

Westmorland County Football Association Limited



SETTING UP A CLUB

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Setting up a football club for the first time might appear to be a daunting task with different factors to consider such as affiliating to the County FA, gaining membership of a league, finding a pitch and changing facilities to use, purchasing and maintaining kit and importantly financing the team playing costs. In addition to the other guidance listed in this leaflet, the following steps should help smooth the process and allow you as a new secretary to enjoy the participation in football and worry less about the administration side of the game.

Introduction to Grass Roots Football

The vast majority of football throughout the country is played at a local level for personal enjoyment. Before embarking on forming a new team, the following questions should be asked:

- Are there enough potential players?
- Are there enough volunteers to take care of club organisation and administration?

Affiliation

It is recommended that all clubs in the area affiliate to the Westmorland County Football Association. It is through affiliation that the family of football is brought together and ensures correct standards and discipline are maintained. In effect it acts as a quality assurance and as a safety net to help protect players, clubs, officials and administrators throughout the game.

The major benefits from affiliation to Westmorland County Football Association include:

- Part of the structure of the National Game from grass roots upwards
- Eligible to participate in County FA Cup Competitions
- Discipline and Fair Play
- Opportunities to apply for grant aid and funding from The Football Association/The Football Foundation
- Access to information and advice from:
 - County Football Association Personnel
 - FA Regional Facilities Officer
 - FA Regional Football Development Officer
 - FA Regional Coaching Officer
 - FA Regional Director for Girls and Women's Football
- Opportunities to acquire suitable Public Liability and Personal Injury Insurance cover for your club, team and players
- County FA publications
- Opportunity to participate in FA Football
- Your club has the opportunity to make its views known on the future development of the game to both its County Football Association and The FA.

Clubs will need to affiliate to a parent County Football Association and the appropriate league they wish to join. Clubs are recommended to seek advice on suitable league membership from the Westmorland County Football Association.

Affiliation forms are available from our office. Completed forms plus respective payment must be received and processed by Westmorland County FA before the club starts playing football. Affiliation will be confirmed by the issue of a receipt, detailing the club's affiliation number for the season.

Apply to join a League - this will be dependent on the age and gender of your players, the day you plan to play and the location of where the club plans to play home matches. Details of leagues operating in Westmorland can be found listed in our directory or on our website.. Most leagues require applications from new clubs to be received by the end of March proceeding a new season, so act on this as soon as possible to avoid disappointment. Membership of leagues in Westmorland also requires the registration of players to that competition.

Constitution - Appointment of Club Officials

It is recommended that clubs should appoint a Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and Club Welfare Officer to enable the club to function effectively within FA Rules and Regulations. It is also suggested that other people are appointed to assist in other administrative areas of the club.

For youth clubs with players aged 18 and under, a Welfare Officer MUST be elected. This person should already have or be willing to achieve the mandatory FA qualification requirements for the position, ensure the viability of a team; squads should have at least 14 players or appropriate number for mini-soccer teams.

Agree a set of club rules and codes of conduct for members to follow. The FA has standard set of club rules which can be used. Please contact our office if you would like a copy.

Agree a name for the club. You may need to contact us to confirm that similar names do not already exist. Duplication of names will result in affiliation to the association being declined in which case an alternate name will be required.

Finance - Income and Expenditure to run the Club

As a new club it will be important to raise funds to run the club and initially these will probably be from player memberships and subscriptions. It is also advisable to produce a list of costs to run your team throughout the season which will help you create a budget of income and expenditure for the season.

Open a bank account in the clubs name, ideally requiring two signatures to access funding. One of these should be the Treasurer who is responsible for keeping details of transactions and producing a record of accounts each season.

Raise Funds - running a football club is not a cheap affair. The members should identify ways of funding the club. A kit, plus access to a change strip, will need to be purchased and the cost of cleaning covered. Quality match balls and a first aid kit will be required. Hire of a pitch and changing rooms are often paid for in advance. Referees fees and expenses will need to be considered together with the annual cost of affiliation to Westmorland County FA, membership of leagues and other competitions. To help raise funds initially, a membership fee to join the club could be charged. Playing costs can be covered by the charging of match subscriptions each game.

Seek Sponsorship - this usually involves part or full payment by a business or organisation towards a playing strip in return for the sponsor's name to be displayed on shirts. Please note that there are rules in place which limit the position and area on clothing that can be used the wording involved. Sponsorship of youth team kits must be age appropriate and not detrimental to the health, welfare or general interest of young players.

Players - Registration, Eligibility, Discipline, Safeguarding Children and Coaching

It is important that clubs are fully conversant with the rules of each competition that they may wish to enter. All discipline at grassroots is administered by the County Football Association and the secretary of the club is responsible for ensuring that all players are eligible to play. If the club has any doubts about eligibilities, for example suspensions, they should contact the Westmorland County FA Office for details. For youth teams, it is important to observe child protection safeguards and details are available from the Westmorland County Football Association.

Insurance - Public Liability, Personal Injury and other policies

It is mandatory for clubs to have adequate Public Liability insurance cover which is provided by the Westmorland County Football Association. Players are advised to have insurance to cover injury or accident whilst playing or travelling to matches.

Fixtures - Leagues and Cup Competitions

Fixtures are administered by the appropriate competition which advises clubs of forthcoming matches. If it is a home match, the club secretary must arrange hire of a pitch, notify opponents and officials of kick-off time and location of venue. For away games, arrange to inform your own team of venue, kick-off time and make transport arrangements for players. All County Football Associations run cup competitions which give an opportunity for teams to play against clubs from different leagues or divisions.

Affiliated Leagues in Westmorland:-

Senior Leagues - 11v11

- Westmorland County U25 League – Wednesday (evenings from May – July)
- Westmorland FA Veterans Festivals – ad-hoc through summer

Youth Leagues – 5v5, 7v7, 9v9, 11v11 (depending on age group)

- Kent Valley Junior Football League – Saturday/Sunday
- South Lakes Girls League – Monthly festivals – Sunday

Pitches - Useful Contacts and Advice

Find a Pitch - the club will require a home pitch. Most local authorities have pitches for hire, or you may have access to an independently-owned pitch or facilities that are part of schools or company sports grounds.

Please note hire charges will vary.

Kit and Equipment

Purchase suitable equipment prior to the start of your fixtures and ensure you have sufficient equipment for all teams in your club. The necessary equipment will include, playing strip, First Aid kit, nets, corner flags and balls.

Administration

See the Club Action Timetable (below) which covers pre-season tasks, prior to day of the game, on the day of the game, discipline and the club annual general meeting (AGM).

Results/Public Relations/Press

Ensure you pass on results of your matches to comply with competition regulations. All clubs are recommended to establish good relationships with their local press to publish results, match reports and possibly just interesting stories about their clubs. Good PR will help raise the profile of the club, bring in new players and may even attract some sponsorship.

Club Action Timetable

PRE-SEASON

Players

Ensure each team has a squad of at least 16 players or the appropriate number for Mini Soccer / Small Sided teams.

Affiliation

Complete and forward appropriate documentation and fees to your County Football Association and league or other competitions. There after the affiliation application will be processed via the Whole Game System portal.

Facilities

Arrange pitch(es) which comply with appropriate league regulations and specifications. It is also prudent to arrange/book training facilities early.

Meetings

Organise club/team meetings (e.g. weekly training, monthly Management Meeting, AGM). Also attend relevant league or County Football Association meetings when required.

Registration

Ensure all players are registered with appropriate league and Westmorland County Football Associations. Birth certificates may be required.

Friendly Fixtures

Arrange fixtures with affiliated club secretaries.

Subscription and Match Fees

Set a subscription and Match Fees for players and members to meet your costs for the season. Carry out fundraising (appropriate to the club).

Delegation

Club Secretaries / Team Managers should seek support from other members to spread the administration work load where practical.

PRIOR TO THE DAY OF THE GAME**Confirm Fixture**

e.g. Kick Off, Colours, Directions to ground, availability of pitch with Groundsman, match officials.

ON THE DAY OF THE GAME**Pitch**

Ensure pitch is safe and correctly prepared with nets, corner flags, markings and access to appropriate changing facilities.

Match Officials

Ensure match officials have been paid (home team only).

Refreshments

Provide refreshments where appropriate.

Results

Ensure the result card is completed and posted to the appropriate league/competition official to arrive by designated time. Please note the competition may require the result to be confirmed by telephone to the appropriate official. Level of detail on result card (e.g. players, goalscorers, substitutions, injuries etc) will be dependent on league policy.

OTHER TASKS**Disciplinary Procedures**

This is an ongoing task throughout the season. This will be completed through the Whole Game System portal, separate guidance is available. The club must ensure any suspended players do not play.

END OF SEASON**AGM**

Arrange AGM and/or presentation evening.

Enjoy Your Football

If you have any further questions or issues with starting up a new club, please do not hesitate to contact us, where we will be happy to assist and answer your queries