

TOGETHER EDI STRATEGY

2022 – 2027

TOGETHER



CONTENTS

- 4..... Message from Trevor Birch
- 6..... Message from David McArdle
- 8..... Context
- 9..... Mission and vision
- 10..... Blackburn Rovers case study
- 12..... Role of the EFL
- 13..... EFL reach
- 14..... Collaboration
- 16..... EFL impact on the ecosystem
- 22..... Benefits across Clubs of 'Together'
- 24..... Exeter City case study
- 26..... Strategy pillars
- 28..... Support
- 30..... Educate
- 32..... Communicate
- 34..... Embed
- 36..... Listen
- 38..... Preston North End case study
- 40..... What does success look like?



MESSAGE FROM TREVOR BIRCH

Together is the EFL's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy, which will provide the League and Clubs a framework to ensure that the EFL is truly reflective of the diverse communities that our 72 Clubs represent across England and Wales.

As a League, our four core values are Aspiration, Credibility, Community and Progress – all of which are firmly embedded within the Together EDI Strategy.

Football should be a game for all, but to improve, unfortunately we must acknowledge that barriers do still exist.

There continues to be reports of incidents of discrimination within stadiums and in wider society, while in the digital world, players, Clubs and football bodies are continuing to combat the presence of online abuse.

We know supporters living with a disability can have challenges when attending and viewing matches, be it in person or from home.

We continue to see a lack of diversity across the game, be it in Boardrooms, coaching positions or throughout our collective workforce. This clearly requires our continued attention and we will work with and challenge our Clubs to improve their processes.



Work has been ongoing over the years, which has given us a base to build from, but there is more we can do.

The foundation has been the EFL's Code of Practice which looks to embed EDI at the core of everything we do and everything we stand for. For the 2022/23 season, the Code of Practice has been reviewed and relaunched to provide Clubs across the EFL with a greater level of dedicated support, to ensure they are undertaking the correct and sustainable path to make meaningful change within the local area.

Last season, the EFL hosted its first-ever LGBTQ+ Fans Forum while British Sign Language was used during the National Anthem at the Carabao Cup, Papa Johns and Play-Off Finals at Wembley Stadium.

Over the past four years, the EFL had a groundbreaking partnership with the Mind Charity, which developed many initiatives that were designed to improve people's mental

health inside and outside of Clubs. From the start of this season, the EFL joined forces with British Red Cross to form a new partnership that will use the power of football to support those who are isolated from society and are experiencing loneliness.

During last summer's AGM, Clubs voted in favour of a regulation change which now enables a home club to wear its 'away' or third kit where a clash may occur that would make it difficult for people who are colour blind to differentiate between the kits worn by both teams.

The EFL will also implement a new system to support Clubs with data gathering to improve awareness of their local demographic, and there will also be assistance for recruitment processes with the launch of I-Recruit the groundbreaking Blind Recruitment tool within the football industry.

While progress has been encouraging, there is still more to do on our journey Together, and through this strategy, the EFL Inclusion team will support Clubs with ongoing education opportunities to ensure knowledge and understanding of EDI-related topics, which will empower them to make a positive impact for their communities and the game.

Of course, a strategy won't deliver progress on its own, but with 60% of the population living within a 10-mile radius of an EFL club, and with over 20 million supporters entering through the turnstiles each season, the EFL is as well placed as anyone to grasp the opportunity to make meaningful changes to the town, cities and populations that they represent.

I would like to thank the League's equality stakeholders and all of our Clubs for their crucial support in helping to develop this important body of work and we look forward to working with you in the years ahead to improve our game, Together.

Trevor Birch
CEO



TOGETHER
AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

MESSAGE FROM DAVID MCARDLE

**EFL HEAD OF EQUALITY, DIVERSITY
& INCLUSION**

Welcome to the EFL Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, 'Together'. The strategy has been established to provide a path forward for the EFL within this vital area of the organisation and to society. 'Together' will be the catalyst to the next phase of our journey.



Through the strategy, the EFL aims for football across the League to be more reflective and representative of the demographic of the communities in which we serve at all levels. The EFL will work with and challenge its Clubs to improve their processes and outlooks, leading to sustainable change, which will allow greater diversity.

The EFL has made great strides during the past number of years, with advancements such as the ground-breaking partnership with Mind, the establishment of the Minority Coaches Regulation – which has allowed coaches from under-represented groups to have greater access to opportunities – the development within the EFL Code of Practice – which has allowed Clubs within the EFL to develop their structures – and the implementation of key EDI initiatives.

However, football continues to face its challenges.

The beautiful game and the national sport are two phrases which are often used to describe football.

Is the game so beautiful if you don't feel welcomed because the language used in the stands states your sexual orientation is a negative?

Is it really a beautiful game when you miss part of a match because your sight lines are affected as you require the use of a wheelchair?

Is it the national sport when there is a glass ceiling due to your gender?

Or is it a national sport when there is a lack of visible role models off the pitch that represent your ethnicity and therefore you can't see your access to the game?

We would like to think there are no barriers, however, the under-representation statistics and anecdotal evidence shows these barriers exist and the perception across the public states that we require change.

Achieving this change will not be easy or straightforward – it requires the game to go on a journey. The EFL, through its new strategy, has established a path for this journey, a path which allows our Clubs to understand how they can make an impact and be supported by the EFL, who take the lead to reach our mission and vision.

The path has been established through the pillars of support, educate, communicate, embed and listen, with tactics used across these pillars to make the changes required and allow the EFL and its Clubs to continue forward on our journey together.

I would like to thank our equality stakeholders for their support in the development of 'Together' and their continued collaboration in the future developments of the EFL Equality, Diversity and Inclusion journey.

David McArdle

CONTEXT

In many instances, the EFL is at the forefront of society, bringing together people and communities across 72 Clubs. The League's unique reach and unprecedented impact, through a wide-ranging fanbase and global audience, allows the EFL to challenge behaviours and promote inclusive practices across the game. The EFL wishes for its Clubs to be reflective and representative of their communities and be a driving force towards diversity across the country.

To achieve its aims, the EFL requires a united vision and mission to make the game a truly reflective environment in which everyone can meet their full potential.

The establishment of the EFL's EDI Strategy 'Together' provides its Clubs and Communities a pathway to their own EDI journey in which the EFL can fully support and guide to allow for the achievement of its outcomes in a consistent and meaningful way.

The EFL is in the view that it will never complete its EDI journey and will always seek to re-address its path to ensure its ability to continuously challenge.

provides opportunity towards a section of the community. The deconstructed offering may support someone due to the way they learn, the entry point within the game or the additional support they may require.

Overall, the EFL wishes to remove all barriers across the sport, however, this will take collaboration within all stakeholders and constant re-defining of objectives and requirements to ensure barrier free access. The EFL is of the view that it will never complete its EDI journey and will always seek to re-address its path to ensure our ability to continuously challenge.

As an organisation, the EFL believes that defining EDI in this way allows the game to collectively understand the path which lays ahead and, together with its Clubs, can remove barriers from football and society.

Defining EDI

To ensure the EFL and its Clubs can have a consistent approach and understanding of the path and journey which is ahead, the EFL has established a consistent message of how it defines Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Many across society believe the EDI definition is that you provide everyone with the same opportunity. Providing everyone with the same opportunity allows organisations to become equality driven and will allow for success and change to be seen across society.

The EFL does not follow this, instead defining EDI as providing everyone with the same opportunity to succeed. This may mean the game requires to increase its efforts for some aspects of the community to succeed, due to increased barriers or lack of previous opportunity made available. Football may have to deconstruct the way in which it



MISSION AND VISION

EDI Mission: The EFL establishes a best-in-class provision, uniting football to ensure inclusive and welcoming opportunities across the EFL environment through sustainable and effective change.

The Mission sets out the EFL's immediate aims and ambitions across the organisation. The EFL aims to undertake ground-breaking work which will provide Clubs the opportunity to be best in class, working in partnership with stakeholders to provide the in-depth knowledge and understanding to achieve.

The EFL aims to ensure that these changes are sustainable and effective, which will be achieved by ensuring Governance and Regulatory criteria are altered to allow the EFL and its Clubs to continue to develop, leaving sustainable and effective change in everything we do.

EDI Vision: The EFL and its Clubs are reflective and representative of the communities in which they serve at all levels of the game.

A key strength of the EFL is the diversity of its membership and the reach in which they provide the organisation. However, it is vital to understand each of its Clubs are different, especially within their demographic.

The EFL's Vision wishes its Clubs to mirror their communities in which they serve and therefore representing and reflecting the heart of their communities. Achieving this will ensure diversity of thought, opinion and message to create lasting change and a true reflection of what is important to the communities in which EFL Clubs are at the heart of.

HOW BLACKBURN ROVERS ARE BREAKING DOWN RACIAL BARRIERS...



A Club steeped in tradition, Blackburn Rovers has long been proud of the diverse community in which it resides. However, in a town where more than 30 per cent of the local community is from a South Asian background, it became clear that the demographic of the matchday crowd at Ewood Park didn't fairly represent the demographic of the town and its diverse community.

As the Club progresses on the pitch in a bid to return to the top flight, behind the scenes it continues to make strides off it.

Through the appointment of Yasir Sufi as the Club's first Integration Development Manager in January 2020, coupled with the introduction of the #OneRovers brand, Blackburn Rovers is continuing to develop links with the non-white community, breaking down barriers and creating opportunities to further allow for the Club's success to be enjoyed by all.

In March 2020, Rovers launched the Ewood Express, an affordable and accessible transport initiative for young people to be collected directly from their school or mosque and attend a match at Ewood Park, along with teachers and volunteers, before being returned when the game has finished.

The service fills in where parents and families can't and at just £6 per child for both the transport and the match ticket, the project makes it both affordable and accessible for all.

Rovers' fixture against Preston North End in December 2021 saw more than 650 children use the service, with a further 1,000 children attending a dedicated Ewood Express fixture against Queens Park Rangers.

While research showed that more than 30 per cent of the local Blackburn community were

from a South Asian heritage, upon breaking the demographic numbers down further, it was highlighted that this figure rose to 60 per cent in under-19s within the area, with certain areas of Blackburn's population, such as Bastwell, having more than 85 per cent South Asian heritage.

With a number of those families located at a considerable distance from Ewood Park, the Club acted to find a solution in making the stadium not only more representative of the town, but more accessible too.

Head of Operations at the Club, Lynsey Talbot, said: "It is really important that the Football Club mirrors the demographic of the town. Family doesn't necessarily just mean two adults and children at a game; it's about looking past that and looking at the key demographics within the area and making sure we mirror that.

"We did the research to find out what our community looked like and tried to find ways to encourage those who weren't necessarily engaging with us to do so, and find out why they maybe hadn't been previously. We wanted to fix those issues and encourage anyone and everyone to come to Ewood Park.

"Blackburn Rovers as a Football Club is a massive part of the community. We're in the heart of the community and it goes without saying that we want to be here for decades to come, embrace the community in which we live in and allow everyone under the #OneRovers brand to enjoy not just the football, but the venue as a whole."

Alongside the Club's innovative Ewood Express initiative, Rovers' matchday staffing and stewarding system has been deliberately designed to be multicultural and all staff are given extensive training on the importance of inclusivity.

After partnering with a local food supplier, all kiosks in the stadium's concourses now have Halal options available, with a designated area within the stadium that is completely alcohol-free. The Club also has a multi-faith prayer room that is available to use on matchdays.

Integration Development Manager, Yasir Sufi, added: "Recent statistics showed that

approximately 60 per cent of under-19s in and around Darwen were from diverse communities, making it a massive catchment area. Do we see that reflected in the ground on matchdays? Not so much. Do we want to see that reflected in the matchday attendance? Of course we do, and anything that can help with that will be a huge step forward.

"The idea behind the Ewood Express started pre-COVID-19 when we as a club wanted to reach diverse communities as much as possible, but also make it as easy as possible for people to get to a game. We soon realised that for those not living within close range of the stadium that transport was a massive problem for them and the affordability of it as well.

"The Ewood Express allows children to travel in groups together from schools, mosques and local Clubs, bringing them together and giving them an opportunity to enjoy the match and experience something they previously might not have been able to. It's about catering to each person's specific needs."



ROLE OF THE EFL

- Monitor the progress of the EFL's Equality journey.
- Share good practice across the EFL and beyond.
- Develop and maintain relationships with National and International EDI stakeholders.
- Challenge and support EFL Clubs to progress on their EDI journey.
- Challenge and support English football within areas of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- Embed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion across the EFL.
- Administer and assess EFL Clubs on their undertaking of the Equality Code of Practice.
- Support EFL Clubs with education provision and resources.
- To be a vocal and visible leader across football within Equality, Diversity and Inclusion aspects.



EFL REACH

Due to the EFL's longstanding history, scale of organisation and Club membership, it is in a unique position to utilise its organisational influence and reach to impact the football industry and society as a whole.

The EFL remains committed to using its reach to demonstrate good practice within the EDI landscape and highlight key messages to improve lives in communities.



72
Clubs



8 Million
Unique website
visitors in 2021



110k
Average Highlight
Show Audience



1874
Matches
per season



4.3 Million
Social Media
Followers



889k
Purchases on
iFollow



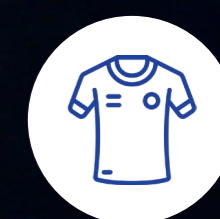
202k
Average Live
Match
TV Audience



20 Million
Fans attended
matches in 18/19



Average 400k+
Fans attended
each match day



2700+
Senior Players
8000+
Academy Players



EFL IMPACT ON THE ECOSYSTEM

INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS



Internal Organisation

Embed EDI initiatives and values across organisational structures and work plans to achieve the mission and vision set out within the EDI strategy.

How? All EFL departments work together to embrace EDI outcomes, implementing collaboration to ensure policies and procedures are effective in creating an inclusive culture.



EFL Events

EDI thread runs through all EFL events, sharing inclusive values and standards to promote messages during activities.

How? EDI outputs and tactics are visible throughout event planning, resulting in inclusive environments being established.



Member Clubs

Support all 72 Member Clubs in their own EDI journey, assisting in achieving actions based on insights of local demographics.

How? Create support programmes and education resources to provide Clubs with knowledge and understanding to set appropriate outputs.



EFL Trust/League Football Education

Close collaboration with internal stakeholders to ensure the best opportunity for EFL Clubs to thrive and create community change.

How? Ensure workstreams are aligned, allowing for greater provision towards Club outputs, therefore removing any duplication of Club requirements.



League Structures

EFL structures allow for the organisation to maintain its EDI journey and provide the best possible provision.

How? Governance and Regulation rules are reviewed to ensure they are fit for an EDI environment and do not place barriers within the EFL's structures.



EFL IMPACT ON THE ECOSYSTEM

FOOTBALL STAKEHOLDERS



Football Bodies

Collaborate with football bodies to make changes to the football environment and a greater future for society.

How? Share good practice, projects and resource with football bodies to ensure a joined-up approach and allow effective change.



Players/Coaches

Establish a safe environment in which players and coaches can thrive within the EFL and progress on their own journey.

How? Establish an effective discrimination reporting mechanism which provides effective support for players and coaches to meet their full potential, taking learning from their experience to provide a suitable pipeline of career progression.



Club Officials

Ensure EDI requirements are fit for purpose and can be implemented within the Club environment, establishing support mechanisms throughout.

How? Consult with Club officials both across the League and seniority to ensure challenges faced are reflected within the support provided to Clubs.



Supporters

Promote EDI initiatives and stories across Clubs and supporters, ensuring an enjoyable and safe football experience.

How? Establish campaigns and education programmes directed towards supporters to improve knowledge and understanding of unacceptable behaviour and how to report such incidents.

EFL IMPACT ON THE ECOSYSTEM

SOCIETY STAKEHOLDERS



Equality Stakeholders

Listen and consult with Equality stakeholders to ensure the full impact of Equality outputs can be achieved.

How? Share plans and workstreams to allow clear goals to be established, while together devising action plans dedicated to making sustainable change.



Society/Media

Communicate EDI actions and outputs throughout society to allow for the mainstreaming of EDI conversations.

How? Use the voice and power of the EFL to spread messages of both the EFL itself and its stakeholders to establish clear messages.



EFL Partners

Actively involve commercial sponsors and partners to allow synergy in partnerships and shared objectives.

How? Share EDI vision, mission and outcomes to allow partners to join the EFL's journey and support initiatives, while also creating shared EDI objectives which add value in efforts to create effective and sustainable change.



Suppliers

Suppliers working with the EFL understand its EDI journey and are welcomed to join the EFL on its EDI path.

How? Share the EFL's commitment to EDI with suppliers and work with suppliers who meet its expectations within EDI.



Government

Align the EFL's EDI journey with opportunities for change within National Government policy.

How? Use the power and scale of football within England and Wales to influence decision-making processes and legislation.

BENEFITS ACROSS THE CLUBS OF 'TOGETHER'

The Together strategy aims to benefit all levels of the Club environment. Together has placed outcomes and tactics to ensure all aspects of the Club structure can have an impact on our overall mission and vision and all phases of the Club structure can have an influence on both the EFL and its own journey with points on the path which will see sustainable change to the unique areas.

Together will seek to change on the pitch, in the Club offices, in the stand and within the communities which our Clubs call home, to ensure the journey continually considers every individual involved in establishing a brighter future for our game.



Coaches

The EFL will work with stakeholders to provide greater pipeline opportunities for under-represented coaches to access the game and opportunities within the EFL. The League will also provide opportunities for current coaches to gain additional knowledge of EDI related areas.



Communities

The EFL will work with Clubs to ensure their local community demographic is understood to ensure the Club is embracing the community and providing support to access the Club as a whole. This will be achieved through greater understanding and awareness via education.



Players

Greater discrimination reporting mechanisms and greater support towards players through Mental Health and Wellbeing awareness will ensure players can perform to their full potential.



Supporters

Supporters will see the benefit through a greater matchday experience, with Clubs being provided guidance on EDI related fan experiences to ensure full enjoyment can be had throughout. Supporters will be supplied information of how to report any discriminatory conduct by fellow supporters.



Academies

Club Academy staff will be provided a greater level of education opportunities to greater understand the challenges related to under-represented communities and an awareness of the demographic of the Clubs' local community, ensuring all players and staff can reach their full potential.



Community/Charity Organisations

The EFL will work with the EFL Trust to ensure alignment between both organisations to ensure the ability for Club Community Organisations (CCOs) and Clubs to work closely to deliver on community activities and limit duplication of work streams.



Club Staff

Club staff will be able to join staff networks across the EFL to share good practice, as well as lived experiences within football, while also being provided opportunities to increase their knowledge through an extensive education programme.



HOW EXETER CITY ARE HELPING MAKE FOOTBALL HER GAME TOO



Exeter City were one of the first Clubs in the country to officially partner with the #HerGameToo campaign and were the first to dedicate an entire weekend of football to the campaign when they hosted Newport County during the 2021/22 season.



The initiative, launched in May 2021, was founded by a group of female football fans with the aim of raising awareness to help tackle sexist abuse in the game and ultimately creating a better and more inclusive atmosphere for female fans and the next generation.

By taking the lead on the campaign, the Grecians set out to not only make supporters aware of the challenges that female fans and players may face on a daily basis, but to encourage people to speak up against discrimination if they see it, educate others and, ultimately, inspire the next generation of female football fans.

After consulting key stakeholders at the Club, Exeter dedicated a weekend to the campaign, showcasing a variety of activity which included a social media takeover, a number of testimonies from female supporters, dedicated #HerGameToo matchday graphics, matchday programme and promotional material around St James Park and player warm-up t-shirts ahead of the match, which were later auctioned off with the funds donated to female grassroots teams.

Representatives from #HerGameToo were also invited to St James Park for the fixture.

“The aim of Her Game Too is to tackle the misogynistic culture surrounding football, so we can create a better and more inclusive atmosphere for female fans for now and the next generation,” said Lucy Ford, Co-Founder of Her Game Too.

“We feel it is important to have the support and backing of professional Clubs throughout the country, so we were delighted to partner with Exeter City. The work they have done to support equality in the game has been fantastic to see and we hope they will inspire other Football Clubs.”

Exeter Director, Elaine Davis, added: “We were pleased to be one of the first EFL Clubs to back Her Game Too in their mission to raise awareness of sexism against women in football.

“Here at Exeter City, we support diversity and welcome all supporters whatever their age, race, gender, ethnicity or sexual orientation. The Club supports Her Game Too in their mission to ensure that every woman continues to feel safe, comfortable and, most importantly, respected in the wider football community and of course, here at St James Park.”

STRATEGY PILLARS

Five pillars – Support, Educate, Communicate, Embed and Listen – have been established due to their importance in the journey of the EFL and its Clubs.

Each pillar is key to the path moving forward and allows the EFL, its Clubs and stakeholders a clear understanding of how they can join the EFL on the future journey and the touchpoints and influence they can have in achieving its overall mission and vision.

The strategy has been designed to provide an explanation of what the EFL aims to achieve within this key part of the journey. However, it is important to understand the EFL has been on its EDI path for a number of years and therefore has already achieved significant success.

Each pillar will produce a series of outcomes and each outcome will provide a number of tactics, which will show progression on the journey and additional opportunities for stakeholders to be involved.

To understand the ongoing progression, each tactic has an output which will provide the EFL and its Clubs with support as they continue on the journey. Finally, each pillar has its own future aim, allowing the EFL and its Clubs to understand the key points on the path.



SUPPORT

Explanation:

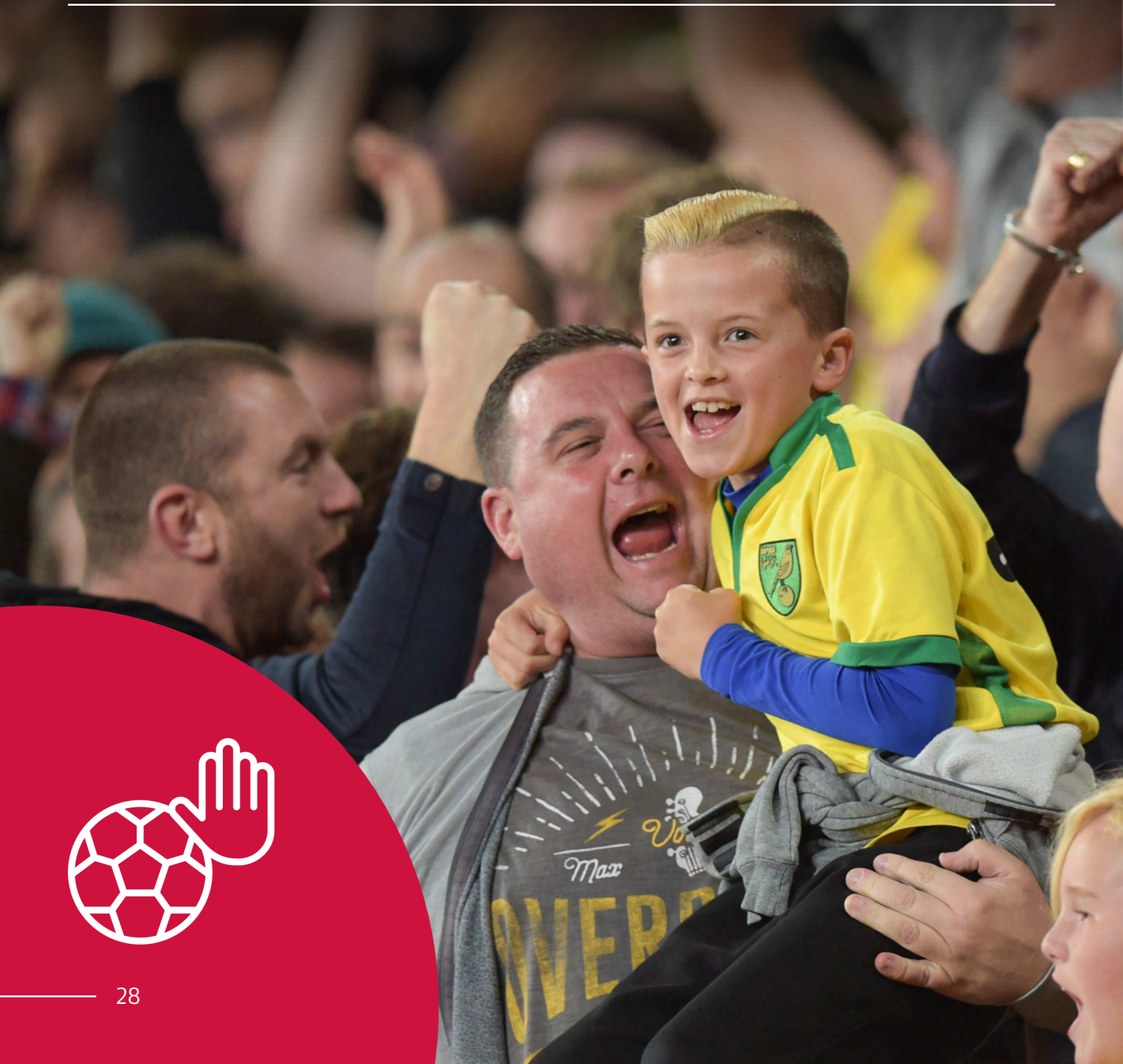
Support the fight against all forms of discrimination, under-representation and lack of opportunities, ensuring the EFL environment supports inclusion and accessibility to the game, while establishing individuals at the heart of all decisions.

Outcomes:

- The EFL is a safe and enjoyable experience for all.
- The EFL widens its provision within EDI related topics.
- The development of a mentally healthy culture throughout the EFL.
- Everyone can access football within the EFL.

Future ambition:

Eradication of discrimination and under-representation in all forms on and off the pitch, achieved through a greater diversity of participants, with the aim of having barrier free access to EFL Clubs.



Outcome	Tactic	Output
The EFL is a safe and enjoyable experience for all	EFL to investigate alterations to regulations to allow advancement of EDI journey	Changes to regulations
	Work in partnership with stakeholders to establish effective mechanisms ensuring reports are effectively investigated	Discrimination reporting mechanism launched
	Provide support and education to Clubs to effectively identify forms of discrimination, increasing confidence in investigating and effectively managing discrimination incidents	Education programme delivered
	In partnership with stakeholders, continue to seek change within the operating of social media platforms	Challenges within platform operations
	Support EFL Clubs in challenges relating to fan behaviour	Support programme launched
	The EFL to introduce an anonymous inclusive culture reporting service for EFL Club employees	Reporting service launched

Outcome	Tactic	Output
The EFL to widen its provision within EDI related topics	The EFL to investigate the opportunity to broaden its provision to include other underrepresented groups e.g., homeless, those on low income, environment sustainability etc	Research report undertaken
	The EFL to open discussion with additional stakeholders within wider EDI topics	Number of established partnerships created

Outcome	Tactic	Output
The development of a Mentally Healthy Culture throughout the EFL	Work in partnership with appropriate stakeholders to establish a procedure to ensure victims of discrimination are supported across the EFL	Procedure established and communicated
	Establish mental health and wellbeing good practice and support Clubs to establish a mentally healthy culture throughout their environment	Good practice established and delivered to Clubs

Outcome	Tactic	Output
Everyone can access football within the EFL	Support the creation of diverse fans groups across EFL Clubs by sharing good practice	Good practice guides
	Work with stakeholders to establish good practice regarding inclusive fan experience, introducing projects which improves the stadium environment	Consultation and good practice produced
	In partnership with key stakeholders, establish programmes and campaigns to increase the diversity of fans attending EFL matches	Increase in fan diversity
	In partnership with stakeholders, support the development of future diverse referees across the EFL	Increase in referee diversity
	Support EFL Academies to diversify all aspects of their programme and develop opportunities across their local demographic	Education opportunities

EDUCATE

Explanation:

The EFL, along with its partners, provides a comprehensive programme of education to EFL Clubs and beyond, ensuring awareness and understanding, which allows for the removal of barriers.

Outcomes:

- EFL Clubs are confident to operate in a changing EDI landscape.
- EFL Clubs have improved awareness, knowledge and understanding across EDI topics.

Future ambition:

Across the EFL, Clubs are confident to challenge all forms of discrimination and can implement an inclusive culture, making alterations to the environment to support participants.



Outcome	Tactic	Output
EFL Clubs are confident to operate in a changing EDI landscape	Establish Club support programmes providing expert guidance and assistance on areas of EDI	Guidance material produced and launched
	Undertake the Code of Practice (CoP) with EFL Clubs, reviewing content yearly to ensure good practice is administered and appropriate actions are being undertaken	CoP Launched and all Clubs engaged
	Create separate networks for Club Equality Officers and Disability Access Officers to establish shared good practice	Networks established meeting twice per year
	Support Clubs in the creation and implementation of their Equality Action Plans	Number of Club action plans and guidance established
	In partnership within the Integrated Coaching Strategy (ICS) support the development of mandatory EDI Education within coaching qualifications	Mandatory training implemented

Outcome	Tactic	Output
EFL Clubs have improved awareness, knowledge and understanding across EDI topics	Provide education opportunities to allow understanding on barriers relating to diverse groups and their access to football	Education programme established
	Creation of EDI E-Learning courses relating to multiple EDI topics to support Club knowledge and understanding	EDI e-learning hub launched
	Establish education programme in partnership with stakeholders for Board members, Senior Management and staff across EFL to ensure clear understanding of EDI	Board and management training delivered



COMMUNICATE

Explanation:

The EFL discusses Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at every opportunity through its structures and beyond, ensuring its voice is visible to improve society and under-representation across football.

Outcomes:

- Using the power of the EFL brand to raise awareness of anti-discrimination messages, promoting EDI activity and inspiring individuals from diverse groups.
- The EFL take a clear and visible stance against discrimination, demonstrating vocal and visible leadership.

Future ambition:

The EFL is a force for good, with all within society aware of the EFL's stance on EDI topics and regarded as best in class.



Outcome	Tactic	Output
Using the Power of the EFL brand, raise awareness of anti-discrimination messages, promoting EDI activity to inspire individuals from diverse groups	Supply Clubs with guidance on EDI celebration events, providing messages and assets for key events	Yearly calendar produced and assets created for key events
	Produce a yearly EDI report to provide an update of work being undertaken across the EFL	Yearly report produced
	Diverse imagery is used across all EFL content and publications, whilst undertaking an accessibility audit of the EFL website and social media content	Imagery process, accessibility audit undertaken
	Celebrate stakeholder campaigns, utilising the assets of the EFL to champion positive role models and celebrate the contribution of diverse pioneers	Key stakeholder campaigns celebrated

Outcome	Tactic	Output
EFL to take a clear and visible stance against discrimination, demonstrating vocal and visible leadership	EDI topics to be included within all EFL events and conferences	EDI included within each conference and event
	The EFL to speak and present at appropriate conferences to promote its work within EDI	Number of conference Activity
	The EFL to implement an Equality campaign and brand to support the mainstreaming of conversations and advancement of its EDI journey promoting the EFL vision	EDI campaign launched
	Working with key football stakeholders to unite aspects of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion under one clear message	Partnerships with football stakeholders



EMBED

Explanation:

The EFL aims to embed EDI across all aspects of the business and is fully considered within all decision-making processes, ensuring Clubs are supported to embrace EDI within their own environments, challenging under-representation across the EFL.

Outcomes:

- The EFL is an employer of choice, with staff feeling valued and supported through the organisation, as well as having opportunities for progression.
- The creation of a League-wide diverse workforce
- EDI is embedded throughout the EFL, creating a culture of inclusion.

Future ambition:

The EFL and its Clubs' workforce are reflective and representative of the demographic of the country, with no under-representation across the EFL through mandatory expectations on Clubs.



Outcome	Tactic	Output
EFL is an employer of choice with staff feeling valued and supported through the organisation, while having opportunities to progress	Introduction of Equality Impact Assessments to policies and procedures within the EFL to ensure the environment and culture supports the advancement of EDI	EIA process established
	Establish an education programme for EFL staff to increase knowledge of EDI topics	EDI education programme established
	The EFL to review and develop the recruitment process to attract diverse candidates from a wider talent pool	Review of recruitment process

Outcome	Tactic	Output
The creation of a League wide diverse workforce	Provide Clubs with guidance relating to HR, Equality Law, Inclusive Recruitment and Equality consultation	Guidance documents produced
	EFL to introduce a blind recruitment tool to support Clubs in the recruitment of under-represented groups	I-Recruit launched
	Establish and support programmes to develop and encourage diverse leaders, under-represented coaches and football administrators across the EFL	Programmes launched
	Establish and support programmes to develop current and former players from diverse backgrounds to continue on their football journey through coaching and football administration	Programmes launched
	Improve diversity of staff within the EFL to be more reflective and representative of the National demographic	Increase of representation
	Engage with EFL Clubs to support engagement within the English FA Football Leadership Diversity Code	Increase in Clubs signed up to FDLC
	Support Clubs across the EFL to provide guidance on diversifying board membership through establishment of shadow board, diverse recruitment and player representation	Board education and guidance launched

Outcome	Tactic	Output
EDI is embedded through the EFL creating a culture of inclusion	EFL to designate Board EDI Champion	Board champion designated
	Build relationships with National and Global institutions with the view of developing specific action plans to support EDI outcomes across unique groups	Stakeholder partnership established
	Establish networks of diverse staff across the EFL and member Clubs to share experiences and create supportive environments	Number of Staff Networks established

LISTEN

Explanation:

The EFL actively listens to stakeholders and participants to understand views and experiences across EDI. The consultation will allow for informed decisions to be taken to ensure effective and sustainable changes are made.

Outcomes:

- Understand the EFL's diverse participation to allow for informed decisions.
- Grow relationships with EDI stakeholders to improve diversity of opinion through consultation.

Future ambition:

A collaborative ecosystem across the EFL, with communication and the sharing of views being common practice through EDI processes and delivery.



Outcome	Tactic	Output
Understand the EFL's diverse participation to allow for informed decisions	Establish consultation through the creation of an EFL EDI working group	Working group established
	EFL to establish Equality monitoring process to allow full understanding of representation across the EFL	Monitoring procedure and system launched
	Undertake research within under-represented groups on barriers and challenges to increase engagement and support	Research programmes launched
	Undertake regular fan consultation to ensure EDI outputs reflect challenges faced within the game	Number of fan consultations undertaken each year
	Introduce Club staff Inclusion surveys to improve inclusive cultures across the EFL	Survey programme launched

Outcome	Tactic	Output
Grow relationships with EDI stakeholders to improve diversity of opinion through consultation	Work with stakeholders to ensure messages are received by diverse groups	Altered information established
	Undertake regular stakeholder consultations to ensure EFL EDI outputs are effective and appropriate to allow for change to take place whilst continuing to understand stakeholder gaps	Stakeholder consultation diary established
	Creation of an EDI Club Consultation Group to gain views of Member Clubs	Club Consultation Group established





HOW PRESTON NORTH END ARE DIVERSIFYING THE CLUB'S FANBASE

Preston North End has made steps to create a closer connection with their ethnically diverse local communities by actively engaging with local Muslim residents living in the immediate vicinity of Deepdale Stadium.

Following a successful Ramadan project, the Club then celebrated Eid-al-Fitr by delivering 1,000 traditional South Asian sweet packs to local residents, while North End themed gifts were handed out for Eid-al-Adha to those accessing local mosques.

The Trust's Head of Community, Rebecca Robertson, explained: "The area has a big Muslim community, so we're going to be working with a number of partners to offer

culturally appropriate food and produce to members of the community in order for them to be able to open their fast.

"There are people that still don't know what Ramadan is, why it's celebrated, why people take part in that celebration. We've got a big part to play in ensuring that people understand why it happens."

As a result of this action that took place over the course of Ramadan and both Eid celebrations, PNE has dramatically increased its engagement with the Islamic community, recording a 144 per cent rise in ethnically diverse individuals accessing their work – improving from around 2,000 in 2020 to 5,000 in 2021.

This has led to the implementation of a multi-faith prayer room – unveiled by Mayor of Preston, Javed Iqbal – on matchdays inside Deepdale Stadium for supporters of all faiths, enabling fans to pray before, during and after games, thus removing potential barriers to supporters being able to attend matches.

Mo Patel – a practising Muslim supporter who now undertakes the role of casual Community Engagement Coordinator with PNECET after initially volunteering on the Ramadan initiative – praised the move to open a prayer room.

He said: "Some supporters may have had to make a decision between choosing to pray and attending a match during certain parts of the season, due to the different times that their religion may determine that they need to pray.

"We believe that supporters of all faiths should not have to make that decision and we want to continue to break down all barriers that may prevent any of our existing fans from attending matches at Deepdale, while also encouraging members of our local community to show their support for PNE."

Additionally, the Club has established other new initiatives that are accessed by those from ethnically diverse communities.

This includes a weight management programme at a women's refuge centre, which helps participants to lead healthier and more active lifestyles through exercise and by providing advice about how they can support their own wellbeing through healthy eating and positive habits.

"It's brilliant for us to see," said North End captain Alan Browne. "Over the past year or so, it's been really difficult to get that binding connection because of the pandemic and you can't really build relationships with people outside the football club.

"For us as players we love seeing things like this. Even if you're not a football fan or you've no interest, it's good to get in with the community, whether that's around football or not.

"To see us support different causes and events is brilliant."





WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

The creation of outputs within the strategy pillar tactics will provide the EFL and its Clubs with the tools to establish effective and sustainable change.

However, to ensure the EFL and its Clubs have utilised these tools and affected the required change, the strategy has established a series of Key Success Indicators. The KSI have established the improvements and goals within key elements of the EFL, which will demonstrate ultimate progression on its journey within Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

The KSI will challenge the EFL and its Clubs to improve on current EDI related aspects of the game, as well as setting challenging goals to ensure the outputs have been utilised effectively across the EFL, providing a greater environment to all beneficiaries of the strategy.

The EFL will monitor the progress of the KSI and these will support in the understanding of the EFL 'Together' EDI Strategy's success.

KEY SUCCESS INDICATORS

1

Staff Diversity

The EFL will aim to improve its staff diversity and be closer to becoming reflective and representative of the demographic of the country.

	Gender	Black, Asian or MH	Disability	LGBTQ+
Current National	51% Female 49% Male	15%	21%	3.5%
EFL Current	38% Female 62% Male	4%	2%	0%

Success

Improvement in staff diversity to be more representative and reflective.



2

Club Relevant Person Diversity

The EFL will support Clubs to improve the diversity of their relevant persons by providing education and awareness, as well as establishing networks with partners of highly skilled individuals.

	Gender	Black, Asian or MH	Disability	LGBTQ+
Current National	51% Female 49% Male	15%	21%	3.5%
EFL Current	13% Female 87% Male	Not currently measured		

Success

Club relevant person diversity to be more representative and reflective, whilst implementing greater breadth of monitoring.

3

Code of Practice

The EFL will undertake a review of the Code of Practice. The new CoP will implement a tiered approach allowing Clubs to further advance their EDI journey.

Current Position

100% of Clubs are engaged within current CoP with varying levels of engagement. Clubs are assessed every three years across three cohorts.

Success

100% of Clubs are engaged in new CoP with greater level of EFL support. Clubs will be assessed every two seasons with all Clubs assessed in same season.

4

Club Achieving Gold level of CoP

The EFL aim to tier the current Code of Practice, allowing Clubs to be assessed across Bronze, Silver and Gold.

Current Position

The CoP currently offers only one level of award and Clubs are required to undertake PLEDIS if they wish to further progress.

Success

20% of Clubs (14) achieve Gold award.

5

Club Action Plans

As part of the CoP, Clubs will be required to create an EDI action plan based on the need of the local community – Potential Crouch Report requirement.

Current Position

Support and requirement for Clubs to have an Action Plan is sporadic and no structure to assessing action plans.

Success

100% of Clubs with EDI Action Plans with clear support and future ambition.

6

i-Recruit

EFL will establish a Blind Recruitment Academy tool to support Clubs in achieving Regulation 115 as well as improving diversity across coaching positions.

Current Position

Clubs undertake their own recruitment, with requirement for Academy positions being advertised within EFL website.

Success

100% of Clubs utilising i-Recruit with platform used for further roles across EFL Clubs.

7

Equality Monitoring System

The EFL will establish an Equality Monitoring system across the EFL to greater understand our Diversity across Clubs. This system will include supporters' data.

Current Position

There is no comprehensive system to understand the Diversity of individuals across the EFL.

Success

100% of Clubs inputting regular Equality information in regard to both staff and supporters.

8

Football Leadership Diversity Code

The EFL will support and encourage Clubs to sign up to The FA's FLDC.

Current Position

Currently, 29 Clubs across the EFL has signed up to the Code (40%).

Success

The EFL aim to have 54 Clubs (75%) sign up to the FLDC.



9

Fan Survey Target

Fans across the EFL to recognise the League’s ability to support the creation of inclusive environments.

2019 Fan Survey - The EFL helps promote inclusivity of the game?		
Strongly Agree	Slightly Agree	No Opinion
13%	31%	43%

Success

Over the lifespan of the strategy the EFL will improve the fan perception of our efforts to improve inclusivity.

10

EDI Fan Consultations

The EFL will undertake a series of EDI Fan Consultations working with partners to engage with fans to determine the best way to support development.

Current Position

The EFL currently do not have a regular dialogue with EDI fan groups with constructive engagement material.

Success

Over the lifespan of the strategy the EFL will undertake 100 hours of EDI fan consultations (20 hours per season).

11

Consultation Meetings

The EFL will undertake regular consultations with partner and stakeholder organisations to ensure key deliverables are undertaken and the journey can be shared.

Current Position

The EFL currently do not hold a regular dialogue with partners and EDI stakeholders.

Success

Over the lifespan of the strategy the EFL will undertake 400 hours of EDI consultations (80 hours per season).

12

Staff Engagement Target

The EFL establishes a Mental Health and Wellbeing culture, ensuring promotion of health and wellbeing of its employees.

2018 Staff Engagement Survey - “The EFL promotes the health and wellbeing of employees”			
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
28%	51%	20%	1%

Success

Over the lifespan of the strategy improve the staff engagement survey results.

13

Equality Impact Assessment

The EFL will undertake EIA against policies within the organisation to ensure Equality is embedded across EFL.

Current Position

Currently the EFL do not undertake EIA against any policy within the business.

Success

50% of all policies within the EFL would have undertaken an EIA over the lifespan of the strategy.

14

EDI Action Plans

To support the EFL’s EDI journey a series of action plans related to EDI topics will be established to better engage with communities and set clear outcomes to improve the overall environment.

Current Position

The EFL currently do not establish Action Plans for EDI topics.

Success

Over the lifespan of the strategy the EFL will establish 10 EDI Action Plans in partnership with EDI stakeholders.



15

Communication Engagement

The EFL will improve on fan awareness of EDI campaigns and workstreams to ensure visibility of voice and stance.

2019 Fan Survey – Fan awareness of EDI campaigns and workstreams				
Day of Action	LGBTQ+ Campaign	Discrimination Reporting	Code of Practice	Disability Campaign
63%	60%	47%	12%	5%

Success

Over the lifespan of the strategy ensure fans have greater awareness of the EDI campaigns across the EFL.

16

Diverse Fan Groups

The EFL, in partnership with key stakeholders, will increase support to Clubs and inspire individuals to establish diverse fan groups who are affiliated the FSA and have a live presence across EFL Clubs.

Affiliated and Live Presence Fan Groups		
Championship	League One	League Two
27	15	10

Success

The EFL to provide guidance to Clubs to ensure each EFL Club has a minimum of one Diverse Fan Group. 40 Championship / 25 League One / 24 League Two.

17

EDI E-Learning

The EFL will establish a series of EDI E-Learning courses designed to improve awareness and knowledge across the EFL, Member Clubs and Club Trusts.

Current Position

The EFL currently has one E-Learning module (Playing for Inclusion) which is available across the game.

Success

The EFL will establish a further nine EDI E-Learning courses to support the knowledge of the game.



18

Mental Health Training

The EFL recognise the importance of mental health awareness across its environment and therefore wish to ensure further training and guidance can be provided.

Current Position

The EFL have recently began to educate Clubs and staff within Mental Health First Aid.

Success

The EFL aim to educate 1,000 individuals across Mental Health topics using both face to face and E-Learning material.

19

Staff EDI Training

The EFL aims to further improve the knowledge of both staff and Club staff across the EFL.

Current Position

The EFL do not currently monitor EDI education provision across the EFL.

Success

Throughout the life span of the Strategy EFL staff collectively will undertake 1,500 hours of EDI training with staff within Clubs, collectively undertaking 5,000 hours.

20

Board Training

The EFL Board will undertake regular EDI education, ensuring they are aware of the demographics and the challenges in which they face.

Current Position

The EFL Board do not undertake regular EDI training with a calendar of training not yet established.

Success

Throughout the lifespan of the strategy EFL Board members will collectively undertake 200 hours of EDI training.





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