



A CALENDAR AND GUIDE TO EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL 2025-2026



**ENGLAND
FOOTBALL**

INTRODUCTION

Across the country, people from a range of backgrounds, cultures and communities take part in football in different ways. This could be playing, coaching, refereeing and volunteering to name a few. The diversity of these people is one of the best things about the beautiful game.

The FA, England Football and the County FA network are working to address under-representation in football and to ensure it is inclusive through the delivery of:

- [The FA Strategy 2024-2028](#)
- [FA EDI Strategy](#)
- [FA Grassroots Strategy](#)
- [FA Women and Girls Strategy](#)
- [FA South Asian Inclusion Plan](#)
- [FA Refereeing strategy](#)
- [The FA Disability Football strategy](#)
- [FA Learning](#)

We hope this calendar and guide can help you with your understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion.

The FA will also be launching a number of new strategies and supporting documents across the 2025-2026 season.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE AND CALENDAR?

The FA's calendar and guide to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in grassroots football should be used to view the many ways in which football can bring people from all backgrounds, cultures and communities together. This is by no means a definitive list of all key celebrations, but it is a general guide to some of the EDI moments for awareness across the grassroots landscape. If you are involved in running the game, whether through a club, league or facility, we always recommend speaking directly to the people who may observe any one of the dates contained in this document to understand their personal preferences and perspectives and to continue to enhance knowledge sharing.



PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS & FA RULES

EQUALITY ACT 2010

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and wider society. There are nine protected characteristics (see image right). The basic framework protects people from direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation regardless of whether the victim holds multiple characteristics or is perceived to have or is associated with someone who has a protected characteristic.

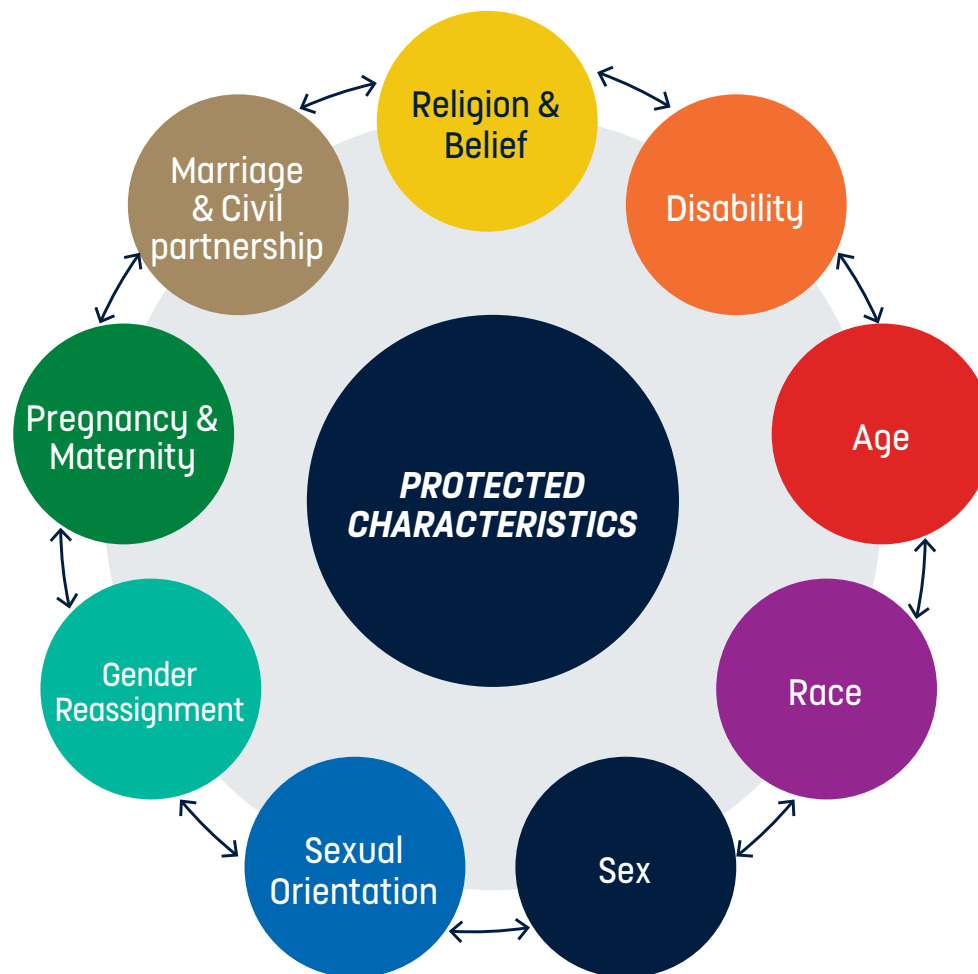
FA RULE E 3.2

An aggravated breach of FA Rule E3 is when a participant is charged with insulting, abusive or improper behaviour, or brings the game into disrepute, while also including a reference, whether express or implied, to any or more of the following: ethnic origin, colour, race, nationality, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or disability.

RULE B5 FOOTBALL AND RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

- (a) A Participant cannot be compelled to play football on bona fide occasions where religious observance precludes such activity, save where the Participant:
- (i) has consented to do so on such occasions;
 - or
 - (ii) is registered as a player under written contract, which shall be taken as consent to play on such occasions unless otherwise provided for in the contract.
- (b) Annually, when planning programmes, Competitions shall define and notify agreed dates of such occasions.

**E3(2) does not cover Pregnancy & Maternity/ Marriage & Civil partnership.*



EDI CALENDAR

August 2025 – January 2026

	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	JANUARY
Religion and Belief	09/08: Raksha Bandhan (Hinduism)	22/9 - 24/9: Rosh Hashana (Judaism) 22/9 - 2/10: Sharad Navratri (Hinduism)	1/10 - 2/10: Yom Kippur (Judaism) 6/10 - 15/10: Sukkot / Shemini Atzeret & Simchat Torah (Judaism) 20/10: Diwali (Sikhism & Hinduism)	Islamophobia awareness month (Islam) 5/11: Guru Nanak Jayanti (Sikhism)	14/12 - 22/12: Chanukah (Judaism) 25/12: Christmas Day (Christianity)	20/1: Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh (Sikhism)
Disability		6/9: Colour Blindness Day 22/9 - 28/9: International Week of the Deaf 23/9: International Day of Sign Languages	ADHD awareness month Dyslexia awareness month 6/10: World Cerebral Palsy Day 10/10: World Mental Health Day 9/10: World Sight Day		3/12: International Day of Persons with Disabilities	
Age	12/8: International Youth Day		1/10: International Day of Older Persons	14/11: Children in Need Day 15/11 - 16/11: <u>Silent Support Weekend</u>		
Race and Ethnicity	18/7 - 17/8: South Asian Heritage Month	East & South East Asian Heritage Month	Black History Month			
Sexual Orientation			11/10: National Coming Out Day			
Sex, Gender Identity and Gender Reassignment			26/10: Intersex Awareness Day	Movember 20/11: Transgender day of Remembrance		

Some dates are provisional, based on the lunar calendar and/or sighting of the moon. The FA recognise that in the case of most of the faiths concerned there are various ways of spelling the same word. This is because of the range of languages (and alphabets) of the original terms. Some dates may also vary and the date of local celebrations may differ.

In this calendar we have only highlighted the six largest faiths in England by population and recognise there will be other faiths not mentioned. All Jewish Festivals begin at sunset and end on nightfall on the dates highlighted.



EDI CALENDAR

February – July 2026

	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY
Religion or Belief	17/2 - 19/2: Ramadan (Islam) 18/2 - 4/4: Lent (Christianity)	2/3 - 3/3: Purim (Judaism) 04/03: Holi (Hinduism) 20/03: Eid Al-Fitr (Islam)	1/4 - 9/4: Passover (Judaism) 14/4: Vaisakhi (Sikhism) 12/4: Orthodox Easter day (Christianity)	01/5: Vesak Day (Buddhism) 26/5 - 30/5: Eid al-Adha (Islam) 21/5 - 23/5: Shavuot (Judaism)	16/6 - 17/6: Islamic New Year (Islam)	
Disability		1/3: International Wheelchair Day	2/4: World Autism Day	04/5 - 10/5: Deaf Awareness Week 11/5 - 17/5: Mental Health Awareness Week		
Age		11/3: Young Carers' Action Day 14/3 - 15/3: Silent Support Weekend		10/5: National Children's Day UK		26/7: World Day For Grandparent's and the Elderly
Race or Ethnicity	17/2: Lunar New Year	21/3: International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination	Football Welcomes Refugees Month (Amnesty International UK)	21/5: World Day for Cultural Diversity	Gypsy, Roma & Traveller History Month 22/6: Windrush Day	
Sexual Orientation	Football v Homophobia Month of Action LGBT+ History Month				Pride Month	
Sex, Gender Identity and Gender Reassignment		8/3: International Women's Day 15/3: Mothering Sunday 31/3: International Trans Day of Visibility		17/5: International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia	21/6: Father's Day	



RACE & ETHNICITY

KEY DATES TO CONSIDER

18 JUL - 17 AUG 2025

South Asian Heritage Month

Celebrating the history and achievements of British South Asians.

OCT 2025

Black History Month

Celebrating Black history and the impact of Black heritage and culture on the UK.

17 FEB 2026

Lunar New Year

A festival that celebrates the beginning of a new year on the traditional lunisolar Chinese calendar.

21 MAR 2026

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Observing a theme of eliminating racial discrimination across the world.

JUNE 2026

Gypsy, Roma & Traveller History Month

Through celebration education and awareness, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History month helps to tackle prejudice, challenge myths and amplify the voices from the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community.

THE FA HOST FIRST SOUTH ASIANS IN FOOTBALL TALENT ID SCOUTING COURSE

Across 2025 The FA will host 3 Talent ID level 2 courses, the first one was held at Wembley Stadium for South Asians in football looking to make their first steps on their Talent ID scouting journey.

The two-day course was delivered by senior coaching lecturers Ed Cope and Martin Harrison, with participants learning the fundamentals of Talent ID including the characteristics that make an effective scout, scouting biases, personal strengths and building a career within the industry.

Participants were also joined by full time Newcastle United scout Abdul Habib who took part in a Q&A, sharing an insight into his scouting journey, and role as a full-time scout.

The course forms part of our new three-year South Asians in Football plan, '[Build, Connect, Support](#)', which aims to ensure that South Asian communities across the country have an increased awareness of – and access to – opportunities within our game.

The cohort of 36 learners came from all areas of grassroots football and the professional game, with the course designed to develop skills and open more opportunities in the world of



Talent ID. Participants were awarded their Talent ID level 2 qualification upon completion.

The FA's Diversity Inclusion Manager, Anwar Uddin MBE, said: "Increasing representation at all levels of the game is a key part of our EDI strategy a game free from discrimination. This course empowers individuals from under-represented communities to explore a career in Talent ID, equipping them with skills to support the grassroots football community and help discover future professional players. This qualification provides a strong foundation for a career in Talent ID, and we are excited to see where it takes them."

For more information about Talent ID courses contact the FA EDI team.

FURTHER GUIDANCE & ORGANISATIONS TO CONSIDER

- [Kick It Out](#)
- [Show Racism the Red Card](#)
- [South Asian Heritage Month](#)
- [Black History Month](#)
- [Football Unites Racism Divides](#)
- [The Frank Soo Foundation](#)
- [United Nations](#)



RACE & ETHNICITY – YOUR GAME YOUR WAY

YOUR GAME YOUR WAY, OCTOBER RECAP: CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

October's Your Game Your Way session focused on Black History Month, bringing together an inspiring panel and a passionate audience to reflect on the significance of Black history in football. We were honoured to be joined by former professional footballers Marlon Harewood and Leroy Rosenior, alongside Nottingham Forest FC EDI Lead, Erika Williams. Their insights sparked powerful conversations on identity, inclusion, and the legacy of Black players in the game.

This monthly online event, held on the last Wednesday of each month from 6:00-7:30 PM, is open to everyone involved or interested in grassroots football. As we head into our second year, the Your Game Your Way community continues to grow, attracting people from across the country and across all areas of the game.

Launched to create a supportive, connected network, Your Game Your Way is a space for sharing best practice, exploring challenges, and highlighting

the incredible work being done around Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) in football. Each session focuses on a different theme linked to race, ethnicity, or another protected characteristic, featuring leading voices in football who contribute to dynamic discussions and debates.

Hosted by the FA EDI Team and the FA Community of Practice Ambassadors, who are a group of 20 casual staff who act as an extension of the FA EDI team, embedded in the community. Every session is shaped by its participants, your voices, your experiences, your game, your way.

Want to get involved and join us on our monthly calls?

Join our growing network by emailing EDICOP@TheFA.com



YOUR GAME YOUR WAY
PRESENTED BY THE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE
.online
ANOTHER GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO CONNECT WITH PEOPLE OPERATING WITHIN FOOTBALL AND EDI. THIS MONTH WE WILL BE DISCUSSING THE NATIONAL LEAGUE SYSTEM AND MUCH MORE WITH OUR ESTEEMED GUESTS

LUKE TUFFS
Manager at Ashford Town

NATALIE LOUISE BROWN
Board Director
Barnsley United FC

DANNY HILLS
Bulwich Harriers player & EDI Lead

TIMINGS
6:00PM - 7:30PM

TO RECEIVE AN INVITE PLEASE EMAIL
EDICOP@THEFA.COM



YOUR GAME YOUR WAY
PRESENTED BY THE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE
.online
Another great opportunity to connect with people operating within football and EDI. This month we will be discussing Black History Month and much more with our esteemed guests.

LEROY ROSENIOR MBE
Ex pro footballer / ambassador and FA Community of Practice

ERIKA WILLIAMS
Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Lead at Nottingham Forest

MARLON HAREWOOD
Ex-Professional Footballer

TIMINGS
6:00PM - 7:30PM

TO RECEIVE AN INVITE PLEASE EMAIL
EDICOP@THEFA.COM



YOUR GAME YOUR WAY
PRESENTED BY THE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE
.online
ANOTHER GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO CONNECT WITH PEOPLE OPERATING WITHIN FOOTBALL AND EDI. THIS MONTH WE WILL HAVE A PARTICULAR FOCUS ON DISABILITY FOOTBALL & MUCH MORE WITH OUR ESTEEMED GUESTS

STEVE ATKINS
Chair of Sussex County FA, Hon Treasurer of Brighton & Hove FA, Hon President of Sussex County Football League

OWAIN DAVIES
CEO at Level Playing Field

MARY TRYPHONA
EDI COP Ambassador

TIMINGS
6:00PM - 7:30PM

TO RECEIVE AN INVITE PLEASE EMAIL
EDICOP@THEFA.COM



GENDER

KEY DATES TO CONSIDER

26 OCT 2025

Intersex Awareness Day

A day to highlight the human rights issues faced by intersex people.

NOV 2025

November

Raising awareness of men's mental health and wellbeing issues.

08 MAR 2026

International Women's Day

Commemorating the cultural, political and socioeconomic achievements of women.

15 MAR 2026

Mothering Sunday

A traditional day to honour mothers.

21 JUNE 2026

Father's Day

A traditional day to honour fathers.

ENGLAND FOOTBALL SHOWS MUSLIM GIRLS THEY ARE MADE FOR THIS GAME

With only 40 per cent of Muslim girls in mainstream schools saying they feel comfortable participating in physical activity, England Football partnered with Nike to break down the barriers that prevent Muslim girls from engaging in football and PE.

To challenge this perception and show Muslim girls that football is a space where they belong, a campaign was launched in July with a [powerful video](#) shared across the England Football social media platforms, celebrating the power of inclusion and representation in the sport. At the heart of the film are trailblazing Muslim women.

Among them are Jawahir Roble, the first female Muslim referee to wear a hijab, Maria Maleh, a creative

director, stylist and co-founder of grassroots women's club Hamster FC in London, and Sabah Ali Mahnood, founder of FC Leytonstone's girls' football programme who campaigns for the inclusion of South Asian women and girls in football. Alongside the campaign video launched in July, England Football and Nike have worked with experts including the Youth Sport Trust and the Muslim Sports Foundation to create and release [practical top tips resources](#) to support and educate teachers and coaches.

FEMALE FOOTBALL AT YOUR CLUB

To find out more about Equal game, connecting to schools, the play on initiative, big football day and much more, visit the following link [here](#):



GENDER – IN THE SPOTLIGHT



LEAH HIDDEN – JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION MANAGER AT SURREY FA

This is my first year working in the football industry. I came to Surrey FA with experience across sectors – Technology, Construction, Engineering, and corporate start-ups – where I led global teams, delivered strategy at pace, and navigated complex organisational dynamics. These environments shaped me, and I value what they taught me. But joining Surrey FA was a decision grounded in purpose: football, with its scale and reach, offers a rare and powerful opportunity to advance justice, equity, diversity and inclusion in ways that ripple across society.

In football, JEDI isn't theoretical – it's personal. It's about people and relationships, firsts, and breakthroughs. This year alone, I've had the privilege of talking openly with trans individuals about trans inclusion and governance. I've been welcomed into mosques, shared Iftar, and learned about Islam not from a textbook but from people's lived experiences. I've supported refugees new to our communities. I've worked under the leadership of a female CEO and a Black Chair – a combination I had never experienced in my career. Each of these moments has deepened my commitment to this work and reminded me that inclusion is not only necessary – it is transformative.

We've launched HerTeam, a Journey to Inclusion-funded programme supporting women with mental health challenges through football. Delivered in partnership with mental health practitioners,

the programme centres culturally competent, female-only spaces – providing a vital entry point into sport for women from minoritised ethnic and religious communities.

We also created United In Difference, our response to the rising Islamophobia in the grassroots game. Through mosque visits, Ramadan reflections, and a co-produced documentary project, staff were invited to listen, learn, and reflect. This wasn't tokenism. It was about building relationships that embrace difference, that's grounded in mutual respect and shared accountability.

Our work isn't done in isolation. It is supported and sustained by an ecosystem of people and partners who deserve recognition. We are continually inspired by The Frank Soo Foundation, providing legacy to an important England player, while also advocating for East and South East Asian representation in football. Our Governance and Discipline teams across Counties play an essential role in holding the line – ensuring discrimination of all kinds is investigated, addressed, and prevented with rigour and care. We celebrate the clubs leaning into this work – not because they have to, but because they want to build cultures of belonging. And we are endlessly grateful to our Community Champions, Equal Game Ambassadors and Disability Ambassadors, whose everyday leadership in allyship makes the grassroots game stronger, richer, and fairer.



RELIGION AND BELIEF

KEY DATES TO CONSIDER

CHRISTIANITY

25 DEC 2025

Christmas Day

Held on the 25th of December commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ.

03 APR 2026

Good Friday

A holiday commemorating the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

05 APR 2026

Easter Sunday

A date commemorating the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

06 APR 2026

Easter Monday

A religious observance of an angel meeting the women who arrived at Jesus's tomb.

ISLAM

**17 FEB -
18 MAR 2026**

Ramadan

Muslims around the world fast during daylight hours as well as praying, giving to charity and strengthening family ties.

Please see Ramadan guidance document.

20 MAR 2026

Eid-al-Fitr

Marking the end of a month of fasting and a time of celebration.

HINDUISM

20 OCT 2025

Diwali Deepavali & Bandi Chhor Divas

A celebration and festival including fireworks and lamps symbolically marking triumph of light over dark.

SIKHISM

20 JAN 2026

Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh

Marking the birth of the tenth Sikh leader to honour and remember a great warrior, poet, philosopher and spiritual master.

14 APR 2026

Vaisakhi

A spring festival celebrating the founding of the Sikh community.

BUDDHISM

01 MAY 2026

Vesak Day

Commemorates the birth, enlightenment and death of Siddhartha Gautama, who is commonly known as Buddha.

Find out more about a Buddhist festival celebrating the Buddha and doing the impossible

JUDAISM

01 - 02 OCT 2025

Yom Kippur

Meaning the Day of Atonement. It is celebrated ten days after Rosh Hashanah.

**6 - 15
OCT 2025**

Sukkot/Shmini Atzeret & Simchat Torah

Sukkot a Hebrew word meaning Booths or Huts refers to the Jewish festival of giving thanks to the fall of harvest.

**22 - 24
SEPT 2025**

Rosh Hashana

The Jewish new year festival.

Jewish festivals start at nightfall the day prior.

FURTHER GUIDANCE & ORGANISATIONS TO CONSIDER:

Muslim Chaplains of sport

Maccabi GB

Hindu Forum of Britain

Sikh Press Association

The Carob Tree Project

Community Security Trust

Faith Forums 4 London

Ramadan Tent Project

Sports Chaplaincy

The Church of England

Nujum Sports

The FA Faith & Inclusion

Football's ability to bring together people of all faiths, religions or beliefs is unrelenting. By ensuring all religions are covered by FA Rule B5, we aim to offer equal opportunities for all religions.

To find out more about FA Rule visit www.TheFA.com



RELIGION AND BELIEF

COUNTY FAS TRAIN ON ANTISEMITISM

Through the work of Maccabi GB, in partnership with HM Government's Advisor on Antisemitism, the 'Tackling Antisemitism in Sport' project, which educates the sporting world on the issue of Antisemitism and the British Jewish community, has engaged 45 County FAs (at the time of publication) with this important training. The training workshops provide an introduction to the British Jewish community, discuss the issue of antisemitism, and go through real-life antisemitic incidents that have occurred in the game of football. The project and workshops delivered are indicative of The FAs efforts to promote inclusivity for all players, staff, and fans across British football.



To enquire about booking a workshop for your county or club, please reach out to antisemitisminsport@maccabiqb.org

MARCH OF THE LIVING - THE FOOTBALL BUS

In April 2025, The FA Head of Diversity & Inclusion Programmes, Dal Darroch, along with representatives from the Premier League, EFL, Spurs, Manchester City, Fulham and Maccabi GB took part on March of the Living. A 4-day educational trip to Poland to visit the sites and learn more about the history of the Holocaust.

This was both an extremely moving and informative experience, culminating in a march alongside 60 Holocaust Survivors and 5,000 participants from around the world, from Auschwitz I to Auschwitz-Birkenau.

If your club or County FA would like to reserve a spot on the 2026 March of the Living UK Football Bus, contact amy@antisemitism.org.uk for more details.



LONDON LIONS REACH STEP 4 OF THE ENGLISH FOOTBALL PYRAMID

London Lions have reached Step 4 of the English Football Pyramid - the Southern League Central. This is the highest level reached by the Jewish club and a true testament to the quality of the players and management. We would like to wish the team a big Mazal Tov (congratulations) and we are looking forward to seeing how their season progresses. This achievement was discussed among many other football and EDI related topics on one of the FA's Your Game Your Way Lets talk NLS' quarterly online calls. If you are involved in non-league football and would like to join the Your Game Your Way mailing list contact

EDICOP@Thefa.com



DISABILITY

KEY DATES TO CONSIDER

06 SEP 2025

Colour Blind Awareness Day

Raising awareness that colour blindness affects 1 in 12 males and 1 in 200 females.

20 - 26
SEPT 2025

International Week of the Deaf

An annual celebration of the Global Deaf community.

OCT 2025

Dyslexia Awareness month

Dyslexia Awareness month takes place globally and aims to amplify the message and raise awareness world-wide.

06 OCT 2025

World Cerebral Palsy Day

A day for people to celebrate and support those living with Cerebral Palsy.

10 OCT 2025

World Mental Health Day

A day to raise awareness of mental health issues and mobilise efforts in support of mental health.

09 OCT 2025

World Sight Day

Raise awareness to focus attention on the global issue of eye health.

03 DEC 2025

International Day of Persons with Disabilities

The day is about promoting the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities.

01 MAR 2026

International Wheelchair Day

Wheelchair users celebrate the positive impact a wheelchair has on their lives.

11 - 17
MAY 2026

Mental Health Awareness Week

A week to focus on achieve good mental health across the UK.

FA CHAIR DEBBIE HEWITT MBE REFLECTS ON HER EXPERIENCE AT THE EE DISABILITY FA CUP

One of my highlights of the year is the [EE Disability FA Cup](#).

It is so much more than watching football - it's a celebration of resilience, passion, and at its heart, it shows the power of sport to unite communities.

It's held annually at the end of June, at our very own St. George's Park, and you get to see some of the finest disabled footballers in the country.

The EE Disability FA Cup is the largest competition of its kind in England, providing a platform for six different formats of the game: amputee football, blind football, cerebral palsy football, deaf football, partially sighted football and Powerchair football. Each match highlights the incredible skill, determination and teamwork of the athletes, challenging perceptions and demonstrating that disability is absolutely no barrier to elite-level performance.

The EE Disability FA Cup isn't just about competition, it's about celebrating what's possible when barriers are broken and everyone is given a chance to shine. I promise you for regular fans and newcomers it provides an inspiring and unforgettable experience. Make it a date in your diary for next year.

The EE Disability FA Cup took place at the end of June 2025 at St. Georges Park.



DISABILITY

COMETS

A safe place for Disabled Children aged 5-11 to kickstart their football journey.

Comets is a recreational, pan-disability football programme for disabled boys and girls aged between 5 and 11. Pan-disability is the largest format of disability football, which sees players with a broad range of impairments and health conditions play together.

Comets offers a new, flexible and inclusive way of playing, one that's all about playfulness, friendships and having fun. More than anything, Comets is football that breaks the old rules and replaces them with a brand new one: **JUST BE YOU.**

Comets is currently running at a range of locations across England, but more sessions are being added all the time.

To find out more visit <https://www.Englandfootball.com/play/Disability-Football/Comets>

DISABILITY TRAINING & TOOLKIT FOR CLUBS: JOURNEY TO INCLUSION

Is your club ready to open its doors and welcome more disabled people? Perhaps you already have a disability offer in place and are looking to expand? Or maybe you're yet to offer disability football and are worried about how to do so? The good news is, we have everything you need! From promoting your offer and welcoming new players on their very first visit, to embedding disability in your club culture, both on and off the pitch.

It's time for change. Simply use our online toolkit or book onto one of our face-to-face workshops to join us in providing more football opportunities for disabled people.

To find out more visit <https://www.Englandfootball.com/play/Disability-Football/Training>

To see Comets and disability Training for Clubs: Journey to Inclusion in action, watch this video <https://www.uefa.com/news-media/video/028c-1abac0f76363-47775b41bdae-1000--uefa-grassroots-awards-2024-best-disability-initiative/>



"She's more willing to join in. It's a quieter place, it's a calmer place, it's a fun place, where she can just be herself.

Her communication, her education, her social side, everything has improved purely from starting Comets. It's not just football, it really is an awful lot more than football for her.

If you're considering Comets, you will not regret it. Once you're there you're part of it, you won't want to leave."

Avril's Mum

[Comets Disability Football video - Avril's Story](#)



SEXUAL ORIENTATION

KEY DATES TO CONSIDER

20 NOV 2025

Transgender day of remembrance

Remembering and honouring the lives of trans and gender-diverse people reported murdered in the last 12 months.

FEB 2026

Football v Homophobia Month of Action

The month of action calls on football to tackle homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in the game.

LGBT+ History Month

A month long observation of LGBT history, increasing visibility and raising awareness of matters affecting the LGBT community.

31 MAR 2026

International Trans day of Visibility

A day to increase the visibility of trans people across all communities.

17 MAY 2026

International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia & Biphobia

Aiming to coordinate events that raise awareness of LGBT rights worldwide.

JUN 2026

Pride Month

Pride month is celebrated each year in the month of June to honour the 1969 Stonewall uprising in Manhattan.

WEST RIDING FA MAKES HISTORY WITH DEBUT LEEDS PRIDE WALKING FLOAT

On Sunday 20th July, the streets of Leeds came alive with colour, music, and celebration as thousands gathered to take part in Leeds Pride. Among them, for the very first time, was the West Riding FA, proudly stepping out with their very first walking float. As a County FA, the decision to get involved in Leeds Pride was an easy one. Inclusion is at the heart of everything they do, and this was an incredible opportunity to show support for the LGBTQ+ community while celebrating the vibrant diversity within football.

The team came together in true Yorkshire style, united and undeterred by the rain. Armed with branded t-shirts, glitter, flags, and even bucket hats to battle the classic British weather, they made their way through the city's streets with cheers from the pavements and support from fellow parade participants lifting spirits every step of the way.

Reflecting on the day, Hannah Simpson, Chief Executive of West Riding FA, said: "Today has been nothing short of joyful for me and the entire team. After setting our sights on being part of Leeds Pride last year, it's been incredible to finally be at the heart of the celebrations. At West Riding FA, inclusion isn't just a value - it's a commitment we carry into everything we do. Taking part in events like this strengthens our mission to ensure football, and our wider community, is a safe, welcoming space for everyone. We're already looking ahead to next year - bigger, brighter and prouder than ever."



FURTHER GUIDANCE & ORGANISATIONS TO CONSIDER:

- [Football v Homophobia](#)
- [Stonewall](#)
- [GFSN](#)
- [Pride Sports](#)



SEXUAL ORIENTATION

COUNTY FAS UNITE FOR FOOTBALL V HOMOPHOBIA MONTH OF ACTION

Amateur FA, London FA, Middlesex FA, Surrey FA, London Assembly, Football v Homophobia and Stonewall joined together to celebrate an evening of LGBTQ+ inclusion in football for the Football v Homophobia Month of Action.

Hosted at London City Hall, the evening kicked off with an opening address from Emma Best (London Assembly) and Jon Holmes (FvH). Jon shockingly revealed that 74% of LGBTQ+ people surveyed stated that they had experienced or heard LGBTQ+ abuse whilst watching football. Whilst the statistic serves as a stark reminder of the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ members of the football community, Jon also highlighted the 24% rise in reporting to the FA's discipline teams, demonstrating the increased awareness of unacceptable language in this area.

Chaired by referee Ryan Atkin, the panel brought together a group of inspiring leaders advocating for LGBTQ+ inclusion in football and beyond. Jahmal Howlett-Mundle (Semi-Professional Footballer), Esther Jones Russell (Amateur FA), Natalie Washington (Football v Transphobia), Alex Baker (Stonewall FC and FA board), and Simon Blake (Stonewall CEO), discussed the steps needed to create change. Their powerful and inspiring stories highlighted the huge strides that have already been made in creating a community for the LGBTQ+ people in football, but also the collective role that we all have in ensuring football is a welcoming space for everyone.



KEY DATES TO CONSIDER

12 AUG 2025

International Youth Day

A day to raise awareness of the need to ensure the engagement and participation of young people.

01 OCT 2025

International Day of Older Persons

This year the World Health Organisation has themed the day around Ageism through the ages.

14 NOV 2025

Children in Need Day

A day to raise money for young people experiencing disadvantage through poverty, disability, illness, distress, abuse, neglect, and behavioural or psychological difficulties.

11 MAR 2026

Young Carers Action Day

Organised by Carers Trust, it aims to raise awareness of young carers and the incredible contribution they make to their families and local communities.

10 MAY 2026

National Children's Day

The day is all about the importance of a healthy childhood.

FA LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

The FA Leadership Academy is a 12-month learning and development programme for Youth Leaders in football aged 16-24 which kicks off with a 4-day residential event. Over their 12-month learning and development journey, participants are supported to unlock their full potential whilst implementing a project that aims to deliver positive change in their local football community.

This video provides a summary of the 4-day residential

<https://youtu.be/PThNhBSizJE>



CLUB MAKER

The FA Club Maker is a new initiative, that supports young people in taking their first steps into volunteering in the game. The aim is to introduce young people to the number of roles available to them off the pitch.

Get in touch with your County FA to find out when their next Club Maker workshop is taking place!



AGE – YOUTH LEADERSHIP AND VOLUNTEERING

As the largest stakeholders in the grassroots game, we know young people between the ages of 14-24 are already leading in local football communities. Whether you aspire for a career in football, want to develop new skills, or want to help others to enjoy the game, find out how to get involved.

FA YOUTH COUNCIL

The FA National Youth Council has existed since January 2012. The team is made up of 15 youth leaders in various roles within football to ensure that all young people have meaningful and inclusive opportunities to develop themselves and positively influence the football community.

The FA National Youth Council believe that young people are not just the leaders of tomorrow; they possess the energy, skills and ideas to change football and the wider community for the better today. No decision about young people should be made without young people. The FANYC has representation on The FA Council and various sub-committees including Youth Participation, Football Development and The FA Inclusion Advisory Board.

COUNTY FA YOUTH COUNCILS

A County FA Youth Council is a team of young people, typically between the ages of 16 and 25, who are the voice of the youth for their respective counties. This is where the County FA involve young people in a meaningful way, allowing them to provide equal weight and value to their ideas and suggestions.

Please contact your County FA to find out about your local Youth Council and explore other great initiatives including the FA leadership academy and The FA regional youth Network.

<https://community.thefa.com/youth-leadership-volunteering/w> - Youth Leadership and Volunteering Hub

<https://www.englandfootball.com/participate/volunteer> - England Football Volunteering



OPPORTUNITY - INCLUSION ADVISORY GROUP (IAG)

GET TO KNOW THE KENT FA EQUALITY ADVISORY GROUP (EAG) & CHAIR DAVID RAINFORD

The Kent FA Equality Advisory Group (EAG) is part of a national network of 50 established by The FA and forms part of the county FA code of governance. These groups are essential in promoting equality, challenging discrimination, and ensuring that grassroots football is welcoming, accessible, and truly representative of the diverse communities it serves.

The EAG (sometimes referred to as an Inclusion Advisory Group, IAG) acts as a critical support mechanism for a county FA, offering insight, guidance, and a genuine voice from the community. By strengthening the connection between the County FA and underrepresented groups, the IAG helps to build a more inclusive and vibrant grassroots football environment.

At the heart of the Kent FA EAG is David Rainford, Chair of the Equality Advisory Group and Independent Non-Executive Director on the Kent FA Board. With a career that spans professional football, education, and now a leadership role at the Premier League, David brings deep insight and dedication to inclusion in the game.

"Everyone wants to give back to the game," says David. "The EAG is a group of wonderful people who all bring different perspectives, backgrounds, and understandings of the Kent football landscape."

In his Premier League role as Head of Education and Academy Player Care, David helps define the education and welfare experiences of young players, a mission closely aligned with the values of Kent FA.

He encourages others to get involved:

"I would encourage everyone to explore their local EAG and see how they can contribute to making football more inclusive and representative."

Interested in making a difference in your football community?

Contact your local County FA to find out how you can get involved with your local Inclusion Advisory Group.



OPPORTUNITY

DEVELOPING LEADERS ACROSS THE FOOTBALL INDUSTRY

THE FA KICKSTART: LEADERS MENTOR PROGRAMME

We launched the Kickstart initiative in 2024, aiming to provide aspiring leaders from historically underrepresented groups within the football industry with the opportunity to gain valuable insight, guidance and support from experienced professionals to develop their experience and become leaders of the future. In its first year, we onboarded 20 mentees onto the programme, with the aim of building soft skills such as confidence-building, presenting skills, negotiation skills and authenticity in the workplace. Mentees learnt from successful industry experts through in person sessions, alongside one-to-one and group mentoring meetings with their assigned mentor.

See a video which captures year 1 -

<https://youtu.be/ZhvN5sYiT30>

Keep an eye on the FA website for more opportunities and programmes to help you become the best version of yourself.



REPORTING DISCRIMINATION

To ensure our national game is inclusive, we all have a responsibility to step up and blow the whistle on discrimination. Here's how:

THE GRASSROOTS GAME, DISABILITY GAME, WOMEN'S PYRAMID AND THE NATIONAL LEAGUE SYSTEM

IF YOU'VE BEEN THE VICTIM OF OR WITNESSED AN INCIDENT OF DISCRIMINATION:

Report it via The FA website.

Report it to Kick It Out through their [online reporting form](#) or via their reporting app available on both [iOS](#) and [Android](#).

Alternatively, email Kick It Out at report@kickitout.org

For grassroots football - complete the online form you'll find [here](#), which also goes to the County FA. You can also contact the County FA directly.

A full list of County FAs and contact details can be found [here](#).

Please note: If the incident occurs outside 'organised' football (i.e. in competitions not affiliated to the County FA), the County FA can still advise on what your next steps should be).

REPORTING DISCRIMINATION ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

Whether it's in connection with professional or grassroots football, if you see a post on social media you believe is discriminatory, there are three ways to report it. These are:

By contacting the site on which the post exists – see more information below.

By reporting it to Kick It Out through [their online reporting](#) form or via their reporting app available on both [iOS](#) and [Android](#).

Alternatively, email Kick It Out at report@kickitout.org

By contacting the police, either:

- In person
- By calling the local police on 101
- By completing the online reporting form you'll find [here](#)
- By calling 999 if you are in an emergency





**ENGLAND
FOOTBALL**