

GUIDANCE NOTES:

**1.5**

# ADULT WELFARE AND SAFEGUARDING IN AFFILIATED FOOTBALL POLICY & PROCEDURES

VERSION: 1.1 | PUBLISHED: NOVEMBER 2025





# CONTENTS

Glossary of terms	4
Introduction	6
Football’s Commitment Statement	6
Safeguarding framework	7
Key concepts in adult safeguarding	8
Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility	8
Self-determination, mental capacity and decision-making	8
Person-centred safeguarding	9
Six principles of adult safeguarding	9
Safeguarding practice and culture	10
Safer working practice	10
Safer recruitment	10
Learning and development	12
Confidentiality and information-sharing	12
Working in partnership	12
Appropriate behaviours	12
Abuse of trust	13
Responding to and reporting concerns	14
Responding to concerns	14
Whistleblowing	15
Safeguarding complaints	15
Policy review and acknowledgements	16
Policy review	16
Acknowledgements	16
Appendix 1: Legislation and statutory guidance	19
Appendix 2: Definitions, signs and indicators of abuse	20
Appendix 3: Concern flow chart	22
Appendix 4: Referral form	23
Appendix 5: Football responsibilities and accountabilities	26





# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Abuse	Abuse can be defined as a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It includes acts of commission (such as an assault) and acts of omission (situations where the environment fails to prevent harm). Abuse may be a single act or omission or a series of acts or omissions.
Adult at risk of harm (or adult at risk) <sup>1</sup>	<p>A person aged 18 or over who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Has need for care and support and;</li><li>- Is experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect, and;</li><li>- As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.</li></ul> <p>This definition recognises that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The risk of harm can fluctuate so someone who is an adult at risk may not always have been and may not always continue to be;</li><li>- Having a disability does not automatically mean a person is an adult at risk.</li></ul>
Consent	<p>Consent is the action by which an individual gives permission for something to happen or agreement to do something.</p> <p>Consent is not given forever and is only relevant at the point of being expressed and may be for a specific reason only.</p>
Discipline & integrity	Discipline is the process in football whereby allegations of misconduct including discrimination are assessed thoroughly against The FA Rules and Regulations to determine whether proceedings are brought against individuals. Where proceedings are brought and a case is proved, sanctions are applied according to the sanctioning guidelines. Depending on the level of the game and the threshold of the concern, different teams (e.g. discipline teams or integrity teams) will investigate at national, county or club level.
Disability	According to the Equality Act 2010, a person is defined as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment, health condition or illness that has a substantial and long-term (12 months or more) negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities. This includes physical, sensory, intellectual, social, behavioural impairments and mental health conditions.
Low-level concern <sup>2</sup>	<p>A concern arising from behaviour or actions that could be described as poor practice which falls below the standard required by a club as set out in their codes of conduct. While the behaviour may not be immediately dangerous or intentionally harmful it does set a poor example and if it were to continue, it might lead to harm or put an adult at risk or child at risk of harm.</p> <p>A low-level concern may also relate to a concern about the wellbeing or welfare of an individual participant. Failure to challenge low-level concerns can create an environment where unacceptable behaviour is normalised and where abuse could subsequently take place. Whilst the behaviour may not be immediately dangerous, survivors of non-recent sexual abuse in football describe how abuse often started as a low-level concern.</p>
Mental capacity	Capacity refers to an individual adult’s ability to take a specific decision or take a particular action at a particular time even if they are able or not able to make other decisions at other times. The starting point should be the assumption that the person has capacity to make a decision unless it can be established that they cannot.

<sup>1</sup>The Care Act 2014.  
<sup>2</sup>Adapted from The FA Safeguarding Case Management County Football Associations Referral Threshold and Process.

Mental health <sup>3</sup>	Mental health is something that everyone has. It is a changing state that can impact on an individual’s ability to be themselves and to cope with life’s challenges; affecting wider wellbeing both positively and negatively.
Misconduct	<p>Defined in FA Rule E3.1, ‘A Participant shall at all times act in the best interests of the game and shall not act in any manner which is improper or brings the game into disrepute or use any one, or a combination of, violent conduct, serious foul play, threatening, abusive, indecent or insulting words or behaviour.’</p> <p>Misconduct concerns are dealt with by disciplinary processes and/or integrity teams.</p>
Non-recent	Non-recent abuse is when abuse is disclosed years after it took place. ‘Non-recent abuse’ is the term used rather than historic abuse, as it recognises that whilst the abuse may have occurred some time ago, the impacts of the abuse may continue to be present for the person who was subjected to it.
Participant <sup>4</sup>	A football participant includes (but not exclusively) players, coaches, officials, match officials and staff.
Safeguarding adults <sup>5</sup>	Safeguarding adults means protecting an adult’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult’s wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action.
Self-determination	Self-determination is the right that adults have to make their own decisions. They may choose not to act to protect themselves or may make decisions that others consider to be unwise.
The Football Authorities and Bodies (‘Affiliated Football’/‘Football’)	<p>Affiliated Football (or ‘Football’) refers to the following Football Authorities and Bodies collectively:</p> <p>Football Authorities: The Football Association (The FA and through The FA, all County FAs), Premier League (PL), English Football League (EFL), Women’s Professional Leagues Limited (WPLL), Professional Footballers’ Association (PFA), League Managers Association (LMA), Professional Game Match Officials Limited (PGMOL)</p> <p>Football Bodies: League Football Education (LFE), Premier League Charitable Fund (PLCF) and EFL in the Community (EFLitC). <b><u>See Appendix 5.</u></b></p>
Welfare <sup>6</sup>	Welfare describes a person’s health, happiness, safety, prosperity and general wellbeing.
Wellbeing	An umbrella term for a combination of factors that influence how a person functions and feels.

<sup>3</sup>Adopted from research and work carried out within the Mental Health in Football Forum June 2023.  
<sup>4</sup>Participants may include players, managers, coaches, relatives, intermediaries, match officials, owners and directors, or any other individual who may be subject to the FA’s rules and regulations from time to time. For a full list of those considered to be ‘Participants’, please see The FA’s rules which can be found in The FA Handbook.  
<sup>5</sup>Care and Support Statutory Guidance, updated September 2024.  
<sup>6</sup>Adapted from Affiliated Football’s Safeguarding Children Policy.

Further definitions of abuse and indicators can be found in **Appendix 2**.

# INTRODUCTION

Football is for all. Across England every week thousands of adults participate in football in lots of ways, for example as players, club, league and team officials, match officials, staff and volunteers<sup>7</sup>. For the vast majority, their experience of the game is positive and beneficial, supporting their physical, mental and social wellbeing.

Whatever their role, every adult deserves to participate in a safe and positive environment where they are treated with respect.

In order to create and maintain this environment, The FA as the national governing body sets safeguarding and regulatory standards across all levels of the game. Football has many different parts – for example clubs, leagues, trusts and foundations. The FA safeguarding strategy, regulatory framework, policies, procedures and guidance all exist to support the development of ever-safer football environments.

Working in partnership is an essential principle of effective safeguarding. This safeguarding policy outlines how The FA works collaboratively with the Football Authorities and Bodies to provide a safe and positive experience for all and safeguard adults at risk of harm in open-age, affiliated football. This policy should be read in conjunction with FA rules and regulations, policies, procedures and the regulations and guidance provided by the individual Football Authorities and Bodies to their members and member organisations.

The Football Authorities and Bodies also have safeguarding responsibilities to children (all those under the age of 18). These responsibilities are outlined in [\*\*Football's Safeguarding Children Policy\*\*](#).

<sup>7</sup>Not an exhaustive list.

# FOOTBALL'S COMMITMENT STATEMENT

This commitment underpins the policies of each of the Football Authorities and Bodies.

Football is committed to ensuring the game is safe, inclusive and enjoyable for every adult participant, regardless of age, gender, gender reassignment, sex, disability, culture, language, race, religion or faith, belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy, maternity, marriage and civil partnerships.

Football is committed to creating and maintaining safe and positive environments that promote the welfare of all adult participants and prioritise the safeguarding of adults at risk as detailed in the Care Act 2014.

To achieve this, football will continue to work collaboratively in line with government legislation and practice guidance to:

- Work together with adult participants considering their wishes, their mental capacity and any risks presented;
- Implement preventative safeguarding measures;
- Make the reporting of safeguarding concerns as easy as possible;
- Respond appropriately and swiftly to any concerns and allegations of abuse and low-level concerns;
- Continuously review and develop safeguarding practice.

# SAFEGUARDING FRAMEWORK

The FA's regulatory responsibility means that it has the power to investigate safeguarding concerns and act against any individual with a role in football who breaches its safeguarding policies and/or regulations.

This regulatory framework includes:

1. The FA Disciplinary Regulations <https://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/lawsandrules/fa-handbook>
2. The Equality Policy <https://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/lawsandrules/fa-handbook>
3. The FA Safeguarding Children and Adults' Policies <https://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-1-footballs-safeguarding-framework>

FA Rules and Regulations apply to anyone defined as a participant (past or present). Specific regulations include:

- Case Management procedures. These are in place to enable an assessment related to the potential risk of harm that an individual may pose to adults at risk in football. In assessing that risk, the welfare of adults at risk is paramount.
- Regulation 1.6 in the Safeguarding Adults at Risk Regulations sets out the regulatory requirement to report safeguarding concerns: "Any failure by a Participant to immediately report to The Association, any alleged incident, facts or matters regarding potential abuse or harm against an Adult at Risk, or any sexual offence against anyone (whether an Adult at Risk or not), may amount to Misconduct under Rule E14."

**The FA's safeguarding framework** aligns legislation and statutory guidance to set out the safeguarding rules, regulations, policies, standards and requirements that must be met at every level of the game to safeguard participants.

**The FA safeguarding strategy** underpins The FA's safeguarding framework and has three key focus areas for driving safeguarding across the game: Governance and Standards; Education and Empowerment and Managing Concerns.

Each of the Football Authorities and Bodies has its own rules, regulations, policies and procedures to underpin its own safeguarding adults at risk work.





# KEY CONCEPTS IN ADULT SAFEGUARDING

## SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

Creating safe, person-centred and inclusive football cultures should be at the heart of all open-age and adult football activities. To this end, it is important that football puts in place measures to ensure all participants:

- Have opportunities to share their views;
- Understand how to report any concerns they have about their own or someone else's welfare.

There are roles at all levels of the game that have designated safeguarding responsibilities, but regardless of any individual role, everyone has a part to play in creating an ever-safer football culture.

## SELF-DETERMINATION, MENTAL CAPACITY AND DECISION MAKING

Self-determination is the right that adults have to make their own decisions. They may choose not to act to protect themselves or may make decisions that others consider to be unwise.

Mental capacity refers to a person's ability to make a particular decision at the time the decision is needed. In the UK, the law assumes that adults have the ability to make their own decisions with or without support, unless it has been proven that they don't.



## PERSON-CENTRED SAFEGUARDING

Person-centred safeguarding (also referred to as 'making safeguarding personal') is about creating a culture that works in partnership with people; where individuals are treated with dignity and respect and are fully involved with decisions affecting them. It means engaging the person in a way that empowers them to exercise their own choice and control, as well as improving their quality of life, wellbeing and safety. The adult's views, wishes, feelings and beliefs must be taken into account when decisions are made with them about how to support them to be safe. Working with the person will mean that actions taken help them to find the solutions that are right for them.

The principle of discussing safeguarding concerns with the adult to establish and respect their views and empower them is an important one. Occasionally, however this may not be possible or safe. If in doubt, advice and guidance should be sought from the relevant Football Authority's network of designated safeguarding people.

## SIX PRINCIPLES OF ADULT SAFEGUARDING

The Care Act 2014 sets out the following principles that should underpin the safeguarding of adults and should be considered in any safeguarding action.

### Empowerment

People are supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.

### Prevention

It is better to take action before harm occurs.

### Proportionality

The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.

### Protection

Support and representation for those in greatest need.

### Partnership

Services offer local solutions through working closely with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.

### Accountability

Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.



# SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE AND CULTURE

## SAFER WORKING PRACTICE

Safer working practice refers to the preventative safeguarding measures that should be put in place to support the creation of inclusive, safe and person-centred football cultures. When implemented consistently and effectively, safer working practice minimises the opportunity for low-level concerns and abuse to occur. Each of the Football Authorities and Bodies must provide clear safer working practice guidance that is aligned to their own policies and procedures and appropriate for the context of their football activities. Safer working practice includes (but is not limited to):

- A designated safeguarding person where relevant for events;
- Codes of conduct;
- Safeguarding plans and risk assessments;
- Photography and filming guidance;
- Informed consent<sup>9</sup>;
- Football environments guidance e.g. changing rooms, accommodation, travel, trips and overnight stays<sup>10</sup>;
- Online and offline communication guidance;
- Lone working guidance;
- Consideration of medical and accessibility needs.

<sup>9</sup> Information about activities, images, footage and how personal data is used must be provided in ways participants can understand to inform their choices and decision-making.  
<sup>10</sup> Not an exhaustive list.

## SAFER RECRUITMENT

To create and maintain safer cultures, a robust safer recruitment process is required.

This must include:

- Involving participants in the recruitment process where possible;
- Advertising of roles and role descriptions that highlight organisational safeguarding commitment and standards;
- Confirming the applicant's identity and qualifications with original documents;
- A fair shortlisting and interviewing process appropriate to the role;
- Obtaining written references and reviewing them prior to any offer or appointment;
- Where the role has eligibility, ensuring the correct level of DBS Check is undertaken and renewed in line with the Disclosure and Barring Service, legislation and statutory guidance<sup>11</sup>;
- A process for risk assessing positive DBS disclosure information;
- An induction process which prioritises safeguarding;
- A suitable probationary period;
- Regular safeguarding training relevant to the role, alongside regular performance reviews;
- Exit interviews.

When commissioning a service, it is incumbent upon the commissioning organisation to ensure that any contractors or commissioned service providers use safer recruitment processes.

<sup>11</sup> More information about DBS Checks in sport – working with adults – can be found [here](#). Guidance from Ann Craft Trust about eligibility for DBS Checks when working with adults can be found [here](#). Those working within [HCPC](#) and GMC-regulated roles have additional guidance around DBS Checks.





## LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Football commits to ensuring that staff, volunteers, trustees, board members and committees receive ongoing, regular safeguarding training appropriate to the level and requirements of the role. Training should include information about working in partnership with adults.

## CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION-SHARING

Sharing information with the right people is central to safeguarding adults. All information relating to incidents, allegations and concerns should only be shared on a 'need to know' basis.

This means information is not automatically shared with the adult's family including their partner, child, parent or other relative, or their social support network or carer (whether paid or unpaid). As a principle, information should only be shared with family, friends or carers with the consent of the adult. Or, if the adult does not have capacity to consent, and family, friends or carers need to know so that they can act in the best interests of the adult to support their safety.

The adult's wishes should be respected unless there are overriding reasons for sharing information.

The law does not prevent the sharing of sensitive, personal information within organisations. If the information is confidential, but there is a safeguarding concern, sharing it may be justified.

Information can be shared lawfully within the parameters of the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

The circumstances when information may need to be shared externally without the adult's consent include those where:

- It is not safe to contact the adult to gain their consent – i.e. it might put them or the person making contact at further risk.
- It is believed they or someone else is at significant risk of harm, including children.
- It is believed the adult is being coerced or is under duress.

- It is necessary to contact the police to prevent a crime, or to report a serious crime that has been committed.
- The adult does not have mental capacity to consent to information being shared about them.
- The person causing harm has care and support needs.

Advice and guidance about when and how to share safeguarding information can be sought through football's network of designated safeguarding people or via The [FA Safeguarding@TheFA.com](mailto:FA_Safeguarding@TheFA.com).

Any decision to share or not to share information with an external person or organisation must be recorded together with the reasons why it was decided to share or not share information.

Information must be securely handled and stored in line with data protection legislation and the Football Authorities and Bodies' own data protection and privacy policies.

## WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Football commits to work in partnership with local and national statutory partners in accordance with their policies and procedures. Multi-agency working is essential to ensure partner organisations including the police, health services, Local Authority Adult Services departments and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), are able to carry out their statutory duties to safeguard and protect adults at risk.

## APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOURS

Everyone working, volunteering and participating in football is responsible and accountable for how they behave towards adults. Every adult has the right to equal opportunity and the right to be treated with respect and dignity. All participants should adhere to the relevant codes of conduct.

Football has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying, harassment, victimisation and all forms of discriminatory behaviour and all incidents will be taken seriously. Breaches may be classed as a disciplinary offence which will be dealt with under

The FA's Disciplinary Procedure and may also result in a referral to The FA's Safeguarding Case Management Team, Disciplinary or Integrity Teams and/or Statutory Agencies including the police, Local Authority and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

## ABUSE OF TRUST

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 recognises that adults in certain roles within sport (where they are caring for, advising, supervising, instructing, training, coaching, teaching, managing, tutoring, mentoring, assessing, developing, guiding, treating, or providing therapy) are in positions of trust as they have power and influence over young people they work with. This law relates to 16 and 17-year-olds. It is a sexual offence and breach of FA policy for anyone in such a role to engage in sexual activity or have an inappropriate relationship with a 16 or 17-year-old notwithstanding that the age of consent is 16.

Adult players have the right to consensual sexual activity. However, these same roles that create positions of trust can also result in a power imbalance between two adults. Relationships between adults where there is a power differential as outlined are referred to as relationships of trust.

The power imbalance between those with responsibility and those being coached, mentored or otherwise supported means that The FA may consider sexual activity to be inappropriate although not illegal. Sexual activity that is perceived to be inappropriate where there is an imbalance of power and possible breach of the relationship of trust will be assessed on a case-by-case basis in partnership with the adult. All possible breaches of the position of trust and relationship of trust must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Person.





# RESPONDING TO AND REPORTING CONCERNS

## RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

Adult welfare and safeguarding can be complex. It is not always known whether an adult is deemed to be an adult at risk or not. Football recognises an adult's welfare can be affected by many different factors, both from within and outside the game.

Any cause for concern should be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Person and the nature of the concern will determine the response. Some concerns may be passed to the relevant statutory agency, league, club or County FA as appropriate.

Advice is always available through the network of the Football Authorities and Bodies' designated safeguarding people or The FA Safeguarding Team.

The Football Authorities and Bodies have their own policies and procedures that communicate how to respond to low-level, welfare, safeguarding and misconduct concerns relating to adults. These should be followed when responding to any concerns.

Concerns relating to the behaviour of an adult participant towards another adult participant within a football environment (e.g. coach and player or peer players) may be misconduct. This includes things like discriminatory behaviour or language, bullying and sexual misconduct, violent conduct, serious foul play, threatening, abusive, indecent or insulting words or behaviour. Such concerns can be investigated in line with disciplinary regulations and where appropriate disciplinary and/or risk management actions can be taken. Allegations made against any individual with a role in football should be shared with The FA Safeguarding Case Management Team via [safeguarding@thefa.com](mailto:safeguarding@thefa.com).

Football commits to work closely with adults to take their wishes into consideration, ensure they understand their options in reporting to the police and or statutory agencies and to signpost them to appropriate expert support.



Reporting concerns should be as easy as possible for all participants and all participants should know how to report concerns about adult welfare or abuse.

Allegations of non-recent abuse will be taken seriously and managed efficiently and promptly.

If there is a concern that an adult is at immediate risk of harm, the emergency services should be contacted. The designated safeguarding person and The FA Safeguarding Case Management Team should be informed as soon as possible (and within 24 hours).

If there are concerns about an individual's conduct towards a child (under 18) or the welfare of a child in and around the adult game environment e.g. spectators or 16/17-year-old players, coaches, referees or volunteers, then the safeguarding children policy should be followed.

Signs and indicators of adult abuse and low-level concerns can be found in **Appendix 2**.

A concern flow chart can be found in **Appendix 3**.

## WHISTLEBLOWING

Whistleblowing in the context of safeguarding adults means escalating a concern when it is recognised that appropriate safeguarding actions have not been taken. It may also mean raising concerns about misconduct or suspected misconduct.

Safeguarding whistleblowing concerns in football should be referred to The FA's Safeguarding Case Management Team via [Safeguarding@TheFA.com](mailto:Safeguarding@TheFA.com) review the concerns and advise.

Alternatively, concerns can be reported to the police or local adult services teams.

## SAFEGUARDING COMPLAINTS

All complaints should follow the escalation process of the relevant organisation. For further information regarding complaints relating to any of the individual Football Authorities or Bodies please see the contact information in **Appendix 5**.



# POLICY REVIEW AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be updated every three years or sooner where there is any significant change within football or in legislation or statutory guidance.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This policy has been developed in alignment with HM Government guidance and with the support of The Ann Craft Trust (ACT).

ACT is a national organisation providing information and advice about adult safeguarding with a specialist Safeguarding Adults in Sport and Activity team.

Tel: 0115 951 5400

Email: [Ann-Craft-Trust@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:Ann-Craft-Trust@nottingham.ac.uk)

[www.anncrafttrust.org](http://www.anncrafttrust.org)

The Ann Craft Trust has been pleased to support The FA in developing its adult welfare and safeguarding policy for affiliated football.

“The FA recognises the importance of safeguarding adults in sport in order to provide a safe and positive experience for every adult participant and this policy will contribute to this end.”

Joanne Pell, Safeguarding Adults in Sport Manager, The Ann Craft Trust







## APPENDIX 1: LEGISLATION AND STATUTORY GUIDANCE

This safeguarding policy is underpinned by the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- [Care Act 2014](#)
- [Care and Support Statutory Guidance \(updated 2024\)](#)
- [Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- [Disclosure and Barring Service guidance](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
- [Mental Capacity Act 2005](#)
- [Protection of Freedoms Act 2012](#)
- [Sexual Offences Act 2003](#)
- [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#)
- [UK General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#)



# APPENDIX 2: DEFINITIONS, SIGNS AND INDICATORS OF ABUSE

The Care Act recognises 10 types of abuse (below) that may be experienced by adults (The FA also recognises bullying as a form of abuse for children and adults).

Type of abuse	What you might see in football
<b>Physical abuse</b> – includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions. This might happen in football or elsewhere.	Regular over-training, refusing breaks or intentionally hitting/kicking or punishing a player. Bruising to arms or face may be visible, and repeated injuries, fearfulness or anxiety. A change in the behaviour or confidence of a person. This may be a sign of any type of abuse.
<b>Sexual abuse</b> – adults with care and support needs can consent to sexual activity but can still be abused. This includes rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure.	A coach or manager demands sexually-explicit pictures from an adult with learning disabilities that they are training. A player may comment on behaviours they don't like from other adults or young people. Their behaviour may become disturbed or overly sexual.  Adults can be sexually exploited as well as children, so be aware of strangers collecting people, alcohol abuse and fearfulness.
<b>Emotional or psychological abuse</b> – this could include threats of harm or abandonment, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.	Threatening a player with physical harm or persistently blaming them for poor performance or sending harassing messages after a game. Players should report that this is happening to them.  A parent/carer always speaks for the person and doesn't allow them to make their own choices.  Person is not attending/no longer enjoying their sessions. You may notice that a participant in a team has been missing from practice sessions and is not responding to reminders from team members or coaches.
<b>Domestic abuse including coercive control</b> – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse. It also includes so called 'honour-based' violence. This happens away from football but we might see signs in football.	A person who is withdrawn, fearful or anxious when a carer or partner or family member comes to collect them, bruising, grip marks or other signs of stress or physical harm.
<b>Financial or material abuse</b> – including theft, fraud, internet scamming or coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements.	A club member demanding a player buys them a ticket for a game or insisting they buy everyone rounds of drinks and takeaways they can't afford and don't want.  A player might not be able to afford match fees/subs or new kit, appear to be hungry or report being unable to pay rent.
<b>Neglect</b> – including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health social care or educational services, the withholding medication, food or heating.	A player whose medical conditions are untreated or who needs glasses or hearing aids, who is always hungry or complains that their home is always cold or they can't have a shower at home after football.

Type of abuse	What you might see in football
<b>Organisational abuse</b> – (sometimes called Institutional abuse) – includes neglect and/or poor practice within an organisation such as care homes or health settings, but also includes sport organisations such as football.	A closed or unsafe culture, perpetuated by lack of or ineffective policies and procedures or structures in the sport club or organisation.  A club or team persistently fail to meet players' needs. For example, allowing players to be injured or ill due to lack of care. A player from sheltered accommodation may report rigid rules and lack of choices in their home – for example, having to go to bed at a certain time.
<b>Discriminatory abuse</b> – difference or perceived difference, particularly with respect to race, gender or disability or any of the other protected characteristics of the Equality Act. This might happen in football.	Behaviours such as harassing of a club member because they are or are perceived to be transgender or jokes about a player's disability or use of discriminatory language, online or offline. A player might report this happening to them elsewhere.
<b>Self-neglect</b> – not looking after own personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviours such as hoarding. This happens away from football, but we might see signs in football.	Players or others may be hungry, dressed in old clothes and lacking in money despite being in work.  Poor personal hygiene, need for dental care or glasses. Dirty playing kit.
<b>Modern slavery</b> – slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.	Players or others may be hungry, dressed in old clothes and lacking in money despite being in work.

## IN FOOTBALL WE MIGHT ALSO SEE:

**Bullying** – bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face-to-face or through cyberspace and comes in many different forms.

**Cyber-bullying** – using technology to bully and humiliate people.

**Forced marriage** – The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 makes it a criminal offence to force someone to marry. The adult may report gifts of gold, planned trips abroad or disclose anxiety about an event.

**Mate crime** – when people who may be vulnerable are befriended by members of the community who go on to exploit and take advantage of them. It may not be an illegal act but still has a negative effect on the individual.

**Radicalisation** – the aim of radicalisation is to attract people to their reasoning, inspire new recruits and embed their extreme views and persuade vulnerable individuals of the legitimacy of their cause. This may be direct through a relationship, or through social media.

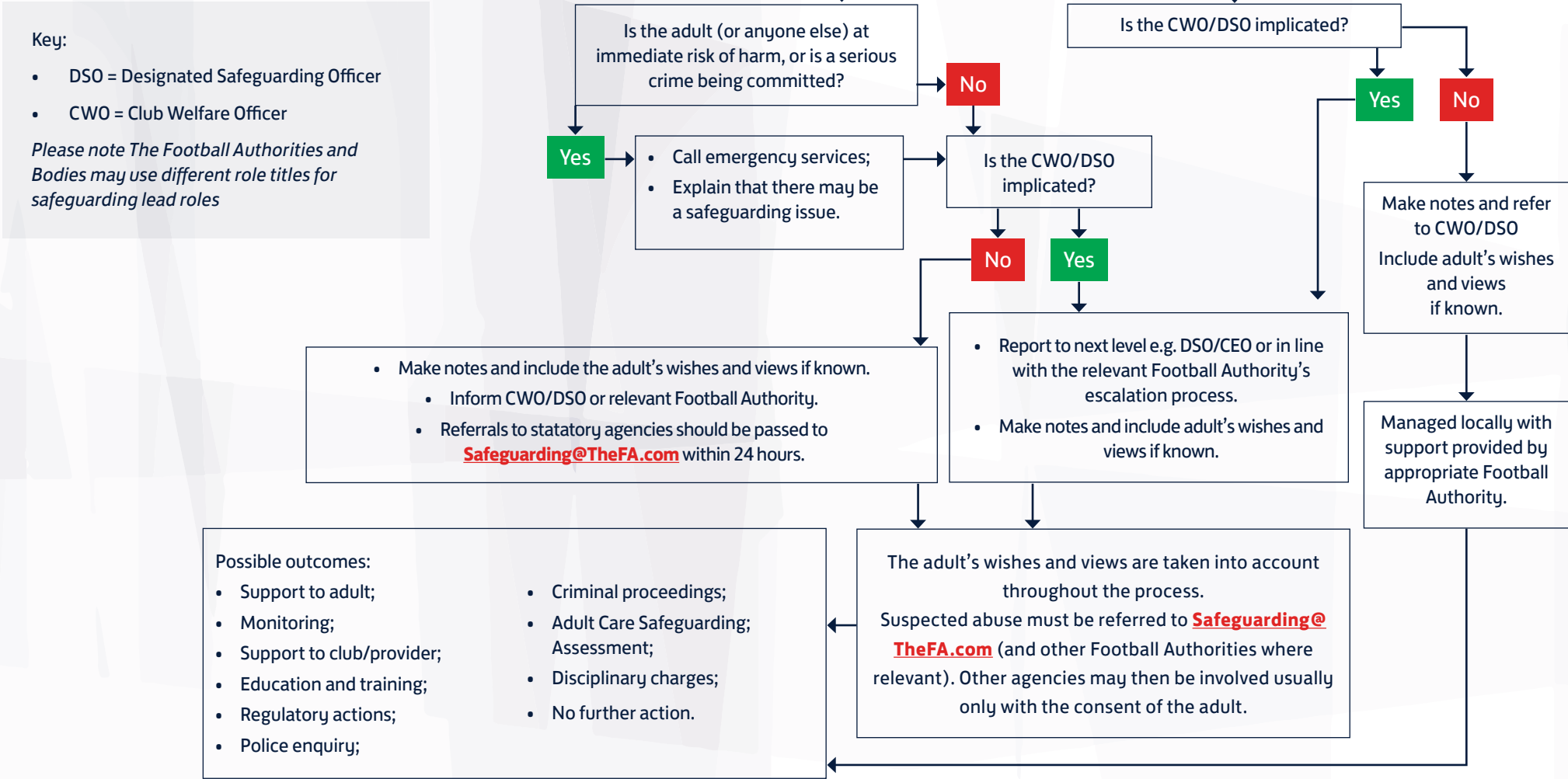
**Forced Home Invasion (also known as Home Takeover or Cuckooing)** – when criminal gangs use violence and abuse to target the homes of people who are vulnerable, to use them as a base for crime, often drug dealing. This is a form of exploitation.

The above is not an exhaustive list. There are many signs and indicators that may suggest someone is being abused or neglected. There may be other explanations, but they should not be ignored.



APPENDIX 3: CONCERN FLOW CHART

GENERIC FLOWCHART FOR REPORTING



APPENDIX 4: REFERRAL FORM

SAFEGUARDING REFERRAL FORM – AFFILIATED FOOTBALL

Date of referral: \_\_\_\_\_ County FA(s): \_\_\_\_\_

PARTICIPANT'S DETAILS (THIS IS THE PERSON YOU ARE REFERRING TO THE FA)			
Participant name:		Relationship to victim/s:	
Address:		Tel number:	
		Email:	
		Role in football: (is the post paid?)	
Postcode:		Club or organisation:	
Date of birth:		FAN: (FA Number) – if relevant:	
Gender:		Ethnicity:	
REFERRER'S DETAILS (PLEASE ENTER YOUR DETAILS)			
Name of referrer:		FAN: (FA Number) – if relevant	
Address:		Role/organisation:	
		Tel number:	
		Email:	
Postcode:		Relationship to participant:	



APPENDIX 4: REFERRAL FORM (CONT.)

DETAILS OF CHILD/CHILDREN OR ADULT(S) AT RISK			
<div>Details of alleged victim/s (age):</div> <div>e.g. Joe Bloggs (12 years), Wembley FC under-13 girls' team</div> <div>(Please include name, age, club, parents/carers' details and any other relevant info)</div>		FAN: (FA Number) – if relevant	
		Gender:	
		Ethnicity:	
		Parent/carer name:	
		Contact details: (telephone number, email, etc. )	
		County FA:	
PROFESSIONAL NETWORK (PLEASE PROVIDE NAME, CONTACT NUMBER AND EMAIL. KINDLY PROVIDE THE ADVICE RECEIVED AND CONTACT DATE WITH AGENCY)			
LADO: (Name, telephone number and email address)			
Social Services:			
Police:			
Other: (e.g. NSPCC, Club Designated Safeguarding Officer, etc.)			

DETAILS OF CONCERNS				
Type of abuse: (please tick as appropriate if known) Possible or actual risk of harm to children or adults at risk	Sexual abuse Organisational abuse	Emotional abuse Bullying	Physical abuse Discriminatory abuse	Neglect Domestic abuse Self-neglect Financial abuse Other (please specify)
Incident/s details:  Please summarise the incident including details of any other relevant parties.  Clearly identify a list of your safeguarding concern/s				
Do you think this referral relates to: (please tick as appropriate)	High-level poor practice	Possible or actual risk of harm to children	For information only	Not sure
Action taken: Please specify if you referred to a statutory agency, the County FA, the Club Designated Safeguarding Office or any other action taken related to your concerns (including action taken by the Club).				
OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION				
Further information: Please include any information that you think is relevant to our investigation.  Can The FA contact the victim of their parents/carers directly?				
FOR FA USE ONLY				
Date received by The FA:	Case accepted? (tick as appropriate)	Yes	No	





# APPENDIX 5: FOOTBALL RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

ORGANISATION	DESCRIPTION	OVERVIEW OF KEY SAFEGUARDING RESPONSIBILITIES
<div></div> <div><b>The Football Association (The FA)</b> Wembley Stadium, PO Box 1966, London, SW1P 9EQ Tel: 0844 980 8200  Email: <a href="mailto:Safeguarding@TheFA.com">Safeguarding@TheFA.com</a>  W: <a href="#">Safeguarding - Rules &amp; Regulations   The Football Association (TheFA.com)</a></div>	<p>The governing body of football in England, from grassroots football to the professional game, including safeguarding responsibility for: England teams; The Barclays FA Women’s Super League and Women’s Super League 2; The National League System; specific Cup competitions, including The Emirates FA Cup; safeguards at Wembley Stadium and St. George’s Park and the Safeguarding Operating Standard for County FAs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides policy framework for safeguarding children and adults and regulatory framework for safeguarding children and adults at risk across the game.</li><li>• Develops safeguarding policy, procedures and safer working practice guidance.</li><li>• Reviewed annually by NSPCC CPSU re compliance with and continual progress against the national standards framework for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport.</li><li>• Manages child protection and adult at risk concerns in collaboration with the statutory agencies and those arising from content on DBS certificates – in line with FA Regulations, including managing suspensions, other risk management measures and referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service.</li><li>• Operates the DBS Check service for anyone in affiliated English football working with children and young people. The service extends from grassroots to the EFL and collaborates with the Premier League which oversees the provision of checks in their clubs and club community organisations.</li><li>• Provides safeguarding awareness training for coaches, referees, medics, designated safeguarding officers and club committee members – the latter from grassroots football to the National League System.</li><li>• Facilitates tailored training for those in designated roles in County FAs and develops toolkits and guidance for grassroots football.</li><li>• Commissions research and insight as required.</li><li>• In collaboration with the Premier League, EFL and County FAs, continually reviews compliance against safeguarding standards and measures.</li><li>• Works with colleagues to embed safeguarding in all relevant systems, processes, programmes, activities and events.</li><li>• Collaborates with all football bodies, the NSPCC CPSU and Ann Craft Trust (ACT) via the Professional Game Safeguarding Forum to share practice and strengthen safeguarding arrangements across the game.</li></ul>

ORGANISATION	DESCRIPTION	OVERVIEW OF KEY SAFEGUARDING RESPONSIBILITIES
<div></div> <div><b>The Premier League</b> 30 Gloucester Place London, W1U 8FL Tel: 0207 864 9000  Email: <a href="mailto:safeguarding@premierleague.com">safeguarding@premierleague.com</a>  W: <a href="http://www.premierleague.com/about/safeguarding">www.premierleague.com/about/safeguarding</a></div>	<p>The Premier League is the organising body of the Premier League football competition with responsibility for the competition, its Rule Book and its centralised broadcast and other commercial rights.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Has long-standing safeguarding and safer recruitment rules that complement FA regulations. These are reviewed each season.</li><li>• Issues clubs with Safeguarding Standards detailing requirements.</li><li>• Requires clubs to have a board-level senior safeguarding lead, a dedicated full-time head of safeguarding and an academy safeguarding officer.</li><li>• Supports club understanding and compliance through guidance and support visits.</li><li>• Delivers safeguarding training and awareness sessions regularly throughout each season.</li><li>• Requires clubs to refer concerns to statutory agencies, Football Authorities and Bodies.</li><li>• Commissions regular independent audits of internal and club safeguarding policies, procedures and practice.</li><li>• Collaborates with Football Authorities and Bodies to share practice and strengthen safeguarding arrangements across the game.</li></ul>
<div></div> <div><b>English Football League (EFL)</b> EFL House 10-12 West Cliff Preston PR1 8HU Tel: 01772 325940 Email: <a href="mailto:safeguarding@efl.com">safeguarding@efl.com</a>  W: <a href="http://www.efl.com/governance/safeguarding/">www.efl.com/governance/safeguarding/</a></div>	<p>The EFL is the largest single body of professional clubs in European football and is responsible for administering and regulating the EFL, the League Cup and the League Trophy, as well as reserve and youth football. The EFL supports two charitable organisations: League Football Education (LFE) and EFL in the Community (EFLitC).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Requires all clubs to have a Safeguarding Senior Manager (SSM) reporting at board level, as well as a club Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).</li><li>• Issues a set of safeguarding standards detailing the expected requirements across all members’ clubs.</li><li>• Inspects Clubs to ensure compliance and continuous improvement in the area of safeguarding. Clubs that operate an academy are independently audited by safeguarding specialists.</li><li>• Issues every club that operates a youth academy with strict safeguarding rules and procedures that complement FA Rules and Regulations at the start of each season.</li><li>• Requires adherence to safer recruitment practice.</li><li>• Maintains regular communication with clubs providing advice and guidance on all matters related to safeguarding.</li><li>• Requires Club Senior Safeguarding Manager and Designated Safeguarding Officers to attend compulsory training throughout the football season.</li><li>• Requires clubs to report and refer concerns to statutory agencies, The FA and the EFL.</li></ul>





# APPENDIX 5: FOOTBALL RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES (CONT.)

ORGANISATION	DESCRIPTION	OVERVIEW OF KEY SAFEGUARDING RESPONSIBILITIES
 <b>Women's Super League Football (WSLF)</b> 2 Woodbridge Street London, EC1R 0DG  Email: <a href="mailto:Info@womenspro-game.com">Info@womenspro-game.com</a>  W: <a href="https://womensleagues.thefa.com/">https://womensleagues.thefa.com/</a>	The WPLL is the organising body of the Barclays Women's Super League and Women's Super League 2 with responsibility for the league handbook and its centralised broadcast and other commercial rights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Has safeguarding requirements for its member clubs and monitors compliance against these requirements.</li><li>• Requires all clubs to have a Safeguarding Policy, a Designated Safeguarding &amp; Player Welfare Officer and a Board Safeguarding Champion.</li><li>• Support club's understanding and compliance through guidance and training.</li><li>• Requires adherence to safer recruitment practice.</li><li>• Requires clubs to refer concerns to statutory agencies, The FA and WPLL.</li><li>• Collaborates with clubs, Football Authorities and Bodies to share practice and strengthen safeguarding arrangements across the game.</li></ul>
 <b>The League Managers Association (LMA)</b> St. George's Park Newborough Road Needwood Burton-upon-Trent Staffs, DE13 9PD Tel: 01283 576350  Email: <a href="mailto:lma@leaguemanagers.com">lma@leaguemanagers.com</a>  W: <a href="http://www.leaguemanagers.com">www.leaguemanagers.com</a>	A member association which represents the interests and views of Managers and Head Coaches in the Premier League, EFL, Barclays Women's Super League and Women's Super League 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Has a policy to guide its staff who work with children and young people.</li><li>• Provides support and guidance to its members, including counselling support via its confidential helpline.</li></ul>

ORGANISATION	DESCRIPTION	OVERVIEW OF KEY SAFEGUARDING RESPONSIBILITIES
 PROFESSIONAL GAME MATCH OFFICIALS  <b>Professional Game Match Officials Limited (PGMOL)</b>  Email: <a href="mailto:humanresources@pgmol.com">humanresources@pgmol.com</a>  W: <a href="http://www.efl.com/match-officials/">www.efl.com/match-officials/</a> and <a href="http://www.premierleague.com/referees/overview">www.premierleague.com/referees/overview</a>	Appoints, trains, and develops referees and assistant referees to officiate across the Premier League, EFL and The FA competitions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Has a policy to guide its staff in providing a safe environment for vulnerable group and responding to safeguarding concerns.</li><li>• Provides support and guidance to its match officials, observers and staff as required.</li></ul>
 <b>Professional Footballers' Association (PFA)</b> 20 Oxford Court Bishopsgate Manchester, M2 3WQ Tel: 0161 236 0575  Email: <a href="mailto:info@thepfa.co.uk">info@thepfa.co.uk</a>  W: <a href="http://www.thepfa.co.uk">www.thepfa.co.uk</a>	A trade union which represents the interests of professional footballers who have played or are playing in the Premier League, EFL and Barclays Women's Super League and Women's Super League 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Has a policy to guide its staff who work with children and young people, requiring the relevant checks and training for staff in line with FA policy.</li><li>• Has a named Designated Safeguarding Lead.</li><li>• Has a Designated Safeguarding Officer.</li><li>• Provides support and guidance to its members.</li><li>• Promotes its online resource 'The PFA Safety Net' to young Academy players, parents, guardians, carers and club personnel.</li><li>• Provides a national counselling service to its members.</li></ul>



# APPENDIX 5: FOOTBALL RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES (CONT.)

ORGANISATION	DESCRIPTION	OVERVIEW OF KEY SAFEGUARDING RESPONSIBILITIES
<div></div> <div><b>Premier League Charitable Fund</b>  <b>Premier League Charitable Fund (PLCF)</b> 30 Gloucester Place London, W1U 8FL Tel: 0207 864 9000  Email: <a href="mailto:safeguarding@plcf.co.uk">safeguarding@plcf.co.uk</a>  W: <a href="http://www.premierleague.com/about/safeguarding">www.premierleague.com/about/safeguarding</a></div>	<p>The Premier League Charitable Fund creates and supports activities that inspire young people to achieve their potential and positively impact their communities. The PLCF develops programmes and provides funding to 92+ Club Community Organisations (CCOs) in the Premier League and EFL.</p>	<p>Requires all CCOs receiving funding from PLCF to comply with a range of safeguarding arrangements set out within a Capability Code of Practice. Requirements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Safeguarding policy and procedures.</li><li>• Management of safeguarding.</li><li>• Training and support.</li><li>• Service delivery.</li><li>• PLCF commissions annual independent safeguarding audits of Premier League CCOs.</li><li>• PLCF offers safeguarding advice, support and training to CCOs.</li></ul>
<div></div> <div><b>EFL in the Community (EFLitC)</b> EFL House 10-12 West Cliff Preston, PR1 8HU Tel: 01772 325800  Email: <a href="mailto:safeguarding@efltrust.com">safeguarding@efltrust.com</a>  W: <a href="http://www.efltrust.com">www.efltrust.com</a></div>	<p>EFL in the Community is the charitable arm of the EFL, supporting a network of Club Community Organisations (CCOs) to deliver and facilitate events, programme and activities within their local communities, often engaging with some of society's most vulnerable groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Along with the PLCF, outlines safeguarding measures for CCOs to comply with and evidence via the Capability Code of Practice (CCOP).</li><li>• Acts in an advisory capacity, supporting CCOs with ongoing safeguarding guidance and training.</li><li>• Monitors safeguarding and incident data from CCOs, observing trends and patterns, making recommendations and offering support and guidance as required.</li><li>• Operates robust safeguarding policies, procedures and measures for the direct delivery of a range of projects and programmes involving children and adults at risk.</li></ul>







**FOR ALL**

The Football Association  
Wembley Stadium  
London HA9 0WS  
**T:** +44 (0)800 169 1863  
**F:** +44 (0)800 169 1864  
**W:** TheFA.com