16/17-year-olds starting their pathway within Open Aged Football.

Safeguarding Compliance within all Open Aged Clubs is continuously monitored with all coaches, assistants and physios requiring an FA DBS check and from next season 23/24 all Open Aged Clubs are required to name a Welfare Officer.

Clubs have been contacted asking for the 'Understanding Your Rights in Football' information to be distributed to their young players and for clubs to adopt the Safeguarding Children Policy.

It is vital that we engage with our Open Aged Leagues so that we can work together and communicate the message to their member clubs and ensure that any safeguarding concerns are raised and reported as per safeguarding regulations.



SAFEGUARDING GUIDANCE FOR OPEN AGED CLUBS WITH 16 AND 17 YEAR OLD PLAYERS

Cornwall FA is aware that there are many 16 and 17 year old players looking to play in Open Aged Football. This is a fantastic opportunity for these young players to progress and be challenged both technically and physically, however officials, managers and players must also recognise that these young players are still minors.

There are many ways that a club can ensure these young players are enjoying their football and stay at the club by playing football in a safe environment:

- 🕒 Club to adopt and adhere to the FA Safeguarding Policy.
- 🕒 Ensure all coaches and physios working with 16/17 year olds are named and attached to the team on the Whole Game System
- 🕒 Ensure that all coaches and physios working with 16/17 year olds obtain an FA DBS check and undertake the relevant FA safeguarding training.
- 🕒 Manager/Coach should speak with the U18's player (and parent) about their expectations of joining the team, including playing time and their role within the team.
- 🕒 Ensure that the young player feels comfortable in the changing room environment and explain that if they do not wish to undress in the changing room they can arrive and depart wearing their playing kit.
- 🕒 Encourage your team captain to mentor any young players throughout the season and ensure that the other players on the team are mindful of the player's age when both on the pitch and in the changing room.
- 🕒 Safeguard U18's player at all times, but particularly during matches to ensure that he/she is not subjected to verbal or physical abuse by opposing players who are trying to intimidate them. Report any concerns to the match official and the County FA.
- 🕒 Manager/Coach to make the match official aware that you have an U18 player on your team.
- 🕒 Remember by law U18's are not allowed to drink alcohol!
- 🕒 Do not allow U18's to take part in any initiation (hazing) rituals.
- 🕒 Think about the travel arrangements for both home and away matches for U18' players. Ensure you have consent from parents and their emergency contact details.
- 🕒 Clubs to distribute the 'Understanding your Rights' leaflet to all 16/17-year-old players

For further information or guidance on Safeguarding Children and Young People in football please contact Claire Summers-Evans, Designated Safeguarding Officer claire.summers-evans@cornwallfa.com or phone 01208 262989 or visit our website www.cornwallfa.com

Paul Stewart Presentation

Cornwall FA were delighted to offer a Safeguarding presentation delivered by ex-professional footballer Paul Stewart in January 2023. Paul's honest account of the abuse he suffered as a young boy by his football coach was both harrowing and inspiring and was a real reminder to all those who attended as to why safeguarding children in football is such a priority. It was also clear why parents and carers should never be afraid to ask questions about their clubs safeguarding policies and procedures and how important it is for Clubs to promote their good safeguarding practices.



Respect – Promote the Positive, Report the Unacceptable

Poor behaviour in both the youth and adult game is still of an unacceptable level.

Open Aged Football

Misconduct charges and suspensions are now being published on Cornwall FA media pages and a points deduction system is being introduced by The FA from Step 7 this season. Players and Clubs need to start taking responsibility for their actions and understand that poor behaviour is driving referees, players, and spectators from the game. Cornwall FA are collectively looking at what we can do to improve behaviour in Cornwall and work is taking place to introduce a CCFA Fair Play Award where we can reward good behaviour in Open Aged Football.

Youth Football

In the youth game behaviour from our young players is still very positive, but the unacceptable behaviours we face come mainly from coaches and spectators. Thank you to those clubs and leagues who continue to proactively encourage good behaviour from their coaches, players, and spectators, creating a better environment for everyone during match days.

Cornwall FA will be working closely with the new merged Cornwall Youth League and ensuring that poor behaviour is consistently reported, investigated and charges raised, with patterns of poor behaviour monitored by the County DSO. The DSO will also be attending a preseason coach meeting in September to talk about respect and behaviour.

Make it a Positive Match Day Experience

The better the environment we create for the players, the more everyone will enjoy the game. Greeting the opposition and the referee, putting on refreshments, appointing a Match Day Manager, are all ways in which any club, at any level can start to make a difference on the day.

GOOD PRACTICE

- ✓ Coaches to stand in the technical area unless called on the pitch by the referee to treat an injured player
- ✓ Spectators to stand behind the respect barrier on the opposite side of the pitch
- ✓ Applaud good play for both teams
- ✓ Only the coach to issue instructions to the players
- ✓ Respect handshake (or fist pump) before the game
- ✓ Handshakes all round after the game regardless of the score

POOR PRACTICE

- No spectators to stand behind the goals
- No shouting at the referee or questioning his/her decisions
- Do not encroach onto the pitch
- No angry post-mortems after the game
- Parents refrain from issuing technical instructions from the side-lines

We ONLY do Positive.





We also want to encourage clubs and teams to report good behaviour, highlighting all of the good work which is happening in clubs throughout Cornwall when it comes to showing respect and creating the right environment.

Claire Summers-Evans

Designated Safeguarding Officer



Referee Development Officer Report

Recruitment & Conversion

We recruited and trained 54 new referees over 8 referee courses.

We ran 1 U18 referee course & 1 Women & Girls referee course.

We have converted 38 referees from Trainee to Level 7 or Y1.

We have recruited and trained 11 new FA Referee mentors whose role will be supporting our newly qualified referees.

We have recruited and trained 27 new FA Match Day coaches whose role will be to support referees applying for promotion from Level 7 to Level 6, Level 6 to Level 5 or Level Y1 to Level Y2.

We have recruited and trained 18 new FA Referee Observers whose role will be to support referees applying for promotion from Level 5 to Level 4 or Level 4W to 3W.

We have recruited and qualified 8 new Walking Football Referees.

We have supported the recruitment of 2 new referee tutors who will be supporting us in the delivery of our referee courses.

Retention

80% of our referees re-registered for Season 22/23.

Our RAO appointed to 6960 games during the season with a coverage rate of 94.21%.

We continue to provide our U18 referees with purple shirts to highlight to players and spectators that the referee is under 18 and they must understand that young match officials are on a learning curve and wearing a Purple Shirt is not only a reminder of this, but also an opportunity to support and encourage them.

We have recruited a New Referee Coordinator, Dave Bartlam, whose role is to appoint mentors to our trainee referees during their first 5 games. He has also taken on the responsibility of appointing these new referees to youth games, (something we weren't able to do previously). This has helped with retaining new referees as they have a better support system in place and are now able to start their refereeing journey in youth football if they choose to.

We conducted a referee survey on participant behaviour which allowed us to highlight and address issues with other parties involved in the Cornish football community.

We have begun to publish results of disciplinary hearings which we hope will show referees that action is being taken against poor participant behaviour, as well as highlighting to those involved with football, the consequences to poor participant behaviour.



Progression

We have had 27 referee promotions this season.

Level 7-6 x 16

Level 6-5 x 7

Level Y1-Y2 x 2

Level 4W-3W x 2

Lee Swabey

Referee Development Officer

