



DISABILITY ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

DISABILITY FOOTBALL ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

This toolkit aims to support players, clubs and facility providers to understand their audience and to help create new opportunities within North Riding.

Many clubs have a desire to increase the playing opportunities within their communities, but don't know where to start but it is easier than you think. This toolkit is designed to help answer questions that you may have, give you advice when setting up your session and signpost you to your next steps.

You may not realise but a lot of clubs may already have players with additional needs playing within a mainstream team and there is no reason to why they shouldn't be playing with their friends. This toolkit can be used to raise awareness but also help support coaches adapt their sessions so that all players can get the best start in their footballing journey.

What is PAN ability? PAN essentially means 'all'

Why PAN ability?

By opening your session to all (dis)abilities, it will help you recruit larger numbers and therefore make your sessions sustainable. Often within these sessions there will be individuals who are stronger both physically and technically than others, therefore the coach should adapt their session to support the differences in abilities and also ensure all players are getting the most out of each session.

What do you need to know?

It is not necessary for you to know or understand each individual impairment or long-term health condition, although there is a great amount of information available online, you can find links to these websites within the 'useful contact' section of this booklet. It is much more important to understand the barriers which prevent disabled people from taking part in sport. Do your research and don't be afraid to keep learning.

To Consider

It is important that the participants within your session know that they can go at their own pace. If they know they can take a break whenever they feel like without fuss and the coach won't single them out, they won't be put under inappropriate stress. You will likely find that disabled people are respectful to different peoples' needs. The focus of the session should remain flexible to accommodate different abilities.

4 IN 5 DISABLED PEOPLE WOULD LIKE TO BE MORE ACTIVE

- Activity Alliance



YOUR SESSION...

Who do you want to target?

When thinking about who you would like to target, be realistic. If it is youth football, we recommend 4 year age bandings. At North Riding we work towards Under 8, Under 12, Under 16 and Adults. Be mindful that setting your target audience too narrow will limit your audience, another reason to do your research and find out what your community wants/needs.

Engagement

There is no silver bullet when it comes to reaching people from diverse populations, identify your audience's touchpoints, support services and connect them into your activity. Successful engagement needs to involve disabled people, families and carers, they will provide you with better knowledge of what is desired within your community.

Location

It is important that the location of your session is easily accessible by public transport. The venue should also appeal to players. Somewhere they can feel safe, comfortable and enjoy their football. Other factors to consider include: Is your venue going to be accessible for those who have mobility issues or visual/hearing impairments? Does your location have accessible toilet facilities? What else is going on at the venue? Some disabled people find it harder to concentrate, for example, visually impaired players in a noisy sports hall.



SET INDIVIDUAL CHALLENGES TO SUPPORT
INDIVIDUAL PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

Percentage of
people living with a
disability within
North Riding

- ▶ **MIDDLESBROUGH 21%**
- ▶ **STOCKTON-ON-TEES 19%**
- ▶ **REDCAR AND CLEVELAND 22.8%**
- ▶ **YORK 15.4%**
- ▶ **HAMBLETON 16.9%**
- ▶ **RICHMONDSHIRE 15.5%**
- ▶ **SCARBOROUGH 22.5%**
- ▶ **RYEDALE 17.8%**

Census 2011

SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS



Amputee players

Some amputee players may use a prosthesis in everyday life. In amputee competition football, the outfield players are either above or below knee single leg amputees. They then use aluminium wrist crutches.

When working with amputees, consider the following:

- How movement is affected?
- What movement patterns are already established
- The players understanding of personal safety and medical care
- Is the amputation acquired or congenital? This may affect, for example, the length of time a player may be able to train

Players who are deaf

When coaching deaf players, it is useful to remember the following points with regards to safety:

- The communication needs of the player, establish quick and easy signs that ALL players use and understand
- Always check for understanding before the players start the exercise
- Make sure all your group understand the emergency procedures

Players with Cerebral Palsy

Cerebral Palsy (CP) is non-progressive and causes variable impairment of the co-ordination, tone and strength of muscle action, impacting on postures and movement. The degree of impairment between individuals varies considerably.

- Players may be prone to exhaustion
- Players with CP may be prone to accidents and injuries
- Some players with CP may also have speech impairments, its important to get to know your players

Players with a learning disability

A learning disability is a condition where the brain does not develop as fast or fully as someone without a learning disability. The degree of learning disability can vary enormously.

- You should ensure your players understand specific safety rules. Situations that appear to be an obvious danger may not be perceived as such by some individuals

Players with a visual impairment

When coaching visually impaired players, it is useful to remember the following points with regards to safety.

- Allow players time to orientate themselves in a venue and pinpoint any potential dangers such as doorways
- Be aware of changes in the environment that could cause an injury such as discarded kit or even someone walking into an open space unannounced
- Do not leave equipment lying on the floor – always leave it in the same place each session so players know where it is

**ALMOST THREE QUARTERS OF DISABLED PEOPLE
HAVE MORE THAN ONE IMPAIRMENT** – Activity Alliance

MARKETING YOUR SESSION

Terminology

Think carefully on the terminology used to advertise your session. Although 'Disabled People' is a widely used phrase, some groups and individuals, do not identify with the term and would not consider themselves to be disabled. To reach more people choose your wording carefully in your promotions. How can you alter your terminology to appeal to your audience?

Effective messages

We advise that you show your activity clearly in action, using facial expressions as they will look genuine and natural. Try to stay away from illustrations as most people find it difficult to engage with illustrations as they won't be able to visualise themselves being a part of your session. Additionally, if the marketing only shows very fit or high-speed activity, you may put off a lot of potential players.

Motivating messaging

Convey the emotions involved in your session | *Being active feels amazing!*

Appeal to a passion | *Love football? Ready to tackle a new challenge?*

De-motivating messaging

Urge or command them to do something | *Get active! Get Involved!*

Suggest Seriousness or Competitiveness | *Serious about football? Come play for us!*

Appeal to an individual's abilities to perform | *Play with players just like you!*

Focus on disability | *Disabled? Want to join our team?*

Activity Alliance 10 Principles

Activity Alliance has developed 10 principles to support providers to deliver more appealing opportunities for disabled people. To look at these 10 principles please go to - <http://www.activityalliance.org.uk/how-we-help/research/ten-principles>



EQUIPMENT

What equipment will I need?

Most will utilise a set of equipment the same as a grassroots club. However, there are factors that should be considered when purchasing equipment. Taking into consideration the colour of walls and floors of your venue if indoors, we would advise a contrasting colour such as blue for the benefit of any player with partial sight. Bib colours are also key, we do recommend using bright colours – contrasting colours are better for everyone.

Impairment specific sessions may require alternative equipment tailored to different needs. For example, blind players use footballs that have bells inside which allows them to utilise their heightened hearing. Contact us directly if you have any queries about such equipment.

Considerations

Something such as wearing a bib can present a challenge for some players. Do not assume a player knows why they have to wear a bib, explain what it represents or challenge them to come up with a team name in relation to the bib colour. Additionally, cones can also be confusing. Try to use the same colour cones for a grid rather than multicolours.

Coaches working with players with a disability may need to become skilled at a variety of different methods of communication, different ways of giving out information by telling, showing and guiding as well as different ways of gaining information by listening, watching and asking questions.



EXPLAIN EVERYTHING, ASK QUESTIONS,
DO NOT ASSUME YOUR PLAYERS ALL
UNDERSTAND – Activity Alliance.

BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

Barriers play the biggest role
in preventing participation

PSYCHOLOGICAL

Research shows that in order to appeal, do not focus on disability. Instead, try linking your provision to their values. Highlight enjoyment and the positives of a team environment. Coaches who are passionate about disability football are key for creation and sustainability.

SOCIAL

Research shows that a negative first experience, can put participants off from coming back. Ensure that your session is fun and welcoming, encourage friends to also come along to the session.

PHYSICAL

Is your location accessible for all? Accessibility often focuses on wheelchair access, but it is a lot broader. Does it have appropriate facilities? Is the ground suitable, does it need to be indoor or 3G? Is it next to a busy main road? Can you ensure the space is safe?

70% OF DISABLED
PEOPLE ARE
MOTIVATED TO BE
ACTIVE TO IMPROVE
OR MAINTAIN THEIR
PHYSICAL HEALTH

ACTIVITY ALLIANCE

MENTAL HEALTH FOOTBALL

Like physical health we all have mental health. As with our physical health having a mental problem can affect us all regardless of age, race, religion or income level. Mental health problems cover a range of conditions involving changes in emotion, thinking or behaviour (or a combination).

Exercise is proven to have a positive effect on physical and mental wellbeing. Chemicals released during physical activity lift the mood and help reduce stress. Football sessions can enhance the development of informal support networks and friendships between mental health service users.

Attracting participants and removing barriers

- Afternoon Sessions work best often medication causes significant side effects in the morning
- Keep the session day and times consistent
- Brand your session as a 'Mental Wellbeing' project rather than a 'mental health' project. An impact of the stigma around mental health means that many people don't identify with the term Mental health

Key contacts

General mental health information

Mind - www.mind.org.uk

Rethink Mental Illness - www.rethink.org

NHS - www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

The FA have some resources which you may find useful, visit

<https://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/inclusion-and-anti-discrimination/mental-health-and-wellbeing> to find out more.



WOMEN AND GIRLS

Weetabix Wildcats

Wildcats is for girls aged 5-11 who want to get involved with football for the very first time or want the opportunity to play with other girls their own age. The wildcat centres aim to boost confidence, meet new friends, get active and introduce football.

We believe that, with the right support and coaching, players with a disability can achieve their potential and by recognising everyone as an individual as opposed to an impairment, this is possible. We have wildcat centres covering the whole of North Riding, providing opportunities to girls, all centres should ensure that they reflect the diversity of the population of the local area and must be inclusive of all players with a disability, impairment or any long term health condition.

To find out more about wildcats, visit our website at <https://www.northridingfa.com/players/youth/girls/wildcats>

Female Friendly Toolkit

The female friendly toolkit provides practical advice for clubs to help develop an environment that encourages women and girls to get involved in football.

To find out more information and access the toolkit, visit <https://www.thefa.com/womens-girls-football/female-football-toolkit>



“

I started playing football for a local team when I was 9 years old, football was and still is my life. When I played mainstream football I always found it hard to fit in because of the Cerebral palsy and more often than not found myself on the side lines as a sub. My game time was always limited even though I always gave everything and more.

I think I have gained in confidence and certainly my skills have greatly improved. I enjoy all aspects of CP football and think I have finally found a place within the team where I can shine. It has also given me the opportunity to meet other people with CP who also share the love of football and many friendships have been formed.

Emilia Brownlees – North East and Yorkshire Cerebral Palsy Football Team.

”

RECREATIONAL SESSIONS

For some players, affiliated football isn't an option because of the lack of time or because they don't want to play competitive football. At North Riding there are several recreation centres, which are designed to cater for both adults and children and allow players to play football in an organised but informal way.



Hambleton District Council Recreational Centre Case Study

We created this provision as there seemed to be very little opportunity within the local area for participants with a disability to participate in football activity. I'm very passionate about creating opportunities for people to participate in sport and believe that all participants with an interest should feel valued and included. These sessions were so needed in the local area and it's great to see so many of our participants grow in confidence and it is great to see that they are enjoying the experience that football offers.

RECRUITMENT - We promoted the sessions via our social media channels and through our email contacts/ participants database of people of whom have attended other groups that we deliver. We have been in contact with local schools in the area, SENCO's, care providers, local child development centre in Northallerton and the local Mencap group in Northallerton as well as some further groups Northdale, Chopsticks and Yatton House Stokesley.

IMPACT - The sessions have allowed participants to meet up with new and old friends, take part in new activities and learn new skills and develop these skills. Weekly opportunity to do some exercise in a fun setting. The sessions have been popular and participants have really enjoyed the opportunity that these weekly sessions provide.



I think it is hugely beneficial to get local partners and groups to assist with player recruitment in the early stages. Photos to promote what takes place at sessions can be of massive help, incentives such as trainer of the week and certificates for participating can also help promote achievement of participants and may encourage people to come along to participate.



North Riding Junior Disability League

The format of this league is 5v5 and it is played at a central venue, once a month. The teams involved in the league decide who would like to host a date and time and the league arrange the fixtures for that event where all teams will play each other in a tournament format.

The league operates mixed teams at Under 16, Under 12 and Under 8, with a maximum of 4-year age banding.

North East Ability Counts League

This league adopts the principle of 'ability banding' where there are enough participating teams and clear differences in the ability level of players.

Premier League Level – Players participating at this level can cope physically, have good levels of spatial awareness, excellent ability to understand tactics and good levels of physical strength and fitness.

Championship Level - Players participating at this level are mobile, have spatial and tactical awareness, knowledge of the laws of the game and have a good level of fitness.

League Level: Players participating at this level have limited mobility, spatial awareness and fitness.



TALENT PATHWAY

The FA disability football performance unit has a clear vision: to develop winning England teams. In order to do so, the mission is to deliver the world's leading talent programme for disability sport, maximising player and coach potential.

The Pathway comprises of FA Disability Player Development Centres (PDCs), FA Regional Impairment Specific Centres of Excellence and FA England Impairment Specific Development Squads.

FA England Talent Days

FA England Talent Days will be recognised as the first selective environment in the Player Pathway. The Programme will identify and signpost players to the 'right' environment at that point in time (they will run on a yearly basis to ensure that players can be re-assessed and kept in the Talent System). ETDs will not be viewed as player development environments. The England Talent Day will be underpinned with the formation of local Disability Football Recruitment Networks responsible for driving player identification and recruitment.

What do you need to ensure is in place?

Affiliation

Disability teams are required to be affiliated just like any other team. Affiliation is essentially a membership to the County FA and it allows your club access to funding schemes which may become available throughout the season. When affiliating it also allows you to take out our Public Liability insurance as well as Personal Accident to cover everyone underneath your club set up. Setting up a new club can be quite a daunting process, but our staff team are here to help. Alternatively you can look at our affiliation guide by visiting <https://www.northridingfa.com/leagues-and-clubs/affiliation>

Staffing Ratios

Ratios of volunteers to players should be based on a risk assessment of the needs of the individuals, some players may require one to one support at times. As a minimum there should always be 2 coaches on site.

Player Registration

Online player registration allows clubs to store player information on the Whole Game System. When player information has been added to the system, it remains there for annual registration before the start of each season, significantly reducing administration time for club volunteers and removing the requirement of repeat paper forms. The benefits have been identified as; Maintaining a single record of players within a secure system and clubs will be provided with a single view of players in their Whole Game System. Please visit our player registration site, by visiting <https://www.northridingfa.com/leagues-and-clubs/players-and-people/player-registration> or contact us, we are happy to help!



SAFEGUARDING

We are committed to creating and maintaining safe and positive environments. We support our clubs in their responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and adults involved in football.

Minimum expectations and Standards

We identify all children and adults playing within a PAN ability session/Team as vulnerable. Therefore, understanding safeguarding policies and procedures is a priority. All youth team coaches are required to complete DBS checks before involvement.

We also are supporting all coaches to have an up to date FA Safeguarding Children Qualification as a minimum standard. All clubs must have a Welfare Officer within their club set up and have undertaken appropriate training, if it is an adult team, we also need a designated Adult Welfare Officer who has completed the Safeguarding Adults Module (Online).

To find out more click visit our website at <https://www.northridingfa.com/about/rules-and-regulations/safeguarding-and-welfare>

Safeguarding contacts at the CFA

Safeguarding at North Riding FA	Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm 01642 717770 safeguarding@northridingfa.co.uk
Further Support	NSPCC 0808 800 5000 Monday – Friday 9am – 10pm Weekends 9am – 6pm Safeguarding Inbox NRCFA safeguarding@northridingfa.com Emergency 999
Out of Hours contacts available	Local Children’s Services Internet search: ‘Children’s Services’ followed by your town/city name



We are happy to help, please contact us

Useful Contacts for your Records

North Yorkshire Sport	www.northyorkshiresport.co.uk
Tees Valley Sport	www.teesvalleysport.co.uk
Activity Alliance	www.activityalliance.org.uk

Disability Specific Contacts

Cerebral Palsy Sport	www.cpsport.org
Wheelchair FA	www.thewfa.org.uk
Amputee FA	www.theeafa.co.uk
UK Deaf Sport	www.ukdeafsport.org.uk
British Blind Sport	www.britishblindsport.org.uk
National Autistic Society	www.autism.org.uk
Mencap Sport	www.mencap.org.uk
Limb Power	www.limbpower.com

Local Authorities

You may also want to contact your local authority, as they will have a good understanding of provision in your area.

Parent Carer Forums

Each local authority has a voice for parent carers. Forums are an excellent way to engage with your target audience. Not only will you be able to advertise via these networks, you'll be able to utilise them as consultations within your local area to find out what people would like.



Find where your local forum is by visiting
www.nnpcf.org.uk

ACTION PLAN – CLUBS

Objective	Tactics	Timescale	Responsibility	Cost
1. Community Engagement Consultation	Engagement toolkit – football foundation			
2. Education of club members	FA Playmaker Course Introduction to disability football (Online Module) Safeguarding Adults Module (Online) Para Talent ID Workshop			
3. Identify specific issues at your club which may make it difficult for people with disability to become involved in your club.	Audit of the club (disabled toilets, access to clubhouse / changing rooms, parking) Audit communication channels - using Activity Alliance resources			
4. Affiliation & Safeguarding	Ensure that you have affiliated your session to the CFA Ensure that you have all safeguarding requirements in place			
5. Equipment and Advertising	Create a poster to display and advertise. Have a look at what equipment will be needed			
6. Networking	Research local support services and touchpoints within the community to engage participants			
7. Create 1 Disability Team	Enter a team into a league School – Club Links – To work with local schools to identify children with a disability who may like to participate Funding – Grow the Game			

ACTION PLAN – FACILITY OPERATOR

Objective	Tactics	Timescale	Cost	Key Partners
1. Community Consultation	Engage with clubs to see who already hosts a disability section Engagement toolkit – football foundation			
2. Identify specific issues at your facility which may make it difficult for people with disability to become involved	Audit of the facility (disabled toilets, access to clubhouse/ changing rooms, parking)			
3. Affiliation and Safeguarding	If hosting a standalone session please ensure that you have affiliated to the CFA. - Ensure all safeguarding requirements are in place			
4. Establish Recreational Football session	Working with local partners such as community organisations/ clubs			
5. Education	FA Safeguarding adults module Delivering an excellent service for disabled customers (activity alliance) Introduction to disability football (online module)			

CONTACT US!

We are committed to supporting you with setting up your own teams around the county with a vision of providing opportunities for everyone. We are extremely proud and passionate about disability football. There are over 450 individuals playing across both our Junior and Adult Pan leagues and recreational centres.

Additional Training and Support

We are committed to providing support to our clubs, as well as sign posting them to additional training and resources from partner organisations. To find out more please visit our support page by visiting:

www.northridingfa.com/players/disability/support-and-training

We are here to support you

Disability Lead at North Riding CFA

Jasmine Morris | Football Development Officer

Jasmine.Morris@northridingfa.com

Phone: 01642 717779

Safeguarding at North Riding FA

Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm

01642 717770

safeguarding@northridingfa.co.uk

Thanks and Credits

Credit for information provided in this engagement toolkit are reserved for Activity Alliance and Sport England.





www.northridingfa.com