

# ESSEX COUNTY FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION



Create a united grassroots environment which delivers football opportunity For All.

## GRASSROOTS CLUB AFFILIATION PACK



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# Top Tips & New Affiliation Updates

Entering the new 2023/24 season there are additional requirements to the affiliation process that you will need to look out for to ensure that your club can complete the process as smoothly as possible.

We have highlighted within this pack where something is **NEW** for this upcoming season's affiliation and we have also provided some Top Tips, where before the affiliation window opens, you can get ahead of the game and ensure certain things are in place, ready for when you start your affiliation.

**The following guide has been created as a support guide for clubs whether new, or existing in the county of Essex. Hopefully, the information provided will help your club as well as reassure you that help and support is at hand. The list of contacts below are our staff team on hand to help. Your starting contact should be the Football Services Officer or Football Development Officer in whichever local authority you are based.**

## Key Contacts



At the Essex County FA, as a large county for football participation, we regionalise the county into four 'Group Areas' to help manage, service and develop the grassroots game.

Listed below are the group areas in which we work and the key contacts for those areas;

### **Group 1: Braintree, Colchester, Maldon & Tendring**

Football Services Officer: Martin Angelo  
Tel: (01245) 393 080  
Email: [martin.angelo@essexfa.com](mailto:martin.angelo@essexfa.com)  
Football Development Officer: Lana Gillard  
Tel: (01245) 393 092  
Email: [lane.gillard@essexfa.com](mailto:lane.gillard@essexfa.com)

### **Group 3: Basildon, Castlepoint, Rochford, Southend-on-sea & Thurrock**

Football Services Manager: Robert Craven  
Tel: (01245) 393082  
Email: [robert.craven@essexfa.com](mailto:robert.craven@essexfa.com)  
Football Development Officer: Ellie Finneran  
Tel: (01245) 393099  
Email: [ellie.finneran@essexfa.com](mailto:ellie.finneran@essexfa.com)

### **Group 2: Brentwood, Chelmsford, Epping Forest, Harlow & Uttlesford**

Football Services Officer: TBC  
Tel: (01245) 393 081  
Email: [discipline@essexfa.com](mailto:discipline@essexfa.com)  
Football Development Officer: Emma Burden  
Tel: (01245) 393073  
Email: [emma.burden@essexfa.com](mailto:emma.burden@essexfa.com)  
Football Development Manager: Karl Sear  
Tel: (01245) 393094  
Email: [karl.sear@essexfa.com](mailto:karl.sear@essexfa.com)

### **Group 4: Barking & Dagenham, Havering, Newham, Redbridge & Waltham Forest**

Football Services Officer: Fran Smith  
Tel: (01245) 393083  
Email: [fran.smith@essexfa.com](mailto:fran.smith@essexfa.com)  
Football Development Officer: Jake Ling  
Tel: (01245) 393088  
Email: [jake.ling@essexfa.com](mailto:jake.ling@essexfa.com)



Whether you are a new club recruiting your committee, or an existing club wanting to add to your committee, it is very important to share the roles and responsibilities. The running of a grassroots club has many different elements, and having multiple volunteers, will support the process, ensuring that the workload is shared. Some examples of the mandatory roles needed for affiliation have been provided below with a brief overview of their role within the club dependant on whether you are a Youth Club or an Adult Club;

## Youth

- Club Chairperson: Lead member of the club, will be responsible for the overall leadership and development of the club.
- Club Secretary: Main source of contact at the club and will receive and send any relevant information and updates required out to its members.
- Club Treasurer: Responsible for handling the club's finances and paying relevant fees such as affiliation costs to the County FA.
- Club Welfare Officer: Responsible for ensuring that FA safeguarding standards are met by all associated with the club. Support the club personnel understand the policies and procedures for raising concerns. FA DBS Check verifier for the club.
- Team Manager: Responsible for running the team's training and games, as well as managing players of the respective teams.
- Team Secretary: Responsible for the teams' admin, such as confirming fixtures with the opposition and referee, as well as dealing with player discipline sanctions.

## Adult

- Club Chairperson: Lead member of the club, will be responsible for the overall leadership and development of the club.
- Club Secretary: Main source of contact at the club and will receive and send any relevant information and updates required out to its members.
- Club Treasurer: Responsible for handling the club's finances and paying relevant fees such as affiliation costs to the County FA.
- Club Welfare Officer: **NEW** for this season, Adult clubs must now name an individual as a Club Welfare Officer. No qualifications are needed just a listed individual.
- Team Manager: Responsible for running the team's training and games, as well as managing players of the respective teams.
- Team Secretary: Responsible for the teams' admin, such as confirming fixtures with the opposition and referee, as well as dealing with player discipline sanctions.

### Top Tip!

Once your committee has confirmed its club & team officials (including a Club Welfare Officer for Open-Age teams), they can be updated immediately via the Club Portal and you do not need to wait for the affiliation window to open to do this.

This will complete an affiliation requirement before the window opens!

Follow this link for further information on club role profiles: [www.essexfa.com/volunteers/volunteer-roles](http://www.essexfa.com/volunteers/volunteer-roles)

# Football Leadership Diversity Code

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The Football Leadership Diversity Code has been launched with the aim to ensure English football at all levels represents our modern and diverse society. Tailored for the National League System, Women's Pyramid and Grassroots football, the Code focuses on tackling inequality alongside improving representation of diverse groups across senior leadership positions, wider team operations and coaching roles. The Code looks to increase the equality of opportunity by encouraging the selection of leaders and coaches based on merit from a wider pool of diverse talent.



Clubs will pledge to adhere to five commitments to being Leaders in Football Diversity, ensuring that they promote and deliver the highest standards across their club:

- 1: Club Leadership - Our club's leadership should reflect the diversity of our local community
- 2: Coaching and Selection - Ensuring diversity within our volunteer coaching workforce
- 3: Culture - Continuing to strive for the most inclusive club culture
- 4: Reporting Discrimination - Encouraging the reporting of discrimination
- 5: Raising Awareness – Raising awareness on the topic of equality, diversity, and inclusion

The Code will form part of the minimum requirements for England Accreditation each season. Clubs will be able to adopt the Football Leadership Diversity Code and apply for accreditation via Platform For Football. Clubs that sign up to the code will ensure their culture encourages people from all backgrounds to be part of football in the local community, both as participants and in roles off the pitch.

Clubs can adopt this code by visiting the Club Portal: [clubs.thefa.com](https://clubs.thefa.com)

Essex County FA deliver Equality, Diversity and Inclusion workshops for clubs and leagues across a range of themes.

To express an interest in attending one of our workshops, please follow this link to complete our online form <https://forms.office.com/e/kMpFwEvWfB>

For more information on The Football Leadership Diversity Code visit [www.essexfa.com/about/rules-and-regulations/inclusion/football-leadership-diversity-code](https://www.essexfa.com/about/rules-and-regulations/inclusion/football-leadership-diversity-code)



## Affiliating your club

New and existing grassroots clubs in Essex, will need to affiliate to Essex County FA as the local football governing body. Affiliating to Essex County FA will allow you to join an affiliated league, play in organised friendlies, access qualified match officials, and gain the appropriate cover (such as; Public Liability Insurance and Personal Accident cover) for your players.

### Top Tip!

#### Go Green and be Good To Go!

By clicking the 'Teams' menu, you can easily see whether each team is compliant with FA regulations. A green circle with a green tick against your 'Officials', 'Qualifications' and 'Team Ground' means the team is ready to be affiliated once the window opens. An exclamation mark in a yellow circle means action is required.

## Identifying a club name (New clubs only)

If you are a new club you must decide on a Club Name and we advise on identifying three to four potential names before contacting our Football Services team. We also advise trying to use the location of where your team will be based within the club name and avoid proposing similar names to surrounding clubs already affiliated. Our Football Services team will be able to confirm and agree a name for your new club as part of the affiliation process.

## Club affiliation costs

Through the new FA model, and in line with the evolving landscape of football, a "team fee", rather than a "club + team fee" model, is being introduced for the 2023/24 season.

### *Regional National Feeder League (Step 7) and below*

As affiliation fees are no longer split into a "club fee" and a "team fee", Essex FA's affiliation fees have also been reviewed and aligned with the new FA model. Essex FA has not altered, or increased, its affiliation fees for the last 15 years, and instead of grassroots clubs being charged £23 as a club fee and then £12 per team, **a flat grassroots fee of £17 per team is to be introduced for 2023/24 for all teams at Regional National Feeder League (Step 7) level and below.**

### *National League System and EFL*

Team fees for clubs within the English Football League (EFL) and National League System (NLS) have also been adjusted. EFL team fees have been set at £500, NLS Step 1 & 2 teams at £250, NLS Step 3 & 4 teams at £150 and NLS Step 5 & 6 teams at £100.

### Top Tip!

#### Insurance

You can take out public liability and personal accident insurance through Essex FA's recommended provider, Sportsguard, during the affiliation process under the 'Club Insurance' and 'Team Insurance' stages; taking out insurance in this way negates the need for Essex FA to check your insurance documentation is correct.

## County Cups



We offer \*23 County Cups, which enable all teams playing competitive football to enter a countywide competition.

Our competitions range from U12 to U18 across boys' and girls' football as well as open age male and female and three male veterans' competitions.

We boast around 1,500 County Cup entries each season and each of the finals are played at a semi-professional stadium.

**NEW**

The cost to enter a County Cup is from £15 for most competitions and the deadline for entry is 31st July. Entry is to be made before the competition deadline and through the Club Portal where you will see a 'Manage Competitions' tab to submit your team entries.

More details can be found here: [Essex FA County Cups](#).

\*For season 2023/24 Essex County FA are piloting a secondary youth county cup competition for the U13 age group. Following consultation with stakeholders and to encourage increased participation, Essex FA have launched a pilot competition open to teams competing in U13 divisions of sanctioned Sunday leagues as determined in accordance with a qualification pyramid. The Essex U13 Trophy will compliment the provision previously included within the Essex Cordell U13 Cup.

## FA Technology Systems



The FA now have several Technology Systems in place designed to ease the administration of grassroots football. Please find below a quick summary of each of the platforms and for more information, visit: [www.essexfa.com/leagues-and-clubs/club-management/online-club-administration](http://www.essexfa.com/leagues-and-clubs/club-management/online-club-administration)

### Whole Game System

The FA's Whole Game System is a long-standing platform that has historically been used for grassroots clubs' administrative tasks, such as affiliation, discipline, player and team registration. As The FA continues to align all of their platforms and club admin through the Club Portal, WGS will only be utilised by club volunteers to acknowledge, respond to and make payment for discipline cases during the 2023/24 season.

**NEW**

### Club Portal

Club Portal has been designed as the new basis for all club administration activity. For the 2023/24 season it is now being used for club affiliation (which previously took place in the whole game system). It will also continue to be used for player registration and England Football Accreditation applications and renewal periods.

**NEW**

### Club Portal Affiliation Support

Ahead of the affiliation process opening you can find an introduction to the changes to the affiliation process on The FA's Grassroots Technology Knowledge Base here: <https://grassrootstechnology.thefa.com/support/solutions/articles/48001235369-coming-in-2023>.

There is also guidance about the various requirements depending on the type of teams that are being affiliated here: <https://grassrootstechnology.thefa.com/support/solutions/articles/48001235370-affiliation-requirements>.



## Player Registration

All player registration now takes place online through the Club Portal. Clubs are able to search for players, invite new players to join the club using a hyperlink or direct invitation and then register them with their league. Leagues set the specific requirements for registration (whether photos are needed, or proof of ID), although all players will be required to have an email address to register.

## Full Time

Full-Time is used by many leagues in order to find out results, arrange fixtures and then provide details of the players that have played in each match. It is linked on online player registrations and the Club Portal, in that officials listed and players registered are transferred automatically into Full-Time, as well as The FA Matchday app. Results can be submitted by logging into Full-Time, by sending a response to an automated text or by submitting details on The FA Matchday app.

## Match Day App

The FA's official Matchday app has been developed specifically to automate everything around your football life – whether you're a player, club secretary, manager or coach.

Who's in the team? Who are the opponents? Where's the game? When's kick-off? Is anyone currently suspended? With Matchday, all the answers are instantly available at your fingertips.

And it's all in a safe and secure environment, backed by The FA. We'll also ensure it has up-to-date, comprehensive information on players, clubs, fixtures and leagues.

It's often said that time is our most precious commodity. The main aim of Matchday is to save you time, so you can confidently enjoy the game you love, knowing your football life is sorted. Oh, and we forgot to tell you – it's free!

For more information please visit [www.essexfa.com/coaches/matchday](http://www.essexfa.com/coaches/matchday)

### Top Tip!

#### Technology

If you have any queries about the player registration process and using FA systems generally, please direct these to [technology@essexfa.com](mailto:technology@essexfa.com) where our team can provide support.





## Finding a Home Ground

As a grassroots club applying to an affiliated league, we would recommend you secure a pitch for your team to play its home matches. This is a mandatory requirement for all clubs when applying to an affiliated league. Please note that this will be an annual cost to your club and fees can range dependant on the facility type you wish to play your matches.

There are a number of pitch operators across the county, ranging from Local Authorities, Parish Council's, Town Council's, Education providers and private facilities.

To start your search for a pitch, feel free to use the link below to browse various sites within your local area through the Football Foundation's 'Pitch Finder' resource: [www.pitchfinder.org.uk](http://www.pitchfinder.org.uk)

Our local Football Development Officer team may also be able to support you. Please visit: [www.essexfa.com/about/contact-us](http://www.essexfa.com/about/contact-us)

### Top Tip!

You can already select your Team Grounds within the Club Portal. Once you have updated your team grounds, be sure to assign the correct teams to the correct grounds as this will speed up your affiliation once the window is open!



## Applying to a local league

There are a number of playing opportunities that exist in Essex across the different player pathways; Male, Female, Disability & Futsal and provision ranges from U7's through to Walking Football.

Your Club/Team will need to decide which league is most appropriate to apply to. Some factors to consider will be:

- Club/Team Locality
- Player availability
- Club/Team/Player aspirations
- Entry requirements from Leagues rules

Our Football Development Officers are on hand to have discussions with any Club/Team around this.

Each League typically has a league entry fee, this information can often be found on the league website or can be shared by the League Secretary.

For more information, please click on the links below that will take you to our website where all Essex affiliated leagues are listed with hyperlinks to their websites.

Any trouble getting in touch with a local league, please get in touch with your local Football Development Officer for support.

**MALE PATHWAY**

**FEMALE PATHWAY**

**DISABILITY**

**FUTSAL**



## League Rules

Once your affiliation to Essex County FA has completed, new and existing clubs will pay their fees to enter their local grassroots league.

As a member of a local grassroots league, your club committee will have to adhere to certain commitments to ensure they are upkeeping with the league's rules. Your local league will send you their official league rules upon entering, and you will need to ensure you read this in full to understand the responsibilities and procedures.

Some examples of this may be, attending league meetings such as Annual General Meetings (AGM) or Special General Meetings (SGM), these may be in person or virtually and are typically held annually before the new season. Other league rules for clubs may be, confirming fixtures with opposition and referees, submitting your results on a matchday, and paying referees on time.

Please Note: Not adhering to these league rules may result in fines and disciplinary actions which can be avoidable. Any queries on what these may incur, speak to your respective League Secretary.



## Safeguarding

At the Essex County FA, we place the safeguarding and welfare of children and adults at risk at the heart of our mission in creating safe, inclusive and positive environments For All. It is everyone's responsibility to make children and adults at risk feel included in football and protected from abuse, thus every club is required to endorse and adhere to The FA's Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policies.

We offer a range of safeguarding services and training to help create a safe and enjoyable football experience for everyone. We ensure safeguarding requirements are met as a prerequisite of club affiliation and we support clubs to maintain these standards. The department also conducts safeguarding visits each season to ensure that member clubs are providing the County FA with the correct information on volunteers and safeguarding best practices.

## Affiliation requirements

### A note for all Clubs to affiliate:

- Safeguarding Declaration – Every club will be required to accept a Safeguarding Declaration. Where clubs have teams that play across different levels of the game, multiple declarations will need to be accepted
- Key Officials – Clubs are required to name their key officials (Chairperson, Secretary, Welfare Officer & Treasurer)

**NEW**

### Top Tip!

#### Safeguarding Declaration

You can complete the mandatory Safeguarding Declaration immediately via 'My Club' and then the 'Documentation' tab. You'll then need to view the document before you can accept the Declaration.



## Youth Club Affiliation

As a Youth Club you will need the following in place before completing affiliation:

- A Club Welfare Officer who has completed the FA's Welfare Officer Course, Safeguarding Children Course, Safeguarding for Committee Members Course and hold an in-date and accepted FA DBS
  - All committee members to have completed the free online Safeguarding for Committee Members Course
  - All coaches require an in-date and accepted FA DBS check and complete the FA's online Safeguarding Children Course
  - Named Manager or Coach – Every youth team must name all managers and coaches assigned to each team
  - One coach from each team to complete the free online Concussion Guidelines Course
- BEST PRACTICE – not an affiliation requirement**

For further information on courses mentioned and the FA DBS check process, please see the 'Obtaining an FA-Certified DBS' and 'Safeguarding Training & Qualifications' sections below.

## Open-Age Club Affiliation

- Coaches working with 16-17 year olds within open-age football are required to have an FA DBS Check, in line with UK Government legislation
- A named 'Welfare Officer (Adult Teams)'. No FA Safeguarding qualifications are required for this role
- Named Manager or Coach – Every team must have a minimum of one Manager or Coach

## Disability Pathway

Clubs with Adult Disability Teams require:

- Coaches working with 16-17 year olds within open-age football are required to have an FA DBS Check, in line with UK Government legislation
- A named 'Welfare Officer (Adult Disability Teams)'. The free online Safeguarding Adults Course is required for this role
- Named Manager or Coach – Every team must have a minimum of one Manager or Coach

## Obtaining an FA-Certified DBS

To start your FA DBS check, please speak to your Club's Welfare Officer who will be able to initiate your application and help progress it.

For more information about obtaining an FA DBS check please visit our Frequently Asked Questions page at <https://www.essexfa.com/safeguarding-and-welfare/dbs-verifications/dbs-guidance>

Additionally, please speak to one of our dedicated Safeguarding Officers who will be happy to help. Essex County FA staff contact details can be found at <https://www.essexfa.com/about/contact-us>



# Safeguarding Training & Qualifications

## The FA Welfare Officer Course:

- Mandatory for any Club Welfare Officer in a Youth Club
- £25 Online Course
- Two hours
- Minimum age of 18 to complete
- Course prerequisites include an FA Safeguarding Children Certificate and an FA DBS check
- <https://learn.EnglandFootball.com/courses/safeguarding/welfare-officers-course>

## The FA Safeguarding Children Course:

- Mandatory for any coach working with U18s in Football
- £30 Online course. 50% off with Code SGC0523GR (for a limited time only)
- Two hours
- Minimum age of 16 to complete
- Free recertification every 2 years
- Receive a certificate once completed
- <https://learn.EnglandFootball.com/courses/safeguarding/safeguarding-children-course>

## The FA Safeguarding for Committee Members:

- Mandatory for Chairperson, Secretary, CWO & Treasurer
- Free online course
- One hour
- Supports you as a committee member to identify the collective responsibility in safeguarding
- <https://learn.EnglandFootball.com/courses/safeguarding/safeguarding-for-committee-members>

## The FA Safeguarding for All Course:

- Free Online Course
- Minimum age of 14 to complete
- Provides a basic overview of how to safeguard children, looking specifically at best practice, poor practice, and abuse topics
- If you're under 18, it'll also explain how to keep yourself safe in football
- <https://learn.EnglandFootball.com/courses/safeguarding/safeguarding-for-all>

## The FA Safeguarding Adults Course:

- Free Online Course
- Minimum age of 14 to complete
- Explores the meaning of 'Safeguarding Adults' and 'adults at risk'
- <https://learn.EnglandFootball.com/courses/safeguarding/safeguarding-adults-course>

## The FA Safeguarding Awareness for Parents & Carers Course:

- Free Online Course
- Minimum age of 16 to complete
- Helps parents and carers make an informed choice about the football setting they enrol their children in, and the responsibility we all hold in making football safe and inclusive
- <https://learn.EnglandFootball.com/courses/safeguarding/safeguarding-awareness-for-parents-and-carers>

## Concussion Guidelines Course:

- Free Online Course
- 20 minutes
- Learn how to recognise and manage a concussion from the time of injury to a player's safe return to football
- <https://learn.EnglandFootball.com/courses/medical/concussion-guidelines>


## Whistleblowing Policy



### Don't Hesitate... Escalate!

#### The FA's Whistleblowing Policy

If you have reported a safeguarding concern about a child or young person and are dissatisfied with the manner in which the concern has been handled, there are a number of organisations you can (and should) escalate the concern to.

<b>Within Football:</b>	<b>External to Football:</b>
<b>Club Welfare Officer</b> Check your club website, ask your coach or committee members	<b>Local Authority Designated Safeguarding Officer</b> Check your local authority website
<b>TOP TIP:</b> Know who your CWO is and have their contact details!	<b>The NSPCC</b> (0800) 800 5000 help@nspcc.org.uk
<b>League Welfare Officer</b> Check your league's website or ask their committee members	<b>The Police</b> Non-Emergency: 101 Emergency: 999
<b>Essex County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) &amp; Child Welfare Officer (CWO)</b> Helen Hever, helen.hever@essexfa.com, (01245) 393098	
<b>The FA's Safeguarding Team</b> safeguarding@thefa.com	



 @EssexCountyFA    EssexFootball   [www.essexfa.com](http://www.essexfa.com)

## Supporting the Matchday Environment



At Essex County FA our vision is to 'create a united grassroots football environment which delivers football opportunity For All'. As part of this everyone involved should feel safe and be able to enjoy the experience. Clubs play a key role in supporting the matchday environment and below are some things to consider and look over to ensure you are doing as much as you can to support.

## Club Discipline

It's key to keep Club discipline under control and to a minimum. Yellow cards shown for dissent and red cards shown for any offence will mean individuals missing out on game-time, and can affect the enjoyment of other participants in the game. Repeated poor discipline can have a reputational impact on the Club, as well as leading to charges and sanctions, including fines. As a result, it's important to be clear on what you expect from your players in terms of their commitment and behaviour on and off the pitch.

## Points Deductions for Serious Misconduct

**The FA will introduce point deductions for teams across the grassroots game from the start of the 2023/24 season if their players or coaches commit repeated offences of serious misconduct.**

Point deductions will apply to clubs at Step 7 and below of the men's game, and clubs across Tier 3 and below in the women's pyramid, which commit cumulative incidents of serious misconduct, such as acts of discrimination and assault or attempted assault, physical contact or attempted physical contact against a match official.

Deductions will range from three to 12 points depending on the number of breaches within 12 months of the team's first offence and severity of the case(s).

More information on the sanctioning guidelines across the grassroots game can be found in the [Sanctions Guidelines e-booklet](#).



## Reporting Discrimination

Essex County FA is determined to provide a safe, inclusive and positive football experience for anyone who wishes to participate in the game. Discrimination has no place in football. It can be upsetting and hurtful. So, when you tell us about it, we listen and we act. If you've witnessed discrimination in football, there are a number of ways of reporting it to us. We investigate every report on discrimination we receive and treat each one seriously, so you can be sure that you're being listened to.

1. Report directly into The FA via their online form <https://shorturl.at/dVXZ2>
2. Report directly into Essex County FA: Email: [Discipline@essexfa.com](mailto:Discipline@essexfa.com)
3. Online Kick It Out Form [www.kickitout.org/forms/online-reporting-form](http://www.kickitout.org/forms/online-reporting-form)  
Email: [report@kickitout.org](mailto:report@kickitout.org) Or download the Kick it Out App

This form has been created to inform The FA of any incidents involving potential acts of discrimination.

## RESPECT

Creating the right environment for your players, both on and off the pitch is so important. To support this, The FA launched its RESPECT programme in the 2008/09 season to emphasise and encourage the need for better environments across all levels of grassroots football.

The Respect codes of conduct are in place to ensure that everyone involved within an England Football Accredited club or league is playing their part to give the players a positive experience. Clubs should actively get new Codes of Conduct signed by all members – players, coaches, committee members and spectators.

Please visit our website for more info including templates of the FA Respect code of conducts: [www.essexfa.com/leagues-and-clubs/matchday-environment](http://www.essexfa.com/leagues-and-clubs/matchday-environment)

## #PlayYourPart

Essex County FA have created Matchday Environment support documents that clubs can use to create the best possible matchday experience for everyone involved. Visit the link below which has downloadable documents covering:

- #PlayYourPart for Clubs
- #PlayYourPart for Coaches
- #PlayYourPart for Spectators
- #PlayYourPart for Players
- Guide to Coaches Pre-Season Workshop & template presentation
- Guide to Spectators Pre-Season Workshop & template presentation

Please visit our website for more info: [www.essexfa.com/leagues-and-clubs/matchday-environment](http://www.essexfa.com/leagues-and-clubs/matchday-environment)



## Kit & Equipment

Every club needs kit & equipment, and typically clubs will fund this through player membership fees, sponsorship or other club funds.

There is no specific funding pots for bibs, balls and cones etc. You may be able to obtain Sponsorship for such items, alternatively we recommend these costs are split amongst the playing squad.

Please find below links to Active Essex & London Sport funding pages, where you can sometimes find small grants and funding opportunities to support some of these costs.



[www.activeessex.org](http://www.activeessex.org)



[www.londonsport.org](http://www.londonsport.org)

## Coaching



All courses are offered centrally by England Football Learning (FA Education).

More information on the coaching pathway can be found here:

<https://learn.englishfootball.com/courses>

### EE Playmaker

This online entry-level course is for anyone interested in taking a more active role in grassroots football. Minimum age 14.

Cost: Free

<https://learn.englishfootball.com/courses/football/ee-playmaker>

### Introduction to Coaching Football

For those coaching a team or looking at getting into coaching, this is a 4-week online course contains webinars, e-learning, community support and a range of resources to provide you with the skills to coach players of all ages. The course includes both First Aid and Safeguarding qualifications. Minimum age 16.

Cost: £100\*

<https://learn.englishfootball.com/courses/football/introduction-to-coaching-football>

\* PLEASE NOTE: From 30th May, courses for August will be released. At this point, the I2CF course will be priced at £100- with the Introduction to First Aid in Football & Safeguarding Children Course available as separate elements. They will now become a prerequisite for the I2CF, so please encourage all new coaches to obtain these elements first, before they are eligible to book the I2CF.

## Further Qualifications

The Introduction to First Aid in Football and Safeguarding Children course are available as standalone courses. From August, these two qualifications will be a prerequisite for enrolling on the Introduction to Coaching Football course. All these qualifications can be accessed via England Football Learning.

Coaches can register their interest for both the UEFA C & UEFA B Coaching Licences. Spaces on both courses are limited, and coaches will need to meet specific criteria to apply.

More information <https://learn.englishfootball.com/courses>



# Essex FA Coach Development Programme

Across the season, we offer a range of face-to-face and online coaching events, providing localised support and learning opportunities for volunteer coaches.

Our offer compliments the formal FA qualification pathway, and is delivered by our team of experienced Coach Developers, as well as a range of expert guests from partner organisations. <https://www.essexfa.com/coaches>


If you would like to discuss coach development in your club, please feel free to contact our Coach Development team.

[Andrew.Crowl@essexfa.com](mailto:Andrew.Crowl@essexfa.com) or contact your local Football Development Officer.


## First Aid

Introduction to First Aid in Football is an online course suitable for anyone looking to develop their knowledge and understanding of medical care for players of all ages. The course is a 2 hour online course costing £30.


For more information and how to book, visit [www.essexfa.com/coaches/development-and-courses/fa-level-1-introduction-to-first-aid-in-football](http://www.essexfa.com/coaches/development-and-courses/fa-level-1-introduction-to-first-aid-in-football)




**On The Pitch**  
Practical workshops for new and experienced coaches



**In Focus**  
Insight from partner organizations



**Your Club**  
Support your coaching workforce



**Online Discussions**  
Support with common coaching challenges







## Referees

Every team wants a qualified Referee for their games and Essex County FA works to recruit, develop and retain referees. Clubs and teams can help to support this by respecting referees in the match day environment. There are two campaigns which you should be aware of:

### #ThankTheRef

#ThankTheRef, is aiming to encourage more participants in grassroots football to positively comment on, and show gratitude to their referee after each game with some inspiring words of support.

We are encouraging all members of the grassroots football community to tweet us @EssexCountyFA after their next match. Do so including #ThankTheRef, to highlight why they appreciated their referee (and assistant referees) on the day and why they officiated the game effectively.

### U18 Yellow Armband

U18 officials will don the bright armbands to signify their age and that they're still in the early stages of their development. The aim is to highlight to spectators that these referees are still children and they're learning and developing, similar to the players on the pitch. Without them, many youth games may go uncovered, meaning participation and player development could also be impacted.

For more information on refereeing or enquiring about becoming a new referee, please visit our website for more details: [www.essexfa.com/referees](http://www.essexfa.com/referees)





## Assistant Referees

Within grassroots football, a lot of the time Essex FA affiliated referees are going to require voluntary assistants to support them in officiating the game or a volunteer will actually need to be the referee!

Within mini-soccer parents, spectators, or coaches may need to act as the referee for the game. Within youth or open-age football, the assistants are primarily from each of the two teams.

The FA offer a range of learning and support to volunteers who may wish to increase their knowledge on officiating or assisting a grassroots game of football.

Please find below a list of online learning to help you understand the laws of the game and how to control a match:

**FA Guide to the Laws of the Game:** [falearning.thefa.com/course/view.php?id=1804](http://falearning.thefa.com/course/view.php?id=1804)

The FA Guide to the Laws of the Game online learning has five sections and will take approximately 90 minutes to complete:

- Module 1 – Before the Match
- Module 2 – Signals and Communication
- Module 3 – ‘Getting it Right’
- Module 4 – Offside
- Module 5 – Managing Restarts and Set-Pieces

**Match Control:** [falearning.thefa.com/course/view.php?id=1872](http://falearning.thefa.com/course/view.php?id=1872)

The Match Control online learning is primarily for referees who have recently completed the FA Referee Course however more experienced referees may also find it valuable as a refresher. The online learning will take approximately 40 minutes to complete and is made up of five sections:

- Module 1 – What is Match Control?
- Module 2 – Effective Communication
- Module 3 – Alertness and Awareness
- Module 4 – The Art of Management

**Assistant Refereeing:** [falearning.thefa.com/course/view.php?id=1884](http://falearning.thefa.com/course/view.php?id=1884)

The Assistant Refereeing online learning is primarily for referees who have recently completed the FA Referee Course and anyone who is undertaking the role as a club assistant referee. The online learning will take approximately 20 minutes to complete and covers the role of the assistant referee and their responsibilities; signals, positioning and movement; and working as a team.



## The National Referee Recognition Awards

The National Referee Recognition Awards is the time to celebrate the referees who unique contributions make such a difference to our game, clubs and communities. As a club, you are able to nominate a referee for the 'Club Recognition Award' in which the referee would've:

- Demonstrated exceptional performance and dedication in officiating your club's games
- Will be won by someone from the refereeing community who consistently display high level of skill, fairness, and professionalism

For more information around the National Referee Recognition Awards, please visit the England Football website for more details: <https://www.Englandfootball.com/participate/referees/referee-recognition-awards>

## The Grassroots Football Awards

The Grassroots Football Awards is our opportunity to celebrate the people who make grassroots football great for everyone. They're for the people who make a positive difference. They're our way to recognise the fantastic people who put their heart and soul into football across England.

Tell us about the match official who has impressed you on match day or in the Refereeing community. Someone who has shown dedication and commitment to supporting the game and match officials, whilst showing empathy and respect to all involved. They might be a Referee, a Referee observer, coach, mentor, developer, appointments officer or any other role who goes above and beyond to support and/or develop match officials. So long as they promote refereeing positively at all times by supporting their colleagues and creating a positive matchday culture, we want to hear about them.

For more information around the Grassroots Football Awards – Match Official of the Year, please visit the England Football website for more details: <https://www.Englandfootball.com/participate/Grassroots-Football-Awards>

## Finances

Managing your money is an essential part of good club management.

Although managing the day-to-day finances of your football club can seem a daunting or tedious task, it's a vital part of running a reputable and sustainable Football club. The club treasurer will be responsible for taking care of the clubs finances and will be the main source of contact relating to club income and expenditure.

Sport England's Club Matters has a whole section on this with some useful tools. Visit: [www.sportenglandclubmatters.com/financial-management/income-generation/funding-guidance/](http://www.sportenglandclubmatters.com/financial-management/income-generation/funding-guidance/)



## Squad Booster



Essex County FA can support their affiliated clubs with recruitment by posting adverts across our website and social media platforms, reaching out to thousands of followers.

To develop an advert for players or volunteers please visit [www.essexfa.com/players/support/squad-booster](http://www.essexfa.com/players/support/squad-booster)



The **#SquadBooster** hashtag is used every day by a growing number of users, generating millions of interactions every year as players and teams are matched together: [bit.ly/SqBstEss](http://bit.ly/SqBstEss)



12:32 pm · 14 Dec 2021 · Buffer



Essex County FA @EssexCountyFA · 15 Dec  
Players Wanted! @ShieldAcademyFC: Age Group: Under 10s (Blacks), School Years: 5 and 6, Format: Small-Sided, Position/s Required: All Positions, Training: Saturdays and Thursdays, Matches: Sundays, Competition: @echoleague #Ilford Details: [squadbooster.com](http://squadbooster.com) #SquadBooster



## England Football Accreditation

Clubs are an essential component of the football participation pathway, providing playing opportunities directly for all sections of their local community.

England Football Accredited is the new framework for league and club accreditation and replaces the FA Charter Standard. The accreditation provides The FA and the Essex County FA with the opportunity to recognise the clubs who raise the bar and set the tempo for football to thrive within the county. It enables us to work with stakeholders to ensure the offer within your club remains modern and offers maximum opportunity to participate, regardless of background or ability. No matter how big your club is, if you have the England Football Accreditation it shows that you're making a huge difference to your local community. As we transition to the new accreditation framework, more football than ever is played within an accredited environment within Essex.

Dependant on a clubs pathway offering, each accredited club will achieve a star rating. This recognizes and demonstrates that they have football teams within their setup which support the three accredited player pathways (Male, Female and Disability). It helps us to align and tailor the necessary support and services your club needs to become the best version of itself.

For more information on England Football Accreditation please visit [www.essexfa.com/leagues-and-clubs/englandfootball-accreditation](http://www.essexfa.com/leagues-and-clubs/englandfootball-accreditation)



## FA's In The Box Podcast

As a club it is key to be able to identify what you stand for, and the visions and values you have set that define your club. By having a set of vision and values this will encourage buy-in from everyone associated with your club and support development of a safe positive and inclusive environment.

Click on the image to access The FA's In The Box Podcast's where the FA's team discuss ways in which your club can identify its vision and values.





Ensuring your club's marketing, branding and communications are in a strong position will play a crucial part in you achieving many of your other goals, whether that be for player recruitment and retention, attracting volunteers or maintaining a positive reputation.

Marketing and Communications can come in various forms and we encourage clubs to think carefully around how they choose to interact with their different audiences particularly around Social Media Platforms. We strongly advise that clubs have a Social Media Policy which provides guidance to all members on their use of social media. You can find our template at the following link as well a download around guidance of photography and filming in grassroots football:

[www.essexfa.com/leagues-and-clubs/marketing-and-communications](http://www.essexfa.com/leagues-and-clubs/marketing-and-communications)

## Safeguarding and Social Media

In today's world, safeguarding children and young people applies as much online as it does face-to-face. Part of the role of The FA as the game's governing body is to offer guidance. We're constantly looking to provide a supportive framework around everyone who participates in football, whatever their role. This guidance role clearly extends to the use of digital platforms in a football context. Such platforms include websites, email, mobile messaging and use of social media sites such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Twitter. Of course, these technologies have huge benefits. For example, it's so much easier nowadays for a team or club to let its players know the times of training sessions, meet-ups and match venues. However, we have to recognise that digital platforms can be misused, with increased risks to children and young people. Football takes these risks extremely seriously. It's with this in mind that a series of guidance notes have been developed, all listed below. It's essential that everyone involved in our great game makes informed decisions about how they use the internet, social media, mobile phone and email communications – particularly when children and young people are involved. To read the latest guidance on safeguarding in a digital world, visit:

[www.essexfa.com/about/rules-and-regulations/safeguarding-and-welfare/social-media-guidance](http://www.essexfa.com/about/rules-and-regulations/safeguarding-and-welfare/social-media-guidance)

## Club Welcome Pack

Effective communication across organisations is often one of the hardest things to achieve. We encourage and understand that many of our stakeholders use several different methods to share key messages. The Development Team at Essex FA have created a completely editable Club Welcome Pack which we encourage clubs to use as a template adding and removing sections as they wish before updating and circulating on an annual basis. This document is a great way to share/reiterate what the club stands for, its Vision, Values and way you as a club committee wish for it to be represented within the community.

To access the Club Welcome Pack template, visit:

[www.essexfa.com/leagues-and-clubs/marketing-and-communications](http://www.essexfa.com/leagues-and-clubs/marketing-and-communications)



## FAQs

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**Please find below a list of frequently asked questions from clubs and committee members. If you are still unsure of any affiliation process, then please speak with a member of our team via our contact us page at [www.essexfa.com](http://www.essexfa.com).**

### *Where do I affiliate my teams?*

From the 2023/24 season, the affiliation process will be undertaken via the Club Portal and not the Whole Game System. Log-in details will be same.

### *When can I start affiliating my teams?*

The affiliation process is scheduled to open in the week commencing 5th June. Essex FA will contact all existing clubs and new clubs that have been in contact previously to advise when this can be accessed.

### *Who can affiliate teams within my club?*

Only those individuals that are deemed 'Key Officials' will be able to undertake the affiliation process. These roles are: **Secretary, Chairperson, Treasurer, Club Welfare Officer.**

### *Will I still be issued with an affiliation number?*

No, affiliation numbers will not be issued via the Club Portal. Leagues and your County FA will be able to view the 'Affiliation Status' of each team, which will be updated the moment changes are made.

### *How do I enter a County Cup?*

From the 'Teams' menu, click on 'Manage Competitions' and select 'Manage County Cups' from the drop-down menu. Only those County Cup competitions that each team may be able to enter will be shown, and Essex FA will check entries prior to raising invoices.

### *Do I need to enter a County Cup at the same time as I seek to affiliate a team?*

No, the County Cup process can be completed at any time after the affiliation window has opened until 31st July.

### *Where do I complete the Safeguarding Declaration?*

You can complete the mandatory Safeguarding Declaration immediately via 'My Club' and then the 'Documentation' tab. You'll then need to view the document before you can accept the Declaration.

### *I've moved league. How do I make this change on the system?*

From the 'Teams' menu, click on 'Manage Competitions' and select 'Remove from League' to remove your existing membership. Then return to 'Manage Competitions' and select 'Assign to League' from the drop-down menu. You will only be able to make a change to your league whilst there are no registered players assigned to the team.

### *Can I still take out insurance during the affiliation process?*

Yes, you can take out public liability and personal accident insurance through Essex FA's recommended provider, Sportsguard, during the affiliation process under the 'Club Insurance' and 'Team Insurance' stages.



***Do I need to wait for Essex FA to check my affiliation?***

If a club elects to take out public liability and personal accident insurance through Essex FA's recommended provider, Sportsguard, during the affiliation process, and the club has no overdue debts, an invoice will be raised automatically at the end of the process.

***Do I need to affiliate all my teams at the same time?***

No, you can stagger the submission of teams depending on those that are ready to be affiliated. This prevents an affiliation being held up due to one team having a non-compliant official.

***Can I pay in instalments?***

No, for the 2023/24 season, all invoices must be paid in full and cannot be broken down.

***When can I start playing fixtures?***

11-a-side football is not permitted in June, but from the 1st July teams can begin playing fixtures providing their 'Affiliation Status' shows they are affiliated.



**Essex County Football Association**

The County Office,  
Springfield Lyons Approach,  
Chelmsford, Essex,  
CM2 5LB.

[www.essexfa.com](http://www.essexfa.com)



Incorporated in Cardiff. No. 3843186

