

25

GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL AWARDS





IT'S TIME TO SAY THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

The Grassroots Football Awards are here for everyone to say thanks to all the people and organisations who give so much in making football happen.

Right now, we're looking for the volunteers, coaches, clubs, leagues, officials and others who have stood out for you this season.

We want to show every volunteer their time, energy and dedication is appreciated by everyone across the grassroots game. We'll be letting them know they've been nominated. So just by taking the time to say 'thanks' we're all showing how highly we value their vital role.

ALL TOGETHER MORE REWARDING

Just like last year, our national 2025 Grassroots Football Award winners will enjoy a once-in-a-lifetime experience, joined by legends of the game.

Our glittering Awards Presentation Ceremony will again be held at Wembley Stadium ahead of the Community Shield Final. Throughout the day, we'll be celebrating our amazing volunteers and raising the profile of volunteering in grassroots football.



WHOSE STORIES STAND OUT?

This year, we're looking for those inspiring winners' stories – such as volunteers overcoming obstacles, creating opportunities, bringing football to more players – which can be picked up by the media and inspire a whole new generation of volunteers.

What do they do and who do they do it for?

What difference have they made to other's lives?

What makes them stand out so much for you to nominate them?

How are they making football better for more people?

Have they done something that might be picked up by the media?

As well as using the nomination form, nominators can upload a video to YouTube, Vimeo or similar platform and add the link to the nomination form. There's also a box to add a description of the video.

HOW WE FIND OUR WINNERS

There are 12 categories for the 2025 Grassroots Awards including the Bobby Moore Award. People can nominate as many people as they want, in any categories on the online portal. County FA staff can also nominate people for the Awards.

Nominations are open from 28 February to 6 April.

Every County FA then hosts a judging panel which creates a shortlist for their area. Finally, the national judging panel comes together to select the winners from these shortlists.

Remember, the Bobby Moore Award is extra special because it honours the club, league, project, team or individual that represents the spirit of grassroots football in a truly outstanding way.





YOUR KEY DATES

Nomination Stage	28 February - 6 April (midnight)
County Transfer Window	07 April - 09 April
County FA Judging Panel	09 April - 1 May
National Judging Panel	02 May - 22 May
Filming and Ceremony Prep	June - July
Awards Presentation Ceremony	10 August

Nomination Stage
The Grassroots Awards will be led by Ben Grady, Senior Development Manager. Please contact him at Ben.Grady@TheFA.com or on the Teams channel.

YOUR AWARD CATEGORIES

- Match Official of the Year
- The Lioness Award
- Positive Behaviour Award
- Coach of the Year Female Pathway
- Coach of the Year Disability Pathway
- Coach of the Year Male Pathway
- League of the Year
- New Volunteer of the Year
- Young Volunteer of the Year
- Grounds Team of the Year
- Club of the Year
- The Bobby Moore Award

The following pages will take you through the criteria for you to select your winners. Think about how they're making football better for more people with an outstanding contribution to:

Improving the playing experience, and leading by example.

Creating positive spaces and overcoming obstacles.

Uniting people of any age, ethnicity and background, and supporting their community.

MATCH OFFICIAL OF THE YEAR

We're looking for a Match Official who:

Is an advocate for inclusivity – making the game welcoming, equal and diverse.

Handles challenging situations – demonstrating composure even when dealing with dissent, discrimination, or high-pressure moments.

Is a role model for other referees – embodying respect, teamwork, and integrity.

Is consistent and reliable – maintaining high standards across all matches.

Encourages a positive matchday experience – for players, coaches and spectators.

Has passion for the game – inspiring others through their infectious enthusiasm.

In particular...

They can be a referee, a referee observer, coach, mentor, developer, appointments officer or any other role in the match official community.

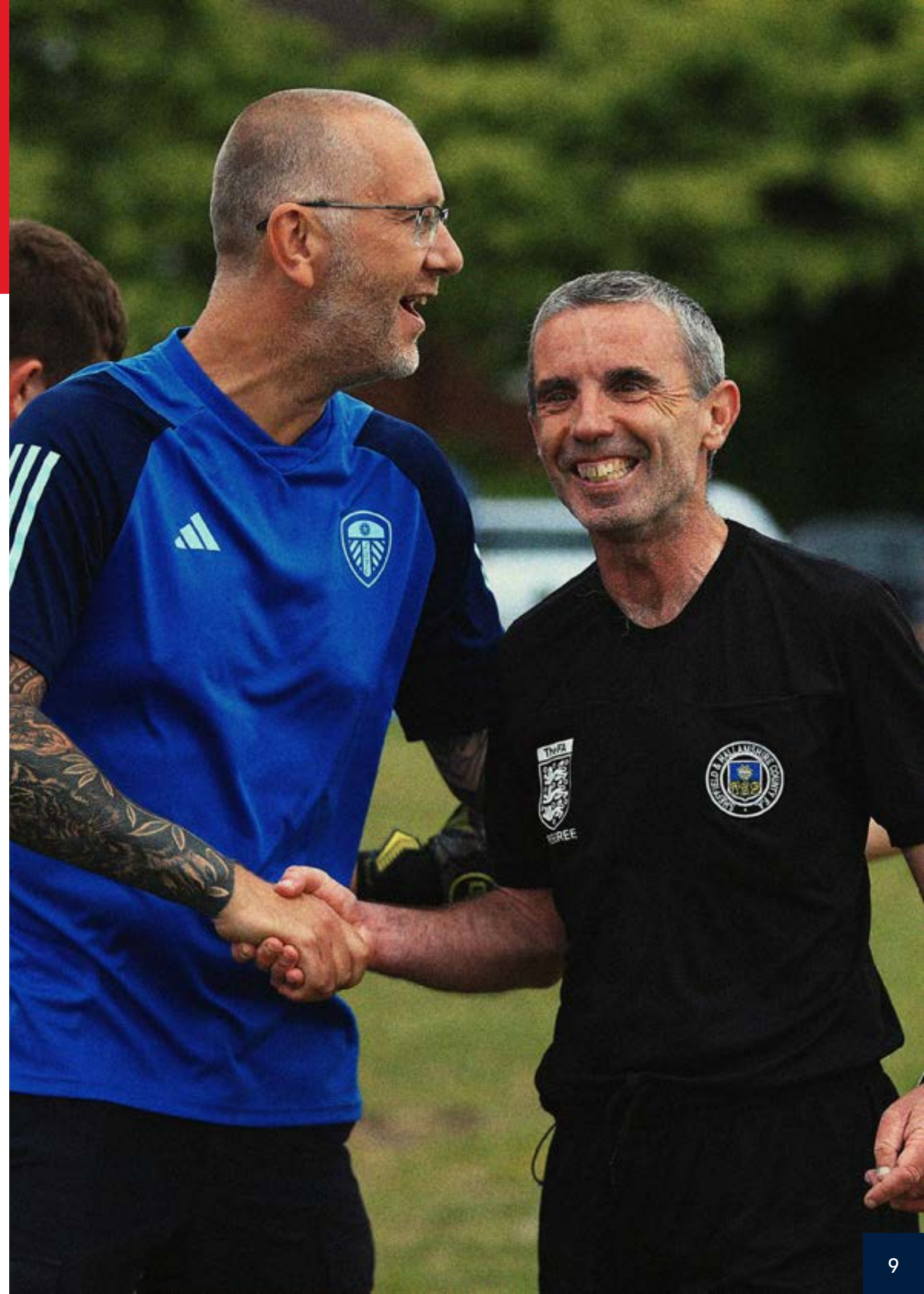
Meet our 2024 winner Steve Bradford

In his 25 years as a local referee, with 250 games a season, Steve hasn't once taken a match fee for his efforts on matchdays, donating every penny back to clubs.

Steve's reward

Joining the Community Shield Match Officials to conduct all the pre-game checks.

“*It's beginning to dawn on me that I've touched lives in a way I didn't realise.*”





THE LIONESS AWARD

We're looking for someone who's moved women or girls' football forward or created new opportunities in the female game.

In particular...

They can be a coach, referee, off-pitch volunteer, club, league or project. So long as they're improving the game for more women and girls by:

Creating chances to coach, manage, administrate or officiate.

Having a big impact in their community, on and off the pitch.

Using football to inspire positive change, including through programmes like Just Play, Squad and Wildcats.

Meet our 2024 winner Ellen Maggs

Ellen works tirelessly, quietly and selflessly to give girls equal opportunities. In recent years, the former Arsenal and England star has reshaped girls' football in London.

Ellen's reward

Ellen received her Lioness Legacy cap at the Community Shield from Ellen White and Rachel Yankey.

“***Creating an environment where girls can shine is key.***”



POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR AWARD

We're looking for a volunteer, club, league or project that:

Brings to life the Standards of Behaviour from
The Grassroots Code, helping to create a more
enjoyable atmosphere for all.

Models positive behaviour for coaches,
spectators and teams to follow.

Effectively tackles poor behaviour or rewards
good behaviour.

Ensures visiting teams and match officials
feel welcomed.

Encourages collective responsibility for a
positive football environment.

Meet our 2024 winner Lorraine Humm

Coach, manager, vice chair, mental health
champion, kit washer and fundraiser. When
something needs doing, even if no-one else has
realised it yet, Lorraine has it covered.

Lorraine's reward

Carrying the Community Shield trophy onto the
pitch and placing it on its plinth.



“When you see a kid
score their first goal
you see the joy on their
face. It's magical.”





COACH OF THE YEAR FEMALE PATHWAY

We're looking for a coach who's inclusive, encouraging and inspiring out female players. A coach who's impressed you with how well they engage players.

In particular...

We're looking for a coach at an England Football Accredited club, or from an England Football programme (e.g. Just Play, Wildcats, Squad Girls Football, Comets Disability Football) who has had a positive impact by:

Helping female players enjoy the game and reach their full potential.

Creating a thriving learning environment for all.

Helping players succeed in their respective game format.

Improving the playing experience, and leading by example.

Creating positive spaces and overcoming obstacles.

Uniting people of any age, ethnicity and background, and unifying their community.

Being aware of their own motivations and demonstrating positive behaviours.

Developing themselves to maximise the impact they have.

PLEASE NOTE:

a winning coach must have

An in-date DBS and first aid qualification.
A commitment to ongoing CPD (such as Introduction to Coaching Football, EE Playmaker or England Accredited Learning).

Meet our 2024 winner Vicki Ashman

Inspiring coach, referee mentor and well-being warrior, Vicki believes in the power of sport and lives her mantra that it's all about fun, friendship and football...in that order.

Vicki's reward

Sitting in the coaches' area at the Community Shield and touring the changing rooms before the game.

It's about helping young girls grow into the people they want to be.

COACH OF THE YEAR DISABILITY PATHWAY

We're looking for a coach at an England Football Accredited club, or from an England Football programme (e.g. Just Play, Wildcats, Squad Girls Football, Comets Disability Football) who has had a positive impact by:

In particular...

A coach at an England Football Accredited club, who has had a positive impact by:

Helping disabled players enjoy the game and reach their full potential.

Creating a thriving learning environment for all.

Helping players succeed in their respective game format.

Improving the playing experience, and leading by example.

Creating positive spaces and overcoming obstacles.

Uniting people of any age, ethnicity and background, and unifying their community.

Being aware of their own motivations and demonstrating positive behaviours.

Developing themselves to maximise the impact they have.

PLEASE NOTE:

a winning coach must have

An in-date DBS and first aid qualification.
A commitment to ongoing CPD (such as Introduction to Coaching Football, EE Playmaker or England Accredited Learning).

Meet our 2024 winner Callum Huckfield

Callum coaches 40 youngsters with SEND or who are neurodivergent neurodiverse barriers in four teams playing in the Staffordshire Ability Counts League and runs a disability football holiday camp.

Callum's reward

Sitting in the coaches' area for the Community Shield final and touring the changing rooms before the game.

“*I want to see young people with additional needs thrive in football.*”





COACH OF THE YEAR MALE PATHWAY

We're looking for a coach at an England Football Accredited club, or from an England Football programme (e.g. Just Play) who has had a positive impact by:

In particular...

A coach at an England Football Accredited club, or from an England Football programme (e.g. Just Play, Comets Disability Football) who's had a positive impact by:

Helping male players enjoy the game and reach their full potential.

Creating a thriving learning environment for all.

Helping players success in their respective game format.

Improving the playing experience, and leading by example.

Creating positive spaces and overcoming obstacles.

Being aware of their own motivations and demonstrating positive behaviours.

Developing themselves to maximise the impact they have.

PLEASE NOTE:

a winning coach must have

An in-date DBS and first aid qualification.
A commitment to ongoing CPD (such as Introduction to Coaching Football, EE Playmaker or England Accredited Learning).

Meet our 2024 winner Craig Rainton

Taking up the reins as sole team manager after the tragic death of his managerial partner, Craig's most important role was in the care, support and time he dedicated to a heartbroken team of ten-year-old boys.

Craig's reward

Sitting in the coaches' area for the final and touring the changing rooms before the game.

"These lads don't know what a positive effect they've had on me."

LEAGUE OF THE YEAR

We're looking for an England Football Accredited League that makes the game more accessible and enjoyable.

The league must:

Be England Football Accredited.

Have created a safe, fun and inclusive space, both on and off the pitch.

Support The FA initiatives such as Respect the Standard, Silent Support, Play Safe.

“*There's nothing we won't do to support and develop clubs.*”

Meet our 2024 winner Peterborough & District Football League

In providing football for over 5,700 players – from u15 to walking football – the League brings a joined-up pathway for players of all ages and abilities, with Respect at the core.

Their reward

Michael Dawson will join the league to present at their end of season awards celebrations.





NEW VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

We're looking for someone who's burst onto the scene this year and had a real impact. We want to know about the volunteer who started volunteering in a new role in grassroots football during the 24/25 season.

In particular...

An inspiring individual, young or old. Someone who's immediately had a big impact at a club, league or other organisation. This might include sessional football through and England Football programme such as Just Play, Wildcats, Squad Girls Football or Comets Disability Football.

Meet our 2024 winner Adam Flint

In Adam's first six months, the club was able to renovate the clubhouse, revamp the kitchen, update the changing rooms and create a new lounge area, and bring in new sponsors.

Adam's reward

Carrying the matchday ball out onto the pitch and placing it on its plinth.

"I get involved in everything."

YOUNG VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

We're looking for a young person who's brought fresh energy, skills and ideas as a volunteer this season.

In particular...

They must be aged 14-25. A young person who is a role model to others, who provides a voice for other young people, or who has a valuable skill set as part of a wider team.

Meet our 2024 winner Aisha Siddique

Enhancing Alpha United's football offering as coach and referee, Aisha is a keen advocate for inclusivity through social engagement initiatives and community outreach.

Aisha's reward

Working with The FA's social media team in the media centre throughout the final.

“I don't really see it as volunteering. It's now more a part of me.”





GROUNDS TEAM OF THE YEAR

We're looking for the people who go the extra mile to make sure their ground – from pitch to facilities – is always ready for the game.

In particular...

They might not even have a role-title, but we want to hear about the people who:

Keep the facilities match-ready all year round.

Make sure the whole space is safe, week in, week out.

Transform poor pitches into good pitches.

Create a playing environment that's always welcoming.

Meet our 2024 winner Arnie Ross

Single-handedly taking care of four different pitch sites for multiple teams, Arnie also runs the clubhouse and finds referees – always with a warm welcome and big smile.

Arnie's reward

Conducting the pre-game pitch inspection with Wembley's Head Groundskeeper.

“You feel happy when you see they're all enjoying themselves.”

CLUB OF THE YEAR

We're looking for a club that's done something amazing...for their players, volunteers or beyond. A club that is inclusive and plays a big part in its local community.

In particular...

An England Football Accredited club that's:

Recruited, rewarded or supported volunteers.

Improved its facilities – on the and off pitch.

Secured new funding to make football better for more people.

Grown their offer for more people to enjoy more football at their club.

Utilised FA initiatives like The Greater Game, Just Play, Comets, Wildcats, Squad.

Meet our 2024 winner Anchorians FC

Bringing football to a huge array of players – from children aged 3-18, to men's and women's teams, disability, home schooled, vets and walking teams...the club offers free fitness clubs, free meals and free washing facilities.

Their reward

Paul Merson will be joining the club's charity fund raising match this season.

“**You're here to play and have fun.**”





THE BOBBY MOORE AWARD

This is for the volunteer that represents the best of grassroots football in your county. We're looking for someone or a group of people who is truly exceptional.

What we're looking for...

Someone who's had a big impact over a period of time by:

Retaining, recruiting or rewarding players and/or volunteers to ensure grassroots football represents its community.

Raising the profile and increasing the accessibility of grassroots football.

Making an impact through grassroots football on issues important in their community.

Meet our 2024 winner Steve Parker

From being a player to manager, to chairperson, Steve has focused on bringing football to absolutely any child. With 39 teams offering male, female and disability football, Crewe has secured its own ground for the first time thanks to Steve's efforts.

Steve's experience

Handing out the winners and runners-up medals to Manchester City and Manchester United's players and coaches after the Community Shield at Wembley stadium.

“*A candle loses nothing by lighting other candles.*”

HOW TO PLAY YOUR PART

Your thanks means the world. And there's no better way to thank our fabulous volunteers that putting them up for a national award.

As a County FA you are best placed to encourage nominations from volunteers, players, clubs and leagues across your county.

Getting the word out

To help you get more people to nominate, you'll receive a press release, a full set of promotional assets and a content plan to help you post on social media.

We suggest the following:

Update your web page with a news story about the Awards.

Post on your social media channels – Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and others you use.

Send out emails to your groups.

Use local stories from your area.

Write about the Awards on your County FA e-newsletters and magazines.

Email your working groups and County FA representative.

Approach your local media with press releases.

Print posters around the County FA ground or large clubs in your areas.

Use your County Cup matchday programme insert.

THE JUDGING PROCESS

All nominations for your County will come into an online platform. [Click here.](#) Your password will be sent to you separately.

It's important to make sure all the nominations have been verified by your County FA and are with you during the transfer window. This means there are no late entries to consider, and everything is on time.

Use the transfer window to move categories to other County FAs. They will get an email notification when you've transferred them across. **This has to be completed by the 09 April 2025.**

Your County should select 12 local winners, one for each award category. These should be chosen by a local panel, selected by your County FA. Please be as diverse and inclusive of your football communities as possible, and remember we're looking for newsworthy winners' stories.

It's your chance to represent the inspiring people who make football happen across your County!

The Judging panel:

We suggest you give your Judging Panel the nominations before coming together.

They can select their top three to bring forward for discussion.

Invite Community Leaders outside of football for their valuable insight and impartiality.

They can select their top three to bring forward for discussion.

And you need to decide what to do if there is a tie break situation.

Good luck and enjoy – we can't wait to hear the inspirational stories you discover this year!