



FA Council Annual Report 2025 - 2026

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Introduction

We are pleased to share the FA Council Annual Report for the 2025-2026 season. This report highlights the work of The FA Council and Committees over the past year and demonstrates how they collectively continue to support The FA in futureproofing the game for all.

The FA Council remains a vital part of The FA's governance structure, bringing together representatives from across football to provide strategic insight, challenge and advice on the issues that shape the future of the game.

Our members represent County Football Associations, leagues and clubs from across the men's and women's professional and semi-professional game, alongside representatives of education, disability and youth football, match officials and key stakeholder organisations, including the Football Supporters' Association, the League Managers' Association and the Professional Footballers' Association. Through its diverse membership, Council ensures that the views and experiences of stakeholders from every level of football are heard and considered.

Throughout the season, Council has considered a broad range of strategic issues affecting football. This report provides an overview of those discussions, together with summary reports from FA Committees, illustrating the breadth of work undertaken across The FA.

The contribution made by Council members extends far beyond attendance at Council meetings. So many members voluntarily give their time, expertise and experience to support FA Committees and Working Groups, and we are extremely grateful for their continued commitment to the game.

Debbie Hewitt MBE
FA Chair

FA Council Annual Report 2025-2026

CHAIR'S REPORT

2025-2026 was another important season for English football, both on and off the pitch.

Our Men's Senior team progressed through to the semi-final stages of the 2026 FIFA World Cup, securing a third-place finish and a bronze medal, which is our best performance since 1966. The Lionesses continued their 2027 FIFA Women's World Cup qualification campaign and, despite losing only once in the group stage, will now contest the play-offs against Greece in October. We also celebrated further recognition for Sarina Wiegman and many of our Women's 2025 UEFA EURO-winning squad in the New Year and King's Birthday Honours, alongside honours for back-to-back winning Men's U21 Euro Championship coach Lee Carsley and Sam Gough, captain of the England women's blind football team.

In Para football, the Deaf Women's Futsal team were crowned European Champions for the second consecutive tournament following a 2-0 victory over Poland. Elsewhere, England Women's U23s became European Competition Champions, defeating Sweden 3-0 in the final.

Whilst England teams continued to achieve success on the pitch, Council remained focused on supporting the long-term development and governance of the game.

During the season, the perspectives of football's stakeholders informed key discussions and decisions across the game. The Council met four times during the season, with two meetings in person at Wembley in July and November 2025, an online meeting in February 2026 and an in-person meeting at St George's Park in May 2026.

STRATEGIC HIGHLIGHTS

Set out below is a summary of the main topics discussed by Council.

Council Review 2.0

Council Review 2.0 is the next phase of work to ensure that The FA's governance structure remains effective, representative and fit for the future. The review considered how Council can continue to reflect the modern game and provide a strong voice for football's stakeholders, while ensuring its structures and ways of working support effective decision-making.

During the season, Council considered proposals relating to FA Club Membership (club shareholding in The FA), Council representation from the clubs and the leagues, the effectiveness of FA Council committees and the Fellowship of Council.

In May, Council and shareholders approved a number of changes, including proposals to simplify FA Club Membership and update representation on Council, strengthening the voice of the National Game and the women's game. Approval was also given to increase the membership of The FA Board to include an additional Independent Non-Executive Director who will bring knowledge and experience of the women's game from grassroots through to professional level. These changes were intended to ensure that the Board and Council continue to reflect both the structure and priorities of the modern game.

Grassroots Football Strategy 2024-2028 & Grassroots 2040

Last season, we introduced Council to Grassroots 2040, our long-term vision for how football will be delivered and supported across England through County Football Associations by 2040. During the season, Council received regular updates on the programme as work progressed across a number of key areas, including

shared services, governance, funding, County FA boundaries and the future relationship between The FA and County FAs.

Grassroots 2040 is designed to ensure that County FAs remain at the heart of football in their communities, while evolving to meet the changing needs of the game. The programme aims to create a more sustainable, consistent and efficient network, enabling County FAs to focus more of their time and resources on supporting participation, clubs, leagues, volunteers and local communities.

Council noted that positive progress was reported across the programme. Shared services are being developed and tested across a number of disciplines, a new funding model is in the process of being agreed, and work continues to strengthen governance arrangements across the grassroots game. Council will continue to play an important role in providing stakeholder insight as this programme develops.

2035 FIFA Women's World Cup Bid

During the season, the Home Nations' joint bid to host the 2035 FIFA Women's World Cup gathered significant momentum. Following FIFA's confirmation that the UK would be the sole bidder for the tournament, Council received updates on the bid and we utilised Council's collective knowledge and experience on how we can maximise the opportunities hosting presents to further accelerate the growth of women's and girls' football across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

Hosting the tournament will provide a unique opportunity to build on the success of UEFA Women's EURO 2022, inspire future generations to play, coach, referee and volunteer, and create a lasting legacy for football across the UK. Council will continue to receive updates as the process progresses. The next step will be 23 November 2026 when all FIFA Member Associations will vote on the awarding of the 2031 and 2035 Women's World Cup tournaments.

Modernisation of St George's Park

Council recognises the important role St George's Park plays in delivering The FA's long-term ambitions for English football, as the home of England teams and a leading centre for football. Council supported a plan to upgrade and modernise the facilities and received updates on progress. Investment plans include improvements to facilities, infrastructure and the visitor experience, ensuring that the site continues to support player development, coach education, major competitions and the wider game.

Other Strategic Sessions and Annual Updates

Council also received updates on:

Refereeing, Laws of the Game and Participant Behaviour

FA Financial Statements for the 2024/2025 Year

Preparation for the 2026 FIFA Men's World Cup

The Adobe Women's FA Cup strategic review

The work of the FA Youth Council

The work of the National Leagues Pyramid Board

LGBTQI+ Inclusion in Grassroots Football

Council Training

A new learning and development programme for Council members was developed and approved during the season. Delivered through a rolling three-year cycle, the programme will provide a more structured approach to member development, combining governance training, football-specific content and practical skills development to support Council in its role of futureproofing the game for all.

THE PEOPLE AGENDA

Charlton and Hope Awards

During the season, Council members were once again invited to submit nominations for the Charlton and Hope Awards, established to recognise individuals who have made an exceptional contribution to football.

The Charlton Award, named after Sir Bobby Charlton, is the Professional Award and it reflects his significant legacy to the game.

The Hope Award, named after Charlotte Hope, is the Grassroots Award, honouring a young volunteer who tragically lost her life and was a formidable force in using football to positively change the lives of those less fortunate.

We were delighted to present the Charlton Award to **Rebecca Welch** and the Hope Award to **Paul Kirby**.

Rebecca Welch has been a pioneering figure in football officiating and has broken new ground for women in the professional game. Her achievements include becoming the first woman to referee in the Premier League and EFL Championship, while also officiating major domestic and international competitions. Through her professionalism, dedication and achievements, Rebecca has inspired aspiring referees across the game and helped demonstrate that opportunities in football should be open to all.

Paul Kirby is a deaf referee and the award recognises his outstanding contribution to football and his work to improve opportunities for deaf people within the game. A referee, coach and advocate for inclusion, Paul has broken down barriers throughout his refereeing career, progressing from local grassroots football to officiating at the Deaf World Cup and Deaflympics. Through his leadership and commitment to accessibility, he has inspired others to get involved in refereeing and helped make football a more inclusive game for all.

On behalf of Council, I congratulate them both and thank them for everything they continue to do for football.

Council Leavers

Thanks go to our colleagues who have stepped down from Council this season. Long servers Geoff Lee (Cornwall FA), Frank McArdle (Derbyshire FA), Elaine Oram (Nottinghamshire FA) and Tom Sampson (Devon FA) gave many years of valuable input to the Council, and we are very grateful for their individual contributions.

In addition, the following Council members retired either during or at the end of the season:

Rebecca Britain (Premier League)

Neil Cassar (Hampshire FA)

Joe Dunmore (Leicestershire & Rutland FA)

Mark Harris (Northern Premier League)

Phil Lawler (Suffolk FA)

Karl Lingham (Hertfordshire FA)

Mark Miles (EFL)

Kim Mundy (Football Communities Rep)

Tony Scholes (Premier League)

Aron Sharpe (Divisional Representative)

Ian Walkom (Women's Football, Tiers 5-7)

Nuala Walsh (Football Communities Representative)

We thank each for their contributions to the Council.

Former Council Members

On behalf of all Council colleagues, I also want to pay tribute to those former members of Council who passed away during the year. Their wisdom and experience helped to make The FA what it is today, and we will be forever grateful for their interest, commitment and camaraderie. Each will be sadly missed.

Dan Tana (Divisional Representative 1975 to 1982)

Steve Vasey (representative for the Royal Navy FA from 2000 to 2014)

John Little (representative for Cambridge University FA from 1999 to 2024)

Lord David Triesman (Independent Chair from 2008 to 2010)

Dennis Johnson (representative for East Riding FA from 2005 to 2013)

Ken Bates (representative for the EFL and the Premier League from 1986 to 2004)

Peter Heard (representative for the EFL from 1998 to 2006)

Along with legions of English fans, we also regret the sad passing of former England players Martin Chivers, Lynda Hale, Colin McDonald, Bobby Tambling and Tommy Wright, and two-time Ballon d'Or winner, former England player and Head Coach, Kevin Keegan.

They each leave a positive legacy to the game and enriched the lives of so many people.

FA TOURNAMENTS

It has been another tremendous year for our FA Cup competitions. The 145th Emirates Men's FA Cup concluded with a tense Wembley final, with Manchester City beating Chelsea 1-0 to complete the domestic cup double, having also won the EFL Cup earlier in the season.

In the 56th Adobe Women's FA Cup, Manchester City beat first-time finalists Brighton & Hove Albion 4-0, also completing a domestic double having already secured the WSL title.

The FA Youth Cup was an all-Manchester final, with Manchester City U18s beating Manchester United U18s 2-1 at the Joie Stadium.

The FA Vase featured AFC Stoneham v Cockfosters, with the match finishing goalless before Stoneham won 4-2 on penalties. The FA Trophy featured Southend United and Wealdstone, with the tie also finishing goalless before Southend won 4-2 on penalties at Wembley.

The FA Sunday Cup was held at Bramall Lane in Sheffield, where Home Bargains beat Hartlepool AFC Supporters 3-1 on penalties after the match finished 1-1.

Congratulations to all participants on what proved to be very tightly contested matches.

We'd like to thank the Men's and Women's Professional Game Committees, National Leagues Pyramid Board, Steps 1-4 Operational Committee, Steps 5&6 Operational Committee, Grassroots Football Advisory Group and Women's Football Pyramid Committee for the substantial work put in to delivering these fantastic competitions, as well as the FA Executive team for their work in supporting the Committees.

The Disability Cup Final weekend took place in June at St George's Park, marking the competition's tenth edition. Showcasing some of the best Para footballers in the country, six finals took place across the two days including the Amputee (Cambridge City v Chelsea FC Foundation), Partially Sighted (Birmingham Futsal v Bolton Futsal), Blind (Royal National College for the Blind v West Bromwich Albion Blind FC), Cerebral Palsy (Chelsea FC Foundation v Norwich City Community Sports Foundation FC), Powerchair (Leeds PFC v Teesside PFC) and Deaf football (Barnet Deaf FC v St. John's Deaf FC).

Our congratulations to the winners - Cambridge City, Bolton Futsal, West Bromwich Albion Blind FC, Norwich City Community Sports Foundation FC, Leeds PFC, and St. John's Deaf FC respectively.

We would like to thank the Disability Football Committee for their oversight of these inspiring tournaments and the contribution of the fans. Equally, many thanks to the FA Executive team for their sustained efforts in leading the progression of the para game.

THE 2026-2027 SEASON

As we look ahead to the 2026–27 season, Council will continue to play an important role in supporting the development of the game through its consultative and representative functions. Alongside its regular business, Council will oversee a further series of governance reforms as part of Council Review 3.0 (the third phase of the Council Review). Additionally, we will focus on strategic developments in the game and continue to support the delivery of key strategic priorities across English football, including the development of the grassroots game, investment in St George's Park and preparations for major international tournaments.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow Council members for the experience, insight and commitment they continue to bring to their roles. Their contribution helps ensure that the game remains inclusive and well-positioned for the future.

Debbie Hewitt MBE
FA Chair
30 September 2026

**Council Expenditure
Season 2025 -2026**

Current Council Expenditure	2025-2026 £k	2024-2025 £k
Attendance Allowances - Council	41.3	42.9
Attendance Allowances - Committees	144.2	145.4
Travel	110.4	118.0
Accommodation	42.8	47.5
Council Tickets and Hospitality	564.4	452.3
* Ambassadorial Duties	0	0
** Council Meetings - Event Costs	33.2	18.6
Recognition Awards	10.0	9.4
*** Council Staff and Admin Costs	150.3	145.0
TOTAL	1096.6	979.1
Fellowship Expenditure		
Fellowship Tickets and Hospitality	101.5	134.7
GRAND TOTAL	1,198.1	1,113.8

- * These are the costs associated with Council Members who travel with various England teams to represent The FA at matches and tournaments
- ** Including technology and catering
- *** Notional time allocated for FA Chair, Company Secretariat and Admin support

Overview

These are the direct costs associated with running Council and the associated Fellowship programme. They do not include any indirect allocation of costs. We publish them in the spirit of transparency. They are unaudited.

Council Members can claim an allowance for attendance at meetings of The FA Council or any committees to which they are appointed. In addition, they can claim any travel and subsistence expenses which they incur, to attend meetings. The increase in Council meeting costs during the season reflects higher hospitality expenditure and additional costs associated with the running of Council meetings.

Council Members and Fellowship Members can attend England and FA matches held at Wembley Stadium, including a guest. We have identified a notional cost for tickets and hospitality which has enabled us to produce an overall cost for matches attended in the season. The increase in costs between the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 season relates to an increase in the cost of hospitality and the number eligible for Fellowship.

The Fellowship of Council is an honorary membership scheme first introduced in 2017 and awarded to former Council members who meet minimum length of service criteria. As the number of members of the Fellowship increases annually, the costs associated with match tickets and hospitality are likely to increase. We propose to introduce changes to the benefits that go with membership of the Fellowship so that from 2027 these costs will start to reduce.

The increase in Council event costs is largely due to the increased costs of videos associated with the interviews of third-party presenters who could not attend in person, for example the UEFA President.

Richard McDermott
FA Company Secretary
30 September 2026

Council Members 2025-2026

Voting Members

Chair

Debbie Hewitt MBE (2022)

Vice-Chairs

D Mistry (2023), Premier League

A Baker (2021), Football Communities Representative

Chief Executive Officer

Mark Bullingham (2019)

Divisional Representatives

1. G Perry (2021), Ashington FC
2. Mark Turner, (2022) Accrington Stanley FC
3. Andrew Shaw (2009, 2012), Altrincham FC
4. Vacant
5. Paul Douglas (2021), Rotherham Utd FC
6. Phil Hough (2012-2014, 2024), Scunthorpe Utd FC
7. Craig Johnson (2021), Aveley FC
8. Christopher Reeves (2012), Poole Town FC
9. A Sharpe (2017), Wingate & Finchley
10. K Discipline (2024), Erith & Belvedere FC

County & Other Association Representatives

Amateur Football Alliance	Jonathan Leese (2018)
Army	Graham Brookland (2023)
Bedfordshire	Alan Young (2023)
Berks & Bucks	John Horsley (2022)
Birmingham	Kevin Shoemake (2022)
Cambridgeshire	Phil Hill (2020)
Cheshire	Colin Garlick (2018)
Cornwall	Geoff Lee (2005)
Cumberland	Ben Snowdon (2023)
Derbyshire	F McArdle MBE (2008)
Devon	Tom Sampson (2017)
Dorset	Stephen Whittle (2009)
Durham	John Topping (2007)
East Riding	John Suddards (2013)
English Schools	Mike Coyne (2025)
Essex	Andy Chaplin (2021)
Gloucestershire	Hitesh Patel (2025)
Hampshire	Neil Cassar (2017), Melanie Robinson CBE (from December 2025)
Herefordshire	Paul Tompkins (2015)
Hertfordshire	K Lingham (2025)
Huntingdonshire	Mark Frost (2005)
Independent Schools	Susannah Abbott (2022)
Kent	Darryl Haden (2024)
Lancashire	David Flory CBE (2023)
Leicestershire & Rutland	Joe Dunmore (2023)

Lincolnshire	Shan Jaehrig (2019)
Liverpool	Ian Wild (2021)
London	Yashmin Harun BEM (2021)
Manchester	Colin Bridgford (2016)
Middlesex	Kayleigh Saunders (2025)
Norfolk	Michael Banham (2021)
Northamptonshire	Neil Griffin (2022)
North Riding	Barry Casterton (2020)
Northumberland	Andrew Cook (2025)
Nottinghamshire	Elaine Oram (2007)
Oxfordshire	Christine Kane (2023)
Royal Air Force	Wg Cdr Joan Ochuodho (2023)
Royal Navy	Steve Johnson (2014)
Sheffield & Hallamshire	Martin Gilmour (2021)
Shropshire	Dave Simpson (2007)
Somerset & Avon	Phil Chaplin (2020)
Staffordshire	Adam Evans (2022)
Suffolk	Phil Lawler (2025)
Surrey	Soye Briggs (2024)
Sussex	Georgia Rooney (2025)
Westmorland	Peter Dicksbury (2018)
West Riding	Mark Heap (2024)
Wiltshire	Simon Russell (2024)
Women's Football Conference	Harriet Miller (2023) & Paul Preston (2025)
Worcestershire	Nichola Trigg (2023)

Representatives of The Premier League

Paul Barber OBE (2016-2017, 2018), Brighton & Hove Albion FC
Cliff Crown (2021), Brentford FC
Rebecca Britain (2019), Manchester United FC
Nicholas Randall KC (2020), Nottingham Forest FC
Richard Garlick (2014-2016, 2022), Arsenal FC
Dharmash Mistry (2023), Premier League
Rebecca Caplehorn (2016), Tottenham Hotspur FC
Tony Scholes (2025), Premier League

Representatives of The English Football League

Rick Parry (2019), Football League
Zoe Webber (2021), Norwich City FC
Neil Bausor (2022), Middlesbrough FC
Liam Dooley (2025), Shrewsbury Town FC
Steve Curwood (2016), Fleetwood Town FC
Liam Scully (2024), Lincoln City FC
Jon Flatman (2024), Barnsley FC
Mark Miles (2024), West Bromwich Albion FC

Other Representatives

The National League	Steve Thompson MBE (2013-2014, 2015-2016, 2021) Phil Alexander (2012-2013, 2014-2017, 2018-2022, 2025)
The Northern Premier League	Mark Harris (2016)
The Southern League	David Martin (2011-2014, 2023)
The Isthmian League	Nick Robinson (2008)

Referees' Association	Helen Conley (2025)
Professional Game Match Officials	Rebecca Welch (2024), Howard Webb MBE (2023)
General Referees Representative	Jason Lee (2025)
League Managers' Association	Lindsay Gordon (2023)
Professional Footballers Association	Maheta Molango (2022)
Supporters' Representative	Chris Paouros (2021), Tom Greatrex (2018)
Disability Football Representative	Colin Chaytors (2008), David Clarke OBE (2017)
Disability Football Match Official	Vacant
British Universities College Sport	Samantha Bell-Minogue (2023)
Association of Colleges	Joanne Maher (2019)
FA Youth Council	Joel Moore (2025)
National League System Steps 5 and 6	Denise Richmond (2020) & Chris Conlon (2024)
Futsal	Graeme Dell (2017), Vacant
FA Women's Super League 1&2	Charlotte Brough (2025), Lee Sanders (2020)
Women's Football (Tiers 3&4)	Flo Allen (2024)
Women's Football (Tiers 5-7)	Greg Petts (2020), Chris Morton (2024), Ian Walkom (2024)
Football Communities Representatives	Deji Davies, Jimmy Khan, Alex Baker, Kim Mundy, Sarah Walters, Kelly Simmons, Aji Ajibola, Nuala Walsh

Total Voting Members: 110

Non-Voting Members

Life Vice-Presidents

Geoff Thompson, OBE, JP (1979), Sheffield & Hallamshire FA
John Waterall (1986), Nottinghamshire FA
Chris Saunders (1982), Independent Schools FA
Maurice Armstrong (1985), Huntingdonshire FA
Peter Hough (1988), Dorset FA
David Henson (1986), Devon FA
Brian Walden (1991), Northamptonshire FA
Barry Taylor (1991), Barnsley FC

Vice-Presidents

Peter Clayton (1997), Middlesex FA

Total Non-Voting Members: 9

Total Members: 119

Committee Reports and Chairs 2025-2026

Disability Football Committee – Colin Chaytors
Football Regulatory Authority – Lord David Wolfson KC
Inclusion Advisory Board – Deji Davies
People and Culture Committee – Debbie Hewitt MBE
Referees' Committee – Alex Baker

Professional Game

Professional Game Board – Rick Parry
Men's Professional Game Committee – Rick Parry
Women's Professional Game Committee – Nikki Doucet

National Leagues Pyramid

National Leagues Pyramid Board – Chris Brown
NLS Steps 1-4 Operational Committee – Steve Thompson MBE
NLS Steps 5 & 6 Operational Committee – Mark Frost
Women's National League Committee – Sue Hough MBE
Women's Football Pyramid Committee – Elaine Oram
Stadium Accreditation Committee – Nick Robinson

Grassroots

National Game Board – Sarah Walters
Affiliated Associations Committee – Colin Bridgford
Facilities Expert Advisory Committee – Peter Dicksbury
Football Development Committee – Professor Jo Maher
Grassroots Football Advisory Group – Ian Wild

**Disability Football Committee
FA Board Sub-Committee
2025-2026**



Chair

Colin Chaytors - Disability Football Representative

Members

David Clarke OBE – Disability Football Representative
Jill Crompton - Independent
Paul Findlay – Independent
Mark Heap – West Riding FA
Shan Jaehrig – Lincolnshire FA
Jimmy Khan – Football Community Rep
Andrew Marriott - Independent
Dean Williams – Independent

Co-opted Members

Andy Whitaker – Activity Alliance
Oliver Eadsforth – Independent
Jeff Mostyn – AFC Bournemouth

Purpose of the Committee

The Committee's role is to consider all policy matters relating to the development of disability football and to oversee the development of disabled players through the FA Disability Football Pathway from grassroots to elite. The consideration of performance of football in achieving participation targets is a key role for the Committee, supporting any changes in approach that may be required.

The Committee also has responsibility for proposing amendments to the Rules and Regulations affecting disability football and its associated competitions, appointing members as required to Local Organising Committees of international tournaments held in England and representing The FA as appropriate.

Sub-Committees

- FA Disability Cup

Number of Meetings

Meetings	2025-26	2024-25
Disability Football Committee	4	4
FA Disability Cup	6	6

Activities and Achievements – Season 2025-26

- The recruitment of two independent members to cover identified gaps in the skills matrix.
- Exceeding annual KPIs for participation, registered players, teams & competitive opportunities.
- Staging the 10th anniversary EE FA Disability Cup Finals at St George's Park with the highest levels of player and spectator satisfaction and increased viewing figures from the live broadcast.

- Highly successful launch of the EE Disability FA Cup Schools' Festival programme as part of the expansion and development of the programme.
- Working with colleagues within the FA to ensure that the 2024 – 2028 Disability Strategy is fully integrated into the wider FA Strategy.
- Full launch of the Comets in School Programme - exceeding the annual target by 136% with demand for future years almost doubling in numbers.
- Roll out of the Journey to Inclusion Training.
- Incremental launch of the Just Play reimagined programme.
- Maintaining funding partnerships with Wheelchair FA, CP Sport and Special Olympics GB, providing strategic leadership by employing a football development officer within each.
- Development and launch of a Neurodivergence Inclusion in Football Workshop – designed to enhance the inclusive experience of neurodivergent individuals within the sport.
- Recruiting more disabled coaches, officials and local administrators.
- Working with Referees Committee to promote greater inclusion and understanding of disability.
- Continued improvement of international rankings, becoming the European Women's Deaf Futsal Champions 2026, Powerchair Home Nations Champions and IBSA U23 UEFA Champions.
- Roll out of the annual Regional and National Emerging Talent pathway programme with over 100 players attending the culmination at St George's Park.
- Inclusion of Para players in the official England kit launch.

Other topics considered during the season included:

- Review of the Terms of Reference.
- Improving links with walking football and the continued expansion of associated programmes.
- Greater alignment of practices across FA divisions and links to other committees.

Objectives – Season 2026-27

- Recruitment of an independent chair of committee and two nominees to represent disability football on FA Council ready to take over from the start of season 2027/2028.
- The establishment of an advisory/working group focused on the elite pathway, helping develop a clear set of objectives and processes for Para football.
- Work with the Club Development Team to review the Thriving Community Club Local Disability Football Plans to ensure the needs of disabled people are taken into account within all clubs.
- Implementation of the Framework for Future Success project.
- Further expansion and development of the EE Disability FA Cup Schools Festival programme – expanding the reach and impact of the event, raising awareness and inspiring participation.
- Working with FA colleagues to ensure disability is fully integrated into all aspects of FA Strategy.
- Roll-out of the annual Para international programme – including attendance at the Blind Men Tri-Nations and IBSA European Championships, Powerchair World Cup and CP Men Tri-Nations.
- Explore the opportunities of bidding for and hosting international Para competitions in England and promoting elite performance and Para football within UEFA and FIFA.
- Developing a closer working relationship with the FA Inclusion Advisory Board to ensure that disability is considered when agreeing policies, procedures and programmes, including in their work with the Professional Game and the needs of neurodiverse spectators.

Colin Chaytors

Chair, Disability Football Committee

30 September 2026

**Football Regulatory Authority
FA Board Sub-Committee
2025-26**



Chair

Lord David Wolfson KC - Independent Commissioner

Members

Nick Robinson – NG Rep, Isthmian League
Alan Young – NG Rep, Bedfordshire FA
John Topping – NG Rep, Durham County FA
Flo Allen – NG Rep, Women’s National League
Zoe Webber – EFL, Norwich City
Paul Douglas – EFL, Divisional Representative
Rebecca Caplehorn - PL
Tony Scholes – PL (retired mid-season)
Nick Randall KC – PL, Nottingham Forest (replaced T Scholes)
Shola Ameobi - Independent Commissioner
Genevieve Gordon-Thomson - Independent Commissioner
Vacancy – Independent Commissioner

Purpose of the Committee

The FRA is established by the FA Board as a division of The Association as the regulatory, disciplinary and rule-making authority of The Association. FA Board, on behalf of The Association, delegates to the FRA the right to administer and exercise the powers and functions of The Association contained in Rules E to L (inclusive).

Sub-Committees

- Stakeholders’ Consultation Group – This is a consultation group comprising representatives of the Premier League, EFL, National League, Women’s Super League, Professional Footballers’ Association, League Managers’ Association and Pro Ref. The group convenes to discuss disciplinary issues affecting the professional game.
- Grassroots Disciplinary Advisory Working Group – This is a working group which is convened to discuss disciplinary issues in the grassroots game and report back to FRA.

Number of Meetings

Meetings	2025-26	2024-25
FRA	6	6
Stakeholder Consultation Group	3	2
GDAWG	3	-

Activities and Achievements - Season 2025-26

During the season the FRA has:

- Considered and approved changes to FA Rules.
- Considered and approved changes to FA Regulations.

- Updated the sanction guidelines for discrimination offences.
- Completed a comprehensive review of the Sanction Guidelines for Betting and Match Integrity Offences.
- Considered and approved improved and streamlined on-field disciplinary processes.
- Discussed current disciplinary and integrity issues affecting both the professional and grassroots game.
- Considered and approved Technical Area Dismissals.
- Approved the Terms of Reference for the Grassroots Discipline Advisory Working Group and its membership.
- Considered and approved grassroots discipline issues including cooling off periods, sanction guidelines, the introduction of Fast Track Discipline, Single Person Panels for non-serious denial personal hearings, and clarifying the extent of 'All Football' Suspensions.
- Discussed key disciplinary and integrity cases which had concluded.
- Appointed the Safeguarding Review Panel for a three-year term.

Objectives – Season 2026-27

For next season the FRA will:

- Monitor The FA's handling of disciplinary and integrity cases.
- Consider the future role and constitution of the FRA.
- Consider whether any changes are required to FA Rules, Regulations, policies or procedures in relation to discipline and integrity.
- Consider whether any changes are required to sanction guidelines.
- Review the outcome of any significant disciplinary cases.

Lord David Wolfson

Chair, Football Regulatory Authority

30 September 2026

**Inclusion Advisory Board
FA Board Sub-Committee
2025-26**



Chair

Deji Davies - Football Communities Representative

Members

Sanjay Bhandari, MBE - Kick it Out (KIO)

Chris Paouros - FSA, PL

Nuala Walsh - World Athletics, LSE

Paul Bickerton - CEO, London FA

Purpose of the Board

The Board is the strategic advisory group for the FA Board and Executive across the breadth of the EDI (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) landscape, supporting and steering the creation and delivery of The FA's EDI strategy.

Sub-Committees

None

Number of Meetings

Meetings	2025-26	2024-25
Inclusion Advisory Board (IAB)	3	4

Activities and Achievements – Season 2025-26

Following the renewal of our Terms of Reference and hire of a fifth IAB member with grassroots football expertise, the IAB evolved to a skills-based composition and is now fit for purpose in addressing modern challenges around inclusion in football. The IAB is now well equipped to support and challenge the Executive in strategy development and serve as ambassadors for our work in the game.

During the season the IAB has:

- Advised on and participated in the inaugural Levels networking event in London. The event sought to access senior executive talent across multiple industries with a view to facilitating pathways into football. A Panel including Richard Masters (PL CEO), Aki Mandhar (Chelsea FC Women CEO) and Deji Davies (FA IAB Chair) spoke at the event.
- Helped to shape the new EDI decision making framework for the FA Board. This framework represents a practical guide to aid the Board in analysing and prioritising decisions on what are often complex and sensitive subjects.
- Provided input to the EDI Professional Game Summit, held in November at Wembley. This was a follow up session to the inaugural Professional Leadership Summit held in 2024 and focussed on establishing a collective mission among EDI professionals within the game.
- Helped to shape the LGBT in grassroots inclusion plan. This body of work was led by Chris Paouros (IAB) and Yasir Mirza (EDI Director) and presented to FA Council in February 2026.

- Provided input into the Mid Cycle EDI review, checking and challenging progress on stated objectives and tweaking strategic deliverables where necessary.
- Contributed to the development of the MBA and Female Technical Director programmes – the former aimed at tackling underrepresentation within the FA's extended leadership team and the latter to develop a stronger female pipeline.
- Maintained a strong relationship with the Chair of KIO through his role on the IAB, KIO is the most influential anti-discrimination body in football and both organisations benefit from the other being successful.

Objectives – Season 2026-27

A core objective for the season ahead centres on the IAB composition. Chris Paouros and Nuala Walsh have reached the end of their terms and will be leaving the IAB. A thorough recruitment process will be necessary to identify suitable replacements and that exercise is already underway. Whilst inroads have been made, greater connectivity with areas of the game not represented strongly enough at IAB level historically, in particular the Disability Football Committee, are planned for 2027.

Alongside our business-as-usual activities, we have set ourselves the following objectives:

- Complete selection process for up to two new IAB members to replace those departing. The primary objective is to ensure subject expertise is retained within the group, whilst also capturing the benefit of broadened skills and perspectives.
- Establish stronger links with Disability Football Committee - Attendance of Colin Chaytors at IAB meeting and vice versa re Deji Davies.
- Help to review the FA South Asians in Football strategic plan to ensure the actions have greater cut through.
- Play a core role in ensuring that mandatory reporting in the professional game serves to drive actions that improve representation in football, with continued support for a third professional game EDI Summit in 27.
- Work with FIFA to continue integrating their anti-racism strategy across the game globally, should the opportunity present itself.
- If required, contribute to a review of the 2026 FIFA World Cup from an inclusion lens and help to shape The FA response on any issues that emerged over the tournament.

Deji Davies

Chair, Inclusion Advisory Board

30 September 2026

**People and Culture Committee
FA Board Sub-Committee
2025-2026**



Chair
Debbie Hewitt MBE

Members

Paul Barber OBE – Premier League, Brighton & Hove Albion
Samantha Bell-Minogue – British Universities Colleges Sport
Lindsay Gordon – League Managers’ Association
Tom Greatrex – Football Supporters’ Association
Steve Johnson - Royal Navy FA
Christine Kane – Oxfordshire FA
Geoff Lee – Cornwall FA
Joan Ochuodho – RAF FA
Steve Thompson MBE - National League
Zoe Webber – EFL, Norwich City

Purpose of the Committee

The Committee’s role is to ensure that Council is a high performing, inclusive and modern organisation that adds meaningful value to the development of football, reflecting high standards of governance. It is the guardian of the culture of Council, ensuring that the skills and capabilities of Council are appropriate to meet its long terms objectives, specifically that the membership of Council and all of its various Committees reflect all areas of football.

Sub-Committees

- Appointments
- Reward and Recognition

Working Group

- Council 2.0

Number of Meetings

Meetings	2025-26	2024-25
People & Culture	4	4
Appointments	1	1
Reward & Recognition	-	1
Council 2.0	5	5

Activities and Achievements - Season 2025-26

We refreshed the membership of the Committee ahead of the season. Yashmin Harun BEM of London FA stepped down and we appointed Christine Kane, Oxfordshire FA.

During the season the committee discussed and agreed:

- Council Review 2.0 – we progressed proposals relating to FA Club Membership, League & Club Representation on Council, Council succession planning, Committee Effectiveness and Fellowship of Council. The majority of proposals were approved by Council and/or the Board during the season. Any needing more work will be carried forward to Council 3.0.
- FA Club Membership – we oversaw proposals to simplify and modernise FA Club Membership, including the introduction of new criteria on which clubs can be FA members, the removal of membership fees and status of Associate Membership and the introduction of women's clubs as members. The new membership structure has now been implemented. As part of the changes, we have recognised Civil Service FC as a Founder Member of The FA, being the only surviving club that was present at our inaugural meeting on 26 October 1863.
- League & Club Representation – we developed proposals to modernise league and club representation on Council and better reflect the structure of the game, notably phasing out the role of Divisional Representatives, increasing the voice of the National League System and better representation of all levels of the women's game.
- Council Diversity – we reviewed how we can work with the various stakeholders which appoint representatives onto Council to enhance the diversity of the pool of candidates they each select from. We noted the high number of members reaching the end of their tenure at the end of the 2026 / 2027 season and will engage with their appointing stakeholders at the start of next season.
- Committee Effectiveness – we commenced an effectiveness review of the Committees and agreed an action plan which is designed to introduce a more consistent approach to how they operate. The project included a review of Committee Terms of Reference and the development of a Best Practice Manual.
- Council Member Learning & Development – we agreed a structured learning and development programme for Council Members, to be implemented from next season.
- Fellowship of Council – we reviewed the future of the Fellowship programme and agreed a range of reforms designed to ensure it remains sustainable and proportionate in the future. This will be fed back to Council and the Fellowship at the start of next season.
- Wembley Suite Match Invitations – we discussed the standing invitations to the Wembley Suite at England and FA matches and considered ways to enhance the premium experience of those who are invited.
- Code of Conduct – we received updates on Code of Conduct matters and considered lessons learned to support standards of behaviour across Council and Committees.
- Committee evaluation – we carried out an evaluation of the Committee's effectiveness at the end of the season having been in operation for two full seasons. The review identified strengths and we agreed actions to support continuous improvement.

Objectives – Season 2026-27

- Council Review 2.0 – conclude Council Review 2.0 projects, including on the Fellowship of Council, Council Succession, and Committee Effectiveness.
- Council Review 3.0 – agree the issues to be addressed under Council Review 3.0 to further modernise Council and have oversight of each project.
- Allowances & Expenses – review the Policy.
- Committee Effectiveness Review – implement the actions arising from the review.

Debbie Hewitt MBE

Chair, People and Culture Committee

30 September 2026

**Referees' Committee
FA Board Sub-Committee
2025-26**



Chair

Alex Baker - Football Communities Representative

Vice-Chairs

Philip Hill – Cambridgeshire CFA (National Game Vice-Chair)

Howard Webb MBE – Pro Ref (Professional Game Vice-Chair)

Members

Aji Ajibola – Football Communities Representative

Barry Casterton – North Riding CFA

Andy Chaplin – Essex CFA

Helen Conley – The Referees Association Representative

Jason Lee - Grassroots Refereeing Representative

Tom Sampson – Devon CFA

Sarah Walters – Football Communities Representative

Rebecca Welch – Pro Ref

Observers

Maurice Armstrong – Life Vice-President

Jarnail Singh Gill

Purpose of the Committee

Responsible for the licensing and regulation of match officials in England, in ensuring the FA meets its obligations under FIFA and UEFA statute in respect of match officials, and for match official appointments to key FA competitions. It provides a forum that brings together the key delivery partners of referee administration and development (Pro Ref, FA Refereeing and the County FA network), with a focus on key strategic issues relating to refereeing, including recruitment and retention, referee development, and equality, diversity and inclusion, from grassroots through to the professional game.

Sub-Committees and Working Groups

- FIFA International List Nominations Group
- FA Competitions Appointments Group
- Grassroots Refereeing 2040

Number of Meetings

Meetings	2025-26	2024-25
Referees' Committee	4	4
FIFA International List Nominations	3	3
FA Competitions Appointments	3	2
Grassroots Refereeing 2040 Working Group	2	-

Refereeing Equality For All (REFA)	–*	Steering Group – 3 National Game – Monthly Professional Game – 3 PGMO match officials – 3
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** REFA did not meet in the 25/26 season. A review of REFA was carried out, including the approach of the Referees' Committee to EDI matters.*

Activities and Achievements - Season 2025-26

The 2025-26 season marked the final year of The FA Refereeing Strategy 2023-26 'To Grow, Guide and Govern'. The year saw continued progress across the key strategic pillars.

- Achieved 41,539 registered match officials, 82% referee retention rate, 4,582 Black and Asian match officials (11%), 3,700 women officials (8.9%), and 78% satisfaction rate across the referee workforce.
- Established the National Performance Centre, providing intensive development for officials with the greatest potential to reach the top of the game.
- Redesigned the Women's National League referee pathway and experience, improving standards and the operating environment for all involved.
- Professionalised support mechanisms for the wider referee workforce to drive continual improvement in the standards of delivery across referee developers.
- Piloted and delivered a new scouting methodology, creating a modern performance analysis tool for referees operating in the semi-professional men's and women's game.
- Agreed a sustainable, funded and resourced support team to modernise MOAS, strengthening support for referees operating across the professional and semi-professional game.
- Collaborated with the Home Nations to create aligned referee development content across the UK and Ireland and developed the National Referee Curriculum.
- Worked with FA Learning to incorporate refereeing into the LXP digital learning platform, enabling scalable delivery of learning and development content to all 41,000 referees.
- Saw positive outcomes from the BAMREF mentoring programme, growth in the Black and Asian Match Official Bursary Scheme, and an increase in the proportion of Black and Asian match officials operating in the professional game.
- Completed the third year of the bodycam trial, supporting the introduction of bodycams into the Laws of the Game for the 2026/27 season.
- Implemented a safeguarding review to ensure best practice is embedded across refereeing, supporting a safer and more inclusive environment.

Objectives – Season 2026-27

- Continue to embed changes to the functioning of the Committee, including linking its activity to the new 2026-2028 Refereeing Strategy.
- Continue to support the evolution of referee development, with a particular focus on grassroots and the women's pathway, as well as the assistant referee pathway and the use of technology.
- Operationalise the Referee Inclusion Advisory Group (RIAG). Ensure there is proportionate focus and committee understanding on the broader range of equality, diversity and inclusion matters relating to officiating, including neurodivergence, disabilities, LGBTQ+ and mental health.
- Continue to develop the framework for licensing and regulating match officials in England, including in relation to referee behaviours and discipline.
- Support the implementation of the recommendations from the recent safeguarding review.

Alex Baker
Chair, Referees' Committee
30 September 2026

**Professional Game Board
FA Board Sub-Committee
2025-2026**



Chair
Rick Parry – EFL

Members

Paul Barber – Premier League, Brighton and Hove Albion
Cliff Crown – Premier League, Brentford
Rebecca Caplehorn – Premier League
Tony Scholes – Premier League (resigned 19 March 2026)
Richard Garlick – Premier League, Arsenal (appointed 19 March 2026)
Neil Bausor – EFL, Middlesbrough
Charles Grant – EFL, Crewe Alexandra
Peter Ridsdale – EFL, Preston North End
Nikki Doucet – WSL
Holly Murdoch – WSL
Charlotte Brough – WSL, Manchester City
Lee Sanders – WSL, Durham Women's FC

Purpose of the Board

The newly integrated PGB is established as a committee of the FA Board. The PGB has delegated authority from the FA Board to undertake a number of functions including the following:

- All administrative and operational issues relating to the men's and women's FA Cups.
- All administrative and operational issues relating to the FA Community Shield and FA Youth Cup.
- Making recommendations to the FA Board in relation to all aspects of the men's and women's Professional Game in England, which may include the coordination of the fixture calendar, professional game refereeing and Laws of the Game, whole game UEFA and FIFA matters and professional game improvement issues.

Sub-Committees

- Men's Professional Game Committee
- Women's Professional Game Committee

Number of Meetings

Meeting	2025-26	2024-25
Professional Game Board	2*	5

**The former PGB met once in the season and the newly integrated PGB also met once.*

Activities and Achievements – Season 2025-26

- Agreement in principle on scope and ways of working of the newly integrated PGB.

Objectives – Season 2026-27

- Implement revised Terms of Reference for both the newly integrated PGB and the PGCs.
- To effectively represent the views of the men's and women's professional game on key and relevant issues to the FA Board.
- To have visibility of the work of the respective PGCs.

Rick Parry

Chair, Professional Game Board

30 September 2026

**Men's Professional Game Committee
Professional Game Board Sub-Committee
2025-2026**



Chair

Rick Parry – EFL

Members

Paul Barber – Premier League, Brighton and Hove Albion
Rebecca Caplehorn – Premier League
Cliff Crown – Premier League, Brentford
Tony Scholes - Premier League (resigned 19 March 2026)
Richard Garlick – Premier League, Arsenal (appointed 19 March 2026)
Neil Bausor – EFL, Middlesbrough
Charles Grant- EFL, Crewe Alexandra
Peter Ridsdale – EFL, Preston North End

Observers

Tom Greatrex – Football Supporters' Association
Phil Alexander – National League

Purpose of the Committee

The Committee is established as a sub-committee of the newly integrated PGB, which in turn is a committee of the FA Board. The MPGC has delegated power from the PGB to undertake a number of functions including the following:

- All administrative and operational issues relating to the Men's FA Cup, The FA Youth Cup and The Community Shield (including conducting draws, prize money distribution and rule breaches);
- All academy licensing matters for the men's professional game;
- UEFA Club Licensing requirements for the men's professional game;
- Recommendations to the PGB on the annual fixture calendar in the men's professional game
- Making recommendations to the FA Board in relation to all aspects of the Men's Professional Game.

Sub-Committees

- FA Challenge Cup/FA Youth Cup Sub-Committee
- Youth Sub-Committee, dealing with the operation of Academies including licences
- UEFA Club Licensing Sub-Committee

Number of Meetings

Meeting	2025-26	2024-25
Men's Professional Game Committee	4	-

Activities and Achievements - Season 2025-26

- Managing the FA Cup, including the functions previously delegated to the FA Challenge Cup Committee
- Administering FA Cup Rules and Regulation issues relating to all games in the FA Cup Proper.

- Signing off FA Cup Rule changes for season 2026/27
- Managing Youth Development and the Academy Licensing System, in conjunction with the Professional Game Academy Audit Company
- Liaising with Pro Ref and receiving Reports from the Chief Football Officer of Pro Ref
- Managing the FA Youth Cup
- Continuing the review of Professional Game interactions with a view towards amending future Terms of Reference for both the PGB and Men's PGC. Completing the integration of the Women's Professional game within the PGB.

Objectives – Season 2026-27

- To implement revised Terms of Reference in respect of both the newly integrated PGB and the individual PGCs
- Manage the activities of the FA Challenge Cup and FA Youth Cup
- Review the structure and responsibilities in respect of the Academy Licensing regime in conjunction with the Professional Game Academy Audit Company and the leagues
- Continue to encourage the best possible refereeing standards across the Professional Game, in conjunction with Pro Ref

Rick Parry

Chair, Men's Professional Game Committee

30 September 2026

**Women's Professional Game Committee
Professional Game Board Sub-Committee
2025-2026**



Chair

Nikki Doucet – WSL CEO

Members

Holly Murdoch – WSL Football COO

Charlotte Brough – BWSL representative Manchester City Women's Football Club

Clare Wheatley – BWSL representative Arsenal Women Football Club

Lee Sanders – BWSL2 representative Durham Women's Football Club

Kay Cossington – BWSL2 representative Sunderland Women's Football Club

Observers

Nick Frith – The FA

Deborah Dilworth – The FSA

Purpose of the Committee

To exercise functions delegated to it by the Professional Game Board in relation to administrative and operational issues relating to the women's professional game including the Women's FA Cup, youth development, domestic calendar and UEFA licensing. The committee was established at the start of the 25/26 season.

Sub-Committees

- PGA Subgroup
- PGAAC
- WPFNCC

Number of Meetings

Meeting	2025-26	2024-25
Women's Professional Game Committee	4	-

Activities and Achievements - Season 2025-26

- Established inaugural WPGC committee, a historic moment for women's football under FA governance
- Administering FA Cup Rules and Regulation issues relating to all games in Women's FA Cup from round 3 onwards
- Noted fixtures and results for the Women's FA Cup
- Distributing prize money and other income from the budget
- Managing Youth Development and the Academy Licensing System, in conjunction with the Professional Game Academy Audit Company
- Successfully achieved the inaugural sign-off of the 2026/27 women's football domestic

calendar as a newly formed committee

- Introduced formal observer status for the Football Supporters' Association (FSA) and the Women's National League (WNL) to bridge governance layers
- Noted and discussed extensive stakeholder feedback regarding proposed structural changes to the Women's FA Cup.
- Noted, reviewed, and debated consultation feedback regarding the new youth development and Professional Game Academy proposals.

Objectives – Season 2026-27

- Managing the Women's FA Cup.
- Reviewing proposals for changes to the Women's FA Cup.
- Navigating creation of the 2027/28 women's football domestic calendar in light of significant challenges notably from the introduction of the FIFA Club World Cup in January 2028.
- Continued progression of women's football formal representation within FA governance across all levels.
- Further discussion of the development and growth requirements for women's professional football in England.

Nikki Doucet

Chair, Women's Professional Game Committee

30 September 2026

**National Leagues Pyramid Board
FA Board Sub-Committee
2025-26**



Chair
Chris Brown

Members

Phil Alexander (Men's National League)
Flo Allen (Women's National League and Women's Regional & County League)
Chris Brown (Independent Chair)
Danni Every (Women's National League and Women's Regional & County League)
Mark Frost (NLS Steps 5&6 Rep)
Mark Harris (Northern Premier League) – resigned during the season
Sue Hough (Women's National League and Women's Regional & County League)
David Martin (Southern League)
Elaine Oram (Women's National League and Women's Regional & County League)
Denise Richmond (Steps 5&6 Rep)
Nick Robinson (Isthmian League)

Observer - Chris Paouros - Football Supporters Association

Purpose of the Board

- Approve the strategy and annual business plans to raise standards in the National League System and Women's Football Pyramid and to present such strategies and plans to the FA Board;
- have oversight of, and hold stakeholders to account, on (but not limited to) the following matters insofar as they impact on the National League System and/or the Women's Football Pyramid:
 - Player and Youth Player Development
 - Coaching & Coach Development
 - Workforce & Volunteering
 - Marketing & Commercial
 - Participant Conduct and Behaviour
 - Club and League Development
- liaise with any committees or other relevant bodies established in connection with the following matters insofar as they impact on the National League System / Women's Football Pyramid:
 - Refereeing
 - Diversity and Inclusion
 - Safeguarding
 - Facilities
- make representations on behalf of the National League System and Women's Football Pyramid on matters relating to FIFA/UEFA or policies developed by other stakeholders insofar as they impact on the National League System and/or the Women's Football Pyramid;
- consider all matters relating to the governance and administration of football in the National League System and Women's Football Pyramid;

- liaise and consult with the FA Board in its consideration from time to time of the Budget to the extent that the same affects the National League System and Women's Football Pyramid;
- have responsibility for all financial matters relating to the National League System and Women's Football Pyramid within the parameters of the Budget as set by the FA Board from time to time;
- make recommendations to the FA Board of the annual fixture schedule as the same relates to the National League System and / or Women's Football Pyramid, provided always that the final decision on the annual fixture schedule shall remain with and be reserved to the FA Board;
- appoint members, delegate appropriate power to, and operate the sub-committees listed below.
- appointing, where appropriate, representatives of the National League System and / or Women's Football Pyramid to other committees of the Company; and
- be granted such other responsibilities and activities as the FA Board may from time to time decide.

Sub-Committees

- Men's Step 1-4 operational Committee
- Men's Step 5-6 Operational Committee
- Stadium Accreditation Committee
- Women's National League Committee
- Women's Football Pyramid Operational Committee

Number of Meetings

Meeting	2025-26	2024-25
National Leagues Pyramid Board	5	5

Activities and Achievements - Season 2025-26

- Agreed the financial budgets for the NLP for Season 25/26.
- Established a collective ambition through a Board Away Day to set the strategic focus for the NLP Board in the short and medium term.
- Considered and agreed a roll out strategy, plan and working group to activate the new NLP Board.
- Explored ways to maximise investment into the NLP, by considering a digital first, data driven engagement strategy.
- Agreed to prioritise Club and League Licencing, seeking to achieve a first-class Club and League License process to help the sustainability of Clubs and effectiveness of Leagues.
- Considered how to accelerate true integration between the Women's and Men's pyramid, through regulatory alignment and executive efficiencies.
- Debated strategic football matters including the WNL Restructure, Steps 5 and 6 Restructure and Incorporation of NLP Clubs.
- Considered the financial strategy for the NLP and agreed budgets for the NLP for Season 26/27

Objectives – Season 26-27

- Launch the NLP Brand to unify the game and elevate the prominence of the NLP.
- Consider how to drive additional investment into the NLP and maximise current investment.
- Drive Club and League Licensing in the NLP to develop a best-in-class process.
- Consider the future operational strategies of the Men's and Women's Pyramid.
- Continue to explore how integration can provide opportunities for collaboration in both pyramids.
- Seek updates from various departments / divisions that engage with the NLP and to support on the effective mechanisms to engage with the NLP stakeholders

Chris Brown

Independent Chair, National Leagues Pyramid Board

30 September 2026

**NLS Steps 1-4 Operational Committee
National Leagues Pyramid Board Sub-Committee
2025-2026**



Chair

Mark Harris - Northern Premier League – resigned April 2026

Steve Thompson MBE – National League – Interim Chair from April 2026

Members

Steve Thompson MBE - National League

David Martin - Southern League

Nick Robinson - Isthmian League

Tom Greatrex – Football Supporters’ Association

Andrew Shaw - Divisional Representative

Chris Reeves - Divisional Representative

Craig Johnson - Divisional Representative

Observers

Elaine Oram – Women’s Football Pyramid

Mark Frost - Steps 5&6 Operational Committee

Purpose of the Committee

- Control and manage football at Steps 1 to 4 of the National League System and to ensure that the constituent leagues comply with the Regulations.
- Determine all matters pertinent to Steps 1 to 4 of the National League System against the relevant National League System Regulations as amended from time to time.
- Control all promotion, relegation and other issues relating to the movement of clubs within Steps 1 to 4 of the National League System.
- Manage the relegation of Clubs from Step 4 of the National League System in conjunction with the National League System Steps 5 and 6 Operational Committee.
- Be responsible for the development and agree the implementation of the National Stadium Accreditation criteria document insofar as it affects Steps 1 to 4 of the National League System.
- Agree the implementation of the National League System Licencing Criteria and make recommendations thereof to the NLS Board on any matter pertinent to the same.
- Manage and develop the FA Trophy competition.
- Propose changes to Rules and Regulations which affect Steps 1 to 4 of the National League System, after relevant consultation, including periodic reviews of the Standardised Rules and relevant FA Competition Rules (in conjunction with any relevant committee).
- Manage the organisation and administration of the England C and FA Representative XI team and to represent the FA at matches.
- Appoint members to sub-committees and working groups when established.
- Carry out such other responsibilities and activities as the NLS Board may from time to time decide.

Sub-Committees and Working Groups

- Allocations
- Rules & Regulations
- Groundshare Working Group

Number of Meetings

Meetings	2025-26	2024-25
NLS Steps 1-4 Operational Committee	6	6
Rules and Regulations sub-committee	3	3
Allocations sub-committee	1	1
Groundshare Working Group	1	0

Activities and Achievements - Season 2025-26

- The committee completed its process to survey Clubs at Steps 3&4 on changes to Play-Off format, with the Regulations approved to be implemented for the 26/27 Season.
- Supported the roll out of the iFAS Matchday App across all Competitions at Steps 1-4.
- The committee has considered through NLS Regulations a number of specific Club issues, mainly that of Hashtag United, VCD Athletic, Mousehole and Dunstable Town & Dunstable AFC.
- The committee has concluded the annual requirement of Rule/Regulation revisions and the Club Allocation process.
- The committee has overseen club allocations at NLS Steps 1-4.
- The committee has recommended changes to Rules & Regulation for the season.
- The committee has worked with the FA Executive to consider the rollout of an enhanced Licensing programme at Steps 2-4 of the NLS.
- The committee has worked collaboratively with Steps 5 and 6 Operational Committee colleagues to review groundshares and bring forward agreed recommendations for change, removing 3-way groundshares in the NLS.

Objectives – Season 2026-27

- To continue to explore opportunities to deliver at least one England C fixture per annum.
- To consider and introduce League Licensing in conjunction with NLP Board priorities
- Address flaws in current 7-day notice of approach rules.
- Address inconsistencies of discipline in the NLS between Steps 1-4 and Steps 5 and 6.
- To finalise recommendations for enhanced club financial reporting at NLS Steps 1-4.
- To continue to ensure that recommendations from the NLS Strategy are implemented effectively and proportionately.

Steve Thompson MBE

Interim Chair, NLS Steps 1-4 Operational Committee

30 September 2026

**NLS Steps 5 & 6 Operational Committee
National Leagues Pyramid Board Sub-Committee
2025-26**



Chair

Mark Frost – Huntingdonshire FA

Members

Phil Chaplin – Somerset & Avon CFA

Kellie Discipline – Divisional Representative, Erith & Belvedere FC

Denise Richmond – Vice Chair – Step 5 & 6 Leagues Representative, Southern Counties East FL

Gavin Perry – Divisional Representative, Ashington FC

Ian Wild – Liverpool CFA

Chris Conlon – Step 5 & 6 Leagues Representative, Combined Counties FL

Co-opted Members

Chris Sirrup – Step 5 & 6 Leagues, North West Counties FL

Matt Jones – Step 5 & 6 Leagues, Northern Counties East FL

Observers

Harriet Miller – Women's Football Pyramid Committee

Purpose of the Committee

- To control and manage football at Steps 5 & 6 of the National Leagues Pyramid and to ensure that the constituent leagues comply with the Regulations.
- To determine all matters pertinent to Steps 5 & 6 against the Regulations of the NLP.
- To agree the delegated authority of the operation of the NLP to the FA Executive.
- To control all promotion, relegation and other issues relating to the movement of clubs within Steps 5 & 6 of the National Leagues Pyramid, working in conjunction with Step 1 to 4 Operating Committee and the NGB Grassroots Committee.
- To be responsible for the development and implementation of the National Stadium Accreditation criteria document insofar as it affects Steps 5 & 6 of the National Leagues Pyramid.
- To agree the implementation of National Leagues Pyramid Licencing Criteria at Steps 5 & 6 and make recommendations thereof to the NLPB on any matter pertinent to the Same.
- To manage and develop the FA Vase Competition.
- To propose changes to Rules and Regulations which affect Steps 5 & 6 of the National Leagues Pyramid, after relevant consultation, including periodic reviews of the Standardised Rules
- and relevant FA Competition Rules (in conjunction with any relevant committee).
- To appoint members to sub-committees and working groups as may be established.

Sub-Committees

- Rules & Regulations Working Group

Number of Meetings

Meetings	2025-26	2024-25
Steps 5 & 6 Operational Committee	7	7

Activities and Achievements - Season 2025-26

- 2025-26 allocations for Steps 5 & 6, taking into account appeals against such allocations.
- Steps 5 & 6 Structural Review – this intended to address current problems at Step 6 with Leagues having too large a footprint causing excessive mileage for some clubs. This intention was to bring the necessary rule/regulation changes in place at the end of the 2025-26 season to enable the newly formed Steps 5 & 6 leagues to commence from the 2027-2028 season. This was not supported by the NLPB.
- We continued to work with the Stadium Accreditation Sub-Committee throughout the season, where all 320 Step 5 Clubs, all 340 Step 6 Clubs plus those Clubs who applied for promotion to Step 6 having for the first time undertaken the new FA Ground Grading in 2025, to ensure as many clubs as possible achieved the necessary grading to continue in the NLP moving into the 2026-2027 season.
- We oversaw the running of the FA Vase Competition for 2025-26. Committee Members voluntarily attended local FA Vase Matches as representatives of The FA. For the Quarter Finals and Semi Finals Members were appointed as Representatives to each of the Matches. Non-League Finals Day and especially the FA Vase Final was a great exhibition of Step 5 Football where AFC Stoneham defeated Cockfosters FC.
- We completed the season with the allocations for 2026-2027, which considered the wishes of the various meetings with the Leagues, to ensure where possible having divisions of between 18 and 22 clubs.

Objectives – Season 2026-27

- To complete the Step 5 & 6 Review, and to achieve a greater number of Step 6 Leagues thus reducing their geographical footprints and resulting in more reasonable travel time and distance for clubs.
- We aim to commence the planning for the process of League and Club Licencing across the whole of Steps 5 & 6.

Mark Frost

Chair, NLS Steps 5 & 6 Operational Committee

30 September 2026

**Women's National League Committee
National Leagues Pyramid Board Sub-Committee
2025-2026**



Chair

Sue Hough MBE – FA Representative

Members

Sandi Dosanjh – Independent
Joanna Coates – Independent
Jessica Creighton - Independent
Flo Allen – Club Representative
Julie Lewis – Club Representative (until October 2025)
Chris Newton – Club Representative (from October 2025)
Lola Ogunbote – Club Representative
Tammy Parlour – Club Representative
Liz Pamplin – Club Representative
Phillip Smith – Club Representative
Sue Day, MBE – FA Representative
Elaine Oram – FA Representative

Purpose of the Committee

Agree and implement the strategic direction, make recommendations in respect of commercial partnerships, agree and implement policy, oversee rules and regulations, and agree and monitor the annual budget for the FA Women's National League.

Sub-Committees

- Commercial Sub-Committee

Number of Meetings

Meetings	2025-26	2024-25
Women's National League Committee	5	5
Disciplinary	5	7

Activities and Achievements - Season 2025-26

- WNL Strategy launched and monitored at each meeting
- WNL Administration moving to FAS and Pro Club Portal, no longer using the Platform for Football and therefore aligning with professional game rather than grassroots.
- Workforce Structure enhanced to reflect work of operating and developing League
- Operation and delivery of the WNL to the highest possible standards
- All clubs achieving 90% compliance with Minimum Operating Standards by deadline
- Business as usual in terms of Fixture calendar, Disciplinary matters, Cup Finals, Awards Celebration.
- Safeguarding and wellbeing provision enhanced
- Youth Review and Structure Review now ready for FA Board Consideration
- Risk Register developed for WNL

- Play Offs successfully run, introduced as a one-off for the 2025-26 season

Objectives – Season 2026-27

- Youth Review completed and ready for implementation in Season 2027-28
- Objectives and targets of the WNL Strategy continue to drive the direction of the League
- Two new Club Representatives appointed to replace retiring members
- Appoint a new independent member
- FAS embedded for use in WNL
- Continue to oversee the operations of the WNL to ensure it is administered to the highest possible standards
- Look at the structure of the WNL for future growth
- Commercial Partner established for the WNL
- Business as usual in terms of Calendar, Disciplinary matters, Cup Finals, Awards Celebration.

Sue Hough MBE

Chair, Women's National League Committee

30 September 2026

**Women's Football Pyramid Committee
National Leagues Pyramid Board Sub-Committee
2025-2026**



Chair

Elaine Oram – Nottinghamshire FA

Members

Harriet Miller – Women's Football Conference
Kelly Simmons – Football Communities Representative
Chris Morton – Women's Regional & County Leagues
Greg Petts – Women's Regional & County Leagues
Paul Preston – Women's Football Conference

Observer – Denise Richmond – National League Steps 5&6

Purpose of the Committee

To control and manage football at Tiers 1-7 of the Women's Football Pyramid. This includes promotion, relegation and any other issues relating to the movement of clubs within Tiers 1-7. The Committee reports to the National Leagues Pyramid Board.

Sub-Committees

Rules & Regulations Working Group

Number of Meetings

Meetings	2025-26	2024-25
Women's Football Pyramid Committee	9	7
Rules & Regulations Working Group	3	2

Activities and Achievements - Season 2025-26

During the season we have discussed and agreed the following:

- The promotion, relegation and other matters relating to the movement of clubs
- The requests from clubs to 'play out of county'
- The requests from clubs to change the club name
- Presented to the Women's Football Conference reports on the activities of the Committee
- Supported Regional League Development initiatives including the inaugural overarching brand and individual leagues and the league code of governance
- Provided feedback to the Women's FA Cup consultation
- Involvement in the Youth Development Review relating to PGA inclusion within the FA WNL
- Reviewed and approved any changes required to the Women's Football Pyramid Regulations and the Women's Regional League Standard Code of Rules

Objectives – Season 2026-27

- To continue to support the Women's Regional League Development which will include league workforce development

- To continue to support the pilot leagues implementing the Code of Governance
- To ensure that the promotion, relegation and any additional movement are considered and approved in accordance with the regulations
- To support the development of the FAWNL expansion to include PGA's
- To continue to review required Women's Pyramid rule and regulation changes
- To continue to support the Women's Football Conference
- To provide up to date information to the National Leagues Pyramid Board
- To ensure that all decisions we make are in the best interests of the game

Elaine Oram

Chair, Women's Football Pyramid Committee

30 September 2026

**Stadium Accreditation Committee
National Leagues Pyramid Board Sub-Committee
2025-2026**



Chair

Mark Harris - Northern Premier League – resigned April 2026

Nick Robinson – Isthmian League – Interim Chair from April 2026

Members

Steve Thompson MBE - National League

Nick Robinson – Isthmian League

David Martin – Southern League

Mark Frost - Steps 5&6

Chris Conlon - Steps 5&6

Greg Petts – Women’s Regional & County Leagues

Liz Pamplin – Women’s National League

Aron Sharpe – Divisional Representative

Observer – Peter Ducksbury - Chair of Facilities Expert Advisory Committee

Purpose of the Committee

- To manage and develop the National Criteria Document for Steps 1 to 6 of the National League System and Tiers 3 to 6 of the Women’s Football Pyramid.
- To consider recommendations to the amendment of criteria made by member Leagues of the National League System and Women’s Football Pyramid, and the Premier League Stadium Fund using a data-led approach.
- To ensure that the requirements set out in the National Criteria Document are reasonable, achievable and aligned to strategic aims of The FA and the Premier League Stadium Fund.
- To monitor the work carried out by the Premier League Stadium Fund’s assessor team.
- To confirm the award of appropriate Grades to all relevant interested parties.
- To discuss and agree a course of action for any Club who is non-compliant, including considering any requests for an extension in time to carry out the works.
- To work with the Premier League Stadium Fund to develop and maintain a training programme for both Stadium Accreditation Assessors and League Officers.
- To liaise with the Premier League Stadium Fund on issues relating to the funding of ground improvements when appropriate.
- To support with the delivery of the National League System / Women’s Football Pyramid Facilities Strategy.

Sub-Committees

- Groundshares
- Criteria

Number of Meetings

Meetings	2025-26	2024-25
Stadium Accreditation Committee	6	5
Groundshares working group	-	3
Criteria working group	1	3

Activities and Achievements - Season 2025-26

- Only 2 clubs relegated for non-compliance (comparable to other seasons).
- Processes embedded between Premier League Stadium Fund, Leagues, Clubs and FA.
- Process for harmonisation of men and women's stadium accreditation criteria completed following criteria review.
- Introduction of RAG ratings to assess extent of works required and clubs' ability to fund/carry them out by the 31 March deadline.
- Groundshare working group has recommended cessation of all three-way groundshares.
- Following the tragic loss of Billy Vigar following an incident at a National League System game, the Committee has been supporting the FA Executive which commissioned an immediate review, conducted by independent Health and Safety experts, of pitch perimeter barriers in the National League System. The Committee agreed changes to the Stadium Accreditation Criteria for the 2026-27 season as a result of this ongoing phased review, and have been working with Leagues to encourage engagement with the review by Clubs.

Objectives – Season 2026-27

- To monitor compliance of Clubs with the updated Stadium Accreditation Criteria and to provide support where necessary in relation to the Pitch Perimeter Fund set up via the Premier League Stadium Fund.
- To continue to roll out harmonised Men & Women's stadium criteria for Men's National League System Steps 3-6 and Women's Football Pyramid Tiers 3-5.
- Create development plan for each stadium to further optimise compliance.
- Review the Stadium Accreditation criteria to best align with the new Premier League Stadium Fund strategy to maximise investment into National Leagues Pyramid Facilities.
- Achieve greater consistency amongst Men's National League System Steps 5-6 leagues for adoption of monitoring club works to achieve compliance.
- Roll out leagues access to data reporting for club compliance.
- Be responsible for the development and agree the implementation of the National Stadium Accreditation criteria document insofar as it affects Steps 1 to 4 of the National League System
- Complete revision of the criteria document

Nick Robinson

Interim Chair, Stadium Accreditation Committee

30 September 2026

**National Game Board
FA Board Sub-Committee
2025-2026**



Chair

Sarah Walters – Football Communities Representative

Members

Alex Baker – Football Communities Representative
Jo Bladen – Independent Member
Neil Cassar – Hampshire FA – until October 2025
Andy Chaplin – Essex FA
Colin Chaytors – Disability Football
Andrew Cook – Northumberland FA – from March 2026
Jimmy Khan – Football Communities Representative
Professor Jo Maher – Association of Colleges Sport
Kevin Shoemake – Birmingham FA
John Topping – Durham FA
Lynsey Tweddle – Independent Member

Purpose of the Board

The National Game Board (NGB) is established as a Committee of The FA Board, with responsibility for the following elements of football at all levels below Step 6 of the National League System and Tier 6 of the Women's Football Pyramid:

- The promotion of raising standards of participation in all forms of association football, including but without limitation, men's and women's football at eleven-a-side levels, small-sided football, futsal, youth football, schools' football, walking football, and disability football.
- The administration, governance and organisation of the game.
- The administration, oversight and monitoring of NGB funding of the game.
- Implementing and monitoring policies set by The FA Board relating to the development of players and coaches.
- Liaising on matters of policy with any other Committees or relevant bodies established in connection with refereeing, equality, safeguarding or any other issue.
- The monitoring and oversight of any risks to the grassroots game.

Committees of the NGB

- Affiliated Associations Committee
- Facilities Expert Advisory Committee
- Football Development Committee
- Grassroots Football Advisory Group

Sub-Committees of NGB

- Business Optimisation Steering Committee

Number of Meetings

Meetings	2025-26	2024-25
National Game Board	5	5
Strategy (2 days)	2	2

Activities and Achievements - Season 2025-26

- Progress across both the current four-year grassroots football strategy and Grassroots 2040 project.
- Approved the roll out of Mixed Adult Football as a format of the game as part of The FA's affiliated offer for the 2026/27 season.
- Oversaw the roll out of the FutureFit programme ahead of the 2026/27 format changes in grassroots football.
- Approved 'The FA's A Game for All Standard for County FAs' and fully endorsed the LGBTQI+ Inclusion Plan.
- Enhanced County FA Governance and Financial Risk Management through the introduction of the internal controls checklist and assessment of financial controls.
- Approved the updated and new requirements of The FA's Code of Governance for CFAs (v.3.0) and the updated compliance framework.
- Launched the County FA Director Training & Education programme.
- Agreed and signed off the National Game Budget for the 2026/27 season.
- Commenced the recruitment process for the NGB Independent Chair.

Objectives – Season 2026-27

- Publish the mid-point review of our four-year grassroots strategy and continue to drive progress against our 2028 targets.
- Continue to drive progress against our FA Group strategy targets of improving and building more facilities, achieving 1000 thriving community clubs by 2028, supporting equal access for women and girls, and tackling discrimination in the game.
- Support important areas within our progressive governance strategic pillar including safeguarding, the Governance Code 3.0 and financial risk management within grassroots football.
- Support the successful delivery of our digital and data roadmaps for the 26/27 season
- Continue to drive the Grassroots 2040 project forward, including overseeing the roll out of a new strategic workforce, launching the transition fund and co-creating the new Partnership Agreement content.
- Develop and continue to roll out the next wave of Business Optimisation services including finance and refereeing, as well as maintaining high performance in existing services.
- Continue to maintain our focus on NGB effectiveness, including ongoing skills assessment reviews and refining our risk management approach.
- Successfully induct and onboard the new Independent Chair for the NGB.

Sarah Walters

Chair, National Game Board

30 September 2026

**Affiliated Associations' Committee
National Game Board Sub-Committee
2025-2026**

Chair

Colin Bridgford – Manchester FA



Members

Michael Banham – Norfolk FA
Philip Chaplin – Somerset & Avon FA
Colin Garlick – Cheshire FA
Peter Ducksbury – Westmorland FA
Martin Gilmour – Sheffield & Hallamshire FA
Darryl Haden – Kent FA
John Horsley – Berks & Bucks FA
Hitesh Patel – Gloucestershire FA
Georgia Rooney – Sussex FA
Kayleigh Saunders – Middlesex FA
Nichola Trigg – Worcestershire FA

Purpose of the Committee

The role of the Committee is to perform, on behalf of the National Game Board, delegated functions in accordance with the Committee's Terms of Reference. The Committee works with The FA's Executive to check, challenge and importantly support the work and direction of the grassroots strategy. The Committee's work and decisions directly impact those associations affiliated to The FA and specific focus relates to the 50 County and Other FAs (collectively, the Affiliated Associations), ensuring a strong partnership culture.

Sub-Committees

None

Number of Meetings

Meeting	2025/2026	2024/2025
Affiliated Associations Committee	4	4

Activities and Achievements - Season 2025-26

The Committee held its first meeting of the season in October 2025. The committee made four new additions with Darryl Haden, Hitesh Patel, Georgia Rooney and Kayleigh Saunders joining. The membership represents the skills required but also representative and reflective geographically of the four regions.

During the season we have discussed and agreed the following:

- The outcomes of the 2025 'State of Play' Reports and considered and approved future provisions, moving from annual to bi-annual.
- A CPD, Mentoring and Coaching offer for CFA CEOs.
- Organised County FA engagement conferences, seminars and meetings with County Football Association officials.

- The setting of any new or additional key performance indicators or development measures and the revisions of any operating standards, such as Safeguarding, Code of Governance v3.0, League Code of Governance.
- Assisted with the development of key strategies, guidance manuals and County FA Operating Standards, specifically the provision of the new 'A Game for All' Equality Standard and Finance Standard.
- Reviewed and approved the terms of the National Game Insurance Scheme on offer for the 26/27 season.
- Reviewed the FA's County FA Complaints Procedure, escalation process and received regular updates.
- Received updates and provided guidance on technology initiatives, including the developments within Platform for Football.
- Reviewed and approved IT service level agreements and received updates on such matters.
- Established a programme of training for County / Other Football Association staff.
- Considered the provisions on administration, specifically Business Efficiency and Business Optimisation opportunities, such as Safeguarding, Discipline and Finance.
- Considered and approved the pilot of 'Dare to Listen' a Safeguarding initiative improving meaningful engagement with children.
- Considered relevant policies such as County FA Expense Policies, Grievance and Whistleblowing policies.
- Established and administered the County FA Recognition Awards Scheme.
- Provided the review and approval of County FA Articles of Association (where such Articles of Association require the approval of The FA).

Objectives – Season 2026-27

Membership of the Committee will remain unchanged for this season, but we will be considering succession planning ahead of the 2027/28 season as FA council term limits for Colin Bridgford, Colin Garlick and Peter Ducksbury are completed.

Alongside our business-as-usual activities in accordance with our terms of reference, we anticipate discussion on such items as:

- Oversee the ongoing implementation of the KPI & Development Measures for the 2024-28 Strategy, alongside supporting the Impact and Performance GR2040 workstream for beyond 2028
- Implementation of new Learning and Development opportunities for County FA staff.
- Receiving regular updates and being consulted on the progress of 'Tackling Poor Behaviour', continuing to support County FAs with positive interventions.
- In conjunction with the GR2040 Pricing Proposition Working Group, review and determine the National Game Insurance and FA recommended levels of cover.
- Provision of additional County FA Operating Standards, specifically the proposed new CFA Finance Standard.
- Establishment of ongoing compliance framework, particularly The County FA Code of Governance.
- Updates on the Business Optimisation Engagement Groups.
- Ongoing support with the progress of 'A New Network Ambition' for beyond 2028.
- Ongoing support in the progress to developing the County FA partnership and pricing proposition agreements for beyond 2028.

Colin Bridgford

Chair, Affiliated Associations' Committee

30 September 2026

**Facilities Expert Advisory Committee
National Game Board Sub-Committee
2025-2026**



Chair

Peter Dicksbury - Westmorland County FA

Members

Chris Barry – The Football Foundation

Colin Chaytors – Disability Football

Chris Conlon – National League System Steps 5 and 6

Neil Cassar – Hampshire FA – resigned October 2025

Greg Petts – Women's Regional & County Leagues

Stephen Whittle – Dorset County FA

Purpose of the Committee

The Facilities Expert Advisory Committee is established as a sub-committee of the NGB and has delegated power to undertake the following functions:

- To support the development of facilities technical standards across the National Game including:
 - Football's Guide to Floodlighting.
 - Football's Guide to Changing Rooms and Clubhouses.
 - Stadium Accreditation - the committee have an advisory role in the Stadium Accreditation Programme, particularly on matters requiring technical guidance and with the development of technical guidance documents.
 - Football's Guide to 3G Football Turf Pitch design principles and layouts.
 - FA 3G Pitch Register and 3G Pitch Testing (the committee will provide advice as required on the register and on testing standards).
 - Football's Guide to Pitch and Goalpost safety and standards.
 - Guide to the Operation of Sites and Facilities
 - Ensure that committee members have up to date training to provide support on technical standards (such as through industry visits, annual conference).
 - To provide input to the NGB as requested to ensure the facilities workforce is considered within activities to support volunteers.
 - Continuing to evolve the Committee's knowledge and engaging with the facility networks workforce development programme.

Number of Meetings

Meeting	2025-26	2024-25
Facilities Expert Advisory Committee	4	4

Activities and Achievements - Season 2025-26

The Committee met face to face on four occasions, one at St Georges Park, Leisure United Sheffield, Wembley Stadium and Leisure United Wednesbury when members also took the opportunity to view the site (not Wembley) as well as undertake training and development.

During the season we have:

- Published the following revised technical document:
 - Pavilion, Changing Rooms and Clubhouses
- Reviewed the following technical documents:
 - Goalpost and pitch sizes particularly around the new 3v3 format
 - 3G Technical Guidance and Pitch & Goalpost Safety
- Worked with FA around pitch run-offs following player injury.
- Continues our work around 3G goal safety and positioning of wheels.
- Raised the issue of The FA being removed as a statutory consultee during the planning process
- Supported The Football Foundation with improvements to the 3G Pitch Register.
 - Continued to trial different infills used as an alternative to Microplastics in ATP's particularly around current FIFA and European legislation and whether DEFRA will implement similar legislation in the UK.

Objectives – Season 2026-27

- Work with the other FA Committees and the Football Foundation to standardise 3G Terminology.
- Continue the business-as-usual cycle of guidance document review and publication.
- Continue work on the new guidance document for Operation of Sites and Facilities
- Work with the Football Foundation to look at the future of ATP's
- Work to ensure the future use of Microplastics is carried out in line with DEFFA requirements in a sustainable and cost-effective manner

Peter Dicksbury

Chair, Facilities Expert Advisory Committee

30 September 2026

**Football Development Committee
National Game Board Sub-Committee
2025-2026**



Chair

Professor Jo Maher – Association of Colleges Sport

Members

Susannah Abbott – Independent Schools FA
Sam Bell-Minogue - British Universities Colleges Sport
Jonathan Leese - Amateur Football Alliance
Joel Moore – FA Youth Council
Mike Coyne – English Schools FA
Graeme Dell - Futsal
Tom Sampson – Devon CFA
Kevin Shoemake – Birmingham CFA
Ben Snowdon – Cumberland CFA
John Suddards – East Riding CFA
Jimmy Khan – Football Communities Representative

Purpose of the Committee

To oversee the development of football within the National Game including:

- Sustaining and increasing participation including through mini-soccer, youth football, veterans' football, walking football, flexible football, futsal, recreational football, small-sided football, and the transition from youth to adult football.
- Reviewing and approving mixed football pilots.
- Raising standards and addressing abusive behaviour in youth and adult football.
- Player development at all ages.
- Coaching and coach education in youth and adult football.
- Volunteer workforce support and development in youth and adult football.
- To oversee football development within education, including:
- Managing the relationships with the English Schools' FA (ESFA) (including appointment of The FA Representative to the ESFA), Independent Schools' FA (ISFA), British Universities Colleges Sport (BUCS) and Association of Colleges Sport (AOCS).
- To oversee the development work and manage the relationship with the FA Youth Council.

Sub-Committees

- Walking Football Advisory Group
- Standard Code of Rules / Standard Code of Rules (Youth Football)

Number of Meetings

Meetings	2025-26	2024-25
Football Development Committee	4	4
Walking Football Advisory Group	6	6
Standard Code of Rules / Standard Code of Rules (Youth Football)	3	3

Activities and Achievements - Season 2025-26

- Future Fit – early adopter leagues are making good progress, and committee approved a rule change of the removal of throw-ins at under 11 from 2026/27, to be replaced with pass-ins and dribble-ins.
- England Futsal hosted the first Lionesses fixtures on home soil.
- Walking Football – participant numbers continue to grow with the national competition a key success in terms of growth and expanding diversity.
- Mixed Football – the pilot is moving to implementation stage which is a key success after several years of testing and building the evidence base.
- FA Youth Council's Leadership Academy is a key success story with strong program numbers supporting youth development in the game.
- Overseen ISFA and ESFA's work on governance and the continued growth of their offer for young people in education.
- Supported BUCS and AoC Sport's diverse development work which covers initiative to grow the game both on and off the field.

Objectives – Season 2026-27

- Monitor the implementation of the mixed football changes, with a particular focus on Futsal.
- Monitor the implementation of the Youth Football review.
- Re-tender the Futsal stakeholder delivery partnership
- Support FA Youth Council's next phase of work on rights of a child aligned to their vision to ensure all young people have meaningful and inclusive opportunities to develop themselves and positively impact the football community.
- Ensure that male, female and disability players' development programmes and interventions are challenged and supported to ensure growth and retention in the game.

Professor Jo Maher

Chair, Football Development Committee

30 September 2026

**Grassroots Football Advisory Group
National Game Board Sub-Committee
2025-26**



Chair

Ian Wild – Liverpool FA

Members

Barry Casterton – North Riding FA
Adam Evans – Staffordshire FA
Shan Jaehrig – Lincolnshire FA
Yashmin Harun – London FA
Jonathan Leese – Amateur Football Alliance
Harriet Miller – Women’s Football Conference
John Suddards – East Riding FA
Paul Tompkins - Herefordshire FA
Alan Young – Bedfordshire FA

Purpose of the Committee

The Grassroots group has been established to oversee the following:

- To promote and monitor the leagues below step 6 of the National League System
- Annually review the Standard Code of Rules for all competitions at Regional Feeder League level and below and tier 7 and below of the women’s Pyramid.
- To manage the FA Sunday Challenge Cup and the FA Inter League cup competition, including to annually review the competition rules and propose any changes to the NGB
- Oversee any protests or disputes related to the National Sunday cup and the FA Inter League Cup
- To promote good standards of governance within leagues and clubs.
- To provide oversight of the England Football Accreditation Scheme as it applies to leagues and clubs below Step 6 of the NLS System
- To have regular contact with leagues on a collective basis as required from time to time.
- Review the status of the Regional Feeder Leagues
- Promote standards of good governance within the women’s game for tier 7 and below

Number of Meetings

Meetings	2025-26	2024-25
Grassroots Football Advisory Group	4	2

Activities and Achievements - Season 2025-26

During the season we have:

- Reviewed and approved changes to the FA Standard Code of Rules
- Circulated regular FA e-newsletters to leagues and club volunteers
- Completed the FA Sunday Cup for 2025-26, final held at Sheffield Utd (Home Bargains winners)
- Completed the FA Inter league cup for 2025-26, Final held at Leicester City (Cheshire League winners)

- Held a consultation with Regional Feeder Leagues about extension of Men's National League System Step 6 leagues from 17 to 24
- Considered lateral movement requests from clubs in the Regional Feeder Leagues
- Placement of teams relegated from Men's National League System Step 6 into Regional Feeder Leagues level.

Objectives – Season 2026-27

- Continue to review Standard Code of Rules for Youth and Adult football
- Continue to support the FA code of Governance for leagues
- Manage the FA Sunday Cup for season 2026-2027
- Look at a proposal to review the inter league cup for season 2027-2028
- Arrange a quarterly forum for Regional Feeder Leagues and continue to gather their feedback on the expansion of Men's National League System Step 6
- Continue to promote the FA's Improving Poor Behaviour programme
- Continue to deal with lateral movement requests from RFL clubs
- Allocate clubs to Regional Feeder Leagues that have been relegated from Men's National League System leagues

Ian Wild

Chair, Grassroots Football Advisory Group

30 September 2026