





# WESTMORLAND COUNTY FA STRATEGIC SUMMARY



Our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) strategy is designed to create a culture that values differences, promotes fairness, and ensures equal opportunities for all. This strategic summary outlines our key objectives and the roadmap to achieve them.

#### Vision:

To become a leading County FA in Equality, Diversity & Inclusion where every individual, regardless of their background or circumstance, feels valued, respected, and empowered to contribute their best and be part of the game they love.

As an organisation we have identified 3 key areas of focus to begin our EDI journey. 1: Women & Girls. As the women and girls game grows nationally, it is imperative that we support players, coaches, volunteers and officials, giving equal opportunities to progress and be involved in the game. 2: Young People in Care. The number of young people in the County in care is increasing and many have suffered adverse childhood experiences. We want to ensure these young people have the opportunity to be involved in football and experience its physical and social benefits. 3. Mental Health & Wellbeing. Mental health awareness has never been higher and we want to work with local clubs and organisations to best support those involved in the game locally who may be suffering from mental health issues or at risk from suffering in the future. These 3 key areas will be supported by our commitment to developing a culture of embedding EDI across our Board of Directors and executive workforce. In addition we have developed two other areas to be considerate of based on an Equality Audit (September 2023) that we undertook. Here we found that Christians and the LGBTQ+ communities were not as represented across our game as they were in general population data for South Lakeland and Eden. We aim to address these differences with targeted campaigns to better support these groups.



# WESTMORLAND COUNTY FA STRATEGY OVERVIEW



## GOVERNANCE

Westmorland County FA is committed towards recruiting directors who are reflective of the game locally. As a County FA we are working towards achieving a minimum 30% of each gender on its Board of Directors. We now have an active ED&I lead on our Board. We also have an aspirational target to recruit 1 director from a BAME background.



## STAFF

Throughout the 2023-2024 season all of the executive staff workforce will undertake ED&I training to develop their knowledge and skill sets. All staff will input into the ED&I strategy and report to Board on progress made towards achieving the Preliminary Level of the Equality Standard for Sport as well as implementation of the strategy.



## TARGET AREA #1 WOMEN & GIRLS

Our first focus area of ED&I is the Women and Girls game. Our work in this area will include; Female only referee course, Club development fund for new female teams, running the ETC, Women's walking football / Over 35's sessions among many other projects.



## TARGET AREA #2 YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE / ACES

Our next focus area is around young people in care or who have suffered adverse childhood experiences. The key areas of work will include; Referee Course for young people who have suffered ACES, Small sides SEN provision, County Lines training for clubs / CWO's and Walter the Wolf's giving tree.



## TARGET AREA #3 MENTAL HEALTH

Our third focus area is supporting people with Mental Health issues in our football community. The key projects for this target area will include the In It Together campaign around adult addiction, Bro Room partnership, Mental Health first aid training for clubs and coaches as well as recruiting a Board lead for Health & Well being.



## CODE OF GOVERNANCE

Westmorland County FA are committed to achieving the Sport England, Code of Governance by summer 2025. This will help structure and embed our EDI work at a strategic level. We are working towards developing a more diverse board of directors.

## EQUALITY STANDARD FOR SPORT

In 2022 we achieved the Equality Standard for Sport Foundation Level. We are now working towards achieving the next step the Preliminary Level which we anticipate will be ready for submission in spring 2024.

## POLICY

We will ensure all policies and procedures relating to EDI are up to date, reviewed on an annual basis and fit Westmorland County FA as an organisation. The CEO and Board will monitor and develop new policy as and where appropriate.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We have recently recruited two new independent directors with one position leading on EDI at board level. The director will work closely with the staff workforce and help shape strategy, implementation and review, ensuring EDI is a key agenda item at Board. The County FA have an aspiration to recruit 1 director from a BAME background.

## TRAINING

All Board of Directors and CEO will be supported with adequate training opportunities relating to EDI. The County FA are committed to securing some external EDI training for those involved at a strategic level.

## IAG

During the 2023/2024 season we will be reforming our IAG in the County and creating smaller working groups with a specific focus on one of our three target areas. We will look to recruit individuals from across our local football network to give the best possible input into the groups.

## WCFA STRATEGY

The CEO and Board will ensure that the WCFA strategy for 2024-2028 is reflective of the local game and covers the EDI strategy and focus areas accurately and thoroughly. Progress against the strategy will be regularly monitored.

## OPERATIONAL PLAN

The CEO and Board will sign off on the operational plan, a working document for each individual season. Progress against specific EDI targets will be monitored reviewed and challenged where necessary.

## RECRUITMENT

Staff responsible for recruitment will undertake training on EDI recruitment. Recruitment processes will be clear and transparent, giving equal opportunity to all to apply regardless of age, gender, race or any other characteristic.

## TRAINING

All staff will be required to complete at least 1 EDI training workshop per season. These will be a range of online and offline learning with internal FA and external training taking place. Training will be monitored and reviewed.

## ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

From the start of the 2023/2024 season EDI will be sit in a staff members role and responsibilities to give a clear focus and accountability for the work in this area. This will be a combined role with Safeguarding.

## 7 MINUTE BRIEFINGS

Over the past two seasons we have successfully implemented Safeguarding 7 Minute briefings to clubs and welfare officers. We aim to develop these 7 minute briefings to incorporate EDI to help clubs develop their knowledge and understanding as well as application of EDI.

## IAG

Staff will lead on the development of the three specific IAG's. Staff will be responsible for communication with the groups, monitoring the effectiveness of them and driving them forward to maximise the output locally.



## WCFA STRATEGY

Staff will have an input into the WCFA Strategy and help shape the EDI focus of the next four years. This will then be presented to board for approval and implemented from the start of the 2024/2025 season.

## OPERATIONAL PLAN

Staff will develop the operational plan with a focus on EDI embedded into it. This will be reviewed regularly and progress updated and challenged where appropriate.

## CLUB SUPPORT

As well as the 7 minute briefings we will strive to support clubs and leagues in their EDI offer and supporting their members. This may include helping clubs understand what EDI looks like and means for them and developing EDI policies and practices.

## FEMALE ONLY REFEREE COURSE

Last season at Westmorland County FA we ran our first female only referee course. This course was designed to allow young female referees the opportunity to learn in an environment they feel more comfortable in. This subsequently helped a few girls take the course as they were not the only female on the course.

## CLUB DEVELOPMENT FUND

The Club Development Fund is for clubs affiliated to Westmorland County FA who are setting up new teams or demonstrate a significant need to support an existing team. The last funding window was prior to the 23/24 season commencing and offered six grants of £500. Clubs were required to be accredited or be committed to becoming accredited in the 23/24 season. Areas that were given priority included clubs looking to create a new female team or reinstate a folded team, clubs with one female team looking to develop a reserve side and clubs with two male/female teams looking to develop an "A" team.

## GIRLS EMERGING TALENT CENTRE

The ETC is designed to identify and develop future players by providing local, accessible high-quality training environments. The ETC offers increased playing time, varied football formats and allow players to play for both an ETC and a grassroots club, school, or representative team, to enhance the variety of playing experiences. 190 players registered for the WCFA ETC trials and training commences in September. Coach and Parent/Inductions have taken place and all coaches and parents/carers have been provided with a welcome booklet including information on training, development reviews, Safeguarding and Respect. The ETC teams for the 23/24 season are U10, U12, U14 and U16 girls.

## OVER 35'S SESSIONS

The Westmorland CFA Female Over 35's Just Play recreational football sessions are part of Cumberland CFA's "Turn Up and Play" programme. The programme consists of sessions arranged at several different venues in order for them to be accessible to a wider audience. The Westmorland CFA sessions run the first Sunday of each month at Dallam School Sports Centre.

## WOMEN & GIRLS AMBASSADOR

The County FA Equal Game Ambassador ran a workshop in the 22/23 season to encourage clubs to offer female provision and develop a female pathway. A second workshop will be ran in the 23/24 season. Areas covered included current opportunities for female players, governance, funding, marketing, finance and facilities.

Community Champion Georgia Smethurst ran a Stepping over the Sidelines workshop with the Regional Coach Development Officer in the 22/23 season to encourage females from a range of backgrounds to coach. Georgia will be running a second workshop during the 23/24 season. Georgia also offers free mentoring support to female coaches.

## KICK START CAREER IN COACHING

The youth coaching project is a six- day course in total, which will run during the school holidays in the 23/24 season. There will be two separate courses of mixed gender groups one for 14-15 years inclusive and the other for 16-17 years inclusive. The minimum age will be 14 years since this is the minimum age to complete the EE Playmaker which will be a requirement for completion of the course. The course will be entirely face to face learning and will involve classroom and practical workshops. Post event, those who have completed the course will be signposted towards becoming part of a Westmorland County FA Youth Council.

## WILDCATS / SQUAD

There are currently three Wildcats centres for girls age 5-11 years and two Squad centres for girls age 12-14 years. The recreational sessions are to encourage girls to play football who haven't played football before and to therefore lead to a growth in female players and teams. Three of the five centres (Wattsfield Wildcats, Brough Wildcats and Ambleside Squad) are linked to clubs.

## SPORTS GOGGLE SCHEME

The scheme provides funding for safe eyewear for players registered to a Westmorland County FA affiliated club. The goggles provide protection from injury and can also be worn by those who wear prescription lenses. Applications in the last funding window were made for a 50% reimbursement from a total purchase cost up to £100 (maximum reimbursement of £50)



**WOMEN &  
GIRLS**

## IN IT TOGETHER

This season we have developed a flyer that will be distributed to all teams in the Westmorland League. The flyer is designed to support mental health and addiction in open age adult football. The flyer has a link to a support podcast, Samaritans video and a NHS self assessment form about gambling and addiction. We also sign post organisations that could help individuals in need with wider Mental Health issues.

## BRO ROOM

This season we have partnered with the Bro Room in Kendal. The Bro Room provide male adults a safe space to talk about mental health, anxiety and addiction and can support with referrals should they be needed.

The Bro Room will be the shirt sleeve sponsors for the referee team in this season Invitation Cup Final to help raise awareness.

## MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

As part of the In it together campaign we will be supporting clubs to have a trained mental health first aider in their club.

The clubs will be offered the opportunity to have a space on a fully funded course from money we been granted through the football delivery fund. This will help coaches better identify players who are in need of additional support.

## WEBSITE CORNER

As part of our commitment to support EDI and mental health awareness we will be creating a brand new website space. This space will offer support to all players in the county around mental health. This will provide links to external support groups and our local partners. This will be promoted through direct communications to clubs and leagues as well as through social media.

## TOUGH TO TALK

Tough to Talk are a men's mental health charity that is committed to helping business and community leaders reduce male suicide rates by training individuals to become 'Tough to talk' Councillors. CFA staff members will undertake the training and opportunities will also be given to coaches and club officials to complete the training too.

# MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

## CLUB RESOURCES

All Westmorland clubs will been given accses to our online space when created. We will also make copies of the In It toghther booklet available throughout the season.

This will support all clubs and players in the county and show support networks that can be accessed should they need to be giving clubs a better support package to provide to their players, coaches and volunteers.

## SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY

Westmorland FA are partnering with "Every Life Matters" to raise awareness and help support people who are experiencing suicidal thoughts. This will be done via workshops, resources and advertising "Every life Matters" across the website and social media.

## REFEREE KIT SPONSORSHIP

Westmorland FA have worked with local businesses to support the promotion of mental health. We have agreed to fund referee shirts for all cup finals in Westmorland throughout the 2023/2024 season.

The Girls under 16 final and the invitation cup final will have mental health support groups as the sleeve sponsor.

### WALTERS GIVING TREE

Walter the Wolf our County FA mascot will once again be running his Christmas giving tree. We will be partnering with Booths to fund presents for young people on Free School Meals and those in need of support at Christmas with various gifts.

### ACES REFEREE COURSE

In early 2024 we will be running the second Westmorland County FA Referee Course for young people who have suffered ACES. After the success of the 2023 course we will be targeting more schools and community groups to give young people the opportunity to develop their resilience and opportunities in the game.

### COACHING IN SCHOOLS

Westmorland County FA delivers after school sessions in local primary schools. The participants in these sessions include young people in care who don't have the opportunity to take part in local grassroots football sessions due to their high level of individual needs. Westmorland County FA provides an opportunity for them to do this in a safe environment.

### SMALL SIDED SEN

Westmorland County FA will be delivering small sided football sessions to primary school pupils on the SEN or pupil premium register. This will include looked after children in care and give them the opportunity to take part in football competitions which are held in an accessible environment for them.

### WALTER THE WOLF BOOKS

Walter the Wolf has written a series of children's books to deliver in local schools.

The books will be designed to support young people in making posters and presentations to raise awareness of behavior, EDI and referee respect in a child friendly, interactive and engaging way.

## YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE/ACES

### SPORTS GOGGLE SCHEME

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### COUNTY LINES TRAINING

In the new year we will be hosting a training session on County Lines. This is a course designed to support clubs when dealing with young people at risk of CCE. This has become an increasing issue in rural areas such as Westmorland over the past few years. Young people in care who have suffered ACES are more at risk of becoming victims of County Lines

### HARDSHIP FUND

This season we have a hardship fund available to our Girls ETC players. This fund will help support the cost of training and playing for families that might need extra support, making the opportunity to play in the ETC more accessible for all.



## ADDITIONAL AREAS OF WORK

### CHRISTIANITY

Consultation with local community to understand the current barriers to participation / involvement in the game

Celebration of Christian holidays (Christmas & Easter)

Targeted campaigns to increase members of the christian community to access referees courses and coaching qualifications

### LGBTQ+

Promote the rainbow laces campaign across leagues and clubs

Staff to attend StoneWall Sports Inclusion Workshop CPD

Promote Football v Homophobia campaign and utilise resources in facilities across the community

### WIDER PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Disability Awareness Day

International Youth Day

Anti Bullying Week



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INFORMATION ABOUT OUR WORK  
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