



2023-2024 Annual Report



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



Peter Dicksbury
Chair

I am pleased to introduce the 2023-2024 Annual Report. The Company continues to successfully deliver football not just in the traditional way but also across all aspects of the community and really appreciate the support of everyone in so doing.

As we complete the third and final year of our current Strategy, I am delighted by the growth in participants, teams, and referees, particularly given the reduction in FA funding to County FA's. The significant growth in the girls and women's teams and the success in recruiting referees', their subsequent promotion, and the improvement of pitches and facilities are certainly some of the highlights of the last three years. I am very proud of what we have done in retaining and developing the game in the county. We provide a fantastic service to our leagues, clubs, referees' and participants which is reflected in the customer satisfaction survey and a real credit to our executive workforce.

We continued the fantastic work in developing football provision with a Girls Emerging Talent Centre, Futsal, Walking Football, all continuing to be popular. We also successfully retained sponsorship of all our competitions sponsored. Our Awards Evening was a highlight of the year, recognising the work many of our volunteers carry out week in week out.

Safeguarding remains at the heart of everything we do as we ensure that children and adults at risk are safe. Walter the Wolf is prevalent in much of our work. The NSPCC and The FA recognise our work in this area as outstanding and is a credit to everyone involved. We are also working towards The FA Equality and FA Corporate Governance Standards. Our work towards The FA's Corporate Governance Standard has seen recruitment of independent directors, revision of Articles of Association, disbanded our Council, and review of the roles and responsibilities of each Director giving them individual ownership of many aspects of our work.

As you can see, I am really proud of our achievements; it is a privilege for me to Chair the organisation and I would like to thank Westmorland County FA Directors, staff, match officials, volunteers, administrators and sponsors for their continued hard work and commitment to the game and look forward to working with you in future.





CEO Review of the Year

James Pattison
Chief Executive

The 2023-2024 season has seen a year of growth and development here at Westmorland County FA, one of which I am immensely proud of.

We were able to run a number of unique season long projects through the FA's Football Delivery Fund and this saw the delivery of our Positive Football Ambassador, Kick Start a Career in Coaching, Walter the Wolf school delivery and Mental Health campaign 'In it together'. Another noticeable highlight has been the creation of our Advisory Boards for groups dedicated for the Women's & Girls game as well as a specific Mental Health working group. We have also successfully implemented a Youth Forum and all three of these groups will be invaluable in shaping the work we do here at Westmorland County FA. County Cup final attendances were up drastically on previous seasons, highlighting just how much local grassroots football means to us all. We were proud to launch our FA Girls Emerging Talent Centre back in September and the first year of delivery has been a great success.

Behind the scenes here at the County FA, we have made huge strides towards achieving the Sport England Code of Sports Governance as well as achieving the Equality Standard for Sport Preliminary Level. We once again passed our Safeguarding Operating Standard from the NSPCC and were highlighted for our work, especially around youth engagement.

One thing that hasn't changed in the County is the amazing work that you, the volunteers do on a daily basis. We have a community that is passionate about the game and is driven to develop it. The leagues, clubs, coaches, referees, volunteers and spectators are what make football happen in Westmorland and we are committed to supporting you in whatever role you have in the game.

I must also say a huge thank you to our staff team and directors. We have just four full time members of staff who are all passionate and driven to develop and service the game. Our directors play a crucial role too, all in a volunteer capacity and our work wouldn't be possible without their support.

We are excited to enter a new four year Business Strategy that outlines our vision for the game here in Westmorland. We have developed a number of strategic objectives underlined by our new clear purpose "Serving all aspects of the grassroots game, by providing safe and inclusive opportunities through the power of football."



Board of Directors 2023/2024



Peter Dicksbury
Chair
Facilities Representative



Peter McDonnell
Vice-Chair
County Cups Representative



Tris Heaward
Equality Diversity & Inclusion
Lead



Steven Jamieson
Health & Wellbeing Lead



David O'Callaghan
Referees Representative



Peter Rushton
Finance Director



Helen Russell
Board Safeguarding Champion



Keith Singleton
Football Development
Representative

LIFE VICE PRESIDENT

G Aplin

VICE PRESIDENT

J R Cotter

M A Crossley

G A Roe

R W Wilkinson

CHAIR

P G Dicksbury

VICE CHAIR

P A McDonnell

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

J Pattison

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

T Heaward

S Jamieson

D O'Callaghan

P Rushton

H Russell

K Singleton



Meet the Team



James Pattison
Chief Executive Officer



Peter Leonard
Safeguarding, Referee Development
& EDI Officer



Sophie Hughes
Football Development Officer



Jim Bone
Football Operations Officer



Denis Elkins
Positive Football Ambassador



Ian Hunt
Club and Community
Facility Development Officer

Strategy 2021-2024 Objectives



Retain and Grow Participation

Retain participation in the male game
Retain and increase participation in the female game
Increase participation in the disability game



Enhance the Local Infrastructure

Coaches – More and better skilled coaches, with a focus on female recruitment
Aspirational - Every team to have a qualified coach

Officials – More and better skilled officials, with a focus on female recruitment
Aspirational - Every match to have a qualified match official

Playing Environments – Accessible playing environments and facilities to meet demand
Aspirational – To secure a new community pitch & home for the Westmorland County FA



High Performing County FA

Outstanding governance
Manage the game effectively
Safeguarding Operating Standards
Equality Standard
Financially sound
Positive reputation

Membership Engagement
Club and league support
Workforce recognition
Digital support
Marketing & Communication
County products and services

Safeguarding



Helen Russell
Board Safeguarding Champion

We're thrilled to report another successful period of progress in safeguarding. We're reshaping the local perception of safeguarding, moving beyond mere compliance to deliver innovative projects and preventive measures that make a real difference.

This season, we achieved a country leading record for parent safeguarding course completion rates. Our PlaySafe competition, offering young players the chance to experience Carlisle United or Kendal Town, was instrumental in this success. It provided an unforgettable stadium experience for local players while promoting safeguarding.

In addition, we've been educating local school children about crowd behaviour and positive role models through free classroom based lessons. Our free children's book, complete with interactive tasks, has been well-received. For ongoing updates and resources, please visit our website.

Our Board Safeguarding Champion Helen Russell has said "Safeguarding at Westmorland County FA is a great place and we have been some big strides in this area. Last season we ran a successful play safe campaign and saw a decrease in poor participant behaviour.

We have had great feedback from the NSPCC when they've observed our work and we continue to make football a safe place for everyone in Westmorland. We have also put a lot of time into developing the voice of a young person and implementing that across the organisation. The Youth Engagement Plan and Youth Forum groups are imperative to that."



Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Equality, diversity, and inclusion are relatively new areas of focus for Westmorland County FA, but we believe we've made significant progress this past season.

We have established an advisory board dedicated to mental health and launched our "In It Together" campaign. Every adult player received a small self-help booklet providing information about available support for various issues, including mental health and addiction. This initiative was introduced at the Invitation Cup final, where the referee team wore green shirts sponsored by the BRO Room, thanks to the generous support of Hadwins Motor Group. We also developed a second advisory board focused specifically on the Women's & Girls game.

We've also taken steps to support young people with special educational needs by creating a referee course in partnership with The Ref Stop.

This course was offered free of charge to young referees who are accessing additional learning support or have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences to help build confidence and develop new skills.

We also developed and delivered our first Diversity & Inclusion Action plan and look forward to continuing this work in the coming season.



Westmorland County Cup Winners



**Senior Challenge Cup sponsored by
Kirkby Lonsdale Bathrooms**

Appleby FC

**Benevolent Trophy sponsored by
Gan Yam Brewery**

Kirkoswald FC

**Junior Cup sponsored by
Stramongate Press**

Kirkby Stephen FC

**Invitation Trophy sponsored by
Hadwins Motor Group**

Kendal United FC

**Women's Senior Challenge Cup
GT7 Academy Ladies**

**Under 18 Boys Cup sponsored by
Sweet Treats by Martin Frickle**

Holme Athletic

**Minor Cup sponsored by Webb's
Kitchens**

Heathwaite United Youth

**Dallam Tower Cup sponsored by
Webbs Kitchens**

Wattsfield United Youth

**Under 13 Boys Cup sponsored by The
Rick Lowe Fitness Suite**

Milnthorpe & District Youth

**SM Jones Trophy sponsored by
Bowes Dairy Produce**

Wattsfield United Youth

U16 Girls Cup sponsored by Joey's

Wattsfield Youth Girls

U14 Girls Cup sponsored by Joey's

Kendal United Girls

**U12 Girls Cup sponsored by Joey's
Wattsfield Youth Girls**



Key Performance Indicators



Female Pathway - 482 registered players

We are over 20% above our female player KPI target for the 2021-2024 period. There are Wildcats Centre's running in Westmorland for girls age 5-11 years, playing football for the first time. There is also an Over 35s Female Just Play Centre at Dallam School. The Westmorland County FA Emerging Talent Centre ran for its first season in 2023/24. The centre provides local opportunities for female players from U10-U16.



Male Pathway - 2565 registered players

We are 19% above our male player KPI target for the 2021-2024 period. The number of teams from the Westmorland area in the Westmorland League for open age male teams has grown over the past three years. There has also been an additional 32 Westmorland teams in the Kent Valley Junior Football League over the past three years. The CFA run an U18s league to support the transition from youth football into Open Age. There are also a weekly Walking Football session at Dallam School.



Referees - 72 registered referees

We have increased our number of referees and developed a stronger infrastructure to support match officials. We have an increasing number of match officials that cover games regularly across all our leagues. We have also completed and delivered our first EDI referee course to support referees from historically under represented groups. Another great achievement has seen three of our referees join the FA CORE programme.



Quality Grass Pitches

13 Grass Pitches are currently rated as Good or Advanced. Our KPI was 8 for quality grass pitches and we currently have 13 Good or Advanced sites. We currently have 80 grass pitches with 9 pitches on the Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund. We aim to have all our club grass pitches regularly inspected on Pitch Power to offer guidance to clubs on pitch maintenance and renovations.

Facilities & Investment



During the season we have been supporting clubs with Football Foundation applications for maintenance machinery, grass pitch improvement and clubhouse development. We have also been involved in the development of the new Playing Pitch Strategy for Westmorland and Furness. This is designed to set priorities for sport in the area and provides evidence to support management and investment decisions.

There are currently 13 grass pitches which are good or advanced in Westmorland. The pitch quality is identified following a Pitch Power assessment. Pitch Power is an app which inspects pitches and gives clubs guidance on how it can be improved to support pitch maintenance programmes. Clubs with a Pitch Power report can then apply for the Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund which is a tapered six-year grant that supports clubs to enhance poor or basic pitches and to sustain good pitches. Currently there are 10 club sites in Westmorland that receive funding from the Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund.





Referees

Refereeing excellence continued to flourish this past season.

We've expanded our refereeing team through recruitment and development opportunities, ensuring comprehensive coverage across the Kent Valley League, Westmorland Under 18's League, and Westmorland Football League.

Our officials have delivered exceptional on-field performances, with over ten promotions and prestigious appointments highlighting their talent. Notably, Will Owen's selection for the FA CORE programme led to refereeing at the Premier League tournament, including matches involving Manchester United and Anderlecht, as well as representing the CORE team in Portugal at the Iber Cup.

Abigail Greenwood's achievements are equally impressive, securing a place on the Women's Emerging Talent Pathway and attaining Level 3W referee status. She will proudly officiate in the Women's National League next season.

Our monthly training sessions continue to attract growing numbers, with over 30 officials regularly attending. We're also excited to introduce a new training programme in partnership with STAT Sports, focusing on data-driven performance analysis to enhance our referees' speed, fitness, and overall well-being.

Finally, the Kent Valley League were awarded a national award at Wembley for their commitment to making refereeing safer!



Westmorland County FA Girls Emerging Talent Centre

The Westmorland County FA Emerging Talent Centre (ETC) ended its first season in June. The ETC provides local opportunities for female players where they can experience a high-quality training environment with varied football formats and increased playing time. The focus of the ETC is to develop players as an individual rather than as part of a team. Players who are involved in the ETC can continue to play for their grassroots team and/or school.

For the 2023-2024 season 80 girls were selected to be part of the ETC in the age groups U10, U12, U14 and U16. Players were also given the opportunity to take part in weekly age-appropriate Strength and Conditioning sessions and Goalkeeper specific training. The training programme ran for 30 weeks with one game for every 6-week block of sessions. Internal Small Sided games were incorporated into each block of sessions and players were also given the opportunity to play Futsal.

The players were involved in fixtures of varying formats during the season and played against other Emerging Talent Centres and grassroots teams. The final fixture for all age groups is at the end of July with Burton Albion ETC at St Georges Park.



Grassroots Football Awards 2023-2024

WCFA Lifetime Achievement

Jim Troughton

New Volunteer of the Year

Shelley Matthews (Ibis Youth)

Coach of the Year for Male Pathway

Jamie Wells (Endmoor Res)

Coach of the Year for Female Pathway

Fran Tollerson (Wattsfield)

Grounds Team of the Year

Richard Close (Kendal United)

Club of the Year

Ibis Youth

League of the Year

Kent Valley Junior Football League

Young Volunteer of the Year

Michael Gilby Steadman (Brough)

Match Official of the Year

Evan Dart

Lioness Award

Kendal United Ladies & Girls

Bobby Moore Award

Ben Close (Westmorland League)

Keeping Football Positive

Stephen Ellwood (Ibis Youth)



Financial Summary



This financial summary is for the purpose of illustration and is not intended to be exhaustive. It is a summary of the full annual report, which has been audited and will be circulated at the Annual General Meeting. Please note we have recently run an 18 month financial year.

Income

Item

FA Grants	£212,305.49
Club Affiliation / Insurance	£24,643.26
Discipline	£20,162.75
Competitions	£10,091.43
Refereeing	£9,268.54
Football Delivery	£58,714.92
Commercial	£3,470.00
Safeguarding	£1,329.92
Other Income	£15,139.35
Sales	£3,836.00

Total	£358,961.66
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Expenditure

Item

Staff Costs	£215,195.86
Building / Office	£28,767.87
Football Delivery	£41,097.01
Refereeing	£7,990.33
Commercial Expenses / Professional Fees	£11,480.63
Other	£3,803.25
Insurance	£11,228.97
Competitions	£22,874.99
Safeguarding	£3,598.55
Board Expenses	£997.43

Total	£354,416.34
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Our Partners

