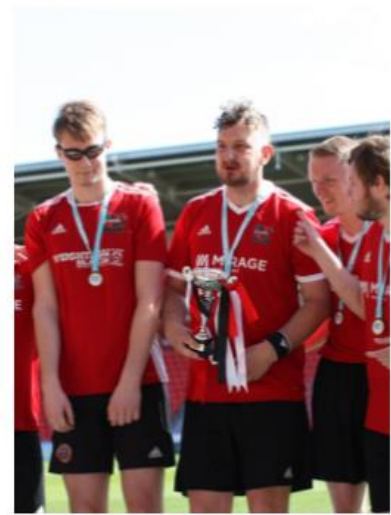




Sheffield FA

Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2023 - 2026

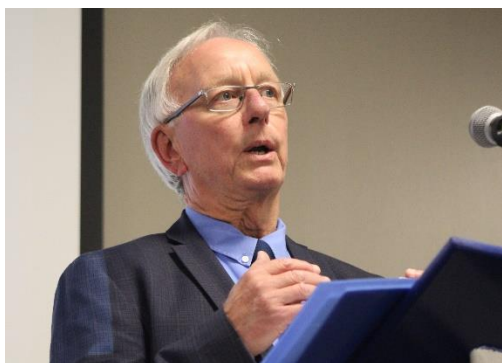


Statements

Sheffield & Hallamshire County Football Association is committed to inclusion. Following an assessment of FA and Office of National Statistics Data this Inclusion Action Plan details the main identified challenges locally, and the positive action we will take to help address these challenges. The ultimate aim of the Association is to create a truly inclusive game where players, coaches referees and volunteers can thrive and achieve their own football aspirations.

Brian Coddington

Sheffield & Hallamshire County Football Association Chair.



As the new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion lead I am looking forward to working across the county to deliver this action plan. It's vital that we keep this document under review, monitoring progress on a regular basis and amending it where appropriate. This will be one of the first responsibilities of the reformed Inclusion Advisory Group. I am keen to increase the diversity of the voices that are part of this process so if you are interested in getting involved, please get in touch.

While there are lots of actions in this document it doesn't cover everything as there are activities taking place in clubs across the county that are playing their own part in ensuring football really is for all. As part of the ongoing monitoring please share these stories so we can build a strong picture of what is really happening across our region.

Rachel Habergham

Sheffield & Hallamshire County Football Association Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Director



Sheffield & Hallamshire County FA Board Statement

It is recognised that decision making is improved when a board is able to draw upon and harness a diverse range of opinions. Gender is an important aspect of diversity and therefore Sheffield & Hallamshire County Football Association will, in line with the FA Code of Governance, work towards ensuring that at least 30% of each gender sits on its Board.

The Office of National Statistics census data 2021 shows ethnic diversity and population sizes (%) across the Sheffield & Hallamshire County FA region. The County FA Board is committed to ensuring that its makeup reflects this diversity.

The Board is also mindful that gender and ethnicity are considered along with additional factors which could include but are not limited to age, disability, LGBTQ+ and socio-economic inclusion.

Intent	Action	Responsibility	Timescale
To increase gender diversity on the S&H CFA Board from the current (Sept 2023) 12.5% female to at least 30% female	Recruit at least two additional female Board members.	Chair	March 2024
To develop a culture of inclusion at the highest level and across the organisation.	To appoint an independent Board member to lead on equality, diversity and inclusion matters.	Chair	December 2023
To increase the ethnic diversity of S&H CFA Board to ensure that the Board is aligned to ONS Census 2021 data and representative of the communities it serves	To ensure that the Board includes at least one Trustee from Asian or Black heritage.	Chair	December 2023
To align the age profile (average age) of the Board to mirror the average age of the general population who are eligible to join the Board (18+).	To reduce the average age of Board membership from the current 58 to 50	Chair	Ongoing
To align the sexual orientation and gender identity of Board members to ONS data 2021	To ensure that the Board includes at least one Trustee who is not straight or heterosexual.	Chair	Ongoing
To ensure that the Board makeup is reflective of the population experiencing long term health or disability.	To ensure that the Board includes at least two Trustees who consider themselves to be disabled under the equality act or who have a long term physical or mental health condition.	Chair	Ongoing

The Board Statement will be kept under review by the Inclusion Advisory Group.

Introduction

The [Sheffield & Hallamshire County FA business strategy](#) references our general commitment to promoting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion throughout all areas of work undertaken by the Association.

To refine our thinking and to ensure that our efforts are targeted, data was captured in early 2023 to provide an up-to-date picture of the diversity across all main football participant groups and compares football's participant profile with that of the main local authority areas within our County FA region.

Data was captured via the following:

- FA Equality Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Dashboard.
- 2021 Office of National Statistics Census data.
- The County FA Board Tracker.
- The FA State of Play survey.

High-level Objectives

The data collected has enabled SHCFA to identify areas of underrepresentation and to consider positive actions to address identified underrepresentation. These actions have been grouped into four high level objectives which are referenced throughout the document.

The high-level objectives are:

High Level Objectives	
1. Improve Gender Equality	2. Ensure football is inclusive to ethnic minority groups
3. Increase opportunities with disability football	4. Effective engagement & communication with under represented communities
Building Blocks to enable Football for All	

What is the data telling us?

The high-level findings from the data show:

- Female participants are underrepresented across all areas of the game. This is particularly true with referees and coaches where only 6% and 7% respectively are female.
- Players of Asian heritage are underrepresented. This is particularly the case within Sheffield where 10% of the population are Asian, which compares to less than 1% of the playing population.
- Participants (Players, Referees, Coaches, Club Officials) of Black heritage are unrepresented. This is particularly the case in Sheffield.
- Participants with Muslim beliefs are underrepresented in Sheffield & Rotherham.
- There is shortfall in provision and opportunities in football for those with a disability.

High Level Statistics

Objective	High-Level Statistics
Improve Gender Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11% of the playing population are (or identify) as female. • 6% of the 737 referees who completed the EDI Survey are female. • 7% of the 4978 coaches who completed the EDI survey are female. • As of April 2023, there are no female Trustees on the SHCFA Board of Directors.
Ensure football is inclusive to ethnic minority groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2021 Census Data shows the ethnic minority population is 21% in Sheffield, 9% in Rotherham, 7% in Doncaster and 4% in Barnsley. • Of the 4354 players who completed the EDI survey only 1% are Asian, 3% Black, 4% Mixed, 1% Other. • Of the 1098 referees who completed the EDI survey <10 are from ethnic minorities. • Of the 1153 coaches who completed the EDI survey, only 2% are Black, <10 Asian, 1% Mixed and 1% Other.
Ensure football is inclusive to ethnic minority groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SHCFA has 948 registered players in season 2022-23. • SHCFA has two pan disability leagues, the South Yorkshire Ability Counts League (Adult and Junior) and Flourish Mental Health League • As of 2022 there are no female leagues for players with a disability. • Of the 1153 coaches who completed the EDI Survey the % of coaches with health conditions, inclusive of disabilities is <10
Effective engagement & communication with underrepresented communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As of April 2023, the County FA Board, Council and executive is entirely white/white British. • The County FA communicates through its own channels and platforms, which potentially restricts connections with prospective participants. • The County FA supports FA initiatives, but it can do more to create awareness and educate stakeholders by connecting national campaigns with local participants and their lived experiences.

Objective 1 – Improving Gender Equality

Objective	Action	Complete by
To increase the number of registered girls and women playing across the SHCFA region.	<p>Target 1-star England Accredited clubs with a male pathway to develop female sessions using FA Weetabix Wildcats (8 x new) and Squad (3 x new) programmes.</p> <p>1 x FE College in each LA region to develop a female flexi league.</p> <p>Attain 30 teams by 2026.</p>	December 2025
Increase the number of recreational opportunities for women and girls in SHCFA	<p>The SHCFA Women’s Recreation Officer role and scope of work to be extended beyond Euro host cities. <i>(Detailed within the 2023-24 Operational Plan)</i></p> <p>Develop walking football opportunities for females.</p> <p>Develop a walking football league in year 2.</p> <p>Year 3 increase female walking football team numbers by 50%.</p> <p>Introduce Futsal for female players. Target 5/6 clubs.</p> <p>Year 2, develop a new league to increase participation.</p> <p>Year 3, increase teams by 50%.</p>	<p>Season 2023-24</p> <p>Season 2024-25</p> <p>Season 2025-26</p> <p>Season 2024-25</p>
Increase the number of female referees within the County by 50%	<p>Deliver female only discounted referee course – Accommodate 15 females each year. (45 new referees)</p> <p>Recruit and develop a female referee mentor/ observer and role model.</p> <p>Target 10 female referees to achieve promotion in year 1.</p>	<p>Season 2023-24</p> <p>Season 2023-24</p> <p>Season 2023-24</p>
Ensure the Board and staff is reflective of the SHCFA demographic	<p>Undertake a Board Skills Audit</p> <p>Encourage greater diversity across Board and advisory group membership.</p>	<p>January 2023</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
Increase the number of female coaches, and females attending CPD events.	<p>Target - 10 female through the new female coaches’ community to attend CPD aimed at new/ introduction to football coaches, with mentor support – minimum of 4 sessions a season.</p>	<p>Session 1 – Sept 2023</p> <p>Session 2 – Nov 2023</p> <p>Session 3 – Feb 2024</p> <p>Session 4 - April 2024</p>

Objective 2 – Ensuring football is inclusive to ethnic minority groups.

Objective	Action	Complete by
Increase the number of playing opportunities for Asian heritage participants.	<p>Establish key strategic partners and partner clubs.</p> <p>Work in partnership with identified community partners to gain valuable research and insight to help address underrepresentation.</p> <p>Understand and address specific timing challenges and create opportunities for children who attend Mosque schools.</p> <p>Work with Community Leaders, Iman and leaders to develop opportunities at 2 mosques in each area.</p> <p>Targeted effort around:</p> <p>Year 1: Sheffield & Rotherham</p> <p>Year 2: Sheffield, Rotherham & Doncaster</p> <p>Year 3: Sheffield, Rotherham, Doncaster, Barnsley and surrounding SHCFA areas</p>	<p>Season 2023-24</p> <p>Season 2024-25</p> <p>Season 2025-26</p>
Increase the number of opportunities for Black heritage participants	<p>Establish key strategic partners and partner clubs.</p> <p>Work in partnership with identified community partners to gain valuable research and insight to help address underrepresentation.</p>	Season 2023-24
Increase the number of qualified referees from ethnic minority groups	<p>Ensure effective communication is used to promote referees' courses and target areas/populations which include high ethnic minorities.</p> <p>Recruit a more diverse referee mentor and referee deployed workforce.</p>	<p>Season 2023-24</p> <p>Season 2023-24</p>
Increase the number of qualified coaches from ethnic minority groups	<p>Work in partnership with the FA to provide a bespoke Coach Education offering for ethnic minority coaches.</p> <p>Target CPD opportunities for coaches in high areas of ethnic minorities</p>	<p>Season 2023-34</p> <p>Season 2023-34</p>

Objective 3 – Increase opportunities with disability football.

Objective	Action	Complete by
To increase the number of registered disabled players within established SHCFA affiliated leagues and clubs.	Consultation with SYACL to gain an understanding of growth capacity, and appetite to grow.	Season 2022-23
	Target 2- and 3-star England Accredited clubs with a male and female pathway to develop disability sessions using FA Disability Weetabix Wildcats, Comet and Just Play (Disability) programmes.	Season 2023-24
Develop new mental health and wellbeing opportunity for Women	Consultation with The Flourish League to gain an understanding of growth capacity, and appetite to grow.	Season 2023-24
Develop a new S&H CFA led Pan Disability League to provide playing opportunities for females (and extended opportunities for males) & to provide consistency of provision throughout the calendar year.	Expression of interest sent to England Accredited Clubs	Season 2022-23
	Identify a suitable and affordable central venue to host the league.	Season 2022-23
	Establish league governance and management rules to help ensure clarity of offer and consistent player experience.	July 2023
Raise Awareness with referees about disability and disability football	Develop 'Disability Awareness' workshop to a minimum of 20 referees per season.	Season 2023-24
	Deliver an 'Awareness of Neuro Diversity' workshop.	Season 2023-24
	Promote the Coaching Disability Football – FA Boot Room to all newly qualified referees.	Season 2023-24
	Attend regional Referee Associations to deliver awareness workshops.	Season 2023-24
Increase opportunities for Blind & VI, Cerebral Palsy and Powerchair football	Work with partners including NHS to increase opportunities in SHCFA.	Season 2023-24
	Work with the Barnsley VI community groups and VI Schools to develop a new opportunity in the County	Season 2023-24
	Work within Rotherham to develop a new Powerchair opportunity within the County	Season 2023-24
Increase opportunities for people with disabilities to stay in the game and become coaches	Identify 12 coaches/volunteers. Deliver a 6-day programme over 6 months to complete the FA Playmaker and the Introduction to football with full bursary and supported by a disability ambassador throughout the programme and with their clubs.	Season 2023-24

Objective 4 – Effective engagement and communication with underrepresented communities

Objective	Action	Complete by
Ensure all recruitment (staff & Board) follows best practice.	Consult with The IAG Chair when a vacancy occurs – consider any role adjustment which may be required, or which may assist with EDI objectives.	Ongoing
	Deliver recruitment campaigns which has the ability to reach all sections of our community.	Ongoing
	All recruitment packs to include a SHCFA commitment to equality statement and an equality monitoring form.	Ongoing
	All staff involved in recruitment to undertake equality in recruitment training.	October 2023
	Shortlisting and recruitment exercises should be consistent and include clear, objective criteria.	Ongoing
To ensure that www and social media content is inclusive.	Undertake an audit of website content to ensure that is reflective of our game locally and highlights the key messages within this IAP.	Jan 2024
	To review SHCFA Governance and Discipline pages to ensure that they are clear about our position on abuse and discrimination, and potential sanctions which could be imposed upon those found to have committed discrimination.	Jan 2024
	Actively support and promote FA messages and campaigns around inclusion.	Ongoing
	Actively support and promote FA campaigns designs to improve behaviors and drive down discrimination.	Ongoing
	To promote key faith dates	Ongoing
To ensure that SHCFA has an evidenced based approach to tackling behavioral concerns.	Work collaboratively across the inclusion, safeguarding and discipline sections to identify concerns (by type and location). Target interventions and education programmes accordingly.	October 2023
	To support The FA points deductions initiative for those teams proven to have committed serious rule breaches or discriminatory behavior.	Ongoing
Ensure that the SHCFA understands EDI challenges and possible mitigations.	Appoint an IAG Chair/Trustee and reform the Inclusion Advisory Group (IAG). The IAG make up should be representative of the game locally.	October 2024
	IAG to meet quarterly to review issues within the game (disciplinary / discrimination report)	Quarterly
	IAG to meet quarterly to review progress against the Inclusion Action Plan.	Quarterly
	All staff and Board members to undertake EDI training at least annually.	Jan 2024

	An Inclusion objective to be added within all County FA staff PDRs.	Season 2022-23
Ensure young people are represented in the strategic decision making of SHCFA.	SHCFA representative to the FA National Youth Council to lead a local Youth Council/or similar vehicle to hear the youth voice. Youth Council lead to attend Board meetings and represent the voice of young people. The Designated Safeguarding Officer to work with the Youth Council Lead to ensure that young player perspective and safeguarding concerns are included with operational planning and evidenced within the FA Safeguarding 365 standard.	October 2023 Season 2023-24 Season 2023-24
SHCFA has a clearly stated commitment to Equality Diversity and Inclusion.	Ensure all relevant policies and the Inclusion Action Plan are public facing documents. To include a dedicated section within the SHCFA season report which highlights relevant progress. The IAG Chair to be appointed as a trustee and to report EDI and IAG progress at Board level.	Jan 2024 Season 2023-24 report May 2023
To ensure/improve facility access for underrepresented groups	Influence facility development plans to ensure equal access for underrepresented groups is built in to plans from the beginning of projects. To include SHCFA representation on new facility steering groups to ensure ongoing equality of provision and maintenance of stated development aims by facility operators.	Ongoing Season 2023-24
To Improve SHCFA insights.	To identify and work with a research partner to conduct insight & research to further understand our communities and underrepresented groups, identify any additional support required and opportunities to remove barriers.	Season 2023-24
To promote good practice and community Champions	To include within each SHCFA monthly newsletter an article which highlights progress and good practice in relation to addressing underrepresentation. To form an independent panel and undertake an anonymised assessment of FA Grassroots Award nominations.	Season 2023-24 May 2023

Objective 4 – Effective engagement and communication with underrepresented communities

Objective	Action	Complete by
Ensure all recruitment (staff & Board) follows best practice.	Consult with The IAG Chair when a vacancy occurs – consider any role adjustment which may be required, or which may assist with EDI objectives.	Ongoing
	Deliver recruitment campaigns which has the ability to reach all sections of our community.	Ongoing
	All recruitment packs to include a SHCFA commitment to equality statement and an equality monitoring form.	Ongoing
	All staff involved in recruitment to undertake equality in recruitment training.	October 2023
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To ensure that www and social media content is inclusive.	Undertake an audit of website content to ensure that is reflective of our game locally and highlights the key messages within this IAP.	Jan 2024
	To review SHCFA Governance and Discipline pages to ensure that they are clear about our position on abuse and discrimination, and potential sanctions which could be imposed upon those found to have committed discrimination.	Jan 2024
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	Actively support and promote FA campaigns designs to improve behaviors and drive down discrimination.	Ongoing
	To promote key faith dates	Ongoing
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What next?

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