

A SHARED COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABLE PROGRESS

HOW VARIOUS ENGLISH FA STRATEGIES ALIGN WITH THE UEFA FOOTBALL
SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY 2030

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**“ONLY IN UNITY, WE CAN
ACHIEVE THE STRENGTH
TO UNLOCK THE UNIQUE
POWER OF FOOTBALL AND
INSPIRE MILLIONS OF
OTHERS TO DRIVE POSITIVE
SUSTAINABLE CHANGE.”**

Aleksander Ceferin
UEFA President





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WE SHARE A COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABLE PROGRESS



Football is For All, and as the governing body for the game in England, this principle guides everything we do.

It also means we are committed to using our leadership role and football's positive power to help address wider issues. For example, combating all forms of racism, championing gender equality, safeguarding children and protecting the environment.

As the document you're reading shows, we have strategies in place for these and many other issues. Collectively they align with UEFA's desire to generate measurable change with sustainable long-term outcomes across 11 different, but inter-connected areas.

Finally, there's an important overall goal we share with UEFA: not simply to make change happen, but to super-charge it.

We are in the privileged position of aiming to do that because millions of people the world over are passionate about football. As governing bodies, we can create direct dialogue with those who play, coach, officiate, volunteer or spectate. Sensitively using such dialogue to change behaviours beyond the field of play is all part of our leadership role.

Mark Bullingham
Chief Executive, The FA

HOW FA STRATEGIES ALIGN WITH UEFA FOOTBALL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY 2030




The FA – organisational strategy overview 2020-24

Vision: Unite the game, inspire the nation


Mission: Change the game to maximise its impact

Mission: Serve the game to deliver football For All


Six action areas:




Win a major tournament




Serve 2M+ through a transformed digital platform




Equal opportunities for every girl



Deliver 5,000 quality pitches



A game free from discrimination



Maximise the appeal & revenues of The FA Cups and WSL

Eight action areas:



Trusted, progressive regulation & administration



Safe, & inclusive football pathways & environments



Personalised & connected learning experiences



Maximum investment into the game



Diverse, high-performance workforce & inclusive culture



World-class venues & events



Strong reputation & clear brand identity



Technology enabled & insight driven

FA strategies referred to in this publication which align to UEFA’s Football Sustainability Strategy 2030:



UEFA Football Sustainability Strategy 2030

Mission: To inspire, activate and accelerate collective action to respect human rights and the environment within the context of European football.

Five action areas:



UEFA's internal organisation



UEFA events



UEFA members



The football ecosystem



Partners and society (e.g. fans, sponsors and global institutions)

11 policies to bring action areas to life:

ANTI-RACISM
1

CHILD & YOUTH PROTECTION
2

EQUALITY & INCLUSION
3

FOOTBALL FOR ALL ABILITIES
4

HEALTH & WELL-BEING
5

REFUGEE SUPPORT
6

SOLIDARITY & RIGHTS
7

CIRCULAR ECONOMY
8

CLIMATE & ADVOCACY
9

EVENT SUSTAINABILITY
10

INFRASTRUCTURE SUSTAINABILITY
11

How UEFA's Football Sustainability Strategy 2030 aligns with FA strategies:

1. ANTI-RACISM

UEFA strategic objective



Relevant FA strategies

The FA 2020-2024 Strategy
A Game For All
(ED&I Strategy)



How they align:

One of our 2020-2024 organisational strategy objectives is 'to deliver a game free from discrimination'. In turn, this is underpinned by our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion strategy, 'A Game For All' (2021-2024), which aims to:

- 'Lead the change' by actively tackling discrimination on and off the pitch.
- 'Be the change' by building a diverse workforce from the inside out.
- 'Inspire the change' by promoting an inclusive and united game which is for all.

We recognise that delivering a game free from discrimination is a long-term objective that needs to continue in future strategic cycles. This also means anti-racism/discrimination will remain a key tenet in our future FA and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategies.

Examples of current initiatives:

- **Football Leadership Diversity Code** – focuses on increasing equality of opportunity with hiring targets – rather than quotas – across all levels of the game (see case study).
- **Online Safety Bill** – extensive lobbying of government in partnership with other members of the football family to introduce a new Bill to tackle online discrimination.
- **Policies and Sanctions** – introduction of tougher charges and sanctions to tackle discrimination across all areas of the game.
- **Research** – partnering with Kick It Out to gain feedback on reporting and disciplinary processes, to understand perceived barriers and make process improvements.

Spotlight: Tackling discrimination online

While discriminatory abuse and hate speech is common across social media, there is an acute focus in football. Following recent abuse directed at players and match officials, we have been working with law enforcement and Government to explore different ways to address this issue. Areas we have been exploring include:

1. Discussing the need for more resources to plug the gaps in the current enforcement system.
2. Reviewing and discussing current policies about witnesses, evidence thresholds and sentencing guidelines.
3. Engaging and providing evidence to further improve the Online Safety Bill draft, making sure that it addresses the issue and is enacted quickly.
4. Ensuring that social media companies are held to account with new robust regulation, and encouraging them to tackle the current abuse ahead of regulation.

This work is ongoing – we will do everything in our power to lead change.

How UEFA's Football Sustainability Strategy 2030 aligns with FA strategies:

2. CHILD & YOUTH PROTECTION

UEFA strategic objective



Relevant FA strategies

The FA 2020-2024 Strategy
Survive. Revive. Thrive.
(Grassroots Football Strategy)
Building an Ever-Safer Culture
(Safeguarding Strategy)



How they align:

Safeguarding is a key priority for The FA, reflected in another of our 2020-2024 organisational objectives – to create 'safe and inclusive football pathways and environment.'

Achieving this objective is primarily driven by our grassroots strategy: 'Survive. Revive. Thrive.' This identifies a number of initiatives to deliver a positive (safe, fun and inclusive) environment.

However, following the Sheldon Report into historic child abuse claims in football, we launched a bespoke specific safeguarding strategy – 'Building an Ever-Safer Culture' (2021-2024). This aims to address the Sheldon Report recommendations as well as reflect football's everyday work to safeguard children and adults at risk through:

- Strong safeguarding leadership and effective governance frameworks.
- Clear communications of expected standards, regulations and policies.
- Prevention through robust recruitment processes and inspirational campaigns.
- Delivery of accessible, impactful safeguarding education programmes, resources and information.
- Making the reporting of concerns as easy as possible accompanied by guidance on managing low-level concerns and robust case management.

Examples of current initiatives:

- **Safeguarding Training** – delivered to The FA Board, Boards of all County FAs and Affiliated Associations, as well as Boards across the men's and women's professional game.
- **Independent Assessments** – assessment of every County FA and Affiliated FA against our bespoke 'Safeguarding 365' Standard and ensuring all compliance requirements are met.
- **DBS Checks** – risk-assessing and managing the checks which include content that indicates criminal convictions, cautions or additional information that may be relevant to safeguarding children or adults at risk.

How UEFA's Football Sustainability Strategy 2030 aligns with FA strategies:

3. EQUALITY & INCLUSION

UEFA strategic objective



Relevant FA strategies

The FA 2020-2024 Strategy

A Game For All
(ED&I Strategy)

Inspiring Positive Change
(Women's and Girls' Strategy)



How they align:

Ensuring football is accessible is embedded into the mission statement which guides our 2020-2024 organisational strategy: **'Serve the game to deliver football for all'**.

It means we have an everyday commitment towards ensuring equality and inclusion in football in England. We have led by example by setting equality, diversity and inclusion (ED&I) targets, recruiting diverse Board members and maintain an ongoing focus on reducing the gender pay gap (currently 2.2%).

As well as our ED&I strategy, 'A Game For All' (see 'Anti-Racism', UEFA strategic objective no.1), one of our organisational strategic objectives is to 'ensure equal opportunities for girls to play'. This is underpinned by our detailed women's and girls' football strategy: 'Inspiring Positive Change'.

Inspiring Positive Change outlines various initiatives to provide increased participation opportunities across the different pathways, either in schools, clubs or recreationally.

Examples of current initiatives:

These are in addition to anti-racism initiatives listed in on page 11:

- **ED&I Campaigns** – delivered throughout the season to focus on equality and inclusion, including our 'Faith and Football' series of publications which recognise specific religious celebrations and give guidance to clubs on how to observe them.
- **Barclays Girls' Football School Partnerships** – creating partnerships with school networks to ensure football is provided either through physical education lessons, or as girls-only extra-curricular activity.
- **Girls' Recreational Football** – these include Wildcats (5-11-year-olds) and Squad (12-14-year-olds). Both provide an alternative way to access the game beyond school and grassroots football.
- **Women's EURO 2022 Legacy** – the wide-ranging legacy programme aims to maximise the impact of the England-hosted Women's EURO 2022 competition. Many new participation opportunities have already delivered and there are targets in place until 2024.

How UEFA's Football Sustainability Strategy 2030 aligns with FA strategies:

4. FOOTBALL FOR ALL ABILITIES

UEFA strategic objective



Relevant FA strategies

The FA 2020-2024 Strategy

Survive. Revive. Thrive.
(Grassroots Football Strategy)

Football Your Way
(Disability Strategy)



How they align:

Our work to ensure football is accessible is also driven by our 2020-24 mission statement: **'Serve the game to deliver football for all'**.

In turn, this ongoing commitment is underpinned by strategies covering two operational areas:

1. **Grassroots football strategy:** Survive. Revive. Thrive. This outlines initiatives to:
 - Deliver a vibrant national club network that delivers inclusive, safe local grassroots football and meets community needs.
 - Implement a transformation in community football by inspiring, supporting and retaining volunteers in the game.
 - Provide modernised opportunities to retain and re-engage millions of male participants in the game.
 - Establish a sustainable model for female participation.
2. **Disability football:** Football Your Way
This strategy aims to improve all aspects of disability football provision in England through increased participation opportunities and disability awareness/understanding.

Examples of current initiatives:

- **Football Foundation** – via investment into and through football's primary grant-giving body, we will delivery of new grass, 3G and small-sided pitches across the country.
- **Government lobbying** – securing funding from central Government for football facility provisions across the country.
- **Local Football Facility Plans** – these identify facility requirements for every local authority across England, enabling delivery prioritisation.
- **Disability Schools' Offer** – providing regular opportunities for young people who are disabled to play in school.
- **Volunteer Game Plan** – a national volunteering strategy to provide a workforce to support grassroots football.

How UEFA's Football Sustainability Strategy 2030 aligns with FA strategies:

5. HEALTH & WELL-BEING

UEFA strategic objective

Relevant FA strategies



Survive. Revive. Thrive.
(Grassroots Football Strategy)



How they align:

Our grassroots football strategy is driven by our constant stated aim: to harness the power of football to unite communities and improve the health of the nation.

We try to deliver this by providing opportunities for everyone, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity etc. to access some format of the game. We also partner with charities and commercial partners to execute purpose-led campaigns to improve mental health and wellbeing in the country.

Examples of current initiatives:

- **Food and Football** – a four-way partnership between ourselves, Marks & Spencer (food retailer), Nuffield Health (healthcare provider) and ITV (broadcaster). The partnership aims to improve the health of the nation.
- **Neurocognitive disease** – following initial broad research into the link between football and neurocognitive disease, we have commissioned more detailed pieces of research to guide any potential FA interventions. In the meantime, we have changed heading guidance and are trialling the removal of heading in youth football (under-12 and below) in the 2022/23 season.
- **Participation opportunities** – offering alternative formats to encourage older participants to play the game, such as walking/small-sided football.

Spotlight: Mental health and football

In recent years, our increased work in mental health has contributed to a more inclusive culture on and off the pitch. Some recent highlights include:

- Mental health training and education for FA senior management, extended leadership teams, national coaches and performance staff to enable them to spot signs of struggle – and how to seek and give support.
- 'Mental Health For All' training for all FA employees to better understand mental health. This work will continue over the coming years.
- Launching a portal for all FA employees containing information, resources, blogs, videos, guides and training to support wellbeing.
- Individual mental health screening at the start of each international camp for all England players from under-17 to the senior teams with access to specialist mental health support.
- Launch of a 'mental health champions' initiative in February 2021, providing advice and support to grassroots referees and match officials.

Our ongoing Heads Up campaign, kickstarted in 2019, culminated in the Heads Up FA Cup Final. It also saw the launch of the Mentally Healthy Football Declaration, committing football to prioritising mental health at all levels of the UK game.

6. REFUGEE SUPPORT

How UEFA's Football Sustainability Strategy 2030 aligns with FA strategies:

UEFA strategic objective

Relevant FA strategies



The FA 2020-2024 Strategy
A Game For All
(ED&I Strategy)



AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL

How they align:

Our mission to 'Serve the game to deliver football for all' recognises the importance of supporting refugees. We have had a partnership in place with Amnesty International UK since 2019 to promote football opportunities for refugees and asylum seekers.

Our partnership jointly funds a full-time development officer, based at Amnesty International UK, focusing on the development of female refugee football and programmes, working with our County FAs and Club Community Foundations.

New for 2022/23:

- Piloting a leadership and mentoring programme for female refugees to become leaders in their own communities and sustain the participation programmes for more females to attend – part-funded by the UEFA Football & Refugees grant.
- We have also now launched a new female refugee project in London in partnership with Greater London Authority, Middlesex FA and QPR Community Trust.

Examples of current initiatives:

- **Good Practice Guide** – supports coaches, clubs and their foundations, and County FAs in setting up football sessions aimed at helping refugee women and girls to better connect with their local communities.
- **Specific refugee and asylum-seeker female programmes** – currently in Liverpool, Manchester, Hampshire [see [here](#)] Doncaster, Middlesbrough, Birmingham and Leicester – aspirations to partner with other cities (see 'Spotlight' below).
- **Afghan refugee support** – actively supporting recent arrivals, e.g. Soccerise; upskilling through FA Playmaker (entry-level coaching course).
- **Football Welcomes** – many County FAs [e.g. Liverpool FA examples [here](#) and [here](#)] and clubs regularly celebrate the contribution of players with refugee backgrounds, highlighting the role of football in creating more welcoming communities.

Spotlight: Funded officer, supporting female refugees

The FA funds a Women's Football Officer through its partnership with Amnesty International UK. Working nationally, she ensures programmes are inclusive of women and girls from a refugee background. We have produced a guide for football coaches to engage refugee women and girls in football (see [toolkit](#)) and provide free webinar events to help leaders and coaches grow participation. We are also supporting 12 female refugees and asylum-seeking women on our inaugural national football leadership training, thanks to a UEFA Football and Refugee Grant.



Women taking part in Middlesbrough FC Foundation's weekly 'Football Welcomes' programme.

How UEFA's Football Sustainability Strategy 2030 aligns with FA strategies:

7. SOLIDARITY & RIGHTS

UEFA strategic objective

Relevant FA strategies

[The FA 2020-2024 Strategy](#)



How they align:

Our mission to 'Serve the game to deliver football for all' also recognises the necessity of making human rights a fundamental part of our work.

We have a number of initiatives and workstreams which, like UEFA, demonstrate our commitment to treating everyone in football with dignity and respect, ensuring equal rights are granted and apply to everyone.

We are also adhering to a number of human rights criteria as part of our bid for UEFA EURO 2028. The expectation is that we will continue to build on current initiatives and ensure human rights principles are embedded in our 2024-28 organisational strategy – and beyond.

Examples of current initiatives:

- **Football Foundation** – in partnership with the Premier League and the UK Government, the Football Foundation also provides emergency grants to clubs to repair damage to football facilities following natural disasters (with contributions from UEFA).
- **Qatar and human rights** – active member of UEFA working group in partnership with other European NAs examining issues surrounding workers' rights in Qatar; carrying out own due diligence with all suppliers ahead of 2022 FIFA World Cup.
- **Living Wage Foundation** – the English FA now demands suppliers pay their employees the correct living wage; currently in place for the majority, the final two supplier agreements are in progress.

Spotlight: Human rights due diligence checks

In preparation for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, The FA embarked on a due diligence exercise to ensure that suppliers within the England team's set up in Qatar were subject to human rights due diligence checks. The FA sent a team of officials to liaise with key human rights organisations, the Qatar Supreme Committee and local suppliers to test and diagnose the effectiveness of the supply chain. Due diligence activities took place across a number of suppliers including the England team hotel, hotel staff, hotel joint committees and the surrounding supply chain. Conducting supplier due diligence was an important step in England's journey to the FIFA World Cup in Qatar.





How UEFA's Football Sustainability Strategy 2030 aligns with FA strategies:

08. CIRCULAR ECONOMY

09. CLIMATE & ADVOCACY

10. EVENT SUSTAINABILITY

11. INFRASTRUCTURE SUSTAINABILITY

UEFA strategic objective

Relevant FA strategies



Playing for the Future
(Sustainability Strategy)

How they align:

The FA operates two sizeable and iconic venues – the world-renowned Wembley Stadium and St. George's Park, the national training centre. Environmental sustainability has been a priority for The FA at both sites in recent years, with an in-house sustainability team (FAST) launched in 2018. Guided by this team, we have made substantial strides to date:

- Wembley Stadium awarded ISO20121, the Event Sustainability Management System.
- United Nations' Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) signed in 2019.
- Upgrades delivered at St. George's Park and Wembley Stadium (e.g. LED pitch lighting) to reduce energy consumption.
- 100% of electricity at all FA sites generated from renewable sources.

Our ongoing work in this area has now been distilled into a defined sustainability strategy: Playing For The Future.

1. **Shoot for Net Zero** – aiming to achieve full net zero CO² emissions by 2040 and reducing energy consumption by 30% by 2028 (see case study).
2. **Save our Resources** – working across FA departments and with partners to minimise resource consumption across all events and operations.
3. **Make an Impact** – embedding strong sustainability governance throughout football and collaborating with key stakeholders across the game to deliver meaningful change.

Numerous climate-friendly initiatives have taken place at St. George's Park (left), including widespread installation of solar panels.

Examples of current initiatives:

- **Financial investment** – significant investment (see case study) across our sites to optimise energy usage and pursue technological innovations.
- **Partner collaboration** – developing awareness and encouraging uptake of sustainability practices.
- **County FA support** – providing education and access to relevant materials, helping them to work towards science-based net-zero targets, and implement their own sustainability frameworks and targets.
- **St. George's Park biodiversity action plan** – delivery of biodiversity initiatives on our sites, including a new woodland and wildlife pond.
- **Water usage** – initiatives to reduce water usage by 30% by 2028.
- **Zero landfill waste** – maintaining zero waste-to-landfill status and 100% elimination of single-use and short-life items across our operations.
- **Campaigns** – educating fans and raising awareness of climate change issues and promoting climate action.
- **Sustainability training** – offered to 100% of FA-accredited coaches, all other employees involved in sustainability projects, and all England age-group teams.



For further information:

To find out more about The FA's work in any of the areas covered in this publication, please contact:

Dal Darroch

Head of Diversity and Inclusion
Strategic Programmes/The FA's
Football Social Responsibility Officer
to UEFA

E: Dal.Darroch@TheFA.com

Maria De Leon

Senior International Relations Manager

E: Maria.DeLeon@TheFA.com





FOR ALL

The Football Association

Wembley Stadium

London HA9 0WS

T: +44 (0)800 169 1863

F: +44 (0)800 169 1864

W: [TheFA.com](https://www.thefa.com)

TM0710