

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

England & Wales - Charity number 1177415

Details

Other names THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DISABLED SUPPORTERS

Status Registered

Legal form Charitable company

Company number [11109719](#)

Registered 2018-03-05

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

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Activities

Objects: 3.1 The objects of the Charity (Objects) are to promote the access and inclusion of disabled people who are socially excluded or impeded from attending sporting events on the grounds of their disability, by:3.1.1 providing, promoting or assisting in the provision of facilities for disabled people at sporting and other events;3.1.2 providing education and information to support and enable disabled people to maximise their attendance, and experience, at sporting events;3.1.3 raising public awareness of the social, attitudinal and environmental barriers which affect disabled people, both generally and in relation to attendance at sporting events; 3.1.4 engaging with, and conducting reviews/audits on behalf of, the operators of stadia and sports venues, to enable those operators to adapt such stadia and/or venues to better meet the needs of the disabled community; and3.1.5 providing workshops, forums, advocacy and general support.3.2 Nothing in these Articles shall authorise an application of the property of the Charity for purposes which are not charitable in accordance with any statutory provision regarding the meaning of the word "charitable" or the words "charitable purposes" in force in any part of the United Kingdom.

Activities: Level Playing Field operates in football, rugby and other sports, in order to: Be a voice for all disabled supporters and spectators? Campaign for equality? Enable disabled people to enjoy live sports? Enrich the lives of disabled people through sports? Raise disability and access awareness. through expert advice and training

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Sponsors Or Undertakes Research, Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** Disability
- **Who:** People With Disabilities

Geography

- Throughout England And Wales

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£425,077	£390,028	-	-
2023-12-31	£425,533	£325,752	-	-
2022-12-31	£425,926	£409,606	-	-
2021-12-31	£345,827	£336,877	-	-
2020-12-31	£335,190	£340,080	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Antony Julian Walker Taylor	Chair	2017-12-13
Derek John Goff		2024-12-17
James Elliot Beddard		2019-10-29
Joanna McNicol		2017-12-17
STEVE EVANS		2017-12-17

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

England & Wales - Charity number 1177415

Accounts

levelplayingfield.org.uk



Annual Report

2024

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President's foreword

David Bernstein CBE



Welcome to Level Playing Field's Annual Report for 2024.

I would like to start with a thanks to the members of staff at Level Playing Field. The charity's continued successes come as a result of their tireless efforts. The impact that our small team is able to have never ceases to impress me. Many disabled fans across England & Wales are seeing changes to their experiences when attending live sport and through that we are seeing the results of dedicated work from our staff. Some of these developments take a long time to come to fruition, but through persistence coupled by expertise they repeatedly achieve positive outcomes.

Important contributions are also made by our Trustees, so I would also like to recognise the impact they have had over the past year. Each of them offers unique insight on work of the charity, which it is abundantly clear they care very deeply about. When put alongside the staff team's endeavours, they help Level Playing Field to be an entity which effectively represents and delivers for disabled fans.

I am also grateful to vice president Lord Faulkner of Worcester and my other fellow honorary officers. Your input is always something which proves incredibly valuable.

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In 2024, we were deeply saddened by the passing of Lord Rosser of Ickenham. He will be remembered for his warmth, empathy, and unwavering integrity. My deepest condolences go to Richard's wife, Sheena, and the rest of the family. We will miss his expertise and advocacy, with which he played a vital role in much of the charity's work over the past decade and beyond. His contributions to the work of Level Playing Field will leave a lasting legacy and we will ensure that through our continued efforts over the coming years.

A huge part of our work to support disabled fans requires us to combat issues on a national level and we have seen that this year, particularly when looking at inaccessible ticketing. Our scope is sometimes even required to go wider, as was the case with our survey which looked at experiences across Europe. At the centre of the charity's activity however, representing individual supporters and finding solutions to directly improve their matchdays will always be a key focus.

To bring about meaningful change, our relationships with other organisations are of critical importance. Our track record as the leader on knowledge of access and inclusion for disabled spectators means governing bodies and major venues across a range of sports respect what Level Playing Field can offer. There are however many times when we are required to have difficult conversations and in these moments our credibility, as well as the strengthened ties we have developed, prove vital.

An area where I have been thrilled to see such proactive work with other organisations, has been through our 'Unite For Access' campaign. Since it rebranded in 2023, it has grown from strength to strength. We saw the strongest ever engagement from Premier League and EFL clubs, in 2024, while there was also a great deal of positive activity across the wider game. The campaign proves to be a catalyst for positive change and has become even more of a highlight in recent years.

In the next year, there will certainly be new challenges to meet, but Level Playing Field is well placed to address them, and I look forward to seeing what strides on furthering access and inclusion we make.

With best wishes,

David Bernstein CBE



Chair's report

Tony Taylor

I am pleased to welcome you to our Annual Report for the year ending 31st December 2024, on behalf of the Board of Trustees at Level Playing Field. Special thanks must go to President, David Bernstein CBE, who has shared his comments above, as well as our Vice President Lord Faulkner, for the support to the charity which they have provided over the course of this year.

We were deeply saddened by the passing of Lord Rosser, in 2024, and pass on our heartfelt condolences to his wife Sheena and the rest of the family, as well as his friends and colleagues.

Lord Rosser served as Vice President of Level Playing Field for more than a decade and played a vital role in promoting equality and inclusion for disabled sports fans.

His expertise repeatedly proved essential in advancing access and was of critical importance in a political context. A key example of this was through his contribution to the Baroness Casey Review of events surrounding the UEFA Euro 2020 Final at Wembley.

He also performed important ambassadorial duties, including presenting Arsenal with their Level Playing Field Centre of Excellence Award and opening the charity's first national forum.

I will personally miss his dedicated support, generosity and wisdom. The charity will now strive to continue his work to raise standards of access and inclusion.

Members of the staff team at Level Playing Field have all made tremendous contributions throughout 2024. Their relentless work to improve the experiences of disabled fans is something I am extremely thankful for. The knowledge and skill they each bring to the organisation is invaluable, but beyond that it is evident that the pride taken in their work allows them to achieve so much as a collective.

Beyond our immediate team, I am very grateful of the work done on a local level

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by disabled supporters' associations. They have a direct impact on improving experiences at their specific clubs, while also feeding into the overall picture and supporting the charity's central pursuits.

There were substantial challenges to address in 2024. The evolution of accessible ticketing trends is deeply concerning and Level Playing Field provided leadership in this area, by bringing disabled supporters' associations together to highlight issues with a unified voice. We have also offered a solution driven approach and have been involved directly with service providers to address their processes and policies. This is clearly an area which will require continued attention in the years to come.

Rises in ableist abuse have also been troubling over the past year, with this apparent through the results of Level Playing Field's Annual Fan Surveys and particularly prominent online across Euro 2024. It has been important to engage with other stakeholders on this matter, including Kick It Out and the Football Policing Unit, while we have also been able to address the subject publicly with significant media attention brought to these trends.

The 2024 Level Playing Field Annual Fan Survey saw us capture data from more respondents than ever before. The results have identified key areas for action, and I am grateful so many disabled fans shared their experiences with us. The survey results provide us with irrefutable evidence to push for change and the team at Level Playing Field will be doing that throughout the course of 2025. It was encouraging to see a drop in the proportion of fans telling us they are unable to attend some venues due to inaccessibility. The figures there remain unacceptable however and show how much work there is still to be done. Earlier in the year, we conducted a survey on the away day experiences of fans when travelling to Europe in club competitions. The need for urgent action on the standards of access and inclusion there were clear.

There were multiple examples of club staff facilitating a more accessible matchday for their clubs' away fans, but an overreliance on that spoke volumes to the wider picture of failings across so many areas.

The results of the survey proved anecdotal reports of substandard access. Level Playing Field therefore called on UEFA to display leadership and a commitment to inclusion, in order to bring about meaningful change, and will continue to push for that. This should be seen as an opportunity to work with clubs and venues to

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ensure they deliver for disabled supporters, allowing fans to travel with confidence.

Although initially delayed by the general election, developments have since been made on the Football Governance bill. We particularly welcomed the Rt Hon Lisa Nandy's assurances that putting fans 'at the heart of the game' was a priority. Level Playing Field raised that in order to ensure disabled fans are part of that, it is important to acknowledge existing failures to provide equitable matchday experiences across the sport and set out clear plans to rectify that.

The charity has continued to stress that engagement with supporters and experts must lead to the development of strategies and assigning of dedicated budgets. Without those steps being mandated, further engagement with disabled fans risks acting as little more than a gesture. Attention to this matter will continue to be a priority, as the bill progresses.

We were delighted to see the positive consequences of rebranding our campaign to 'Unite For Access' continue in its second year. More than 120 teams took part across all competitions, with our strongest ever participation coming across the Premier League and EFL. The level of awareness which came as a result has been so valuable in our efforts to improve the matchday experiences of disabled fans. The Trustees were also very pleased to have a more targeted focus with centralised messaging in 2024, with the education we were able to provide on non-visible disabilities gaining so much traction.

Beyond the engagement of the Premier League and EFL clubs individually, our collaboration with the two governing bodies directly this year has been very positive. A clear example of this was the approval a regulation requiring disabled away supporters with general admission tickets to be situated with their fellow away fans at stadia of all clubs across the EFL. This was a momentous boost to accessibility for wheelchair users, which addressed a key Level Playing Field Away Fan Survey finding.

We are also grateful to the Premier League, EFL and our other funders for the financial support they provide, alongside continued engagement on projects throughout the year. This is vital to the charity's operation.

I would like to close off by sharing my immense appreciation of the contributions from my fellow trustees. I particularly admire the dedication shown in their work,

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which benefits everyone at Level Playing Field, as well as the supporters we serve. They are each steadfast in their commitment to furthering access and inclusion and I know that being a part of the change on that front, is something which rewards every effort. We will all continue in this pursuit throughout 2025, with the continuous aim to push forward improvements to the experiences of disabled fans attending live sport.

Thank you all for your support.

With best wishes,

Tony Taylor



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About Level Playing Field

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Level Playing Field is a registered charity in England and Wales, which acts as a campaigning and advisory organisation to its membership and other parties across all sports. We have a team of dedicated staff with specialist knowledge, skills and experience around issues concerning access and inclusion.

Level Playing Field embraces 'the social model of disability' and promotes the removal of barriers that might prevent a disabled spectator from attending or enjoying a live sports event. We want to ensure that disabled people enjoy an equality of experience as they attend live sport. Level Playing Field is driven to address the current inequality of experience for disabled fans attending live sport. Whether it's lack of choice, availability of tickets or a second-rate experience we use a proactive and constructive approach to tackle these and other issues.



Our mission

Level Playing Field promotes a positive, inclusive experience for disabled sports fans



Our vision

A world in which all disabled fans can freely access and enjoy live sporting events.



Our aims

- Providing support and advocacy for disabled sports fans.
- Offering advice, access audits and training to sports clubs and governing bodies.
- Working with architects and design teams to ensure an inclusive and accessible physical environment at live sporting events.
- Building relationships and partnerships with sports clubs, DSAs, fans and sector organisations.
- Campaigning to keep the disability agenda top of mind for the government.

Level Playing Field delivers its work through four key pillars:

- 
- ▶ **For the Fans**
 - ▶ **For the Clubs**
 - ▶ **Knowledge Centre**
 - ▶ **Campaigns**

Putting it simply, Level Playing Field campaigns and works towards improving the matchday experience for disabled fans by driving an equal matchday experience.

Why we do what we do

It is estimated that 50% of disabled people don't take part in recreational or physical activity.

The barriers to why a disabled fan chooses not to attend live sport can be addressed through training, raising awareness, and updating facilities and services. Last year, Level Playing Field received hundreds of enquiries and complaints and we aim to address these common recurring issues.

Level Playing Field are guided by the following principles:

- ▶ Anti-discrimination – so that disabled people do not face discrimination arising from poor or misinformed practice.
- ▶ Equality of opportunity or making things fairer – for disabled people in every aspect of their contact with sports clubs and venues.
- ▶ Increasing the independence and choices that disabled people have.
- ▶ Individual requirements / diversity – recognising that a disabled person is an individual who, like all others, has his or her own requirements, abilities, human rights and responsibilities.
- ▶ Integration/inclusion – such that services are made accessible to disabled people and offer choice.
- ▶ Involvement in decision-making – so that disabled people, and/or their advocates, are consulted before decisions that affect them are made.
- ▶ The social model of disability, which explains that it is social and physical 'barriers' that cause 'disability', not impairments.

Level Playing Field is working to remove the barriers that currently exclude disabled people. These barriers can be prejudice and stereotypes, the way things are organised and run, along with little to no access to information, buildings and transport.



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Knowledge centre



European away days

While the focus of Level Playing Field's activity is dominated by furthering access and inclusion domestically, a significant number of the fans the charity serves and staff it works alongside had raised matters concerning their teams' matches in Europe. A survey was therefore conducted with the purpose to gain an understanding of the experiences of disabled supporters from clubs across England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland attending these matches, or the reasons why they have not been able to attend.

Unlike most Level Playing Field surveys, which seek to understand the experiences of disabled fans of all sports, at various levels, this survey was limited to supporters of football clubs who have participated in European club competitions within the last 5 years. The survey was live for one month, running from Thursday 18 April through to Sunday 19 May 2024. Responses were anonymous unless the respondent chose to give their name.

Some comparisons were made with our most recent Annual Fan Survey (2023) results data at the time of publication, which provided baseline data for the experiences of over 1600 disabled sports fans.

This survey was answered by 232 disabled football fans, who between them support a selection of teams that competed in UEFA club competitions over the five years following the start of 2019.



Key findings

Poor Accessibility

The average rating for the level of accessibility and inclusion at clubs/stadiums in European club competitions was 'poor'.

Only 20% of respondents gave a rating above 'adequate', whilst 53% selected options below 'adequate'.

This is significantly worse than the average rating of 'adequate' from the equivalent question in our most recent Annual Fan Survey (2023), relating to stadiums in England and Wales. By contrast, only 21% of those respondents gave a rating below 'adequate'.



Separated fans

Of the wheelchair users who told us that they had attended a European away match, 79% said that they had been required to sit with the home fans, as a visiting supporter.



UEFA shortcomings

When asked about UEFA's communication with disabled fans, 29% of respondents rated it as 'non-existent'.

Additionally, UEFA's commitment to providing an accessible and inclusive matchday experience for disabled fans was rated between 'poor' and 'very poor'.





Annual fan survey

Continuing rises in disability abuse and inaccessible public transport as barriers to attending live sport were revealed by the 2024 Level Playing Field Annual Fan Survey.

The results displayed the top ten overall barriers to disabled fans, with 'cost of attending' seeing the largest overall rise, while 'physical access at stadiums' and 'attitudes of others' remained the two most common respectively.

A record number of disabled supporters took part in the charity's fourth annual survey, with more than 2000 total responses for the first time ever.

New areas of focus were included, on arrival and departure times, ticketing and payment methods.

The proportion of respondents that reported there were any sports or sporting venues they felt unable to attend due to inaccessibility dropped for a successive year. While that movement is encouraging, it still displays more than a fifth of disabled fans feel unable to attend certain venues due to inaccessibility.

Data from across all 2055 responses has been displayed in an overall report, with specific breakdowns also sent to all relevant clubs and governing bodies. This enables them to see localised trends and highlights particular areas raised by disabled fans, regarding their services, facilities and communication.

Key findings

Arrival and Departure Times

71% of respondents confirmed that accessibility considerations had an impact on when they arrived at or left live sports events.

Of these supporters, two-thirds cited 'crowding concerns' as one of the reasons for that impact, with over half also citing 'queuing for long periods of time' as a reason.



Disability Abuse

Sadly, this year continued the year-on-year increase in the number of disabled fans who said that 'disability abuse is a barrier when attending live sport' - from 5.5% in 2021, to 6.5%, then 7%, and now 8.5% this year.

The 'attitudes of others' also remains the second-highest barrier to attending (26% of disabled fans).



Contactless Payments & Digital Tickets

For the first time, we asked respondents whether they would benefit from having the option to pay using cash inside stadiums and also if they would benefit from having a physical ticket, rather than a digital ticket.

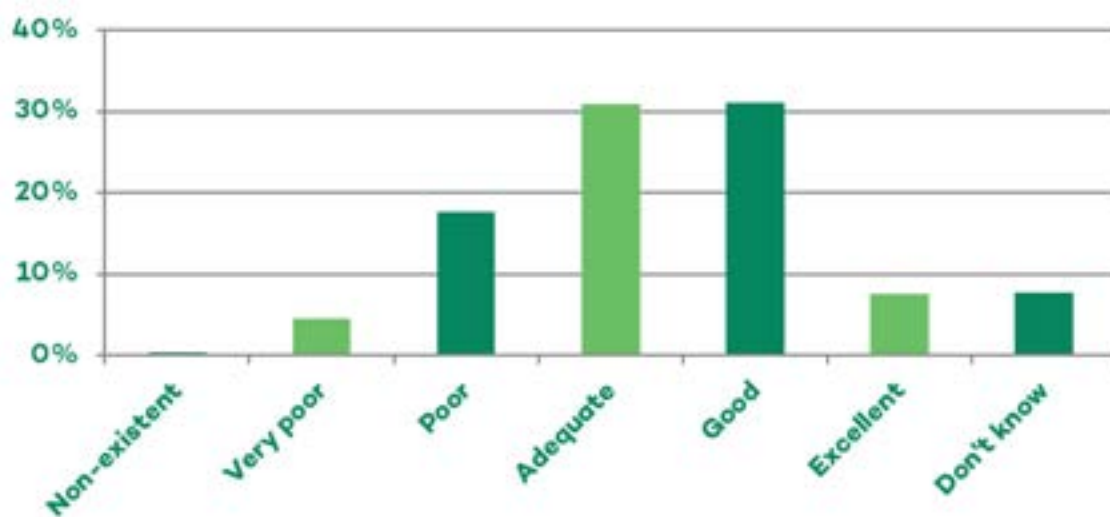


A fifth of respondents (20%) said that they would benefit from the option to pay using cash, while over a quarter of respondents (26.5%) said that they would benefit from having a physical ticket.

Club ratings - Nationwide

We asked respondents "Overall, how would you rate sports stadiums / clubs in England and Wales on access and inclusion?" The chart below shows the results.

Figure 10: Accessibility ratings for stadiums in England and Wales



- ▶ Non-existent – **0.5%** (Unchanged)
- ▶ Very poor – **4.5%** (Up 0.5pp)
- ▶ Poor – **17.5%** (Up 0.5pp)
- ▶ Adequate – **31%** (Down 3pp)
- ▶ Good – **31%** (Up 2pp)
- ▶ Excellent – **7.5%** (Down 0.5pp)
- ▶ Don't know – **8%** (Up 0.5pp)

Overall, fans gave an average rating of between 'Adequate' and 'Good', which is the same as the previous three years.

The results are comparable with previous years, and actually most similar to the results from 2021. The greatest increase is in respondents rating the access and inclusion as 'good', but unfortunately this is offset by an increase in the ratings of 'very poor' and 'poor' too, and a decrease in 'excellent' ratings. Overall there is no clear evidence that access and inclusion has improved in the four years that we have conducted our annual fan surveys.

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Campaigns

Unite For Access

The 2024 celebration of access and inclusion for disabled sport fans, saw the strongest ever engagement from Premier League and EFL clubs.

There was also positive activity across the women's game, non-league football and the Welsh leagues.

More than 120 teams took part in 'Unite For Access' and such a level of awareness is valuable in Level Playing Field's efforts to improve the matchday experiences of disabled fans, to ensure everyone can enjoy live sport.



New Disabled Supporters' Associations

Newly formed disabled supporters' associations had a significant impact in their first year of 'Unite For Access' campaign activity.

Disabled supporters' associations (DSAs) joined clubs and other fans across England and Wales in the celebration of access and inclusion for disabled sports fans.



Seagulls Disabled Supporters' Association, Coventry City Disabled Supporters' Association, Hull City Disabled Supporters' Association, Lincoln City Disabled Supporters' Association and All Access Albion were each involved in meaningful activations.

While not a new DSA, Manchester City Disabled Supporters' Association celebrated a recent relaunch during the campaign, having originally been founded in 1999.

'Unite For Access' also saw disabled fans at other clubs looked to progress plans to establish disabled supporters' associations of their own.



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Fan engagement



Forums

Level Playing Field completed its tour of regional forums at the Principality Stadium, as disabled sports fans joined a range of club staff and other stakeholders.

This followed events at the Etihad Stadium and Pride Park, after the previous year's return to in-person forums at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.

Access and inclusion were at the centre of all discussions, with fan engagement a key priority, in fitting settings to bring fans and accessibility professionals from the regions together, to network while sharing experiences and expertise.

These forums provided Level Playing Field staff with the opportunity to expand their understandings of the disabled fans they serve.

The charity was delighted to have an excellent set of hosts, and that continued as it embarked on the next tour of regional forums at the London Stadium.

A return of regional forums was vital in facilitating widespread, in-person discussions between stakeholders with vastly different insights and backgrounds.

These events have continued to be supplemented by online forums. Through this, Level Playing Field has given platforms to guest speakers, increased the frequency of communal input in such a setting and brought together other parties, without the limitations of geographic constraints.

New disabled fan groups

2024 was another important year for the emergence of new disabled supporters' associations (DSAs).

Level Playing Field's Fans Liaison Officer, Liam Bird, has been pleased to regularly assist supporters with initial meetings and the process of establishing their groups.

Seagulls Disabled Supporters' Association (Brighton Hove Albion), Chelsea Disabled Supporters' Association, Coventry City Disabled Supporters' Association and Hull City Disabled Supporters' Association have each had promising starts. Other groups have also come together as less formalised entities.

The development of new disabled supporters' associations continues to show how effective many existing DSAs, across England and Wales, have been. The charity is always keen to support their efforts at a local level and advocates for them to be at the forefront of fan consultation.



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Club resource

Training & Engagement

Completing the first tour of regional forums since the pandemic was invaluable in bringing industry professionals together with disabled fans, to share different perspectives. Through this, we have also been able to inform staff on key topics and facilitate networking between peers.

Our individualised approach to assisting clubs and providers on specific enquiries is deeply beneficial, but is partnered by insights from survey data, which shows where they sit in relation to the context of sport as a whole.

Accessibility staff are also brought together remotely through online drop-in sessions. These have given the charity an opportunity to invite experts from elsewhere in the worlds of accessibility and sport to share their knowledge.

A key development this year came in the form of our collaboration with the EFL on a disability access officer certificate course. Taking the first group through this training has had an impact on their abilities to deliver access at their respective clubs.

Level Playing Field will look to build on the success of the newly introduced qualification, and seize the opportunity to upskill more staff across clubs and venues.



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Lobbying

Inaccessible ticketing trends

Disabled supporters' associations (DSAs) from across England and Wales, joined Level Playing Field, to raise concerns on ticketing trends, which are causing increases in the inaccessibility of some sporting events for disabled fans.

A letter detailing emerging issues and calls to action, was sent to clubs, venues and governing bodies. It called for access requirements of disabled supporters to be a priority, when considering the implementation of digital ticketing and ticketing procedures as a whole.

Digital ticketing's rise – particularly since the pandemic – has resulted in new barriers to attending live sport for many disabled supporters. There are potential benefits of digital ticketing systems, but it is deeply troubling to see instances where changes have had a negative the impact on accessibility, as disabled fans have largely been overlooked or ignored.

Level Playing Field and disabled supporters' associations called for the following steps to be taken.

- Review of Digital Ticketing Policies
- No Fees for Physical Tickets for Disabled Supporters
- Investment in Digital Upskilling
- Eradication of Premium Phone Lines
- Review of Ticket Office Operations
- Improvements to Online Ticketing Systems
- An End to Early Online Ticket Sales

Level Playing Field has since held positive discussions with governing bodies and individual service providers, to address points outlined in the letter.

Signatories

Access Albion – West Bromwich Albion
AFC Bournemouth DSA
Barrow DSA
Bolton Wanderers DSA
Bristol Rovers DSA
Chelsea DSA
Coventry City DSA
Crystal Palace DSA
Derby County Disabled Club
Everton DSA
Fulham DSA
Huddersfield Town DSA
Hull City DSA
Leeds United Disabled Organisation
Lincoln City DSA
Manchester City DSA
Newcastle United DSA
Oldham Athletic Disabled Inclusion and Diversity
Pompey DSA – Portsmouth
Plymouth DSA
QPR DSA
Rotherham United DSA
Saints DSA – Southampton
Seagulls DSA – Brighton & Hove Albion
Sheffield United Disabled and Carers Association
Spurs Ability – Tottenham Hotspurs
Watford Enables
West Ham United DSA
Wolves DSA
Wycombe Wanderers DSA

Football Governance White Paper

The introduction of the Football Governance Bill in the House of Lords towards the end of 2024 was an encouraging development.

Since it was initially brought forward in March, additional focus was placed on effective fan engagement and commitments to improve equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI).

At that time, Chair of Level Playing Field, Tony Taylor, spoke out on access and inclusion for disabled fans being disregarded as a peripheral point.

Level Playing Field has fed into the process leading up to the Football Governance Bill being introduced in Parliament, at each stage. This included raising concerns when it was first introduced.

The charity remains convinced that as measures to improve the experiences of disabled fans are directly related to allocation of club finances and has made it clear that these areas cannot be treated in isolation when put into practice, if football is to be reflective of the wider community.

The Rt Hon Lisa Nandy's made assurances that putting fans 'at the heart of the game' is the priority. In order to ensure disabled fans are part of that, it is important to acknowledge existing failures to provide equitable matchday experiences across the sport and set out clear plans to rectify that.

Level Playing Field has been in communication with Government officials and will also engage with the shadow regulator, as progression on the creation of an independent regulator continues.

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A year in review

A year in review

Level Playing Field has been able to take a look back on a year which saw a great deal of success, while also presenting a number of threats to improving access and inclusion for disabled fans across England and Wales.

The year was unparalleled in the amount of engagement for both the 2024 Level Playing Field Annual Fan Survey and the 'Unite For Access' campaign.

For individual supporters and other stakeholders, there were also many more isolated scenarios where the charity's involvement was required.

You are invited to take a look through some of the key events from the past year, in the timeline below.



January

Accessible stadia consultation opened

February

Midlands forum held in Derby

March

Unite For Access

April

North forum at the Etihad

May

Inaugural DAO certificate course concludes

June

EFL regulation change on away fans

July

Forum tour concludes in Wales

August

Record response to annual fan survey

September

IFO introduced to disabled fans

October

European away day survey results released

November

Forum tour restarts at London Stadium

December

Accessible Stadia consultation - final stage

Staff



Owain Davies

Chief Executive



Ruth Hopkins

General Manager & Head of Access and Development - NRAC Auditor



Nicky Baker

Access and Development Officer - NRAC Auditor



Daniel Townley

Development Officer



Liam Bird

Fans Liaison Officer

Staff



David Moffat

Access Auditor



Joseph Crabtree

Media and Communications Officer



Mark Phillips

Fan Engagement & Enquiry Officer



Trustees



Tony Taylor

Chair



Steve Evans

Secretary



Jo McNicol

Trustee



Jamie Beddard

Trustee



A word from the Chief Executive

Owain Davies

This annual report should hopefully have provided you with a glimpse at Level Playing Field's contributions towards furthering access and inclusion for disabled sports fans, through the efforts of our staff, the industry professionals they work alongside and disabled supporters themselves. We are grateful for the time you have taken to learn about the charity's work over the course of 2024.

Significant challenges have continued to need addressing and this has included evolving threats to accessibility, such as the impact of a shift towards online and digital ticketing. Combining input from across different disabled supporters' associations (DSAs) and wider fanbases, with the expertise of our staff, was instrumental in raising growing concerns. It was promising to see governing bodies, clubs and venues were receptive to our points, but it is evident this area will require further attention in the years to come.

Given the value disabled supporters' associations have shown in enabling us to elevate collective fan advocacy, it has been particularly pleasing to see the emergence of new DSAs. This has not only benefited representation at a local level, for each individual instance, but also contributes to national initiatives and serves as inspiration to disabled fans considering similar endeavours at their own clubs.

The growth in our training has been another highlight of the past year. Key to this has been the completion of a first DAO certificate course in partnership with the EFL. Through the course, we are upskilling staff who can lead on access at their own clubs, develop best practice and improve overall standards. The impact of this course will only be added to in the years to come, as more club staff earn their qualifications.

Education has been openly available to all club staff through our regular online

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drop-in calls, which have also provided a platform for a number of guest speakers. We have also been pleased to bring industry professionals together with disabled supporters, as we completed our first full tour of regional forms since the pandemic, following an initial return in 2023.

Online forums gave us further opportunities to bring disabled supporter together, as we discussed a range of topics on a national level. This is greatly beneficial in ensuring we remain fully aware of changes to supporter experiences, away from individual instances, and is supplement further by the data driven approach of our surveys. The 2024 Level Playing Field Annual Fan Survey received our highest-ever number of total responses, while we also took the decision to focus on away fan experiences in football's European club competitions. Results from both surveys revealed important findings, which we were able to bring attention to with significant media coverage. More work was also done on bespoke reports, to present findings to increase understanding from other stakeholders.

A rebrand of our flagship campaign to 'Unite For Access' has continued to bear fruit. Across Premier League and EFL clubs, 2024 had our strongest ever engagement. I know that while facilitating a fortnight with such profile takes a tremendous amount of time and effort, that the opportunity to get out to grounds and see such positive activations during that period is something which energises all of our staff.

My fellow staff put in so much effort across the entirety of 2024 and that is something I am incredibly thankful for. So many of the strides we make as an organisation can be traced back to the dedication in that team. I know we are all eager to see what we can achieve together in the next year.

With best wishes.

Owain Davies



Level Playing Field

For disabled sports fans

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 @lpftweets

 @levelplayingfielduk

 /lpftweets

Company Number: 11109719
Charity Number: 1177415

**Level
Playing
Field**

For disabled sports fans

**Directors' Report and
Unaudited Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31st December 2024**

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CHARITY REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

CHARITY NUMBER: 1177415

COMPANY NUMBER: 11109719

TRUSTEES/DIRECTORS: A Taylor (Chair)
S Evans
J McNicol
J Beddard
D Goff (appointed 17th December 2024)

COMPANY SECRETARY: S Evans

REGISTERED OFFICE: Greville House
10 Jury Street
Warwick
Warwickshire
CV34 4EW

PRINCIPAL ADDRESS: The Junction
Station Road
Watford
WD17 1ET

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER: Mark Harwood FCA BFP FMAAT
Michael Harwood & Co
Greville House
10 Jury Street
Warwick
Warwickshire
CV34 4EW

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st December 2024. The Trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Level Playing Field, a charitable company limited by guarantee (Company no. 11109719 and Charity no. 1177415), was incorporated on the 13th December 2017 and is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association. The directors of the charitable company (who are its trustees for the purposes of charity law) have no interest in the company's assets or surplus and receive no remuneration.

The Directors/Trustees meet at least once a quarter and are actively involved in the strategic direction of the charity. Level Playing Field is an inclusive employer and actively promotes the positive impact of having a diverse workforce and trustee board. Level Playing Field has signed up to the Disability Confident Scheme. This commitment allows Level Playing Field to accurately and responsibly represent the community it serves. Trustees are recruited and appointed in line with best practice using both internal and external sources.

A business continuation policy is in place and the Trustees constantly review potential risks, producing plans incorporating financial, operational and strategic options to react to changing circumstances should they occur based on detailed risk assessment.

The Charity works on a collaborative basis with charities and organisations across England and Wales to assist in delivering our Charitable objectives and shared outcomes.

OBJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

Level Playing Field adopts and promotes the social model of disability, in which disability is viewed as a social issue and that an individual only becomes disabled as a result of the social, attitudinal and environmental barriers that the individual faces.

The Charity is focused on removing these barriers in all sports. Level Playing Field (and its membership) is committed to achieving an environment where:

- all fans can enjoy an equal experience at live sports events
- all stadia and sports venues are fully accessible and inclusive
- all customer and/or fan services are equal and inclusive
- disabled people are seen as customers with a commercial value

The Charity is guided by the following principles:

- anti-discrimination – so that disabled people do not face discrimination arising from poor or misinformed practice
- equality of opportunity and fairness – for disabled people in every aspect of their contact with sports clubs and venues
- increasing the independence and choices offered to disabled people
- individual requirements – recognising that a disabled person is an individual who, in a diverse society, has his or her own requirements, abilities, human rights and responsibilities
- integration/inclusion – such that services are made accessible to disabled people and offer a choice
- involvement in decision-making – so that disabled people, and/or their advocates, are consulted before decisions which affect them are made
- acknowledgement of the social model of disability which explains that it is social and physical barriers that cause 'disability' not impairments.

The Directors/Trustees have had due regard to the guidance published by The Charity Commission on public benefit in managing the activities of the Charity.

The main activities of the Charity during the year were as follows:

Knowledge Centre

European Away Days

While Level Playing Field's core focus remains domestic access and inclusion, many disabled fans and partner organisations raised concerns about attending European away fixtures. To explore these issues, a survey was conducted between 18 April and 19 May 2024 with 232 disabled football fans whose clubs had competed in European competitions since 2019.

Key Findings:

- **Poor Accessibility:** Over half (53%) rated accessibility at European stadiums below 'adequate' – significantly worse than domestic venues, where only 21% did so.
- **Separated Fans:** 79% of wheelchair users reported being forced to sit with home supporters when attending away games.
- **UEFA Shortcomings:** 29% said UEFA communication with disabled fans was "non-existent", while overall commitment to accessibility was rated between 'poor' and 'very poor'.

Annual Fan Survey 2024

Level Playing Field's fourth Annual Fan Survey drew a record 2,055 responses, providing the most comprehensive picture yet of disabled fans' experience attending live sport. The survey highlighted rising barriers such as inaccessible transport, rising costs, and continued disability abuse, while also exploring new areas including ticketing and payment methods. Findings were shared with clubs and governing bodies to support targeted improvements.

Key Findings:

- **Arrival & Departure Times:** 71% said accessibility affected when they arrive or leave venues. Of these supporters, two-thirds cited 'crowding concerns' as one of the reasons for that impact, with over half also citing 'queuing for long periods of time' as a reason.
- **Disability Abuse:** The number of fans citing abuse as a barrier rose for the fourth year running – from 5.5% (2021) to 8.5% (2024). 'Attitudes of others' remains the second-highest barrier (26%).
- **Ticketing & Payments:** 20% said they would benefit from the option to pay with cash, and 26.5% would prefer physical tickets over digital-only options.

Campaigns

Unite For Access

Over 120 teams across the Premier League, the EFL, women's football, non-league, and the Welsh leagues took part in the Unite For Access campaign, raising vital awareness of disabled fans' matchday experiences.

New Disabled Supporters' Associations also played an important role, with groups such as Seagulls DSA, Coventry City DSA, Hull City DSA, Lincoln City DSA, and All Access Albion leading meaningful activities in their first year.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS' REPORT

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the company for the year ended 31st December 2024 which are set out on pages 7 to 16.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your company's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Mark Harwood FCA BFP FMAAT
Michael Harwood & Co
Chartered Accountants
Greville House
10 Jury Street
Warwick
CV34 4EW

Date: 24th September 2025

Football Governance White Paper

The introduction of the Football Governance Bill in late 2024 was a positive step, with increased emphasis on fan engagement and EDI. Level Playing Field consistently fed into the process, stressing that access and inclusion must be central, not peripheral, to reform.

Level Playing Field have raised concerns at the Bill's launch, underlining that disabled fans' experiences are tied to club finances and should be integral to governance changes. Engagement with government officials and the shadow regulator continues as plans for an independent regulator progress.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The financial position of the charity at 31st December 2024, as more fully detailed in the accounts, can be summarised as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Net income/(expenditure)	35,049	99,781
Unrestricted Revenue Funds available for the general purposes of the charity	275,447	250,502
Restricted Revenue Funds	51,577	41,473
Total Funds	327,024	291,975

RESERVES POLICY

The reserves policy is to maintain a level of unrestricted reserves which covers 6-12 months of operating costs.

The report of the directors has been prepared having taken advantage of the small companies' exemption in the Companies Act 2006.

On behalf of the board



A Taylor
Chair

Date: 22/09/2025

The campaign was one of Level Playing Field's most successful to date, reaching new audiences, empowering fan groups, and strengthening the movement for inclusive live sport.

Fan Engagement

Forums

Level Playing Field completed its regional forum tour with events at the Principality Stadium, Etihad Stadium, Pride Park, and London Stadium. These in-person forums brought together disabled fans, club staff, and accessibility professionals to share experiences, build networks, and strengthen understanding of access and inclusion. Online forums continued to complement this work, enabling wider participation, guest speakers, and regular input.

New Disabled Fan Groups

2024 saw the growth of new Disabled Supporters' Associations (DSAs), including those at Brighton & Hove Albion, Chelsea, Coventry City, and Hull City. Several other groups are also in the early stages of establishment. These developments highlight the impact of existing DSAs across England and Wales and reinforce Level Playing Field's commitment to supporting and championing fan-led groups at the heart of consultation.

Club Resources

Training & Engagement

Regional forums since the pandemic have proven invaluable in connecting industry professionals with disabled fans, sharing perspectives, and informing staff on key access topics. Alongside tailored club support, survey insights help contextualise progress across sport.

Disability Access Officers were also engaged through online drop-in sessions featuring guest experts, expanding knowledge and peer learning.

A major development was the launch of the EFL Disability Access Officer Certificate Course. The first cohort has already strengthened access delivery at their clubs, and Level Playing Field aims to build on this success by upskilling more staff across clubs and venues.

Lobbying

Inaccessible Ticket Trends

Level Playing Field, alongside DSAs across England and Wales, raised concerns about the growing inaccessibility of ticketing systems for disabled fans. A joint letter to clubs, venues, and governing bodies highlighted issues with digital ticketing and set out key calls to action, including:

- Review of digital ticketing policies
- No fees for physical tickets for disabled fans
- Investment in digital upskilling
- Ending premium phone lines
- Improved online ticketing systems and office operations
- Ending early online-only sales

Constructive discussions with governing bodies and providers are now underway to address these concerns.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(Incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account)
For the year ended 31st December 2024

	Note	2024 Unrestricted £	2024 Restricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Unrestricted £	2023 Restricted £	2023 Total £
Income from:							
Donations & grants	2	855	-	855	29,119	-	29,119
Charitable activities	3	46,405	377,816	424,221	48,447	347,967	396,414
Investments		1	-	1	-	-	-
Total income		47,261	377,816	425,077	77,566	347,967	425,533
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds		216	-	216	216	-	216
Charitable activities	4	20,358	350,610	370,968	18,125	296,358	314,483
Other	5	1,742	17,102	18,844	917	10,136	11,053
Total expenditure		22,316	367,712	390,028	19,258	306,494	325,752
Net income/(expenditure) for the year		24,945	10,104	35,049	58,308	41,473	99,781
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds for the year		24,945	10,104	35,049	58,308	41,473	99,781
Fund balances brought forward		250,502	41,473	291,975	192,194	-	192,194
Fund balances at 31st December 2024	13/15	275,447	51,577	327,024	250,502	41,473	291,975

The notes on pages 9 to 16 form an integral part of the accounts.

BALANCE SHEET
As at 31st December 2024
(Company no. 11109719)

	Note	2024		2023	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	8		1,259		3,854
Investments	9		1		1
			<u>1,260</u>		<u>3,855</u>
Current assets					
Debtors	10	237,844		206,470	
Cash at bank and in hand		137,277		131,273	
Total current assets		<u>375,121</u>		<u>337,743</u>	
Current liabilities					
Creditors	11	(49,357)		(49,623)	
Net current assets			<u>325,764</u>		<u>288,120</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>327,024</u>		<u>291,975</u>
Funds of the Charity:					
Restricted funds			51,577		41,473
Unrestricted funds			275,447		250,502
Total charity funds	13/15		<u>327,024</u>		<u>291,975</u>

Directors' statements:

- The company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies;
- No members have required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006;
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 22/09/2025.....

On behalf of the Trustees



A Taylor
Chair

The notes on pages 9 to 16 form an integral part of the accounts.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS For the year ended 31st December 2024

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) **Basis of Accounting**

Level Playing Field is a company limited by guarantee in England & Wales. In the event of the charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity. The address of the registered office is given in the charity information on page 1 and the nature of the charity's operations and principal activities are given in the Annual Report.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis under the historical cost convention, modified to include certain items at fair value. The financial statements are presented in sterling which is the functional currency of the charity and rounded to the nearest £1.

The significant accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years presented unless otherwise stated.

(b) **Income**

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is legally entitled to the income after any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

For donations to be recognised the charity will have been notified of the amounts and the settlement date in writing. If there are conditions attached to the donation and this requires a level of performance before entitlement can be obtained then income is deferred until those conditions are fully met or the fulfilment of those conditions is within the control of the charity and it is probable that they will be fulfilled.

Investment income is earned through holding assets for investment purposes such as cash and is comprised of bank interest.

(c) **Government Grants**

Government grants are recognised at the fair value of the asset received or receivable when there is reasonable assurance that the grant conditions will be met and the grants will be received.

A grant that specifies performance conditions is recognised in income when the performance conditions are met. Where a grant does not specify performance conditions it is recognised in income when the proceeds are received or receivable. A grant received before the recognition criteria are satisfied is recognised as a liability.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued) For the year ended 31st December 2024

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

(d) **Expenditure**

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Expenditure is recognised where there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that the settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. It is categorised under the following headings:

- Costs of raising funds includes the monthly charges of donation collection organisations.
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into the categories above and includes governance costs.

(e) **Fixed Assets**

Items of equipment costing over £200 are capitalised and are stated at cost (or deemed cost) or valuation less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Cost includes costs directly attributable to making the asset capable of operating as intended.

Depreciation is provided on tangible fixed assets, at rates calculated to write off the cost, less estimated residual value, of each asset on a systematic basis over its expected useful life as follows:

- Computer Equipment 3 years straight line

(f) **Investments**

Investments in subsidiaries are measured at cost less impairment.

(g) **Debtors and creditors receivable / payable within one year**

Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in expenditure.

(h) **Funds**

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds subject to specific restricted conditions imposed by donors. The purposes and use of restricted funds are set out in note 15 to the financial statements.

(i) **Taxation**

The charity is an exempt charity within the meaning of schedule 3 of the Charities Act 2011 and is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued) For the year ended 31st December 2024

2. DONATIONS AND GRANTS

	2024 Unrestricted £	2024 Restricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Unrestricted £	2023 Restricted £	2023 Total £
JustGiving	806	-	806	1,162	-	1,162
LPF Consultancy Ltd	-	-	-	27,957	-	27,957
Miscellaneous donations	49	-	49	-	-	-
Total donations and grants	855	-	855	29,119	-	29,119

3. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2024 Unrestricted £	2024 Restricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Unrestricted £	2023 Restricted £	2023 Total £
Membership Income	110	-	110	112	38	150
Performance-Related Grants:						
- Premier League Fans Fund	-	377,816	377,816	-	347,929	347,929
- The Football League	46,000	-	46,000	46,000	-	46,000
Expenses recharged	295	-	295	2,265	-	2,265
Miscellaneous Income	-	-	-	70	-	70
Total income from charitable activities	46,405	377,816	424,221	48,447	347,967	396,414

4. EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2024 Unrestricted £	2024 Restricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Unrestricted £	2023 Restricted £	2023 Total £
Direct spending						
Expenses recharged	295	-	295	1,501	-	1,501
Unite for Access & Campaigning	2,093	39,766	41,859	1,121	21,296	22,417
Regional DSA Forums	99	1,886	1,985	-	-	-
Event costs	1,848	423	2,271	-	-	-
Other campaign costs	-	-	-	22	417	439
Total direct spending	4,335	42,075	46,410	2,644	21,713	24,357
Support costs						
Staff costs (see Note 6)	12,256	252,845	265,101	11,807	214,107	225,914
Travel and subsistence	2,244	26,745	28,989	1,427	20,011	21,438
Telephone costs	79	1,513	1,592	50	1,006	1,056
Carried forward	14,579	281,103	295,682	13,284	235,124	248,408

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued) For the year ended 31st December 2024

4. EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES (continued)

	2024 Unrestricted £	2024 Restricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Unrestricted £	2023 Restricted £	2023 Total £
Support costs (continued)						
Brought forward	14,579	281,103	295,682	13,284	235,124	248,408
Premises	357	6,796	7,153	1,034	19,646	20,680
Publicity	169	3,223	3,392	77	1,452	1,529
Administration & office supplies	514	9,435	9,949	554	10,537	11,091
Professional fees & insurance	105	2,297	2,402	238	2,295	2,533
Website & email hosting	189	3,598	3,787	265	5,043	5,308
Training	49	931	980	24	450	474
Postage	61	1,152	1,213	5	98	103
Total support costs	16,023	308,535	324,558	15,481	274,645	290,126
Total expenditure on charitable activities	20,358	350,610	370,968	18,125	296,358	314,483

5. OTHER COSTS

	2024 Unrestricted £	2024 Restricted £	2024 Total £	2023 Unrestricted £	2023 Restricted £	2023 Total £
Bank charges	49	35	84	102	-	102
Governance travel costs	742	609	1,351	87	1,675	1,762
Staff entertainment	24	467	491	-	-	-
Other legal and professional	782	13,236	14,018	585	5,746	6,331
Depreciation	130	2,465	2,595	134	2,538	2,672
Sundry expenses	15	290	305	4	82	86
Donations	-	-	-	5	95	100
Total other costs	1,742	17,102	18,844	917	10,136	11,053

Independent examiner's remuneration

Included in the above figures are independent examination fees of £3,300 (2023 - £3,060) and other financial services of £702 (2023 - £648).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued) For the year ended 31st December 2024

6. STAFF COSTS

	2024 £	2023 £
Gross wages	237,477	202,194
Social security costs	21,911	18,584
Pension costs	5,355	4,440
Other costs	358	696
Total salaries, wages and related costs	265,101	225,914
Average number of employees	8	7
Cross-charged to LPF Consultancy Limited	<u>(2)</u>	<u>(2)</u>
	6	5

The number of employees who received total employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) of more than £60,000 is as follows:

£70,001 - £80,000	1	1
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7. TRUSTEE REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

No Trustee or connected person received any remuneration or expenses either directly or indirectly.

8. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Computer Equipment £	Total £
COST		
At 1 st January 2024	11,623	11,623
Additions	-	-
Disposals	-	-
At 31 st December 2024	<u>11,623</u>	<u>11,623</u>
DEPRECIATION		
At 1 st January 2024	7,769	7,769
Charge for the year	2,595	2,595
Eliminated on disposal	-	-
At 31 st December 2024	<u>10,364</u>	<u>10,364</u>
NET BOOK VALUE		
At 31 st December 2024	<u><u>1,259</u></u>	<u><u>1,259</u></u>
At 31 st December 2023	<u><u>3,854</u></u>	<u><u>3,854</u></u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued) For the year ended 31st December 2024

9. INVESTMENTS

	Shares in group undertakings £
COST	
At 1 st January 2024	1
Additions	-
At 31 st December 2024	<u>1</u>

The company's investments are as follows:

LPF Consultancy Limited

Company number:	14396922
Country of incorporation:	England
Nature of business:	Performing access audits on sporting stadia
Ordinary shares of £1 each	100% held

	2024 £	2023 £
Gross income	111,853	185,130
Total expenditure	136,916	185,130
Profit/(loss)	(25,063)	-
Balance Sheet total	(25,062)	1

LPF Consultancy Limited was incorporated on 4th October 2022 and commenced trading in 2023, taking over the audit and training income from Level Playing Field. Any profits made during the financial period is donated to Level Playing Field.

10. DEBTORS

	2024 £	2023 £
Prepayments	37,942	36,320
Accrued income	295	-
Other debtors	1,500	6,147
Amount owed by subsidiaries	198,107	164,003
	<u>237,844</u>	<u>206,470</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued) For the year ended 31st December 2024

11. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	906	1,697
Accruals	3,281	3,286
Social security & other taxes	10,685	10,155
Deferred income (see Note 12)	34,485	34,485
	49,357	49,623

12. DEFERRED INCOME

	2024 £	2023 £
Balance brought forward	34,485	30,215
Amounts released to income	(34,485)	(30,215)
Additions during the year	34,485	34,485
	34,485	34,485

Deferred income comprises of performance-related grants covering the year ended 31st December 2025 (£34,485).

13. MOVEMENT ON FUNDS

	Balance at 01.01.2024 £	Income in year £	Expenditure in year £	Transfers £	Balance at 31.12.2024 £
Unrestricted & designated funds					
Unrestricted revenue funds	250,502	47,261	(22,316)	-	275,447
Total unrestricted funds	250,502	47,261	(22,316)	-	275,447
Restricted funds					
Fans' Fund	41,473	377,816	(367,712)	-	51,577
Total restricted funds	41,473	377,816	(367,712)	-	51,577
Total charity funds	291,975	425,077	(390,028)	-	327,024

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued) For the year ended 31st December 2024

14. RESTRICTED FUNDS

The purposes for which the restricted funds are held by the charity are:

- Fans' Fund Grant funding from the Premier League Fans' Fund to be used for the following outcomes:
- Outcome 1 - To Improve engagement between fans and fan groups and the key operational staff who deliver supporter liaison, disability access and any related facilities and services.
 - Outcome 2 - To make fans voice more representative, through the promotion and development of effective membership organisation.
 - Outcome 3 - To improve the matchday and non-matchday experience for all fans by making football more diverse and inclusive.
 - Outcome 4 - To fund use of not-for-profit skilled or professional services that create and support innovative fan engagement projects.
 - Outcome 5 - To improve the away fan experience.

15. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Fixed Assets £	Current Assets £	Current Liabilities £	Total £
At 31st December 2024				
Restricted funds	1,196	93,007	(42,626)	51,577
Unrestricted funds	64	282,114	(6,731)	275,447
	1,260	375,121	(49,357)	327,024
At 31st December 2023				
Restricted funds	3,661	80,530	(42,718)	41,473
Unrestricted funds	194	257,213	(6,905)	250,502
	3,855	337,743	(49,623)	291,975

16. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

During the year the company made no transactions with related parties.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

England & Wales - Charity number 1177415

Accounts



Annual Report

2023

levelplayingfield.org.uk

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President's foreword

David Bernstein CBE

Welcome to the 2023 Level Playing Field Annual Report.

First of all, my thanks go to the Level Playing Field members of staff. Their efforts throughout this year have brought about many successes for the charity.

Our team is small in number, but continuously makes a dramatic impact on driving standards forward. Their commitment and expertise have resulted in significant improvements to the experiences of many disabled sports fans across England & Wales.

I would also like to recognise the contributions of our Trustees. They each care so deeply about the charity's work, with the advice and consideration they offer proving invaluable. Those contributions, combined with the staff team's pursuits, make Level Playing Field a formidable force for change.

To vice president Lord Faulkner of Worcester and my other fellow honorary officers, particularly, I remain grateful for your vital input. Since the turn of the year, we have been saddened by the passing of Lord Rosser of Ickenham, and our thoughts have been with his wife, Sheena, and the rest of the family. He made a tremendous contribution to the standing of Level Playing Field and we will reflect on that further in our next annual report.

A significant change in our approach this year, came in the form of our 'Unite For Access' campaign, which was rebranded from its previous name of 'Weeks of Action'. This helped strengthen the connection to access and inclusion as the focus of our annual period of celebration. Record breaking levels of participation, mean the campaign outperformed all previous years and realised the potential of the rebrand to its fullest, in helping our team raise awareness and drive equality, to bring about more inclusive experiences for disabled sports fans. I look forward to seeing the campaign evolve in the coming years and am excited to see what strides we can make through it.



Relationships with other organisations have been a key area of development throughout the course of the year. Governing bodies and major venues across a range of sports acknowledge the value which Level Playing Field can offer, when addressing access and inclusion for disabled spectators and that is testament to our track record as the leader in this field. We have also strengthened our ties with a number of other charities, with knowledge sharing to strengthen knowledge bases across the board.

2023 has also raised challenges and our team have worked tirelessly to support disabled fans. This encompassed combatting issues on a national level, but crucially involves representing individual supporters to help bring about direct improvements to their matchdays. The coming year will undoubtedly raise new challenges, but I am confident that we are equipped to continue deal with them.

I look forward to another year Level Playing Field making a meaningful impact on the experiences of disabled sports fans, by leading on access and inclusion.

With best wishes,

David Bernstein CBE

Chair's report

Tony Taylor



On behalf of the Board of Trustees at Level Playing Field, I am delighted to welcome you to our Annual Report for the year ending 31st December 2023. We would particularly like to send our thanks to President, David Bernstein CBE, who has shared his comments above, as well as our Vice Presidents Lord Faulkner of Worcester and Lord Rosser of Ickenham, for all the support they have offered to the charity throughout the course of this year. Very sadly, Lord Rosser passed away in 2024 after a courageous battle against illness and we send our deepest condolences to his wife Sheena, his friends and colleagues. His wise counsel and dedication to the work of Level Playing Field will be missed. There will, of course, be a more detailed obituary to Lord Rosser in our report for the year ending 31 December 2024.

This year was an important milestone for one member of the team, with our General Manager & Head of Access & Development, Ruth Hopkins, celebrating a decade at Level Playing Field. Ruth has made an immense contribution to the work of the charity and for disabled supporters across England and Wales. Her technical expertise has been instrumental in building the organisation into the leader in our area of operation. The loyalty she has shown to the charity, its principles and objectives, as well as to me and my fellow trustees, is something that I greatly value. I am proud to call her a colleague and friend and look forward to many more years working together with Ruth.

The staff team Level Playing Field also saw new introductions this year. Joseph Crabtree joined as Media & Communications Officer in the spring and then later in the year, Mark Phillips was appointed in the newly formed Fan Engagement & Enquiry Officer role. These appointments have brought new ideas and additional expertise to the team. The expansion of our staff has also provided us with increased capacity, so that we can better represent disabled fans, as well as enabling us to respond to increasing demands for our support and guidance.

All of our staff have made huge contributions throughout 2023 and I am grateful for their work to elevate access and inclusion for disabled fans. The passion they each have for making a difference combines with their individual skillsets to

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bring us repeated success. They are also supported locally by disabled supporters' associations doing terrific work to directly improve experiences at their clubs, which I am again hugely grateful for.

In 2023, there were more clear reminders of the importance of our work to have access at the top of the agenda. Failures to accommodate disabled fans at another UEFA Champions League Final was a prominent example of this, with Manchester City supporters sharing troubling reports from the event. Level Playing Field staff were in discussions with individual disabled fans, the club and Manchester City's disabled supporters association. Accounts gathered were then brought to UEFA and the Government, with Level Playing Field demanding accountability. Fans' stories also received prominence through the media, bringing an important spotlight on the accessibility aspect of the showpieces' unacceptable organisation. Following repeated failures by UEFA, it vital that the planning is rectified with the final set to be held at Wembley in 2024.

Beyond sporting events, Level Playing Field was pleased to join other charities and organisations dedicated to accessibility, to campaign against proposals on rail ticket office closures. The inaccessibility of public transport has risen year-on-year as barrier to attending live sport, according to the 2023 Level Playing Field Annual Fan survey, and it was therefore important to be part of the campaign, which resulted in the biggest response to a public consultation in British history. I am grateful to Transport For All on their leadership on this issue, where we ultimately saw a reversal from the Government. We will continue to do our duty in making the voices of disabled sports fans heard and representing their interests on matters of more general accessibility, as the leaders in this space.

Action in the political sphere has often been important in furthering access and inclusion for disabled fans. 2023 marked five years since the Equality and Human Rights Commission's final report on Premier League clubs' accessibility and the positive legacy from that emphasises an urgent need for a permanent mandate. It has been deeply concerning to see without that, momentum has been lost in relation to clubs promoted since then and we will therefore continue to push for increased oversight.

A large amount of focus this year was on the rebranding of our campaign to 'Unite For Access' from its previous name of 'Weeks of Action'. The Trustees took the view that the transition may results in a year of reduced or stagnant impact, but that this would then be outweighed by subsequent growth. I am delighted to

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report that, to the contrary, this change saw an immediate, positive impact, with record-breaking participation levels. Involvement from 100% of Sky Bet Championship clubs helped take the total number of teams beyond 120, which was a phenomenal achievement and displays the potential for the future of the campaign. Beyond the figures, real change took place at stadiums across England and Wales, with some transformative initiatives introduced.

Another evolution this year, came in the form of the Level Playing Field Annual Fan Survey. Now in its third edition, the survey was able to display year-on-year trends for the first time; this presented some concerning data on barriers which are impacting increasing proportions of disabled fans and has helped us to make specific plans to effectively target our efforts. There were 1791 responses to the survey, across 115 different clubs. The response rate was therefore up 37% on the previous year and created a sample size to provide us with unquestionable evidence to utilise in discussions with key stakeholders.

This year's targeted survey was focused on women's football, with a need for more detailed knowledge in that area of rapid growth and where we recognised that minimal data existed. The results raised some interesting points of difference from the men's game, which have formed key parts of our follow up work. Level Playing Field is committed to putting disabled supporter voices at the centre of improving the access and inclusion for disabled fans attending women's football and will continue to consult with fans as more work is done there. The feedback from disabled supporters in our 2023 surveys is something I value and appreciate. The data gathered provide us with essential, informed evidence to enhance our advocacy for improvements in accessibility and inclusion.

The need for us to be able to present the collective voice of disabled fans was made clearer by the Government's response to the consultation on the Football Governance White Paper, which confirmed the scope of an independent regulator would not include equality, diversity and inclusion. The lack of consideration for disabled fans was, we believe, shameful. The introduction of the Regulator was described as a once in a generation opportunity, but the decisions on implementation have squandered the opportunity to improve the experiences of disabled fans. There were accompanying requirements on fan engagement, but these had no measures on accessibility. Instead, it promoted hollow discussion, which previously resulted in a neglect of disabled fans over the course of the process and I saw no evidence for why that would change with no set standards and less public attention. The need for the Regulator to be concerned with

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accessibility matters is something we will continue to campaign for as it heads towards implementation.

Elsewhere, we are grateful to have had more positive engagement with our funders, particularly the Premier League and the EFL. The financial support they provide is essential to the work of the charity. We are also pleased to have regular discourse with them on projects to improve access and inclusion.

Finally, I would like to place on record my appreciation of the work of my fellow trustees. In the past year, Joanna Deagle stepped down from the board and we are extremely grateful for the contribution she made to Level Playing Field. The relentless work of all our trustees is important to everyone at the charity and is especially valued by myself. I know that the knowledge they are contributing to the continued development of access and inclusion leaves them each with a great sense of satisfaction, although we all recognise that there is still so much to be done. Our aim remains to make constant improvements to the experiences of disabled fans attending live sport and 2024 will be no different.

Thank you all for your support.

With best wishes.



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About Level Playing Field

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Level Playing Field is a registered charity in England and Wales, which acts as a campaigning and advisory organisation to its membership and other parties across all sports. We have a team of dedicated staff with specialist knowledge, skills and experience around issues concerning access and inclusion.

Level Playing Field embraces 'the social model of disability' and promotes the removal of barriers that might prevent a disabled spectator from attending or enjoying a live sports event. We want to ensure that disabled people enjoy an equality of experience as they attend live sport. Level Playing Field is driven to address the current inequality of experience for disabled fans attending live sport. Whether it's lack of choice, availability of tickets or a second-rate experience we use a proactive and constructive approach to tackle these and other issues.



Our mission

Level Playing Field promotes a positive, inclusive experience for disabled sports fans



Our vision

A world in which all disabled fans can freely access and enjoy live sporting events.



Our aims

- Providing support and advocacy for disabled sports fans.
- Offering advice, access audits and training to sports clubs and governing bodies.
- Working with architects and design teams to ensure an inclusive and accessible physical environment at live sporting events.
- Building relationships and partnerships with sports clubs, DSAs, fans and sector organisations.
- Campaigning to keep the disability agenda top of mind for the government.

Level Playing Field delivers its work through four key pillars:

- 
- ▶ **For the Fans**
 - ▶ **For the Clubs**
 - ▶ **Knowledge Centre**
 - ▶ **Campaigns**

Putting it simply, Level Playing Field campaigns and works towards improving the matchday experience for disabled fans by driving an equal matchday experience.

Why we do what we do

It is estimated that 50% of disabled people don't take part in recreational or physical activity.

The barriers to why a disabled fan chooses not to attend live sport can be addressed through training, raising awareness, and updating facilities and services. Last year, Level Playing Field received hundreds of enquiries and complaints and we aim to address these common recurring issues.

Level Playing Field are guided by the following principles:

- ▶ Anti-discrimination – so that disabled people do not face discrimination arising from poor or misinformed practice.
- ▶ Equality of opportunity or making things fairer – for disabled people in every aspect of their contact with sports clubs and venues.
- ▶ Increasing the independence and choices that disabled people have.
- ▶ Individual requirements / diversity – recognising that a disabled person is an individual who, like all others, has his or her own requirements, abilities, human rights and responsibilities.
- ▶ Integration/inclusion – such that services are made accessible to disabled people and offer choice.
- ▶ Involvement in decision-making – so that disabled people, and/or their advocates, are consulted before decisions that affect them are made.
- ▶ The social model of disability, which explains that it is social and physical 'barriers' that cause 'disability', not impairments.

Level Playing Field is working to remove the barriers that currently exclude disabled people. These barriers can be prejudice and stereotypes, the way things are organised and run, along with little to no access to information, buildings and transport.



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Knowledge centre



Women's football survey

Women's football has grown significantly in popularity over recent years, both in terms of those participating and those watching the sport. The average attendance at matches this season has more than trebled compared to the previous season. With so many fans now eager to watch their women's team play live in stadiums across the country, Level Playing Field decided to conduct a first-of-its-kind survey to find out about the experiences of disabled supporters as they attend women's football.

The survey was sent out to disabled supporters through club contacts and via social media. It was live for two months, running from Friday 10th February through to Friday 7th April 2023, and responses were anonymous unless the respondent chose to give their name.

Comparisons were made with data from the 2022 Level Playing Field Annual Fan Survey, which provided a baseline for the experiences of over 1300 disabled fans across all sports.

The survey was answered by 190 disabled sports fans who between them supported 33 different women's teams.

Key findings

Lack of information

Over a quarter of disabled fans (26%) stated that 'lack of information' is a barrier for them when attending women's football matches.

This figure is significantly higher than the 16% of fans who said this was a barrier in our most recent Annual Fan Survey 2022 (AFS).



Attitude and anxiety barriers

Over 28% of disabled fans said that 'anxiety or lack of confidence' was a barrier for them attending women's football. One of the contributing factors to this anxiety is likely to be 'the attitudes of others' which 24% of respondents identified as a barrier.

This is very similar to our AFS, where the figures were 26% and 28% respectively.



Attending matches

In general, disabled fans attended women's football matches less frequently, with only 34% attending 'most weeks', compared to 50% of fans in the AFS. One issue highlighted by several fans was that the 'home' ground wasn't always the same venue, making planning difficult.



However, the cost of tickets was less of a barrier for disabled fans attending women's football.



Annual fan survey

One of the key ways that Level Playing Field is able to improve access and inclusion at live sporting events, is by engaging with disabled spectators to better understand their experiences and to ask what they require on matchdays.

The annual survey helps us to gather this information and is the most significant survey in our calendar. This is the third year we have run the survey, and with almost 1800 responses from disabled sports fans, it is our biggest one to date.

The survey was conducted online and was sent out to disabled supporters through disabled supporters' associations (DSAs), club contacts and also via social media. The survey was live for a month, running from Thursday 25th May through to Friday 30th June 2023. Responses were anonymous unless the respondent chose to give their name.

This report summarises the results of the survey and compares many of these results with the last two years' findings. Throughout this report, the term 'pp' will be used as an abbreviation for percentage points when comparing percentages. For example, an increase from 10% last year to 15% this year would be 'Up 5pp'.

The results of the survey will be used to advise clubs on how best to improve the matchday experience of disabled fans. It will also be used to advise governing bodies, DSAs and non-disabled supporter groups on disability access & inclusion.

Key findings

Travel barriers

The percentage of disabled fans for whom 'inaccessible public transport is a barrier to attending live sport' has increased year-on-year, from 16% to 17.5% to 20%.

This is similar to the year-on-year trend for those who said that being 'unable to travel to stadiums' was a barrier:- 15.5% of fans in 2021, now up to 18% in 2023.



Disability Abuse

Another year-on-year increase is the number of disabled fans who said that 'disability abuse is a barrier when attending live sport' - from 5.5% to 6.5% to 7% this year.

The 'attitudes of others' remains a significant barrier to disabled fans, with 25.5% of respondents saying it was a barrier to them attending.



Additional disability-related costs

We asked respondents if there were any additional costs for them when attending live sport, because of their disability. Over 53% of fans identified additional costs, including equipment, support, and appropriate travel.

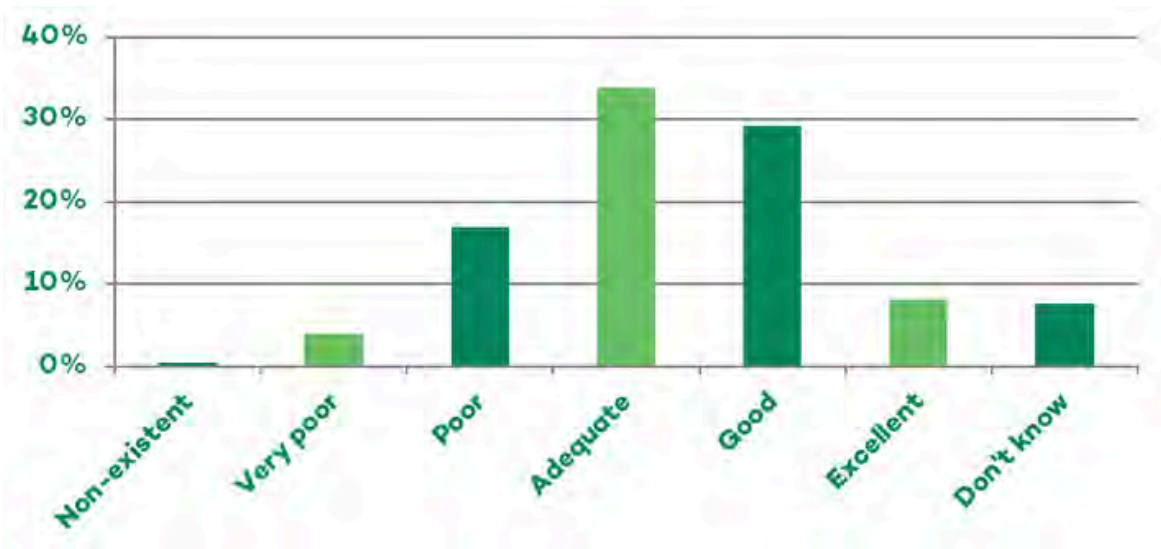
For those who did have additional disability-related costs, they averaged £66 for home games and £111 for away matches.



Club ratings - nationwide

We asked respondents "Overall, how would you rate sports stadiums / clubs in England and Wales on access and inclusion?" The chart below shows the results.

Figure 9: Accessibility ratings for stadiums in England and Wales



- ▶ Non-existent – **0.5%** (Unchanged)
- ▶ Very poor – **4%** (Down 0.5pp)
- ▶ Poor – **17%** (Down 1.5pp)
- ▶ Adequate – **34%** (Up 0.5pp)
- ▶ Good – **29%** (Unchanged)
- ▶ Excellent – **8%** (Unchanged)
- ▶ Don't know – **7.5%** (Up 2pp)



Encouragingly, there was a slight decrease in the number of supporters who rated accessibility as ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’, with a slight increase in those rating it ‘adequate’. The biggest change from last year is the increase in supporters who selected ‘Don’t know/prefer not to say’. It’s not immediately obvious what the reason for this is, but it may be linked to the reduced frequency of attendance highlighted on page 7.

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Campaigns

Unite For Access

A record-breaking number of clubs participated in Level Playing Field's Unite For Access campaign.

Involvement from 100% of Sky Bet Championship clubs, helped take the total number of teams beyond 120.

The campaign, which was rebranded for 2023, ran from February 25 to March 12 and focused on raising awareness and driving equality, to bring about more inclusive match day experiences for disabled sports fans.



The rebrand

Sport in England and Wales plays a vital role in the nation's culture. It has the ability to drive social change and unites a community, ensuring it reflects its diverse make-up. This is why charities and equality groups use sport as a way to raise awareness.

Disabled people are the largest minority group in any population with over 16 million disabled people in the UK, yet disability is underrepresented.

Over the years the campaign has had year-on-year success, with more:

- Clubs backing the campaign
- Dedicated 'Weeks of Action' matchdays
- Social media activity
- National press recognition

Despite this, it was felt that the campaign was not fulfilling its potential and was not being directly associated with disabled supporters. After liaising with sports clubs and supporters, the feedback received highlighted that the previous name was confusing, lacked clarity and purpose.

After a lengthy consultation and working with creative agencies, we have decided that the new name of the Level Playing Field flagship campaign would be 'Unite For Access'.

The intention was to give Level Playing Field a proactive and powerful message, along with a direct link to disability. The aim was to:

- Continue to raise awareness across all sport
- To raise the profile of the real-life matchday experience of disabled fans
- Improve disability access and inclusion on a matchday





Across the divisions

The 'Unite For Access' campaign saw participation from the Premier League, right through to non-league clubs.

At the top level, Manchester City celebrated 25 years of providing audio descriptive commentary, while in Sky Bet League Two, Stevenage gave a young disabled supporter the opportunity to lead the team out.

One of the most memorable moments of the campaign, came when the national anthem was once again performed alongside a British Sign Language Interpreter, ahead of the Carabao Cup Final at Wembley.



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Fan engagement



Forums

The Level Playing Field South Forum welcomed disabled fans, club representatives and other key stakeholders from across sports, to Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.

100 guests attended the charity's first regional forum since the pandemic, with different experiences of accessibility from across all levels of professional sport represented in the room.

Discussions took place on enhancing fan engagement for disabled sports fans and evolving perspectives on disability language, as well as a guest talk from the Royal National Institute of Blind People.

Spurs provided a tour of the stadium's accessible facilities and disability access officer, Simon Blewett, joined SpursAbility's Dee Bright and the legendary Gary Mabbutt, for a conversation on relationships between clubs, disabled supporters' associations and wider fanbases.

Beyond that, there was an opportunity to network and further sessions catered specifically for disabled supporters' associations and staff working for clubs, venues or other organisations.

The Level Playing Field South Forum marked the start of a tour, which will take regional forums to the Midlands, North and Wales.

Online forums have continued, allowing more regular discussion with disabled fans and other stakeholders. They also presented opportunities to bring more guest speakers to the fore.

New disabled fan groups

2023 saw an increased appetite from disabled fans to organise into groups, which could help improve standards of accessibility and inclusion at their clubs.

Fans Liaison Officer at Level Playing Field, Liam Bird, regularly assisted supporters with their initial meeting and the process of establishing their groups. In some cases, these have gone on to become formalised disabled supporters' associations (DSAs).

It is encouraging that emerging groups were spread across a wide range of levels and locations. The timelines have also had a positive impact for knowledge sharing on the unique landscape to navigate, when starting out in 2023.

The development of new disabled supporters' associations highlights the effectiveness of many existing DSAs across England and Wales. Level Playing Field is proud to support their efforts at a local level and is a huge advocate of the differences made by raising disabled fans' voices as collective.



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Club resource

Training & Engagement

Facilitating discourse between club staff and disabled fans through forums is a key service to inform clubs, as is survey data which allows them to see their specific circumstances alongside the context of sport as a whole.

Many clubs also make use of Level Playing Field's in-person staff training, as well as attending remote sessions and receiving bespoke guidance on a range of topics.

The charity was delighted by feedback from the first EFL Disability Access Officer Conference.

Disabled fans, organisations, Level Playing Field officials, club representatives and EFL staff shared their perspectives in panels hosted across the day, at the Poundland Bescot Stadium.

The all-new conference forms part of the EFL's 'Together' strategy, which was launched last summer, to improve equality, diversity and inclusivity over a five-year period.

The day headed up by Level Playing Field in Walsall featured guest speakers from Colostomy UK, RNIB and Tourettes Action.





Centre of Excellence Award

Level Playing Field’s expert auditing team have been able to offer practical advice on existing stadia and planning.

In 2023, the auditing process saw Cardiff City Football Club become the first club in Wales and only the sixth club to achieve this award.

The Cardiff City Stadium now sits alongside Wembley Stadium, The Etihad Stadium (Manchester City FC), Pride Park (Derby County FC), The American Express Community Stadium (Brighton & Hove Albion FC) and The Emirates Stadium (Arsenal FC), as the only football grounds to have reached this standard.

The “Level Playing Field Centre of Excellence Award” is presented to sporting venues that demonstrate the highest access and inclusion standards in accommodating disabled spectators and visitors on match (or event) and non-match days. To qualify for the award, the club or venue undergoes a Level Playing Field professional access audit and must demonstrate that it meets all good practice standards, equality and access legislation and building regulations for accessible sports stadia.

Cardiff City FC was innovative in making many excellent improvements and provisions for its disabled fans. These included several smart and low-cost groundbreaking solutions that established good practice examples for existing stadiums that Level Playing Field now hopes other clubs will look to adopt.

Level Playing Field recognises Cardiff City FC as an excellent example of a club making continued improvements to its disabled fans’ facilities and services.

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Lobbying

Rail ticket office closures

A responsibility to contribute on a wider matter of accessibility, where disabled sports fans could be impacted, was clear in the case of proposals on rail ticket offices.

The Government ultimately asked train operators to withdraw their proposals to close hundreds of rail ticket offices, in a dramatic reversal.

This decision was vital for the accessibility of rail infrastructure and followed campaigns against the plans, which resulted in the biggest response to a public consultation in British history.

The importance of this to disabled sports fans was emphasised in the 2023 Level Playing Field Annual Fan Survey results. The report showed year-on-year rises to 'Inaccessible public transport' as a barrier to disabled supporters attending live sport, with it making the top five most common barriers overall.

Had the proposals gone through, the consequence would have been further negative impact on the accessibility of public transport.

Transport For All led the campaign against the proposals and Level Playing Field was pleased to join more than 60 other organisations representing disabled people, to sign its letter condemning closures.

Level Playing Field also wrote directly to Government ministers and Rail Delivery Group officials, to emphasise the impact closures would have on disabled sports fans specifically, with disabled supporters' associations across England and Wales co-signing the letters.

UEFA Champions League Final

Level Playing Field wrote to UEFA and Government officials, on repeated failures to accommodate disabled supporters at Champions League Finals,

Reports from disabled and non-disabled Manchester City fans attending the final in June, detailed hazardous and potentially life endangering conditions for disabled supporters' arrival and departure from the Atatürk Olympic Stadium.

The charity also shared some of the accounts it received, including that of disabled fan Clare Watson, who broke her femur in two places at the event.

The failures in Istanbul followed horrific scenes at the 2022 UEFA Champions League Final in Paris.

UEFA has been limited in public acknowledgement of the issues and accountability is necessary.



Football Governance White Paper

The Government's response to the consultation on the Football Governance White Paper confirmed the scope of an independent regulator will not include equality, diversity and inclusion.

The justification given for this decision was that: "in the government's view, there should only be intervention in an area where there is clear evidence of a market failure." This failed to acknowledge football's current failure to provide an equal experience for disabled fans on a consistent basis.

The 2023 Level Playing Field Annual Fan Survey results revealed the most common barrier disabled fans face when attending live sport is 'physical access at stadiums.' This was also the case in the 2022 dataset, which was the most recent at the time of the Government's response. It is indisputable that failing to accommodate disabled fans' 'physical access at stadiums' is a market failure and rectifying it falls under governance.

Rt Hon Stuart Andrew MP, Minister for Sport and Minister for Equalities, claimed that the independent regulator will "ensure fans are always at the heart of football."

Not all fans will be at the heart of football, while barriers remain in place. Based on the Government's own estimates, 16 million people in the UK had a disability in the 2021/22 financial year, which represents 24% of the total population. That is almost a quarter of those whom they claim to serve, that this decision neglects.

Level Playing Field has fed into the process of the Fan Led Review and Government White Paper consultation at each stage. This included the direct input of disabled fans, which must have been disregarded in order to reach this outcome. The charity remains committed to working with Government officials to improve access and inclusion for disabled sport fans, wherever possible.

The staff team

A decade of Ruth

General manager & head of access and development, Ruth Hopkins, celebrated a decade of improving access and inclusion for disabled sports fans with Level Playing Field.

When Ruth joined the charity on 29 April 2013, she was the only fulltime member of staff, but has been an essential part of its growth and impact upon the industry since then.

The organisation was highly football focused upon her arrival, but has since diversified across sports, including the Rugby World Cup and Cricket World Cup.

During Ruth's time at Level Playing Field, all national stadia across England and Wales have been audited and the Premier League made a promise to ensure that all clubs comply with the Accessible Stadia Guide.

Ruth's responsibilities at Level Playing Field have been far reaching, including support for DSAs, parliament representation, sitting on consultancy panels and originally being the sole access auditor. The growth of the charity has allowed some of these roles to be taken on by others, but she now leads on the rewrite of the Accessible Stadia Guide.

The impact Ruth has made in her decade at Level Playing Field has been felt by many, with congratulatory messages coming in from supporters, DSAs, colleagues and former colleagues alike.



“There has never been a day I regret coming to Level Playing Field.

“I love meeting people and working with our team of passionate staff.

“In the rewrite of the Accessible Stadia Guide, I am adding more clarity on standards and examples of good practice.

“You can see with the growth of our Weeks of Action – now Unite For Access, that the appetite is there to keep on improving.”

Joseph & Mark Join the team

Two additions were made to the Level Playing Field staff team in 2023, with the appointments of Joseph Crabtree and Mark Phillips, in the respective roles of Media & Communications officer and Fan Engagement & Enquiry Officer.

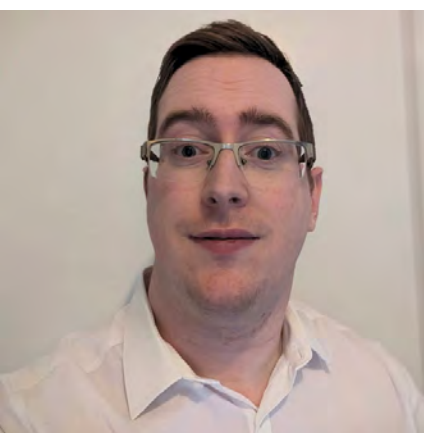
Joseph joined the charity at the start of March - midway through the 'Unite For Access Campaign.

His background in sports club media roles across football and rugby league. He has previous experience in sports journalism and has looked to strengthen Level Playing Field's communications output and impact.



Mark joined Level Playing Field in December, in a newly created role, which will enhance the charity's capacity to provide support to disabled fans on a daily basis.

Since graduating with an LLM in Legal Practice, Mark has been passionate about promoting accessibility and inclusion while supporting other disabled people throughout his career.



An avid football supporter and a lifelong Swansea City fan, Mark has been a member of the disabled supporters' association (DSA) in South Wales since its formation in 2013. In 2017, Mark became the club's first Disability Access Officer and with the support of Swans DSA introduced a number of new initiatives to improve accessibility for disabled fans at the stadium, including the introduction of a Sensory Room. He regularly attends live sport with both Swansea City and Cymru Football where he is also a member of the Equality Advisory Group.

This background will give Mark a detailed understanding of the experiences of disabled fans and club staff. Both Mark and Joseph have been welcome additions to the Level Playing Field staff team.

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A year in review

A year in review

At the end of 2023, the charity took a look back on a record-breaking year for, which saw plenty of challenges and important advancements in access and inclusion for disabled fans across England and Wales.

Reflecting on the year showed outstanding levels of participation across Unite For Access and the 2023 Level Playing Field Annual Fan Survey.

There were also individual advancements at clubs and neglect from positions of power which needed to be challenged.

Take a look through some of the key events for disabled sports fans from this year, below.



January

Away Fan Survey launched

February

Unite For Access kicks-off

March

DCMS Committee meeting on White Paper

April

Ruth celebrates a decade with the charity

May

Five year anniversary of EHRC's final report

June

Repeated Champions League Final failings

July

Women's Survey results published

August

Further boosts for British Sign Language

September

Formation of new disabled fans groups

October

Annual Fan Survey results published

November

Regional forums return in the South

December

RNIB guidance published

Staff



Owain Davies

Chief Executive



Ruth Hopkins

General Manager & Head of Access and Development - NRAC Auditor



Nicky Baker

Access and Development Officer - NRAC Auditor



Daniel Townley

Development Officer



Liam Bird

Fans Liaison Officer

Staff



David Moffat

Access Auditor



Joseph Crabtree

Media and Communications Officer



Mark Phillips

Fan Engagement & Enquiry Officer



Trustees



Tony Taylor

Chair



Steve Evans

Secretary



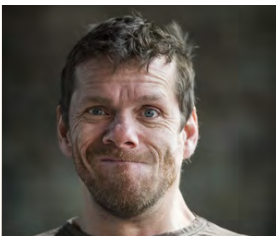
Joanna Deagle

Trustee



Jo McNicol

Trustee



Jamie Beddard

Trustee

A word from the Chief Executive

Owain Davies

I hope that through this annual report, you have seen a snapshot of the value Level Playing Field has delivered towards access and inclusion, through our staff and network of disabled fans. Thank you for taking the time to find out about our work throughout 2023.

We look back on a year of so much positive development but have also been presented with a number of challenges. The failures of another UEFA Champions League Final and the disregarding of disabled fans' interests in the Football Governance White Paper, have reemphasised the importance of our advocacy.

My personal highlight was the return of regional forums, with the Level Playing Field South Forum at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium. Bringing disabled fans, club staff and other stakeholders together has huge value and those in-person discussions are also extremely beneficial for our own staff.

An important change this year, came through the rebrand of our 'Weeks of Action' campaign, to 'Unite For Access'. It was launched in the perfect manner, with a fan-focused video, which took us to the heart of the subject matter. The campaign was an even greater success than expected and I look forward to building on this in the years to come.

It was pleasing to see engagement with the campaign from sport at different levels, with so many poignant moments and examples of meaningful progression. In Sky Bet League Two, none of us will forget the look of sheer elation on Stevenage fan Archie's face, when the young wheelchair user led out his team. Then at the elite level, I particularly enjoyed seeing the legacy of ongoing provisions for disabled fans, with Manchester City celebrating 25 years of audio descriptive commentary, alongside the new introduction Arsenal's British Sign Language Service (BSL).

Annual Report

BSL continued to be a theme throughout the year, including interpreters present at the EFL Finals and the Ashes for the first time and permanent services launched at Wembley and Tottenham.

Surveys were a driver once again, in 2023. We were pleased to fill a void in data on accessibility in women's football and with the successes of the Lionesses accelerating growth in this area, it is clear that we need to push for access to be attached to that development.

A disparity in accessibility information was displayed in the survey results for women's football, but we are still aware of the need to address shortcomings in this area across sport. Guidance shared on best practice and standards here, in addition to our ongoing support for disability liaison officers has provided support to combat this.

The level of support we offer to fans, club staff and venues, would not be possible without support from the Premier League and the EFL. I am grateful to them, as well as the disabled supporters' associations and clubs that have worked with us to address more local matters.

I am most thankful to my fellow staff, for their efforts across the 12 months. The team has grown this year, with the addition of the Fan Engagement & Enquiries Officer. This has equipped us to provide even greater levels of support and has helped to increase efficiency across the board. Mark Phillips as an individual, has been the perfect recruit to the team and while we celebrated him joining, we also marked a decade of Ruth Hopkins' time at Level Playing Field. It has been a pleasure to work with Ruth throughout my time at the charity and the positive impact she has had on access and inclusion for disabled fans cannot be overstated.

The dedication of the whole team has seen us achieve so much over the last 12 months and I look forward to working alongside them to make further progress in the coming year.



Level Playing Field

For disabled sports fans

Level Playing Field
The Junction
Station Road
Watford
WD17 1ET



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@levelplayingfielduk



/lpftweets

Company Number: 11109719
Charity Number: 1177415

**Level
Playing
Field**

For disabled sports fans

**Directors' Report and
Unaudited Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31st December 2023**

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CHARITY REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

CHARITY NUMBER: 1177415

COMPANY NUMBER: 11109719

TRUSTEES/DIRECTORS: A Taylor (Chair)
S Evans
J McNicol
J Deagle (resigned 13 March 2023)
J Beddard

COMPANY SECRETARY: S Evans

REGISTERED OFFICE: Greville House
10 Jury Street
Warwick
Warwickshire
CV34 4EW

PRINCIPAL ADDRESS: The Junction
Station Road
Watford
WD17 1ET

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER: Mark Harwood FCA BFP FMAAT
Michael Harwood & Co
Greville House
10 Jury Street
Warwick
Warwickshire
CV34 4EW

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st December 2023. The Trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Level Playing Field, a charitable company limited by guarantee (Company no. 11109719 and Charity no. 1177415), was incorporated on the 13th December 2017 and is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association. The directors of the charitable company (who are its trustees for the purposes of charity law) have no interest in the company's assets or surplus and receive no remuneration.

The Directors/Trustees meet at least once a quarter and are actively involved in the strategic direction of the charity. Level Playing Field is an inclusive employer and actively promotes the positive impact of having a diverse workforce and trustee board. Level Playing Field has signed up to the Disability Confident Scheme. This commitment allows Level Playing Field to accurately and responsibly represent the community it serves. Trustees are recruited and appointed in line with best practice using both internal and external sources.

A business continuation policy is in place and the Trustees constantly review potential risks, producing plans incorporating financial, operational and strategic options to react to changing circumstances should they occur based on detailed risk assessment.

The Charity works on a collaborative basis with charities and organisations across England and Wales to assist in delivering our Charitable objectives and shared outcomes.

OBJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

Level Playing Field adopts and promotes the social model of disability, in which disability is viewed as a social issue and that an individual only becomes disabled as a result of the social, attitudinal and environmental barriers that the individual faces.

The Charity is focused on removing these barriers in all sports. Level Playing Field (and its membership) is committed to achieving an environment where:

- all fans can enjoy an equal experience at live sports events
- all stadia and sports venues are fully accessible and inclusive
- all customer and/or fan services are equal and inclusive
- disabled people are seen as customers with a commercial value

The Charity is guided by the following principles:

- anti-discrimination – so that disabled people do not face discrimination arising from poor or misinformed practice
- equality of opportunity and fairness – for disabled people in every aspect of their contact with sports clubs and venues
- increasing the independence and choices offered to disabled people
- individual requirements – recognising that a disabled person is an individual who, in a diverse society, has his or her own requirements, abilities, human rights and responsibilities
- integration/inclusion – such that services are made accessible to disabled people and offer a choice
- involvement in decision-making – so that disabled people, and/or their advocates, are consulted before decisions which affect them are made
- acknowledgement of the social model of disability which explains that it is social and physical barriers that cause 'disability' not impairments.

Level Playing Field is working to remove the barriers that currently exclude disabled people, including:

- prejudice and stereotypes
- the way things are organised and run
- lack of/inadequate access to information, buildings and transport

The Directors/Trustees have had due regard to the guidance published by The Charity Commission on public benefit in managing the activities of the Charity.

The main activities of the Charity during the year were as follows:

Fan Engagement

2023 was a year where Level Playing Field's connection with the disabled fans it serves continued to strengthen. Areas of work which were important to that included:

- in-person forums: the return of regional forums, with the Level Playing Field South Forum, was successful in bringing fans, club representatives and other stakeholders together. This was the first time this format had been utilised since before the pandemic and received a highly positive response from attendees.
- online forums: this continuation allowed more regular and open discussion with disabled fans and other stakeholders. It also presented opportunities to bring more guest speakers to the fore.
- podcasts: the introduction of transcripts made the podcasts more accessible, while bitesize clips have enabled the charity to revisit topics when they are of particular relevance to ongoing matters.
- disabled supporters' associations: support and guidance were provided across the season, resulting in significant progress from emerging disabled supporters' associations and groups exploring the possibility of starting a formalised association.

Surveys

Two surveys had a dramatic impact on the knowledge centre pillar of our work during 2023. These enabled the charity to gather real life experiences and use that information to push for change. Throughout the year, the charity had almost 2,000 survey responses in total, evidencing mass consultation with disabled fans. This directly informs the charity's work, equips supporters, and allows Level Playing Field to provide clubs and governing bodies with valuable data to use themselves. Some key points to consider from each survey are:

Annual Fan Survey 2023

- 1,791 responses represent a record number for the charity. This would be expected to have increased how reflective the results are of disabled fans' perspectives across the board.
- more than half of disabled fans identified additional disability-related costs to attending live sport.
- almost a third of respondents had been impacted by the use of flares, smoke bombs, and other such pyrotechnics.
- the data displays year-on-year trends for the first time, allowing Level Playing Field to look at the trajectory of certain focus points for access and inclusion.
- trends included troubling rises in the percentage of disabled fans for whom 'inaccessible public transport' and 'disability abuse' are barriers when attending live sport.
- results that related to barriers experienced by disabled fans showed some positive movement. There were noticeable drops in the percentages of fans where 'physical access at stadiums' and 'attitudes of others' were a barrier. These did remain the top two overall however, emphasising the scale of those issues.

Women's Football Survey

- a first-of-its-kind survey which presented data on relative unknowns for the charity, clubs and governing bodies.
- showed a 'lack of information' was a barrier for attending matches to a significantly higher proportion of fans (26%) than in the previous annual fan survey across all sports (16%).
- data on information corroborated by 38% of respondents rating their club's 'communication and marketing when it comes to attracting disabled fans into watching women's football' as 'poor', 'very poor', or 'non-existent'. 46% of fans listed 'accessibility information' as something which would help when planning for and travelling to women's matches, with only accessible parking ranking higher.
- 'cost of attending' and 'difficulty purchasing tickets' were both shown to be lesser barriers for disabled fans attending women's football and 19% of respondents were aged 18-29, which all displays the potential for teams to attract new supporters.

Campaigns - Unite For Access

In its first year under a new name, the campaign set records, with significant buy-in from clubs, disabled supporters' associations, disabled fans and governing bodies.

Involvement from 100% of Sky Bet Championship clubs, helped take the total number of teams beyond 120.

The name change to 'Unite For Access' from 'Weeks of Action' proved extremely effective, with an immediate connection to messaging at the core of Level Playing Field's aims. An essential part of this came through the film, which showcased the experiences of disabled fans, gained significant traction and started the campaign off in an impactful manner.

Across the fortnight, there was participation from the Premier League, right through to non-league clubs. At the top level, Manchester City celebrated 25 years of providing audio descriptive commentary, while in Sky Bet League Two, Stevenage gave a young disabled supporter the opportunity to lead the team out.

One of the most memorable moments of the campaign, came when the national anthem was once again performed alongside a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter, ahead of the Carabao Cup Final at Wembley. This was followed by more work on BSL, as Arsenal introduced a permanent matchday provision.

Club Resource

Facilitating discourse between club staff and disabled fans through forums is a key service to inform clubs, as is survey data which allows them to see their specific circumstances alongside the context of sport as a whole.

Expert stadium auditing and staff training is also made use of by many clubs. The auditing process led Cardiff City to become the latest recipient of a 'Level Playing Field Centre of Excellence Award,' in 2023. On a wider scale, the charity was delighted to lead on the inaugural EFL Disability Access Officer Conference, which was a positive vessel for the sharing of best practice.

Lobbying

There were a number of instances in 2023, where it was important for Level Playing Field to represent the interests of disabled fans on key issues, through official correspondence with politicians and governing bodies.

Responses to the publication of the Football Governance White Paper and the independent report on the events at the Champions League Final between Liverpool and Real Madrid, sustained efforts from previous years in those areas.

The Champions League Final in 2023 once again saw a failure to accommodate disabled supporters of a Premier League club and it was therefore vital that Level Playing Field applied pressure on UEFA. The direct accounts of Manchester City fans impacted were essential throughout the process.

A responsibility to contribute on wider matters of accessibility, where disabled sports fans could be impacted, was clear on proposed closures of train station ticket offices. Level Playing Field supported the efforts of Transport For All and brought disabled supporters' associations from across England and Wales together to challenge this. Ultimately proposals were withdrawn, in a dramatic reversal and a major victory for accessibility, which followed the biggest response to a public consultation in British history.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The financial position of the charity at 31st December 2023, as more fully detailed in the accounts, can be summarised as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Net income/(expenditure)	99,781	5,783
Unrestricted Revenue Funds available for the general purposes of the charity	250,502	192,194
Restricted Revenue Funds	41,473	-
Total Funds	291,975	192,194

RESERVES POLICY

The reserves policy is to maintain a level of unrestricted reserves which covers 6-12 months of operating costs.

The report of the directors has been prepared having taken advantage of the small companies' exemption in the Companies Act 2006.

On behalf of the board



A Taylor
Chair

Date: 30 Jun 2024

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS' REPORT

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the company for the year ended 31st December 2023 which are set out on pages 7 to 16.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your company's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

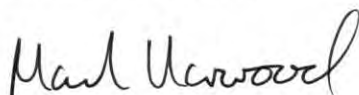
Independent examiner's statement

Since the company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Mark Harwood FCA BFP FMAAT
Michael Harwood & Co
Chartered Accountants
Greville House
10 Jury Street
Warwick
CV34 4EW

Date: 4th July 2024

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(Incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account)
For the year ended 31st December 2023

	Note	2023 Unrestricted £	2023 Restricted £	2023 Total £	2022 Unrestricted £	2022 Restricted £	2022 Total £
Income from:							
Donations & grants	2	29,119	-	29,119	394	-	394
Charitable activities	3	48,447	347,967	396,414	39,659	316,241	355,900
Discontinued activities	6	-	-	-	82,033	-	82,033
Total income		77,566	347,967	425,533	122,086	316,241	438,327
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds		216	-	216	216	-	216
Charitable activities	4	18,125	296,358	314,483	29,674	316,910	346,584
Other	5	917	10,136	11,053	1,069	9,646	10,715
Discontinued activities	6	-	-	-	57,012	18,017	75,029
Total expenditure		19,258	306,494	325,752	87,971	344,573	432,544
Net income/(expenditure) for the year		58,308	41,473	99,781	34,115	(28,332)	5,783
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	(28,332)	28,332	-
Net movement in funds for the year		58,308	41,473	99,781	5,783	-	5,783
Fund balances brought forward		192,194	-	192,194	186,411	-	186,411
Fund balances at 31st December 2023	14/16	250,502	41,473	291,975	192,194	-	192,194

The notes on pages 9 to 16 form an integral part of the accounts.

BALANCE SHEET
As at 31st December 2023
(Company no. 11109719)

	Note	2023		2022	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	9		3,854		2,748
Investments	10		1		1
			<u>3,855</u>		<u>2,749</u>
Current assets					
Debtors	11	206,470		12,088	
Cash at bank and in hand		131,273		221,191	
Total current assets		<u>337,743</u>		<u>233,279</u>	
Current liabilities					
Creditors	12	(49,623)		(43,834)	
Net current assets			<u>288,120</u>		<u>189,445</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u><u>291,975</u></u>		<u><u>192,194</u></u>
Funds of the Charity:					
Restricted funds			41,473		-
Unrestricted funds			250,502		192,194
Total charity funds	14/16		<u><u>291,975</u></u>		<u><u>192,194</u></u>

Directors' statements:

- The company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies;
- No members have required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006;
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 30th June 2024.

On behalf of the Trustees


A Taylor
Chair

The notes on pages 9 to 16 form an integral part of the accounts.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS For the year ended 31st December 2023

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) **Basis of Accounting**

Level Playing Field is a company limited by guarantee in England & Wales. In the event of the charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity. The address of the registered office is given in the charity information on page 1 and the nature of the charity's operations and principal activities are given in the Annual Report.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis under the historical cost convention, modified to include certain items at fair value. The financial statements are presented in sterling which is the functional currency of the charity and rounded to the nearest £1.

The significant accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years presented unless otherwise stated.

(b) **Income**

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is legally entitled to the income after any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

For donations to be recognised the charity will have been notified of the amounts and the settlement date in writing. If there are conditions attached to the donation and this requires a level of performance before entitlement can be obtained then income is deferred until those conditions are fully met or the fulfilment of those conditions is within the control of the charity and it is probable that they will be fulfilled.

Investment income is earned through holding assets for investment purposes such as cash and is comprised of bank interest.

(c) **Government Grants**

Government grants are recognised at the fair value of the asset received or receivable when there is reasonable assurance that the grant conditions will be met and the grants will be received.

A grant that specifies performance conditions is recognised in income when the performance conditions are met. Where a grant does not specify performance conditions it is recognised in income when the proceeds are received or receivable. A grant received before the recognition criteria are satisfied is recognised as a liability.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2023

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

(d) **Expenditure**

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Expenditure is recognised where there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that the settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. It is categorised under the following headings:

- Costs of raising funds includes the monthly charges of donation collection organisations.
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into the categories above and includes governance costs.

(e) **Fixed Assets**

Items of equipment costing over £200 are capitalised and are stated at cost (or deemed cost) or valuation less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Cost includes costs directly attributable to making the asset capable of operating as intended.

Depreciation is provided on tangible fixed assets, at rates calculated to write off the cost, less estimated residual value, of each asset on a systematic basis over its expected useful life as follows:

- Computer Equipment 3 years straight line

(f) **Investments**

Investments in subsidiaries are measured at cost less impairment.

(g) **Debtors and creditors receivable / payable within one year**

Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in expenditure.

(h) **Funds**

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds subject to specific restricted conditions imposed by donors. The purposes and use of restricted funds are set out in note 15 to the financial statements.

(i) **Taxation**

The charity is an exempt charity within the meaning of schedule 3 of the Charities Act 2011 and is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued) For the year ended 31st December 2023

2. DONATIONS AND GRANTS

	2023 Unrestricted £	2023 Restricted £	2023 Total £	2022 Unrestricted £	2022 Restricted £	2022 Total £
Memory Giving	-	-	-	358	-	358
JustGiving	1,162	-	1,162	36	-	36
LPF Consultancy Ltd	27,957	-	27,957	-	-	-
Total donations and grants	29,119	-	29,119	394	-	394

3. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2023 Unrestricted £	2023 Restricted £	2023 Total £	2022 Unrestricted £	2022 Restricted £	2022 Total £
Membership Income	112	38	150	90	-	90
Performance-Related Grants:						
- Premier League Fans Fund	-	347,929	347,929	-	304,803	304,803
- The Football League	46,000	-	46,000	36,000	-	36,000
- The Football Association of Wales	-	-	-	3,000	-	3,000
Expenses recharged	2,265	-	2,265	569	11,438	12,007
Miscellaneous Income	70	-	70	-	-	-
Total income from charitable activities	48,447	347,967	396,414	39,659	316,241	355,900

4. EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2023 Unrestricted £	2023 Restricted £	2023 Total £	2022 Unrestricted £	2022 Restricted £	2022 Total £
Direct spending						
Expenses recharged	1,501	-	1,501	1,333	10,805	12,138
Unite for Access & Campaigning	1,121	21,296	22,417	1,043	24,566	25,609
Event costs	-	-	-	2	28	30
Other campaign costs	22	417	439	11	217	228
Total direct spending	2,644	21,713	24,357	2,389	35,616	38,005
Support costs						
Staff costs (see Note 7)	11,807	214,107	225,914	12,139	218,002	230,141
Travel and subsistence	1,427	20,011	21,438	1,751	7,247	8,998
Telephone costs	50	1,006	1,056	102	1,194	1,296
Carried forward	13,284	235,124	248,408	13,992	226,443	240,435

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2023

4. EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES (continued)

	2023 Unrestricted £	2023 Restricted £	2023 Total £	2022 Unrestricted £	2022 Restricted £	2022 Total £
Support costs (continued)						
Brought forward	13,284	235,124	248,408	13,992	226,443	240,435
Premises	1,034	19,646	20,680	2,237	42,506	44,743
Publicity	77	1,452	1,529	57	723	780
Administration & office supplies	554	10,537	11,091	927	6,266	7,193
Professional fees & insurance	238	2,295	2,533	629	4,585	5,214
Website & email hosting	265	5,043	5,308	3,152	97	3,249
Training	24	450	474	1,266	228	1,494
Postage	5	98	103	21	394	415
Bad debts	-	-	-	5,004	52	5,056
Total support costs	15,481	274,645	290,126	27,285	281,294	308,579
Total expenditure on charitable activities	18,125	296,358	314,483	29,674	316,910	346,584

5. OTHER COSTS

	2023 Unrestricted £	2023 Restricted £	2023 Total £	2022 Unrestricted £	2022 Restricted £	2022 Total £
Bank charges	102	-	102	102	-	102
Governance travel costs	87	1,675	1,762	77	277	354
Other legal and professional	585	5,746	6,331	557	6,656	7,213
Depreciation	134	2,538	2,672	94	1,781	1,875
Loss on disposal of assets	-	-	-	37	703	740
Sundry expenses	4	82	86	202	229	431
Donations	5	95	100	-	-	-
Total other costs	917	10,136	11,053	1,069	9,646	10,715

Independent examiner's remuneration

Included in the above figures are independent examination fees of £3,060 (2022 - £3,000) and other financial services of £648 (2022 - £846).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2023

6. DISCONTINUED ACTIVITIES

	2023 Unrestricted £	2023 Restricted £	2023 Total £	2022 Unrestricted £	2022 Restricted £	2022 Total £
Income from discontinued activities						
Income from Audits	-	-	-	74,383	-	74,383
Training Income	-	-	-	7,650	-	7,650
Total income from discontinued activities	-	-	-	82,033	-	82,033
Expenditure from discontinued activities						
Staff costs (see Note 7)	-	-	-	57,012	18,017	75,029
Total expenditure from discontinued activities	-	-	-	57,012	18,017	75,029

The above income streams and their associated costs were transferred to LPF Consultancy Limited, a subsidiary company of Level Playing Field.

7. STAFF COSTS

	2023 £	2022 £
Gross wages	202,194	271,762
Social security costs	18,584	25,635
Pension costs	4,440	6,879
Other costs	696	894
Total salaries, wages and related costs	225,914	305,170
Average number of employees	7	7
Cross-charged to LPF Consultancy Limited	(2)	0
	<u>5</u>	<u>7</u>

The number of employees who received total employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) of more than £60,000 is as follows:

£60,001 - £70,000	1	1
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8. TRUSTEE REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

No Trustee or connected person received any remuneration or expenses either directly or indirectly.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2023

9. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Computer Equipment £	Total £
COST		
At 1 st January 2023	8,955	8,955
Additions	3,778	3,778
Disposals	(1,110)	(1,110)
At 31 st December 2023	<u>11,623</u>	<u>11,623</u>
DEPRECIATION		
At 1 st January 2023	6,207	6,207
Charge for the year	2,672	2,672
Eliminated on disposal	(1,110)	(1,110)
At 31 st December 2023	<u>7,769</u>	<u>7,769</u>
NET BOOK VALUE		
At 31 st December 2023	<u>3,854</u>	<u>3,854</u>
At 31 st December 2022	<u>2,748</u>	<u>2,748</u>

10. INVESTMENTS

	Shares in group undertakings £
COST	
At 1 st January 2023	1
Additions	-
At 31 st December 2023	<u>1</u>

The company's investments are as follows:

LPF Consultancy Limited

Company number: 14396922
Country of incorporation: England
Nature of business: Performing access audits on sporting stadia
Ordinary shares of £1 each 100% held

	2023 £
Gross income	185,130
Total expenditure	185,130
Profit/(loss)	-
Balance Sheet total	1

LPF Consultancy Limited was incorporated on 4th October 2022 and commenced trading in 2023, taking over the audit and training income from Level Playing Field. Any profits made during the financial period is donated to Level Playing Field.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2023

11. DEBTORS

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade debtors	-	283
Prepayments	36,320	4,170
Other debtors	6,147	1,000
Amount owed by subsidiaries	164,003	6,635
	<u>206,470</u>	<u>12,088</u>

12. CREDITORS:
AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	1,697	393
Accruals	3,286	3,532
Social security & other taxes	10,155	9,694
Deferred income (see Note 13)	34,485	30,215
	<u>49,623</u>	<u>43,834</u>

13. DEFERRED INCOME

	2023 £	2022 £
Balance brought forward	30,215	38,162
Amounts released to income	(30,215)	(38,162)
Additions during the year	34,485	30,215
	<u>34,485</u>	<u>30,215</u>

Deferred income comprises of performance-related grants covering the year ended 31st December 2024 (£34,485).

14. MOVEMENT ON FUNDS

	Balance at 01.01.2023 £	Income in year £	Expenditure in year £	Transfers £	Balance at 31.12.2023 £
Unrestricted & designated funds					
Unrestricted revenue funds	192,194	77,566	(19,258)	-	250,502
Total unrestricted funds	<u>192,194</u>	<u>77,566</u>	<u>(19,258)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>250,502</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2023

14. MOVEMENT ON FUNDS (continued)

Restricted funds

Fans' Fund	-	347,967	(306,494)	-	41,473
Total restricted funds	-	347,967	(306,494)	-	41,473
Total charity funds	192,194	425,533	(325,752)	-	291,975

15. RESTRICTED FUNDS

The purposes for which the restricted funds are held by the charity are:

- Fans' Fund Grant funding from the Premier League Fans' Fund to be used for the following outcomes:
- Outcome 1 - To Improve engagement between fans and fan groups and the key operational staff who deliver supporter liaison, disability access and any related facilities and services.
 - Outcome 2 - To make fans voice more representative, through the promotion and development of effective membership organisation.
 - Outcome 3 - To improve the matchday and non-matchday experience for all fans by making football more diverse and inclusive.
 - Outcome 4 - To fund use of not-for-profit skilled or professional services that create and support innovative fan engagement projects.
 - Outcome 5 - To improve the away fan experience.

16. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Fixed Assets £	Current Assets £	Current Liabilities £	Total £
At 31st December 2023				
Restricted funds	3,661	80,530	(42,718)	41,473
Unrestricted funds	194	257,213	(6,905)	250,502
	3,855	337,743	(49,623)	291,975
At 31st December 2022				
Restricted funds	2,611	35,583	(38,194)	-
Unrestricted funds	138	197,696	(5,640)	192,194
	2,749	233,279	(43,834)	192,194

17. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

During the year the company made no transactions with related parties.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

England & Wales - Charity number 1177415

Accounts



Annual Report

2022

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President's foreword

David Bernstein CBE

Welcome to this year's Level Playing Field Annual Report.

I would like to start by thanking all Level Playing Field members of staff, for their efforts over the course of another successful year for the charity.

A tremendous impact continues to be made by our small team. Each year, the experiences of so many disabled sports fans across England & Wales improve, as a result of their knowledge, care and dedication.

It is also important to recognise the contributions of our Trustees. The wealth of expertise and consideration they volunteer, complements the dedication of a highly motivated staff team.

On a representative level, we have also been pleased to welcome Roy Hodgson as a Patron this year. Roy is respected throughout football and the support of the former England manager will prove invaluable for us.

The visibility of the charity once again received a boost through the Weeks of Action campaign. There was a return to normality, with high levels of in-person activity at stadiums around the country and an opportunity for our staff to make physical visits.

This year has also featured numerous reminders of why our work continues to be so necessary. None was more striking than the UEFA Champions League Final, with disabled Liverpool fans treated unacceptably at another showpiece event. Our staff were in discussions with Liverpool Disabled Supporters' Associations throughout and wrote to UEFA and the Sports Minister in the aftermath, receiving responses from both. It is now important that these events are learned from.



Next year will present new opportunities and challenges for Level Playing Field. We are in the process of developing a new long-term strategy for the charity and continue to strengthen our relationships with key stakeholders.

There are also set to be further developments, on the back of the Government's Fan Led Review. This is of significant interest to me, given the dramatic impact it could have on the politics of football as a whole, in this country. Provisions for disabled supporters should be considered throughout and we are keen to see how that is incorporated.

2022 will be another important year for Level Playing Field, where accessibility and inclusion for disabled fans will remain at the heart of everything we do.

With best wishes,

David Bernstein CBE

Chair's report

Tony Taylor



I am pleased to welcome you to our latest Annual Report, on behalf of the Board of Trustees at Level Playing Field. Our thanks go to our President, David Bernstein CBE, whom you have already heard from, as well as our Vice Presidents Lord Faulkner of Worcester and Lord Rosser of Ickenham, for their support of our work during another important year for the charity.

We were deeply saddened this year, by the passing of our fellow trustee, Rex Burton. His honesty, wise counsel, and determination were a crucial part of Level Playing Field's growth. His passion and drive to improve access and inclusion for disabled fans inspired us all. Rest in peace Rex, from the Board of Trustees at Level Playing Field, the wider team and every supporter that has had a better experience as a result of your devotion.

Rex's contribution in this space was felt far beyond his work as a trustee, with the legacy of his tireless work as MK Dons Disability Officer being clear to see through our Away Fans Survey, as the club was officially awarded English football's 'best away fan experience.'

The away fan survey was an important piece of research, which had some troubling findings. It revealed that over half of the disabled fans who do not currently attend away games had done previously. This suggests that many disabled supporters are now opting not to attend away games, with key barriers highlighted as poor views, being seated in the home end and the lack of disability awareness from other fans. These issues can all be rectified, and we are working towards this with clubs and disabled supporters' associations (DSAs).

A need for more education and awareness in the wider supporter community was also raised by the results of our second annual fan survey. The number of fans for whom 'Attitudes of others is a barrier when attending live sport' almost doubled from the 2021 results. The figure jumped from 15%, to 28.5% this year. This survey provides valuable evidence when we discuss the need for improvements with

Annual Report

clubs and governing bodies, while also allowing DSAs and individual fans to raise key concerns directly, while removing any misconceptions their experiences could be isolated.

1309 fans participated in the 2022 Level Playing Field annual fan survey, which was a slight reduction on the launch edition, as would be expected. We are keen to ensure this increases in 2023 however, to maintain the strength of our data and as next year will be key for assessing trends across the period.

I would like to thank all the clubs that collaborated with us on surveys and campaigns throughout the year. While the findings will not always be complimentary for them, it is crucial that they still see the value and engage accordingly. We are also grateful to our funders, particularly the Premier League and EFL. Their financial support is essential to our ongoing work, as is their recognition of the need for a collective approach to improvements on access and inclusion.

Interaction with governing bodies has been far worse on the European stage. The treatment of disabled supporters at the Champions League Final was unacceptable and we have been working with Liverpool DSA, politicians and the wider fan community to address that. We were invited to provide evidence to the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee (DCMS) and also wrote to UEFA directly on two separate occasions. Our work to ensure the prioritisation of media over disabled supporters ends and considerations for disabled fans are brought to the forefront when planning these events will continue.

Our thanks go to the fans and DSAs who support us with these battles and highlight the barriers they meet when watching live sport, as well as sharing the good practices they encounter. This expands our knowledge base beyond what would ever be possible internally and we will always seek out your insight.

The staff team at Level Playing Field has grown this year, with the introduction of our new access auditor, David Moffat. This comes with the increased demand for audits, showing further commitments from venues to ensure they are suitable for disabled fans, and the regard in which Level Playing Field is held when it comes to carrying out audits and working with the relevant staff in the aftermath.

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I am hugely thankful to our staff as a whole, for the work they have done throughout 2022, which has raised the voice of disabled fans. It was a relief that this year, more of that could once again be done in person and there was direct interaction with the fans their work is being done to assist.

My final thanks, goes to my fellow trustees. Your hard work is certainly felt by me and I know likewise from all others at Level Playing Field. We continue to see development, year-on-year and I know that is a reward for each of you. Attending live sport is a significant force for good and its impact on a person's wellbeing should never be taken for granted. It must be preserved and enhanced and that will continue to be our aim in 2023.

Tony Taylor



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About Level Playing Field

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Level Playing Field is a registered charity in England and Wales, which acts as a campaigning and advisory organisation to its membership and other parties across all sports. We have a team of dedicated staff with specialist knowledge, skills and experience around issues concerning access and inclusion.

Level Playing Field embraces 'the social model of disability' and promotes the removal of barriers that might prevent a disabled spectator from attending or enjoying a live sports event. We want to ensure that disabled people enjoy an equality of experience as they attend live sport. Level Playing Field is driven to address the current inequality of experience for disabled fans attending live sport. Whether it's lack of choice, availability of tickets or a second-rate experience we use a proactive and constructive approach to tackle these and other issues.



Our mission

Level Playing Field promotes a positive, inclusive experience for disabled sports fans



Our vision

A world in which all disabled fans can freely access and enjoy live sporting events.



Our aims

- Providing support and advocacy for disabled sports fans.
- Offering advice, access audits and training to sports clubs and governing bodies.
- Working with architects and design teams to ensure an inclusive and accessible physical environment at live sporting events.
- Building relationships and partnerships with sports clubs, DSAs, fans and sector organisations.
- Campaigning to keep the disability agenda top of mind for the government.

Level Playing Field delivers its work through four key pillars:

- 
- ▶ **For the Fans**
 - ▶ **For the Clubs**
 - ▶ **Knowledge Centre**
 - ▶ **Campaigns**

Putting it simply, Level Playing Field campaigns and works towards improving the matchday experience for disabled fans by driving an equal matchday experience.

Why we do what we do

It is estimated that 50% of disabled people don't take part in recreational or physical activity.

The barriers to why a disabled fan chooses not to attend live sport can be addressed through training, raising awareness, and updating facilities and services. Last year, Level Playing Field received hundreds of enquiries and complaints and we aim to address these common recurring issues.

Level Playing Field are guided by the following principles:

- ▶ Anti-discrimination – so that disabled people do not face discrimination arising from poor or misinformed practice.
- ▶ Equality of opportunity or making things fairer – for disabled people in every aspect of their contact with sports clubs and venues.
- ▶ Increasing the independence and choices that disabled people have.
- ▶ Individual requirements / diversity – recognising that a disabled person is an individual who, like all others, has his or her own requirements, abilities, human rights and responsibilities.
- ▶ Integration/inclusion – such that services are made accessible to disabled people and offer choice.
- ▶ Involvement in decision-making – so that disabled people, and/or their advocates, are consulted before decisions that affect them are made.
- ▶ The social model of disability, which explains that it is social and physical 'barriers' that cause 'disability', not impairments.

Level Playing Field is working to remove the barriers that currently exclude disabled people. These barriers can be prejudice and stereotypes, the way things are organised and run, along with little to no access to information, buildings and transport.



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Knowledge Centre



— Away fan survey —

As the leading charity for disabled sports fans in England and Wales, Level Playing Field receives hundreds of comments, enquiries, complaints and match reviews from disabled supporters each year. Through reading and responding to these comments, we've seen time and time again how different the matchday experience often is for disabled away fans, compared to home fans.

We wanted to hear more from disabled supporters about their experience of attending away matches and investigate how widespread the discrepancy between the home and away matchday experience is.

The survey was conducted online and was sent out to disabled supporters through Disabled Supporters Associations (DSAs), club contacts and also via social media. The survey was live for a month, running from Thursday 6th January through to Sunday 6th February 2022. Responses were anonymous unless the respondent chose to give their name.

The results presented in this survey summary will be used to advise clubs on how best to support the disabled away fans who visit their stadiums. It will also be used to advise governing bodies, DSAs and non-disabled supporter groups.

Key findings

Barriers to attending

48% of respondents said that a poor view of the match was a barrier for them attending away matches.

The next two most common barriers for disabled fans were not being seated with their own fans (28%) and difficulty purchasing tickets (25%).



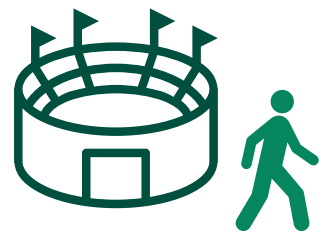
Disability Abuse

43% of the disabled respondents said they had experienced some form of abuse or negative attitude at an away game in the last 5 years.



Declining attendance

Over half of the disabled fans who don't currently attend away games said that they had done previously. The number one provision these fans said that they needed to be available was better/more accessible parking.



Toilet Facilities

On average, respondents rated 'toilet quality' as being between poor and adequate for away matchdays - notably lower than other categories.





Annual fan survey

Level Playing Field is a registered charity in England and Wales that exists to improve the experience of disabled sports fans attending live matches and sports events. As a campaigning and advisory organisation, we work with both fans and organisations across all sports to help drive these improvements.

One of the key ways that we do this is by engaging with disabled spectators to better understand their experiences and to ask what they require on matchdays. The annual survey helps us to gather this information and is our biggest survey each year, with over 1000 disabled sports fans participating. This is the second year the survey has been conducted.

The survey was conducted using SurveyMonkey and was sent out to disabled supporters through Disabled Supporters Associations (DSAs), club contacts and also via social media. The survey was live for a month, running from Tuesday 5th July through to Friday 5th August 2022. Responses were anonymous unless the respondent chose to give their name.

This summary report details the results of the survey and compares many of these results with last year's findings. Throughout this report, the term 'pp' will be used as an abbreviation for percentage points when comparing percentages. For example, an increase from 10% last year to 15% would be 'Up 5pp'.

The results of the survey will be used to advise clubs on how best to improve the matchday experience of disabled fans. It will also be used to advise governing bodies, DSAs and non-disabled supporter groups on disability access & inclusion.

Key findings

Attitudes of others

The amount of fans for whom 'Attitudes of others is a barrier when attending live sport' has almost doubled.

The figure jumped from 15% in 2021 to 28.5% this year.



Anxiety barriers

Over a quarter of disabled fans said that 'anxiety or lack of confidence is a barrier when attending live sport'.

This was an increase from last year - rising from 24.5% to 26.5% - despite covid-19 restrictions abating.



Ticketing difficulties

There was also a significant increase in the number of fans for whom 'difficulty purchasing tickets' was a barrier.

This rose from 17% of fans in 2021 to 24% this year.



Inaccessible Venues

The number of disabled fans who said they are unable to attend certain sports or sporting venues due to lack of accessibility has increased to 36.5%.

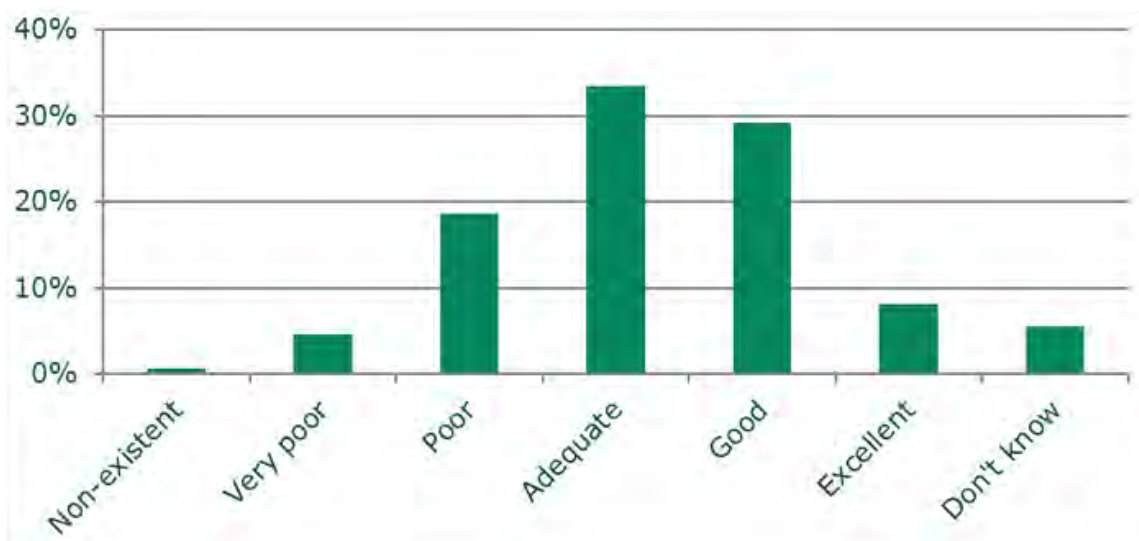
This is a significant increase from 30.5% in 2021.



Club ratings - Nationwide

We asked respondents "Overall, how would you rate sports stadiums / clubs in England and Wales on access and inclusion?" The chart below shows the results.

Figure 6: Accessibility ratings for stadiums in England and Wales



- ▶ Non-existent – **0.5%** (Unchanged)
- ▶ Very poor – **4.5%** (Down 1pp)
- ▶ Poor – **18.5%** (Up 1.5pp)
- ▶ Adequate – **33.5%** (Up 2.5pp)
- ▶ Good – **29%** (Down 2.5pp)
- ▶ Excellent – **8%** (Down 0.5pp)
- ▶ Don't know – **5.5%** (Down 1pp)



Overall, fans gave an average rating between 'Adequate' and 'Good', which is the same as last year. However there was a decrease in the number of fans who rated access and inclusion as 'good' and a similar size increase in the number of fans who rated it as 'adequate'. Whilst these changes are fairly small, this is clearly a shift in the wrong direction, as we would hope to see access and inclusion improving each year at stadiums in England and Wales.

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Campaigns

Weeks of Action

Weeks of Action returned with fans back in stadiums for the charity's 18th Weeks of Action campaign since its launch in 2005.

Level Playing Field continued its year on year growth in engagement across both club participation and in the digital sphere, with over 100 clubs, disabled supporters associations, organisations and partners supporting the campaign and its message: For Disabled Sports Fans.

Level Playing Field ambassador and three-time Paralympic Champion Stephen Miller helped launch the campaign in February 2022, writing to clubs to ask for their continued support once more.



The Manchester Derby

In another Weeks of Action campaign that saw over 100 clubs and organisations take part, the Premier League had the biggest increase in support from the previous year.

Man City dedicated their match against Man United to the campaign, and club staff met with a handful disabled supporters to hear about how they are enjoying being back.

“I would like to thank the access team for making me feel comfortable returning to the stadium, and for their efforts to make my matchday experience as easy and comfortable as possible,” life-long season ticket holder Lynn Ratcliffe said. She and her assistance dog, Simba, were particularly pleased to be back at the stadium on derby day.

Lynn expressed the importance of Level Playing Field’s commitment to improving the accessibility of stadia across the UK, and also mentioned how its website helps her to find important accessibility information for the grounds she visits on her travels with the Club.



Social media

The charity enjoyed another successful campaign across our social media platforms, and the below stats highlight how far the it has come over the years, spreading the positive work done to improve better accessibility and inclusion for disabled fans far and wide.



766,000

impressions



74,400

profile visits



1,431

mentions



46%

rise in
impressions
compared
to 2020



116%

rise in
profile visits
compared
to 2021



85%

rise in
mentions
compared
to 2020



Promotional materials



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UEFA Champions League Final

Communication with UEFA

On May 24 - in the week ahead of the Champions League Final - Level Playing Field wrote to UEFA to ask 'why only 14% of available wheelchair user spaces have been offered to disabled supporters who might require this accessible space.'

Liverpool Football Club were allocated only 38 wheelchair user spaces for the Champions League final at the Stade de France in Paris and understanding was that Real Madrid were allocated the same amount. This meant only 76 spaces in total.

There are 550 wheelchair user spaces available at the Stade de France, so only 14% were to both sets of fans.

Level Playing Field understand that some spaces have not been sold due to poor infrastructure and asked UEFA to clarify this, and whether that meant UEFA believed that the 474 spaces not being sold were not fit for purpose.

UEFA were also asked for assurances that those wheelchair user spaces were not used for camera/media positioning or given to corporate partners that do not have a disability.

What was provided in total to Liverpool and Real Madrid was just over 0.1% of the overall capacity of Stade de France. This is entirely unacceptable. The charity made it clear, that any future finals and tournaments needed to look to provide, not withhold.

Questions were also raised about the stadium, which is set to host the Summer Olympics and Paralympics in 2024.

UEFA response

On May 25th, Level Playing Field received a response from UEFA's Football and Social Responsibility division (FSR) thanking Level Playing Field for the email but stating that.

UEFA “acknowledge the situation and states that we (UEFA) agree that the number of seats available to disabled and low mobility supporters is insufficient. We (UEFA) constantly work to ensure the best possible conditions to eliminate barriers to access to UEFA competitions matches.”

“Due to operational challenges, linked in particular to the change of venue for the final on short notice (Stade de France replaced Saint Petersburg only on February 25th), UEFA was able to assign 93 wheelchair positions (76 allocated to the fans of the two clubs) which fulfil the quality sightlines UEFA aims to offer to disabled spectators.”

“For an event of this size, UEFA would usually aim to identify a higher number of positions, but due to operational constraints (e.g. security, poor view, etc.) and the short preparation time, it was not possible to implement optimal solutions for more wheelchair positions.

“Regardless of this year’s specific situation, we will continue to work to improve accessibility to UEFA’s matches.”

Level Playing Field responded to UEFA, thanking them for their response, but sharing disappointment that questions were not directly answered,

UEFA confirmed that there was insufficient space for disabled fans, which raised further questions on their criteria for major international final hosts.

They also failed to provide assurances that any available wheelchair user spaces were not used for camera/media positioning. This went on to be the case.

The charity called on UEFA to look to work more closely with disabled fans and experts when selecting stadiums and organising future events.

After the final

Level Playing Field's Fans Liaison Officer, Liam Bird, wrote to UEFA following the mistreatment of disabled fans at the final. In it he urged the governing body to expand its review and an excerpt can be found below:

Level Playing Field welcomes the fact that UEFA has commissioned an independent report into the scenes outside the ground at the Champions League final between Liverpool and Real Madrid. But we call on UEFA to widen this review into why wheelchair user spaces were used to house media and potentially corporate guests.

As you know, UEFA only provided 96 wheelchair user spaces (38 provided to Liverpool and 38 to Real Madrid and the remainder on general sale out of the 550 available). For UEFA to provide such minimal allocation for wheelchair users and instead allocate to media is shameful.

We would like to see the review ask:

- If disability inclusion was 'factored in' when choosing the final stadium for this year's tournament?
- Why was a stadium that UEFA themselves stated had operational constraints "sight lines" and also possible "security" considerations, chosen to host a major international final?
- Why did UEFA exclude disabled football fans from a major tournament to benefit media and corporate guests?
- Is there a cultural issue at UEFA towards the safety and also the inclusion of fans? Following the Euro 2020 final the UEFA president issued inappropriate remarks that were not accurate. He stated he hadn't seen issues at Wembley, and it was a nice final. This coupled with what we have witnessed at the Stade de France paints a concerning picture. Will this be considered in the review also? [Click here for news article relating to the comments.](#)

UEFA needs a full review into how they view and support disabled football fans' inclusion and safety. Disabled voices need to be part of any review because at the moment, in the eyes of many disabled supporters, #EqualGame needs an asterisk at the end: *Unless you are a supporter with a disability.



Communication with Government

Chair of Level Playing Field, Tony Taylor, wrote a letter to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, which can be found below:

I am sure you are aware that Level Playing Field (a registered charity) actively campaigns and represents the views of disabled fans across a number of sports. The majority of our work is, of course, football-based.

May I say I welcome your comments regarding the appalling scenes we witnessed at the Champions League Final. We are grateful for your request to UEFA for a full and thorough investigation of what could have potentially been a catastrophic sequence of events.

We have now seen crowd trouble at two major finals (Euro 2020 and the Champions League Final). Unfortunately, it was reported that disabled fans were caught up in the issues witnessed pre-game at both of these major sporting events. We wish to ensure that relevant questions and observations around disabled fans' safety are appropriately made and considered, and we would be pleased to discuss this with you.

We also wish to raise another serious issue with you relating to the Champions League Final. The Stade de France capacity for wheelchair users is 550 spaces. For the final, UEFA allocated a paltry 38 spaces for Liverpool and Real Madrid. Additionally, some wheelchair user spaces were sold directly by UEFA to non-Liverpool or Real Madrid fans making the total available wheelchair space at a major European final equate to just 93 spaces. This left 457 Wheelchair user spaces unaccounted for.

We had serious concerns with this and raised several questions and requested assurances from UEFA ahead of the final. We are aware that UEFA deemed certain spaces as not fit for purpose. Some of the questions we posed to UEFA included the following.

We understand from speaking to our associates at the Centre for Access to Football in Europe (of which I am also a director) that tickets for some of the spaces are not being sold due to poor infrastructure. Does this mean that UEFA considers that 474 spaces of the 550 wheelchair user spaces at the Stade de France are not fit for purpose?

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May we please have your assurances that these wheelchair user spaces are not being used for camera/media positioning or given to corporate partners that do not have a disability?

Level Playing Field considers that it would be far more appropriate to invest in delivering more accessible spaces – especially for a final of this magnitude – rather than restricting the rights of disabled people to attend by reducing the capacity. We fully understand that the match was transferred to Paris at relatively short notice, given events in Ukraine, but the stadium in Paris is a significant one, and we would expect it to be fit for purpose, particularly for a country that is presumably in the final stages of preparations for the Olympic Games.

UEFA's response was then shared.

We specifically asked UEFA again why was it that 457 wheelchair user spaces at the Stade de France were not fit for purpose?

We have also asked if disability inclusion was 'factored in' when choosing the final stadium for this year's tournament? We appreciate that the situation in Russia has caused issues; however, the final is being hosted in a stadium that even UEFA consider to have "insufficient" wheelchair user spaces.

UEFA has chosen a stadium which boasts 550 Wheelchair user spaces; however, it would seem only 96 are fit for purposes. They state 'it's not possible to 'implement optimal solutions.

Finally, UEFA did not provide any assurances that wheelchair user spaces were not being used for camera/media positioning or given to corporate partners that may not have a disability?

UEFA rightly promote their #EqualGame campaign to promote a vision that everyone should be able to enjoy football. Their actions – or inaction – regarding this year's Champions League final suggests that #EqualGame means Equality, provided you are not disabled.

We are sure that, like us, you will have seen evidence that wheelchair bays were being used for the press and media the final, evidence was shared, indicating that wheelchair bays were being used for press and media, something that UEFA could have declared to us in advance had they been so minded.

I know that you are in contact with UEFA about events at the final, but I would ask you to raise our concerns as it is clear that disabled Liverpool fans, in particular, were not considered and discriminated against.

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Dear Tony,

Thank you for your correspondence of 30 May to the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, the Rt Hon Nadine Dorries MP, regarding the UEFA Champions League Final 2022. I am replying as the Minister for Sport. Thank you for raising your concerns. We were appalled by the terrifying and potentially dangerous conditions experienced by many Liverpool fans at the Champions League and I am shocked and concerned by what has come to light. We welcome the fact that UEFA has commissioned an independent investigation, and issued an apology to fans who attended the final.

The French Government has also commissioned a review of the delivery of the event and will also be supporting the UEFA investigation. I met with Minister Oudéa-Castéramet earlier this month and we will continue to work closely with the relevant authorities and Liverpool FC, noting the specific issues you have raised with regards to disabled access.

The government recognises the great importance of getting disabled people to take part in sport and physical activity both as participants and as spectators. We recognise there are barriers which exist and prevent some people from taking part, and we want to continue to do all that we can to tackle these. We will continue to work with our arm's length bodies and sector partners to encourage sport bodies to make sport more accessible.

As you will be aware, the government expects all sports and all clubs to take the necessary action to fulfil their legal obligations under the Equality Act of 2010 to make reasonable adjustments so that disabled people are not placed at a substantial disadvantage when accessing sports venues.

The reasonable adjustment duty is an anticipatory duty because it is owed to disabled people in general. This means that owners of stadia are expected to anticipate the requirements of disabled customers and the adjustments that may have to be made for them, so that disabled people can access the service or facility in question.

Thank you again for your letter. I hope this response has been helpful.

Nigel Huddleston MP Minister for Sport, Tourism, Heritage and Civil Society.

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The Team Grows

Dave Moffat joins as new Access Auditor

Following a period of growth, Level Playing Field appointed a new full time Access Auditor to join the access team.

Dave Moffat officially joined in April and his role involves undertaking Access Audits on Sports stadia throughout the country.

Dave graduated from Northumbria University in 2019 with a degree in Building Surveying and is currently working towards his NRAC accreditation.



He has been a building surveyor for over 20 years, specialising and training in accessibility over the last five years. He is passionate about accessibility and sport.

Level Playing Field General Manager and Head of Access Ruth Hopkins said: “Following a period of growth at Level Playing Field we are delighted to welcome Dave to the team.

“His experience and love of sport will be invaluable and we know he is looking forward to undertaking access audits and design appraisals at different sports venues across the country.”

Dave enjoys all sports having participated in football, rugby, cricket and hockey amongst others and has recently taken up walking football, which he really enjoys.

He has managed adult and junior football teams, including his sons football team from under 9s through to under 19s.

Dave is a lifelong Newcastle United fan and follows all his local sports teams.

Roy Hodgson CBE joins as Patron



Level Playing Field was delighted to announce former England manager Roy Hodgson CBE is to be its Patron.

An influential figure in the game, boasting an impressive coaching career, Roy began his career in Sweden and went on to manage clubs with great success across Europe and, of course, in the Premier League.

During his illustrious career in football management, he has coached national teams including Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, Finland, and of course, England. He led the Three Lions to three major international tournaments, including the 2014 World Cup in Brazil, as well as Euro 2012 and Euro 2016. Roy supported Level Playing Field's Weeks of Action campaign in 2021 when in charge of Premier League side Crystal Palace.

Tony Taylor, Chair of Level Playing Field, said: "We are delighted to welcome Roy as our new Patron.

"He joins us at an exciting time for the charity. The power of attending live sport should never be underestimated and the opportunity to participate in the beautiful game, in however you choose, should be available to all.

"His footballing achievements are inspiring, and I am confident his appointment will have a decisive influence on Level Playing Field moving forward."

Level Playing Field's President, David Bernstein CBE, himself a former Chair of the Football Association, said: "It is great for us to have Roy on board.

"The legacy he has in football and sport is admirable and will be integral as the charity continues to work towards future missions and aims."

Roy said: "I am really proud to join Level Playing Field as their new Patron. "The work it does is vital in ensuring disabled sports fans are rightly included and have an equal opportunity to watch football and other sports.

"Over my years managing, I have looked up into the stands and have seen visible improvements in infrastructure as well as in stadium facilities for disabled fans but clearly there is a lot more to do."

Annual Report

Level Playing Field

A year in review

As 2022 drew to a close year, we took a look back on a significant year for Level Playing Field. The review can be seen in full on the charity's website.

We saw disabled fan representation in the English parliament and the French Senate.

There were biggest-of-their-kind disability fan surveys that provided mixed results regarding access and inclusion of disabled sports fans.

Late in the year, Gianni Infantino's 'I Feel' speech served as a stark reminder that there is a lot of work to do to educate disabled and non-disabled people regarding disability inclusion and that we must continue to do more to ensure the voices of disabled fans are elevated.



January

Away Fan Survey launched

February

Weeks of Action kicks-off

March

Huddersfield open inclusion room

April

Dave Moffat joins Level Playing Field

May

Cath Dyer named EFL Supporter of the Year

June

UEFA urged to expand independent review

July

Matchday supporter guide launched

August

MK Dons win Best Away Fan Experience

September

See Sport Differently support for RNIB

October

Transport for All given podcast platform

November

Annual Fan Survey results published

December

Unite For Access launched

Staff



Owain Davies

Chief Executive



Ruth Hopkins

General Manager & Head of Access and Development - NRAC Auditor



Nicky Baker

Access and Development Officer - NRAC Auditor



Daniel Townley

Development Officer



Liam Bird

Fans Liaison Officer



Ben Southby

Media and Communications Officer

Trustees



Tony Taylor

Chair



Steve Evans

Secretary



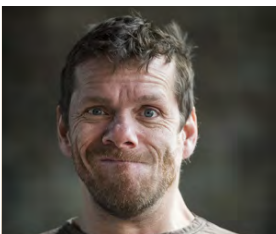
Joanna Deagle

Trustee



Jo McNicol

Trustee



Jamie Beddard

Trustee

A word from the Chief Executive

Owain Davies

Thank you for taking the time to read this annual report. I hope that through it, you have seen the value that our staff and network of disabled fans have provided, in our mission to improve access and inclusion.

2022 has been a year of many successes for us as a charity but has seen further concerns raised. The horrific events at the UEFA Champions League Final, following the failures we saw at the Euro 2020 Final, serve as a clear warning. More must be done to protect fans and the current disregard for their welfare cannot be tolerated.

Our key campaigns had so much life in them this year. Two major surveys focused on the why watching live sport is so important and areas to improve, while 'Weeks of Action' was centred around the return of fans.

A personal favourite moment from the 'Weeks of Action' campaign, was the implementation of British Sign Language at the Carabao Cup Final for the national anthem. Interpreters wore Level Playing Field branding, providing an important service for disabled fans, as well as visibility within the wider crowd. We are excited to see this grow and looking ahead to next year, we are cannot wait to see what impact the name change to 'Unite For Access' will have on the campaign.



The second year of our annual fan survey has once again provided us with key areas to target. Our away fan survey results also gave us a different set of data and backed up many of the points we have been raising. Nearly 50% of respondents said that poor views were barriers to attending away matches, while 28% of respondents have stated that not being in the away end with their own fans contributed to a poor away matchday experience. We also saw very concerning responses in terms of abuse and negative attitudes, which we are pushing for more action to be taken on. A positive side of the results was that it allowed us to recognise the efforts on MK Dons, who received the best appraisals from disabled fans.

This year also saw us increase direct support for fans, with the creation of a guide for first-time football fans and Personal Assistants. Support for clubs has also been provided, with 12 disability access officer round table meetings and ongoing expert advice sharing.

Our vast work throughout this year would not be possible without support from the Premier League and the EFL, which we are very grateful for. I am also hugely thankful to all of the Disabled Supporters' Associations and clubs that have collaborated with us.

My biggest thanks though, goes to my fellow staff. They frequently go above and beyond in their efforts to improve access and inclusion. I know they see the rewards in our work, so I am pleased that we have been able to achieve so much together over the last 12 months.

Level Playing Field

For disabled sports fans

Level Playing Field
The Junction
Station Road
Watford
WD17 1ET



01923 545 370



info@levelplayingfield.org.uk



levelplayingfield.org.uk



@lpftweets



@levelplayingfielduk



/lpftweets



Company Number: 11109719
Charity Number: 1177415

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD
DIRECTORS' REPORT AND
UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2022

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

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LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

CHARITY REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

CHARITY NUMBER: 1177415

COMPANY NUMBER: 11109719

TRUSTEES/DIRECTORS: A Taylor (Chair)
S Evans
J McNicol
R Burton (until 5 January 2022)
J Deagle (resigned 13 March 2023)
J Beddard

COMPANY SECRETARY: S Evans

REGISTERED OFFICE: Greville House
10 Jury Street
Warwick
Warwickshire
CV34 4EW

PRINCIPAL ADDRESS: The Junction
Station Road
Watford
WD17 1ET

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER: Mark Harwood FCA BFP FMAAT
Michael Harwood & Co
Greville House
10 Jury Street
Warwick
Warwickshire
CV34 4EW

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (INCL DIRECTORS' REPORT)

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st December 2022. The Trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Level Playing Field, a charitable company limited by guarantee (Company no. 11109719 and Charity no. 1177415), was incorporated on the 13th December 2017 and is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association. The directors of the charitable company (who are its trustees for the purposes of charity law) have no interest in the company's assets or surplus and receive no remuneration.

The Directors/Trustees meet at least once a quarter and are actively involved in the strategic direction of the charity. Level Playing Field is an inclusive employer and actively promotes the positive impact of having a diverse workforce and trustee board. Level Playing Field has signed up to the Disability Confident Scheme. This commitment allows Level Playing Field to accurately and responsibly represent the community it serves. Trustees are recruited and appointed in line with best practice using both internal and external sources.

A business continuation policy is in place and the Trustees constantly review potential risks, producing plans incorporating financial, operational and strategic options to react to changing circumstances should they occur based on detailed risk assessment.

The Charity works on a collaborative basis with several charities, including the Wheelchair Football Association with which a partnership agreement was signed in 2021. The Charity also works closely with the Centre for Access to Football in Europe, but has no formal agreements or links in situ.

OBJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

Level Playing Field adopts and promotes the social model of disability, in which disability is viewed as a social issue and that an individual only becomes disabled as a result of the social, attitudinal and environmental barriers that the individual faces.

The Charity is focused on removing these barriers in all sports. Level Playing Field (and its membership) is committed to achieving an environment where:

- all fans can enjoy an equal experience at live sports events
- all stadia and sports venues are fully accessible and inclusive
- all customer and/or fan services are equal and inclusive
- disabled people are seen as customers with a commercial value

The Charity is guided by the following principles:

- anti-discrimination – so that disabled people do not face discrimination arising from poor or misinformed practice
- equality of opportunity and fairness – for disabled people in every aspect of their contact with sports clubs and venues
- increasing the independence and choices offered to disabled people
- individual requirements – recognising that a disabled person is an individual who, in a diverse society, has his or her own requirements, abilities, human rights and responsibilities
- integration/inclusion – such that services are made accessible to disabled people and offer a choice
- involvement in decision-making – so that disabled people, and/or their advocates, are consulted before decisions which affect them are made
- acknowledgement of the social model of disability which explains that it is social and physical barriers that cause 'disability' not impairments.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

DIRECTORS' REPORT (Continued)

Level Playing Field is working to remove the barriers that currently exclude disabled people, including:

- prejudice and stereotypes
- the way things are organised and run
- lack of/inadequate access to information, buildings and transport

The Directors/Trustees have had due regard to the guidance published by The Charity Commission on public benefit in managing the activities of the Charity.

The main activities of the Charity during the year were as follows (a more detailed summary of the charity's activities can be found in the Annual Report):

Fan Engagement

2022 was a busy period for Level Playing Field; fans were back watching live sport and attention was on watching live sports in the stands. There were a number of key areas of work which were undertaken:

- podcasts: this continued to reach fans across the country and beyond with monthly episodes released focusing on a range of topics from LPF survey results to the away match experience.
- fan forums: continued virtually with good attendance. A number of forums took the opportunity to focus on underrepresented disabilities and provide education and awareness amongst fellow fans.
- in 2022 Level Playing Field was pleased to award MK Dons with the 'Best away fan experience' as voted by fans.
- Disabled Supporters Associations: support and guidance were provided across the season with further support in the establishment of new Disabled Supporters Associations.

Champions League Final 2022

Once again in 2022 there was a major final and another major incident occurred. This time it was the Champions League final at Stade de France where Liverpool played Real Madrid. The scenes outside the stadiums were terrifying to see and even more so for the fans caught up in it.

We have now seen crowd trouble at two major finals (Euro 2020 and the Champions League Final). Unfortunately, it was reported that disabled fans were caught up in the issues witnessed pre-game at both of these major sporting events. We wish to ensure that relevant questions and observations about disabled fans' safety are appropriately made and considered, and we would be pleased to work with authorities to ensure this doesn't happen again.

Surveys

Our knowledge centre pillar of work has been vital throughout 2022 as we were able to gather real life experiences and used that information to bring about change. Throughout the year, the Charity had over 1900 fans take part in two Level Playing Field surveys (Away Fan Survey and Annual Fan Survey). Some of the key findings which will shape the Charity's work going forward are:

Annual Fan Survey 2022

- the amount of fans for whom 'Attitudes of others is a barrier when attending live sport' has almost doubled. The figure jumped from 15% in 2021 to 28.5% this year.
- over a quarter of disabled fans said that 'anxiety or lack of confidence is a barrier when attending live sport'. This was an increase from last year – rising from 24.5% to 26.5% – despite covid-19 restrictions abating.
- there was also a significant increase in the number of fans for whom 'difficulty purchasing tickets' was a barrier. This rose from 17% of fans in 2021 to 24% this year.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

DIRECTORS' REPORT (Continued)

- the number of disabled fans who said they are unable to attend certain sports or sporting venues due to lack of accessibility has increased to 36.5%. This is a significant increase from 30.5% in 2021.

Away Fan Survey

- nearly 50% of respondents said that poor views were barriers to attending away matches.
- while 28% of respondents have stated that not being in the away end with their own fans contributed to a poor away matchday experience.
- an additional 23% said that the lack of disability awareness from other fans contributes to a negative away day experience.
- the lack of disability awareness may have contributed to the fact that 43% of the disabled respondents stated that they had experienced some form of abuse or negative attitude at an away game in the last five years.

Campaigns - Weeks of Action

The campaign was very successful with significant buy-in by Clubs, Disabled Supporters Associations, Disabled Fans and governing bodies.

- 46% rise in impressions (social media)
- 116% rise in profile visits (social media)
- 80+ clubs participated

Clubs continued to showcase their commitment to making the game more inclusive and accessible for disabled fans through the service they provide.

A significant milestone this season took place at Wembley Stadium. For the first time in history, the National Anthem had a British Sign Language interpreter. This watershed moment not only made the matchday experience more inclusive but also raised essential awareness.

In September 2022, Level Playing Field announced that the Weeks of Action campaign would be rebranded as 'Unite for Access' from 2023.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The financial position of the charity at 31st December 2022, as more fully detailed in the accounts, can be summarised as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
Net income/(expenditure)	9,796	8,950
Unrestricted Revenue Funds available for the general purposes of the charity	196,207	186,411
Restricted Revenue Funds	-	-
Total Funds	196,207	186,411

RESERVES POLICY

The reserves policy is to maintain a level of unrestricted reserves which covers 6-12 months of operating costs.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

DIRECTORS' REPORT (Continued)

The report of the directors has been prepared having taken advantage of the small companies' exemption in the Companies Act 2006.

On behalf of the board

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'A Taylor', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

A Taylor
Chair
Date: 23 June 2023

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS' REPORT

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the company for the year ended 31st December 2022 which are set out on pages 6 to 16.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your company's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Mark Harwood FCA BFP FMAAT
Michael Harwood & Co
Chartered Accountants
Greville House
10 Jury Street
Warwick
CV34 4EW

Date: 26th June 2023

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(Incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account)
For the year ended 31st December 2022

	Note	2022 Unrestricted £	2022 Restricted £	2022 Total £	2021 Unrestricted £	2021 Restricted £	2021 Total £
Income from:							
Donations & grants	2	394	-	394	818	-	818
Charitable activities	3	121,123	304,803	425,926	74,107	270,902	345,009
Total income		121,517	304,803	426,320	74,925	270,902	345,827
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds		216	-	216	212	-	212
Charitable activities	4	86,117	323,489	409,606	36,706	290,195	326,901
Other	5	1,069	9,646	10,715	2,105	7,659	9,764
Total expenditure		87,402	333,135	420,537	39,023	297,854	336,877
Net income/(expenditure) for the year		34,115	(28,332)	5,783	35,902	(26,952)	8,950
Transfers between funds		(28,332)	28,332	-	(26,952)	26,952	-
Net movement in funds for the year		5,783	-	5,783	8,950	-	8,950
Fund balances brought forward		186,411	-	186,411	177,461	-	177,461
Fund balances at 31st December 2022	14	192,194	-	192,194	186,411	-	186,411

The notes on pages 9 to 16 form an integral part of the accounts.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD
(Company no. 11109719)

BALANCE SHEET
As at 31st December 2022

	Note	2022		2021	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	8		2,748		1,356
Investments			1		-
			<u>2,749</u>		<u>1,356</u>
Current assets					
Debtors	9	12,088		9,785	
Cash at bank and in hand		221,191		225,069	
Total current assets		<u>233,279</u>		<u>234,854</u>	
Current liabilities					
Creditors	10	(43,834)		(49,799)	
Net current assets			<u>189,445</u>		<u>185,055</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u><u>192,194</u></u>		<u><u>186,411</u></u>
Funds of the Charity:					
Restricted funds			-		-
Unrestricted funds			192,194		186,411
Total charity funds	14		<u><u>192,194</u></u>		<u><u>186,411</u></u>

Directors' statements:

- The company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies;
- No members have required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006;
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 23 June 2023.

On behalf of the Trustees


A Taylor
Chair

The notes on pages 9 to 16 form an integral part of the accounts.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the year ended 31st December 2022

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES**(a) Basis of Accounting**

Level Playing Field is a company limited by guarantee in England & Wales. In the event of the charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity. The address of the registered office is given in the charity information on page 1 and the nature of the charity's operations and principal activities are given in the Annual Report.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis under the historical cost convention, modified to include certain items at fair value. The financial statements are presented in sterling which is the functional currency of the charity and rounded to the nearest £1.

The significant accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years presented unless otherwise stated.

(b) Income

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is legally entitled to the income after any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

For donations to be recognised the charity will have been notified of the amounts and the settlement date in writing. If there are conditions attached to the donation and this requires a level of performance before entitlement can be obtained then income is deferred until those conditions are fully met or the fulfilment of those conditions is within the control of the charity and it is probable that they will be fulfilled.

Investment income is earned through holding assets for investment purposes such as cash and is comprised of bank interest.

(c) Government Grants

Government grants are recognised at the fair value of the asset received or receivable when there is reasonable assurance that the grant conditions will be met and the grants will be received.

A grant that specifies performance conditions is recognised in income when the performance conditions are met. Where a grant does not specify performance conditions it is recognised in income when the proceeds are received or receivable. A grant received before the recognition criteria are satisfied is recognised as a liability.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2022

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)**(d) Expenditure**

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Expenditure is recognised where there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that the settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. It is categorised under the following headings:

- Costs of raising funds includes the monthly charges of donation collection organisations.
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into the categories above and includes governance costs.

(e) Fixed Assets

Items of equipment costing over £200 are capitalised and are stated at cost (or deemed cost) or valuation less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Cost includes costs directly attributable to making the asset capable of operating as intended.

Depreciation is provided on tangible fixed assets, at rates calculated to write off the cost, less estimated residual value, of each asset on a systematic basis over its expected useful life as follows:

- Computer Equipment 3 years straight line

(f) Investments

Investments in subsidiaries are measured at cost less impairment.

(g) Debtors and creditors receivable / payable within one year

Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in expenditure.

(h) Funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds subject to specific restricted conditions imposed by donors. The purposes and use of restricted funds are set out in note 13 to the financial statements.

(i) Taxation

The charity is an exempt charity within the meaning of schedule 3 of the Charities Act 2011 and is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2022

2. DONATIONS AND GRANTS

	2022 Unrestricted £	2022 Restricted £	2022 Total £	2021 Unrestricted £	2021 Restricted £	2021 Total £
Small donations individually less than £100	394	-	394	318	-	318
W3RT	-	-	-	500	-	500
Total donations and grants	394	-	394	818	-	818

3. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2022 Unrestricted £	2022 Restricted £	2022 Total £	2021 Unrestricted £	2021 Restricted £	2021 Total £
Income from Audits	74,383	-	74,383	14,453	-	14,453
Training Income	7,650	-	7,650	11,518	-	11,518
Membership Income	90	-	90	387	-	387
Performance-Related Grants:						
- Premier League Fans Fund	-	304,803	304,803	-	270,902	270,902
- The Football League	36,000	-	36,000	47,749	-	47,749
- The Football Association of Wales	3,000	-	3,000	-	-	-
Total income from charitable activities	121,123	304,803	425,926	74,107	270,902	345,009

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2022

4. EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2022 Unrestricted £	2022 Restricted £	2022 Total £	2021 Unrestricted £	2021 Restricted £	2021 Total £
Direct spending						
Expenses recharged	764	(633)	131	(256)	1,452	1,196
Weeks of Action & Campaigning	1,043	24,566	25,609	633	12,572	13,205
Regional DSA Forums	-	-	-	2	33	35
Event costs	2	28	30	(14)	(264)	(278)
Other campaign costs	11	217	228	-	-	-
Total direct spending	1,820	24,178	25,998	365	13,793	14,158
Support costs						
Staff costs (see Note 6)	69,151	236,019	305,170	32,678	220,324	253,002
Travel and subsistence	1,751	7,247	8,998	95	1,810	1,905
Telephone costs	102	1,194	1,296	33	1,343	1,376
Premises	2,237	42,506	44,743	2,188	41,579	43,767
Publicity	57	723	780	21	396	417
Administration & office supplies	927	6,266	7,193	728	6,006	6,734
Professional fees & insurance	629	4,585	5,214	316	1,677	1,993
Website & email hosting	3,152	97	3,249	250	2,993	3,243
Training	1,266	228	1,494	12	228	240
Postage	21	394	415	5	46	51
Bad debts	5,004	52	5,056	15	-	15
Total support costs	84,297	299,311	383,608	36,341	276,402	312,743
Total expenditure on charitable activities	86,117	323,489	409,606	36,706	290,195	326,901

5. OTHER COSTS

	2022 Unrestricted £	2022 Restricted £	2022 Total £	2021 Unrestricted £	2021 Restricted £	2021 Total £
Bank charges	102	-	102	83	6	89
Governance travel costs	77	277	354	18	337	355
Other legal and professional	557	6,656	7,213	1,885	5,046	6,931
Depreciation	94	1,781	1,875	119	2,270	2,389
Loss on disposal of assets	37	703	740	-	-	-
Sundry expenses	202	229	431	-	-	-
Total other costs	1,069	9,646	10,715	2,105	7,659	9,764

Independent examiner's remuneration

Included in the above figures are independent examination fees of £3,000 (2021 - £3,000) and other financial services of £846 (2021 - £756).

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2022
6. STAFF COSTS

	2022 £	2021 £
Gross wages	271,762	227,725
Social security costs	25,635	20,116
Pension costs	6,879	4,915
Other costs	894	246
Total salaries, wages and related costs	305,170	253,002

Average number of employees	7	6
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The number of employees who received total employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs of more than £60,000 is as follows:

£60,001 - £70,000	1	1
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7. TRUSTEE REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

No Trustee or connected person received any remuneration or expenses either directly or indirectly.

8. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Computer Equipment £	Total £
COST		
At 1 st January 2021	7,168	7,168
Additions	4,007	4,007
Disposals	(2,220)	(2,220)
At 31 st December 2022	<u>8,955</u>	<u>8,955</u>
DEPRECIATION		
At 1 st January 2021	5,812	5,812
Charge for the year	1,875	1,875
Eliminated on disposal	(1,480)	(1,480)
At 31 st December 2022	<u>6,207</u>	<u>6,207</u>
NET BOOK VALUE		
At 31 st December 2022	<u>2,748</u>	<u>2,748</u>
At 31 st December 2021	<u>1,356</u>	<u>1,356</u>

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2022

9. INVESTMENTS

	Shares in group undertakings £
COST	
At 1 st January 2021	-
Additions	1
At 31 st December 2022	<u>1</u>

The company's investments are as follows:

LPF Consultancy Limited

Company number:	14396922
Country of Incorporation:	England
Nature of Business:	Performing access audits on sporting stadia
Ordinary Shares of £1 each	100% held

LPF Consultancy Limited was incorporated on 4th October 2022 and commenced trading in February 2023.

9. DEBTORS

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade debtors	283	6,519
Prepayments	4,170	3,266
Other debtors	1,000	-
Amount owed by subsidiaries	6,635	-
	<u>12,088</u>	<u>9,785</u>

10. CREDITORS:
AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade creditors	393	1,326
Accruals	3,532	3,270
Social security & other taxes	9,694	7,041
Deferred income (see Note 11)	30,215	38,162
	<u>43,834</u>	<u>49,799</u>

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2022

11. DEFERRED INCOME

	2022 £	2021 £
Balance brought forward	38,162	23,562
Amounts released to income	(38,162)	(23,562)
Additions during the year	30,215	38,162
	<u>30,215</u>	<u>38,162</u>
Balance carried forward	<u>30,215</u>	<u>38,162</u>

Deferred income comprises performance-related grants covering the year ended 31st December 2023 (£30,215).

12. MOVEMENT ON FUNDS

	Balance at 01.01.2022 £	Income in year £	Expenditure in year £	Transfers £	Balance at 31.12.2022 £
Unrestricted & designated funds					
Unrestricted revenue funds	186,411	121,517	(87,402)	(28,332)	192,194
Total unrestricted funds	<u>186,411</u>	<u>121,517</u>	<u>(87,402)</u>	<u>(28,332)</u>	<u>192,194</u>
Restricted funds					
Fans' Fund	-	304,803	(333,135)	28,332	-
Total restricted funds	<u>-</u>	<u>304,803</u>	<u>(333,135)</u>	<u>28,332</u>	<u>-</u>
Total charity funds	<u>186,411</u>	<u>426,320</u>	<u>(420,537)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>192,194</u>

13. RESTRICTED FUNDS

The purposes for which the restricted funds are held by the charity are:

Fans' Fund Grant funding from the Premier League Fans' Fund to be used for the following outcomes:

- Outcome 1 - To Improve engagement between fans and fan groups and the key operational staff who deliver supporter liaison, disability access and any related facilities and services.
- Outcome 2 - To make fans voice more representative, through the promotion and development of effective membership organisation.
- Outcome 3 - To improve the matchday and non-matchday experience for all fans by making football more diverse and inclusive.
- Outcome 4 - To fund use of not-for-profit skilled or professional services that create and support innovative fan engagement projects.
- Outcome 5 - To improve the away fan experience.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2022

14. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Fixed Assets £	Current Assets £	Current Liabilities £	Total £
At 31st December 2022				
Restricted funds	2,611	35,583	(38,194)	-
Unrestricted funds	138	197,696	(5,640)	192,194
	<u>2,749</u>	<u>233,279</u>	<u>(43,834)</u>	<u>192,194</u>
At 31st December 2021				
Restricted funds	1,288	32,719	(34,007)	-
Unrestricted funds	68	202,135	(15,792)	186,411
	<u>1,356</u>	<u>234,854</u>	<u>(49,799)</u>	<u>186,411</u>

15. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

During the year the company made no transactions with related parties.

16. FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

At 31st December 2022, the charity had total commitments under non-cancellable operating leases of £11,290.

17. POST BALANCE SHEET EVENTS

In February 2023 LPF Consultancy Ltd, a trading subsidiary of Level Playing Field (see Note 9), started trading with the Income from Audits being transferred over.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

England & Wales - Charity number 1177415

Accounts



Level Playing Field

Annual Report

2021

www.levelplayingfield.org.uk

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President's foreword

David Bernstein CBE

I am pleased to welcome you to this year's Level Playing Field Annual Report.

In a year where we have had to adapt our ways of living and working, the charity has continued to promote access and inclusion in line with its charitable objectives.

Once again, the staff team has worked hard in a holistic fashion, ensuring that the real-life views of disabled fans are represented and shared, whilst also supporting clubs in providing greater access and inclusion.

We have seen some key challenges in 2021 that have significantly impacted disabled sports fans. Firstly, the Event Research Programmes, which saw Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) fans excluded from attending live sport during the test events (it is also important to acknowledge that not all disabled fans are clinically extremely vulnerable). Secondly, the abhorrent behaviour and stadium breaches we saw at the Euro 2020 final, where accessible entrances were targeted to unlawfully gain entry putting disabled sports fans in harm's way. I am pleased to report that Level Playing Field worked hard to successfully overturn the Event Research Programme exclusions and that the organisation also made a significant contribution and representations to the review of the Euro 2020 final undertaken by Baroness Casey.

We also saw the Fan Led Review, led by Tracey Crouch MP – something that many will know I have a keen interest in. Level Playing Field contributed both with oral and written evidence to the review, which is undoubtedly an important milestone for the overall governance of football. Level Playing Field strongly supported the call for an independent regulator, but there was some disappointment that the report was thin in terms of referencing disability.

Annual Report

I know that the team at Level Playing Field will continue to work with the government and all interested stakeholders to ensure disability has an appropriate platform and representation as football responds to the review.

Our campaigning activities continue to deliver both strong numbers and awareness. This year saw a 27% increase in social media analytics, with clubs delivering many innovative projects to celebrate the Level Playing Field Weeks of Action.

The charity is very fortunate to have a passionate Board of Trustees, Ambassadors and Honorary Officers and I am grateful for their support and dedicated work.

Moving forward, We will continue to see fans returning to stadia on matchdays and Level Playing Field will play a big part in supporting disabled fans and representing their views to ensure that the return to normality is as smooth and safe as possible.

It will be a busy 12 months ahead and I look forward to seeing the achievements during this period.

With best wishes,

David Bernstein CBE



Chair's report

Tony Taylor



On behalf of the Board of Trustees at Level Playing Field, I am pleased to welcome you to our latest Annual Report. I would like to thank our President, David Bernstein CBE, our Vice Presidents Lord Faulkner of Worcester, Lord Rosser of Ickenham and David Davies OBE, for their continued support and wise counsel in an ever-changing landscape.

Level Playing Field's Ambassadors play an integral role in raising awareness and bringing our vision to life. I am, as always, grateful for their continued and dedicated support over the year.

During the past 12 months, as the pandemic locked down society, many people have experienced the loss of live sport; it provides an opportunity to connect with others in our community. This brings so much more than simply being socially connected – we have long stressed the significant physical and mental health benefits for disabled people in attending live sport. After a period of fans being absent on matchdays, so many people now recognise that watching live sport is so much more than just the 90 minutes on the pitch. Lockdown did bring many challenges of course, but we have worked hard with governing bodies and clubs, many of which went that extra mile to ensure that their disabled supporters were not marginalised.

During the year, our work has benefitted from the data and analytics produced by our surveys. We launched the findings from our largest disabled sports fans survey in the summer, with over 1400 fans contributing to the Level Playing Field Annual Fan Survey. The results indicated that 30% of respondents felt that they could not attend sports or sporting venues due to poor access. Whilst much progress has been made in recent years, this represents a stark reminder that there is much more to be done and we must not be complacent.

Annual Report

As our President mentions in his foreword, we have seen several issues which have required our sharp focus. We are proud and passionate about representing disabled sports fans and their experiences. With the potential exclusion of CEV fans at the Event Research Programmes and the appalling and shocking incidents at the Euro 2020 final, we ensured disabled sports fans experiences were at the forefront of considerations.

Level Playing Field is fortunate to have a talented and passionate team of staff. Every single member of our staff team has worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic and produced innovative ways to ensure that they achieve their objectives. I am grateful to them for the way in which they have adapted to flexible working and exceeded objectives. During the pandemic, the need for their support proved to be greater than ever and it is pleasing to see an increased demand for access audits and associated work. As a result, the trustees have decided to recruit a new member of staff to support the access and inclusion work and we hope to have an appointee in place early to mid-2022.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the support that we have received from the Premier League Fans Funds and the EFL, along with other donors who have enabled us to steer a prudent, but efficient path through a challenging time given the impact of the pandemic. Their support has enabled us to provide innovative and effective advice to so many and I am grateful for their continued support.

Finally, I want to place on record my personal thanks to fellow trustees, who work in an entirely voluntary capacity but always go above and beyond the call of duty. As chair, I have been fortunate to have their wise input and support with key areas of the charity and this has ensured that Level Playing Field has been able to continue operating as smoothly as possible during unprecedented and unpredictable times.

We know that there are many challenges ahead, but the trustees are committed to ensuring that accessibility and inclusion remains at the forefront, representing the views of all our stakeholders. Of course, the input of disabled supporters themselves can never be overstated and I am grateful for the support and contribution that has been made to our work from so many.

Tony Taylor

Annual Report

About Level Playing Field

Annual Report

Level Playing Field is a registered charity in England and Wales, which acts as a campaigning and advisory organisation to its membership and other parties across all sports. We have a team of dedicated staff with specialist knowledge, skills and experience around issues concerning access and inclusion.

Level Playing Field embraces 'the social model of disability' and promotes the removal of barriers that might prevent a disabled spectator from attending or enjoying a live sports event. We want to ensure that disabled people enjoy an equality of experience as they attend live sport. Level Playing Field is driven to address the current inequality of experience for disabled fans attending live sport. Whether it's lack of choice, availability of tickets or a second-rate experience we use a proactive and constructive approach to tackle these and other issues.



Our mission

Level Playing Field promotes a positive, inclusive experience for disabled sports fans



Our vision

A world in which all disabled fans can freely access and enjoy live sporting events.



Our aims

- Providing support and advocacy for disabled sports fans.
- Offering advice, access audits and training to sports clubs and governing bodies.
- Working with architects and design teams to ensure an inclusive and accessible physical environment at live sporting events.
- Building relationships and partnerships with sports clubs, DSAs, fans and sector organisations.
- Campaigning to keep the disability agenda top of mind for the government.

Level Playing Field delivers its work through four key pillars:

- ▶ **For the Fans**
- ▶ **For the Clubs**
- ▶ **Knowledge Centre**
- ▶ **Campaigns**

Putting it simply, Level Playing Field campaigns and works towards improving the matchday experience for disabled fans by driving an equal matchday experience.

Why we do what we do

It is estimated that 50% of disabled people don't take part in recreational or physical activity.

The barriers to why a disabled fan chooses not to attend live sport can be addressed through training, raising awareness, and updating facilities and services. Last year, Level Playing Field received hundreds of enquiries and complaints and we aim to address these common recurring issues.

Level Playing Field are guided by the following principles:

- ▶ Anti-discrimination – so that disabled people do not face discrimination arising from poor or misinformed practice.
- ▶ Equality of opportunity or making things fairer – for disabled people in every aspect of their contact with sports clubs and venues.
- ▶ Increasing the independence and choices that disabled people have.
- ▶ Individual requirements / diversity – recognising that a disabled person is an individual who, like all others, has his or her own requirements, abilities, human rights and responsibilities.
- ▶ Integration/inclusion – such that services are made accessible to disabled people and offer choice.
- ▶ Involvement in decision-making – so that disabled people, and/or their advocates, are consulted before decisions that affect them are made.
- ▶ The social model of disability explains that it is social and physical 'barriers' that cause 'disability' not impairments.

Level Playing Field is working to remove the barriers that currently exclude disabled people. These barriers can be prejudice and stereotypes, the way things are organised and run, along with little to no access to information, buildings and transport.



Annual Report

For the Fans



Fan-led review

Announcement

On April 19 the UK Government announced the launch of the 'fan-led review' that examined the ways fans are treated by clubs and wider issues of ownership and governance.

The review was chaired by Tracey Crouch MP, who was Sports Minister from 2015-17, and was a guest on the Level Playing Field podcast. The terms of reference for the 'fan-led review' were released and it stated that:

'The independent review will aim to explore ways of improving the governance, ownership and financial sustainability of clubs in English football, building on the strengths of the football pyramid. The review will add to the recommendations of the English Football League's governance review and the government's 2016 expert working group on football supporter ownership and engagement. The review will be expected to engage extensively with fans to ensure any recommendations are led by fans' experience and interests.'

Level Playing Field fully supported the 'fan-led review' and found it to be an opportunity for real change. As the largest minority group in the UK, we insisted that disabled supporters' voices are heard.

We reached out to Tracey and the DCMS to offer our support.

Request to fans

Level Playing Field invited supporters who wished to raise any views that would feed into the government's football review to get in touch, as the organisation would be submitting evidence on behalf of disabled fans.

We wanted to ensure we were providing the real-life match day views of disabled fans to the government and panel members involved in the review.



Evidence session

In June, Level Playing Field and several fans provided verbal evidence to a panel led by Tracey Crouch MP.

The session provided a brief opportunity to outline key issues and experience where football governance needed to be improved to account for disabled fans and other matters relating to disability.

In the time permitted, the key areas raised were focused on the representation of disabled people at the board level, regulatory obligations and bodies and fan voice/consultation.

Annual Report

Key points Level Playing Field have raised and urged the review to include:

Board representation of disabled people/fans at executive and non-executive level

- Allows for disability matters to have a suitable and non-tokenistic platform that can be weaved into the overarching governance at a club and governing body level.
- Implementing a 'comply or explain' style agreement with clubs to ensure it's prioritised.
- A case of prioritising it, and it will get done.

Regulatory obligations and bodies

- Level Playing Field believes that the most significant catalyst to change for disabled football fans in recent time has been the Premier League pledge. It highlights a case of what gets measured gets done.
- Having both a set of clear, measurable minimum accessible standards along with a regulator/regulatory system would deliver greater access and inclusion and, more so, a fundamental human right.
- Outlines clear standards which take into account disability inclusion and other matters.

Fan voice/consultation

- Having a formal process recognised and reviewed by the board is essential for delivering representative governance.
- Having board involvement with disabled fan engagement further demonstrates a commitment to matters relating to disability and can be included in the governance framework.
- Structured dialogue needs to be an ongoing process, inclusive and varied (meetings, at matchdays, surveys and other formats)
- Disabled fan engagement needs to be standalone from non-disabled fan engagement and not bolted on.

Interim findings

Level Playing Field welcomed the 'Fan Led Review of Football Governance' interim findings, particularly the proposal of an independent regulator. However, we expressed our concern at the lack of detail and information regarding how the recommendations will produce the necessary benefit for disabled fans.

We urged the review panel to work with Level Playing Field and disabled fans to ensure that it wouldn't be an opportunity lost for the millions of disabled football fans who have a right to good governance.



Level Playing Field statement

Thursday 25 November 2021

Level Playing Field acknowledges the release of the independent fan-led review of football governance, conducted by Tracey Crouch MP, which we believe to be a significant piece of work for which we congratulate all those involved.

We are encouraged by this examination of the English football system and agree with the need for greater fan engagement and involvement in the game and in particular the role of an independent regulator. We are extremely disappointed, but sadly not surprised, at the lack of reference to disabled fans and the importance of disabled supporters' voices in the governance of our national sport.

Despite the review being 162 pages of observations and recommendations, actions regarding disability are disappointingly thin.

Disabled people are the largest minority group in the UK (14 million people) but are often an afterthought or low priority in the world of football (and sport in general); we fear that this has proven to be the case once again regarding this review.

We welcome the review's recommendation for an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion action plan. It is important that these plans are not simply broad sweeping statements but offer specific measurable actions that enhance experience and inclusion with all fans' voices at the heart of it.

At the very least, we would want plans to include:

- A set of minimum measurable accessibility standards across football clubs
- Board representation for disabled fans/people
- Regular and meaningful structured dialogue with disabled fans

Disabled fans' voices are imperative in delivering representative governance and understanding the 'whole picture' of the experience of a disabled fan. Having a structured communication process and ongoing fan feedback is essential for shaping effective governance and delivering appropriate inclusion.

Neurodiverse Sports Fans Research Project Launch

Research project with SGSA

Level Playing Field was pleased to announce a national research project in partnership with the Sports Ground Safety Authority into the experiences of neurodiverse sports fans when attending live sports events.

The research project ran from January 2021, and was managed by Britain's largest independent social research agency, NatCen.

We recruited people who have autism, ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia, or dyscalculia, Tourette's syndrome, or other neurodevelopmental conditions and who are sports fans.



Annual Report

It does not matter whether fans attended live sports events regularly, or at all, as we were also interested in understanding why fans may not attend.

As sports clubs in the UK strive to become more accessible for disabled fans, it is important to bear in mind that less than 8% of disabled people are wheelchair users.

Most disabled people have non-visible disabilities, and it is thought that up to 30% of the population may have neurodiverse conditions, with many undiagnosed. These conditions include, but are not limited to, autism, ADHD, dyspraxia, dyslexia, dyscalculia, and Tourette's syndrome.

The huge spectrum of each of these conditions means it is almost impossible to anticipate and cater for every individual's needs. This makes the position for stadium managers – with an anticipatory duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people under the Equality Act 2010 – very difficult.

As part of the Accessible Stadia Guide re-write it became very clear early on that there is a shortage of research and guidance available on this topic. We wanted to include some advice and recommendations for fans with neurodiverse conditions into the new edition and the Sports Grounds Safety Authority (SGSA) offered to fund a research project for us carried out by Britain's largest social research agency, NatCen.

Martyn Henderson, Chief Executive of the Sports Grounds Safety Authority, said: "We are pleased to fund this important primary research as part of our ongoing commitment to improve evidence in relation to spectator safety.

"Ensuring that sports grounds are safe and accessible for people with neurodiverse conditions is important to SGSA and we look forward to the outcomes of the research and future collaboration with Level Playing Field."

The key aim of this report was to recognise and highlight the access requirements of neurodiverse sports fans and how these related to questions about maintaining a safe environment within stadia and grounds.



Annual Report

Feedback from participants revealed the following areas needed improving:

→ Booking tickets

Participants wanted an easier process of booking, with a single accessibility scheme that recognised individual requirements operating across sports. This would reduce the need to repeatedly explain or justify their access requirements.



→ Information provision ahead of the day

Being able to plan improved confidence. Participants wanted more information available in advance of events, covering; what to expect in terms of arrival and transport; security checks and what could be brought into the venue; seating layout; and who they could speak to for help.



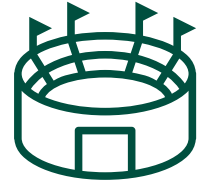
→ Staff

Negative encounters were reported arising from a lack of understanding from staff. They felt staff, particularly stewards, should receive training to be more aware of, better understand and support neurodiverse fans. Where participants received support from disability access or liaison officers, this was generally a positive experience. "Knowledge is key, the training of stewards is the way forward as they are on the grounds with the fans" - carer of child with ADHD and Tourette's, who attends live sport.



→ Venue design

Negative experiences where venues had narrow concourses and gangways or closely packed seating were reported. Being able to pick appropriate seating improved this. Fans often relied on support from other people to find their way around venues but suggested new stadia should be built with wider, more spacious concourses, gangways, and seating. Signage could also be improved using pictures, colours, and larger text.



→ Facilities

Participants were supportive of the provision of sensory rooms for neurodiverse children and for those with more complex needs, but noted that there were various limitations to these. They advocated having more quiet spaces closer to seating areas that could be accessed without prior booking and be used as a space to moderate anxiety or stress.

→ Safety

Many of the factors that improved participants' overall experience also made them feel safer while attending live events. These included accessible/open seating and accessible venue design, support from family or friends, and a strong presence of trustworthy staff who understood the requirements of the range of fans.



→ Venue Arrival

Being physically close to other people can be overstimulating and lead to a rise in anxiety. Participants wanted greater availability of accessible parking or more drop off locations nearer the venues. They also felt there should be more accessible entrances with consistent staffing who understand neurodiverse spectators.

→ Engagement from clubs/venues

Finally, participants wanted greater engagement from clubs and venues with their neurodiverse fans, through a 'neurodiversity champion' to understand the requirements among the supporter base. Participants also felt that clubs/venues could do more to raise awareness with other spectators.

Podcast

The Level Playing Field podcast

During 2020 Level Playing Field released its own podcast, the first of its kind to focus solely on disabled sports fans.

The podcast grew successfully throughout 2021, and below are some of our most popular episodes:

Episode 3 - Stigma

We turned our attention to the [stigma attached to disabled sports fans](#) attending live events as well as the stigma surrounding disability in general.

Our guests included Disability Development Manager at the Albion Foundation (Paul Glover), Strategic Accessibility Lead at the Royal National Institute of Blind People (Marc Powell), Chairperson of Arsenal Disabled Supporters Association (Anne Hyde), and Disability Access Officer at Level Playing Field (Nicky Baker).

Episode 5 - Views of non-disabled fans

In this episode, we [explore the viewpoint of non-disabled supporters](#), how non-disabled supporters' trusts can support better access and inclusion for disabled fans, and how disability is viewed by clubs and non-disabled supporters.

Our guests for this podcast are Nottingham Forest Supporters Trust board members (Lindsay Knott and Paul Severn), as well as a Fan Engagement Consultant (Kevin Rye).

Episode 8 - Disability abuse

This episode we focus on the very real, challenging and personal subject matter of [disability abuse](#).

Our guests on this month's episode include the Baroness Tanni Gray-Thompson, two Swansea City supporters (Diane and Callum), and West Midlands Police Force Football Unit officers (PC Stewart Bladen and PC Stuart Ward).

Fan insights

365 days absent from the Amex

As part of Weeks Of Action 2020, our Fans Liaison Officer spoke to lifelong Brighton supporter, Ed Osborne, about the 12 months away from the football during the pandemic: "I miss watching the game... football is my life," Ed explained

Ed has Tourette's Syndrome, a condition that can cause a person to make involuntary sounds and movements. He also has a rare genetic condition called 'Joubert Syndrome', which affects his balance and coordination, and also means that he has a profound speech impairment and some learning difficulties. He uses sign language to communicate, although he is not deaf.

He's no 'fair weather fan' and has been attending live football since he was a child. Seeing the pleasure Ed enjoyed from watching Brighton even got his dad, Andrew, into football and supporting the club.

The frustrating feeling of being away from the stadium is a familiar one amongst many supporters across the country. The sense of 'belonging' is one that's missed the most by disabled supporters. Just like every football fan, Ed is craved a sense of normality.

One of the most important parts of Ed's life is his connection with the local community, being part of Brighton's fanbase enhances that. Football gives Ed a common link with people, he is one of the crowd and no different to anyone else.

It's important to feel accepted for who he is.



'It means everything to Georgia to be part of the Leicester City family'

Foxes fan David shared his daughter's story as part of our Weeks of Action campaign.

Georgia, 10, is a huge Leicester fan who has been watching the Foxes at the King Power Stadium since the age of two.

David has commended the club for the work they have done to accommodate Georgia and make her matchday experience as enjoyable as it could possibly be.

Georgia has Rett Syndrome, a rare genetic disorder that affects brain development and causes severe physical disability from early childhood. She is unable to walk or talk, but this doesn't stop her from following her beloved club, thanks to the accessibility improvements made.

David said: "I honestly don't know where to start. The staff at Leicester City have been first class with us as a family, especially the Supporter Relations and Accessibility Manager.

"They've been so accommodating of Georgia's needs and have been really welcoming to us. Jim is brilliant and is just a lovely fella. He's always there for us, even if we've got a little gripe, and will do his best to help us out.

"I couldn't ask more from the Club. We're so proud to be associated with LCFC and I know it means the world to Georgia."

It's clear to David that Georgia is at her happiest when watching her beloved Leicester.

"Every time we drive up to King Power Stadium, Georgia always has a smile on her face. She loves the atmosphere and the hustle and bustle of the people around her.

"Her whole face just lights up, no matter what mood she's in, and it's just a really nice feeling for me and my wife as her parents."



Launch of Wycombe Wanderers Disabled Supporter's Association

Disabled Wycombe Wanderers supporters were invited to an event at Adams Park to officially launch the club's new Disabled Supporter's Association.

Disabled fans were invited to take part in a tour around the stadium and meet the co-founders of the Association – Trust Director Peter Lerner and Safety Officer Stephen Copp – to learn more about the associations aims for improving facilities and services for disabled supporters on matchdays.

Peter said: “Having received a fantastic response to the news that Wycombe Wanderers – both the club and Trust – were launching an association for our disabled supporters, it was great to get together in person and kick off the process towards making Adams Park a more enjoyable and accessible place for everyone to come to.

“We look forward to holding more events in future and welcome more members to be part of the continued development of the Association.”



Annual Report

For the Clubs

Tottenham's skywalk wheelchair accessible

As part of the club's wider work to deliver fully inclusive facilities at the Tottenham Hotspur stadium, Spurs have announced their 'The Dare Skywalk' is now accessible to all, including wheelchair users.

The feature is a new activity fans can enjoy which takes them to the summit of their new stadium in north London in a 90-minute adrenaline-filled experience.

Kris Aves became the first wheelchair user to take on the climb earlier this week: "The Dare Skywalk wheelchair climb was an amazing experience. The climb guides were brilliant and were on hand to share interesting facts and history about the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium. Being the first member of the public to take on The Dare Skywalk wheelchair climb was a great feeling – it's a day I won't forget!"

Wheelchair accessible climbs on the Dare Skywalk form part of the club's wider work to deliver fully inclusive facilities, with wheelchair users using a padded wheelchair to experience the Spurs stadium from heights of up to 48.8 metres!



Euro 2020 final

Level Playing Field responded to the deeply concerning scenes that took place outside of Wembley Stadium ahead of the Euro 2020 final (in 2021) between England and Italy.

In a match which saw truly abhorrent behaviour towards players there were major issues towards the safety of disabled supporters attending.

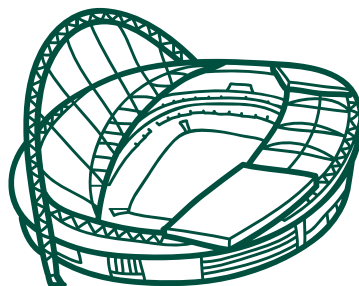
The issues at the final could have been catastrophic for all fans but particularly disabled supporters caught in the violence or injured as a result of reported breaches at the accessible entrance and wheelchair user viewing areas.

We knew from the feedback we have received already that this left some disabled supporters feeling extremely uneasy about attending live sporting events.

Level Playing Field sought assurances from Wembley Stadium and the Metropolitan Police that a thorough and detailed investigation would be undertaken, including the impact on disabled fans.

Level Playing Field continued to make itself available to work with all stakeholders to ensure watching live sport is safe and accessible for all.

Disabled fans have the right to feel safe to watch football – any fan that would knowingly endanger the safety of other supporters is not a true football fan.



Wembley review

Level Playing Field welcomed the independent review that Wembley commissioned after the events that took place ahead of the Euro 2020 final in July.

The magnitude of the event was inevitably going to put additional strain on safety and security at the final. Despite this, the measures in place clearly failed. People stormed the stadium through accessible entrances and disabled fans experienced further issues with overcrowding of wheelchair user viewing areas.

Level Playing Field spoke to fans who attended the final, and they made their views clear. It was a frightening experience that has put people off attending in the future.

We also heard from a wheelchair user who was 'hijacked' by someone impersonating a steward, attempting to gain entry.

We demanded that this review should go into fine detail about the targeted abuse of accessible entrances, stewarding processes and procedures and the lasting impact on disabled fans.

This could not be the lasting legacy of Euro 2020, and we urged Baroness Casey of Blackstock to adopt a more holistic, coordinated review.



Response to the report

The charity released a statement regarding the UEFA sanctions implemented on the English FA for a "lack of order and discipline" in and around the national stadium during the Euro 2020 final.

Level Playing Field statement on the Euro 2020 final at Wembley Stadium

Tuesday 19 October 2021

What happened on the 11 July 2021 must never happen again.

There is no place in our game for the terrible scenes that disabled fans witnessed and experienced that day. The so-called "fans" involved should be held accountable and apologies should be forthcoming from both the FA and The Metropolitan Police to disabled supporters who were directly impacted.

Sanction alone is not enough. It is only by good fortune that we are not discussing a more tragic turn of events and outcome on the day.

Looking ahead, the FA – and football as a whole – needs to learn from what happened and adopt suitable measures to ensure there is no repetition.

Level Playing Field is pleased that the independent review led by Baroness Casey is underway and has already submitted evidence to that process. We hope that the findings from the review will deliver recommendations that will ensure the chaos at the Euro 2020 final will never happen again and that the safety of disabled supporters and, indeed, all supporters remains of paramount importance.

Annual Report

Campaigns

Weeks of Action

With the coronavirus pandemic causing sport to come to a standstill in March 2020, including the postponement of last year's Weeks of Action, the 2021 campaign was in doubt. After a period of planning and consideration, Level Playing Field had little option but to make this year's campaign a virtual one, for the first time ever.

Over 100 clubs supported the campaign, which included clubs from the Premier League, the EFL, National League, non-league, the Women's Super League and Championship, as well as contributions from the Welsh Cymru leagues.

Clubs published content across websites and social media platforms, expressing their support for the campaign by engaging with disabled fans during what has been an especially difficult year.



Media day

Featuring Stephen Miller MBE

Ahead of the 2021 Weeks of Action campaign, Level Playing Field hosted a media day for local and national press, club media staff and other interested parties, to find out more about Level Playing Field and the Weeks of Action campaign.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the meeting took place via Zoom and lasted a little less than an hour. The session was hosted by Level Playing Field Chief Executive Owain Davies, and featured the charity's Chair Tony Taylor, and ambassador Stephen Miller MBE.

The aim of the meeting was not only to inform those unaware of Level Playing Field's work, but to also highlight the importance of live sport for disabled sports fans, especially almost a year of the pandemic began.

Before the previous campaign (2020), Level Playing Field staff travelled to Hotel Football in Manchester - located directly adjacent to Manchester United's Old Trafford - to film a round table discussion with fans and club staff from around the country. This short film was broadcast during the meeting to highlight the work being done throughout England and Wales, to help enhance the matchday experience for disabled fans.

This was the first time Level Playing Field hosted a media day, and will continue to do so ahead of future campaigns.



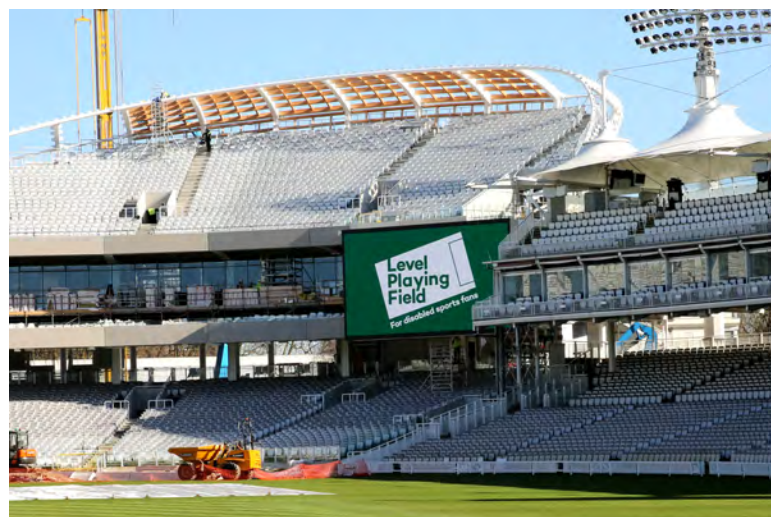
Digital campaign

On the eve of the campaign, Wembley stadium kicked things off by lighting up the world-famous arch in the green of Level Playing Field's logo. The large digital display screens at the front of the stadium also shone out across the London skyline, boldly announcing the imminent start to the Weeks of Action and displaying the important message of the campaign: Access For All.

The Principality Stadium, the proud home of Welsh rugby, also got behind the Weeks of Action on Friday as they lit up their giant display screen to announce that start of the campaign.

Level Playing Field is the leading disability access charity for sports fans across England and Wales, so it's fitting that the most high-profile stadiums from both nations have demonstrated their support for the campaign.

Lord's - the home of Cricket - also got involved in recognising the campaign, displaying the charity's logo on their brand new screen.



Campaign highlights

Fleetwood Town's Virtual Mascot

Fleetwood Town centred their Weeks of Action celebrations around their virtual mascot for the day, Tyler Kenyon.

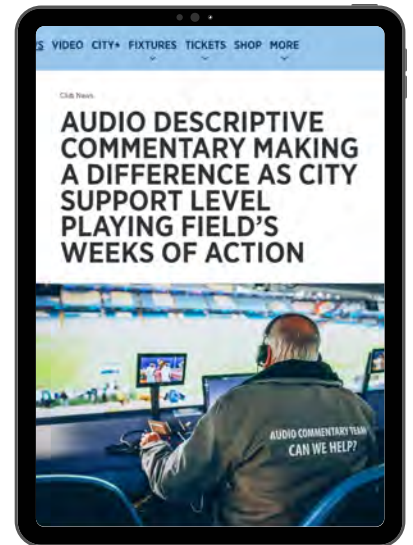
Before being led out on to the pitch virtually by goalkeeper Alex Caines, he got the chance to chat to former Stoke City and Republic of Ireland international, and current Fleetwood Town number six, Glen Whelan, accompanied by manager Simon Grayson.



Manchester City's Audio Description Commentary

The City team decided to use their designated fixture to shine a light on a vital accessible feature at the Etihad stadium – audio descriptive commentary. The club has been offering the service to visually impaired fans for over 20 years, and with the stadium being empty for the majority of 2020, it has become a more critical service than ever.

City confirmed their ADC services will be available for both home and away fans and, moving forward, will also be available for women first-team home matches.



Leeds United captain spends time with disabled supporters

Leeds United captain Liam Cooper joined an exclusive virtual call with some of the supporters from Leeds United Disabled Organisation (LUDO), as part of the club's activities to support the campaign.



Tottenham Hotspur's Disability Access Officer Interview

Simon Blewett, Disability Access Officer at Spurs, sat down with Level Playing Field during Weeks of Action to discuss his role at the club...

He spoke about his passion for disability access, the club's Weeks of Action plans, and how the club kept in touch with fans during the pandemic.

It was always clear to me that disability access could and should be better, and that's my goal.

The [full interview is available](#), but here's a little snippet below.

What's your passion for being a Disability Access Officer?

My mum was a wheelchair user, unfortunately she passed away in 1992 and something that I still find astonishing is that at no point in her life were her rights as a disabled person protected by law, it was always just clear to me that things could and should be better and that's my goal really.

What activities do you have planned for this year's Weeks of Action?

The campaign will be covered on our LED screens around the stadium and in the matchday programme. We have player engagements with both the men's and women's teams, and content that highlights the facilities here, the work of the foundation and some really exciting developments with our tours and attractions.

How have you been keeping in touch with disabled fans during the pandemic?

The club have tried to maintain contact with as many people as possible, via welfare calls, through SpursAbility and through club ambassadors. For me, it was great to make some calls, check in with people and hear their Spurs stories and their hopes for a return.



Annual Report

Knowledge Centre

Annual Report

Our knowledge centre pillar of work has been important in 2021 to gather real life experiences to bring about change. Throughout the year we have had over 1500 fans take part in Level Playing Field surveys.

TV streaming survey

With stadiums being closed throughout the country during the Covid pandemic, tv streaming services became the essential way for sports fans to follow their team's live action. As a disability access and inclusion charity, Level Playing Field wanted to investigate whether these services were fully accessible for disabled supporters, so we conducted an online 'Streaming Services Survey' to find out.

The survey ran from 13 November to 18 December 2020, giving an opportunity for disabled fans to share their experience of using various streaming services since the start of the pandemic. There were 238 respondents, and the comments and scores from the survey were been shared with the streaming service providers featured.

As a charity, we know that many barriers disabled people face can be removed through effective dialogue and good practice. Our hope is that by communicating the results and comments from this survey, streaming service providers will be better informed and improvements to accessibility on their respective platforms can be made.



Annual Report

Key findings included:

Required additional support

8% of respondents said they require some additional support to watch live sport via a streaming service.



Less likely to return

8% of those surveyed said that they are less likely to return to watching live sport in stadiums when they reopen, after having watched live sport on TV during the pandemic.



Ratings

We asked supporters to rate the different streaming services on accessibility for their disability. The scores ranged from 3.4 to 4.2 out of five.



Annual fan survey

Level Playing Field's record breaking annual fan survey report revealed the most in-depth results in the charity's 22-year history.

In its inaugural year the focus of the Level Playing Field Annual Survey was to receive greater feedback year on year, helping to drive change towards better access and inclusion for disabled sports fans.

Level Playing Field has carried out a number of specific surveys in the past, but this was the most comprehensive survey ever, reviewing the matchday experience of disabled fans.

The survey is a first of its kind, with a strong focus on club-specific feedback that will help clubs target specific areas to improve their facilities and services. Thanks to support from clubs, leagues and partners who helped to publicise the survey, Level Playing Field received a total of 1408 responses.

Level Playing Field Chair Tony Taylor said: "This first Level Playing Field annual fan survey provides a great insight into the experiences of disabled supporters as they attend live sport.

"We are grateful to the 1408 fans who took the time to share their experiences with us. It is our hope and expectation that their responses will serve to bring about improvements to services and facilities as clubs see their feedback and comments.

"With 73% of disabled fans eager to return to live sport 'right away' following various restrictions on attending, clubs need to ensure that they are ready, and this report can help with that preparation.

"There is clearly much that still needs to be done to ensure that disabled fans have an equal matchday experience to non-disabled fans. The fact that 30% of respondents said there was a sport or sports venue they felt unable to attend, due to poor access, highlights this inequality. Level Playing Field will continue to promote full access and inclusion for disabled fans and we expect that will be reflected in the results of our future fan surveys."

Annual Report

Key findings included:

Poor access

30% of respondents stated that there were sports or sporting venues that they felt unable to attend due to poor access for disabled supporters

Anxiety and confidence

25% of respondents said that 'anxiety or lack of confidence' was a barrier when attending live sport

Returning

Following lengthy restrictions on attending live sport due to the pandemic, 73% of the supporters surveyed said they would want to attend a match 'right away' once permitted

Covid measures

The top three Covid measures that fans wanted in place when returning were:

- Hand sanitising stations
- Hand washing facilities
- Mask wearing (bar exemptions)



Annual Report

Partnerships

The Wheelchair Football Association

Official partner

Level Playing Field announced the launch of a new partnership between The Wheelchair Football Association (WFA) in March, the national governing body of wheelchair football in the UK.

The announcement was made official on social media as part of Level Playing Field's Weeks of Action campaign. The announcement included a video featuring Level Playing Field's Nicky Baker and the WFA's Adam McEvoy.

Both organisations exist to improve access to sport for disabled people. The focus for the WFA is to promote and develop their sport so that more disabled people are able to actively participate in playing wheelchair football. Level Playing Field exists to promote and facilitate improved access to stadiums, so that more disabled sports fans are able to watch their favourite team play live. Whether watching or playing, both organisations are passionate about seeing disabled people become more included in society.

Having worked together on a couple of projects in the past, the two organisations decided that an official partnership would be the best way to work more closely together in future and also help to highlight the good work that each other are involved in.



The Racecourse Association

The Racecourse Association (RCA) commissioned pan-disability access audits across British Racecourses to identify areas where the race day experience can be enhanced to support disabled racegoers.

Racecourses that have opted into the project will receive an audit of the race day experience in its current form plus a detailed site audit to identify areas that can be developed to support racegoer accessibility. Following these audits, the RCA will work closely with racecourses to implement the findings whilst disseminating best practices from other relevant sectors to maintain British racing's commitment as a sport for all.

The project has been funded with a grant from the Racing Foundation plus contributions from the participating racecourses, demonstrating their commitment to enhancing accessibility.

Following a detailed tender process, the RCA have selected Level Playing Field and LiveTourism to conduct the audits. LiveTourism, an existing partner of the RCA with the Quality Assured Racecourse Scheme, provide a sector-leading service in assisting sports with race day experience programmes. Level Playing Field assessors working on this project are NRAC-accredited and offer an authentic view of the race day experience with their own experience of disability. Assessments will commence shortly and will run over three years.



Annual Report

Covid-19

Response to Clinically Extremely Vulnerable fans' excluded from live sport

Having seen the announcement that the World Snooker Championship at the Crucible in Sheffield refused entry to Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) fans, Level Playing Field expressed concerns that this act would set a potentially discriminatory precedent.

According to the UK government, all people who are CEV or with underlying health conditions have been urged to be vaccinated and yet the World Snooker Championship seemingly placed a blanket ban on their participation in attending this event. As an organisation we viewed this as an attack on freedom of choice and human rights.

The information provided to the UK press, including the BBC and Sky Sports, as well as ticket information on the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association (WPBSA) website, offered no rationale for why this measure was confirmed to exclude CEV fans while also offering no information on who they deemed as CEV.

Last year the Sports Ground Safety Authority (SGSA) issued their Supplementary Guidance 'Planning for Social Distancing at Sports Grounds' (SG: 02), making it clear that attending the event as a fan was a personal decision.

Level Playing Field drove throughout the pandemic that when sport did start to re-open, it re-opens for all, and the choice to attend is for the individual.



Level Playing Field lobbied to overturn blanket ban on clinically extremely vulnerable fans

Carabao Cup Final 2021

Level Playing Field was made aware of the enforced measures being imposed by Wembley stadium for the 2021 Carabao Cup Final between Manchester City and Tottenham Hotspur.

In the guidance issued, all fans were required to wear face coverings, and those who are exempt were required to provide evidence from a 'GP or suitable medical practitioner'.

Level Playing Field believed this is discriminatory and against government guidance which states, "you do not need to seek advice or request a letter from a medical professional about your reason for not wearing a face covering."

Individuals who are exempt from wearing face coverings are not required by law to carry an exemption card or badge. This is deemed to be a personal choice.

Level Playing Field expressed disappointment that disabled fans and clinically extremely vulnerable fans are not having a fair and equal experience despite clear guidance which has been in place throughout this pandemic.

We strongly urged Wembley Stadium to abide by the government guidance, which did not unnecessarily discriminate against disabled fans.

Events Research Programme Guidance U-turn

Level Playing Field was pleased to see that after weeks of lobbying, the government had taken the correct steps in reviewing its Events Research Programme's approach to Clinically Extremely Vulnerable individuals attending pilot events.

The policy change would no longer exclude CEV people from attending government test events and will empower CEV fans to make their own decisions and risk assessments, which they have done both throughout this pandemic.

This decision was the correct one and the exclusion should never have been in place, having the right to choose how you live your life is a fundamental human right. The original government guidance had the potential to set live sport on a dangerous path of exclusion and discrimination.

Return of fans

After a year and a half, Level Playing Field was pleased to hear that sport was on track to have all stadiums back to full capacity in England for the 2021/22 season.

In August, when clubs planned to re-open their turnstiles to fans in England, Level Playing Field urged that they must be open to all fans.

During July Level Playing Field came together with 'Audience Access Alliance' to raise awareness of an accessible reopening when restrictions would be lifted. This is something we continued to push.

Level Playing Field created guides to support clubs with their re-opening plans ahead of the new season.

We also urged clubs to share information ahead of the season and have a consultation with their Disabled Supporter's Associations and fans to ensure no one is excluded because of a disability.



Annual Report

Level Playing Field

A year in review

As we approached the new year, we took a look back at the last 12 months, including some of the best fan stories Level Playing Field covered in 2021 with the release of Level Playing Field's year in review.

Click [here](#) to access the review.

From research projects to new partnerships, 2021 was not only a challenging period, but also a busy and successful one for the charity.

We have seen the return of fans after a season-and-a-half of watching football behind closed doors, we managed to showcase our biggest Weeks of Action campaign to date despite the suspension of fans in stadiums, and we announced new partnership agreements that will go well into the future as we look to continuously improve access and inclusion for disabled fans across all sports.



Staff



Owain Davies

Chief Executive



Ruth Hopkins

General Manager & Head of Access and Development - NRAC Auditor



Nicky Baker

Access and Development Officer - NRAC Auditor



Daniel Townley

Development Officer



Liam Bird

Fans Liaison Officer



Ben Southby

Media and Communications Officer

Trustees



Tony Taylor

Chair



Steve Evans

Secretary



Joanna Deagle

Trustee



Jo McNicol

Trustee



Rex Burton

Trustee



Jamie Beddard

Trustee

A word from the Chief Executive



Over the past year, fans have been returning to stadia. We have witnessed the excitement of being back together and the trepidation associated with this. We have worked hard to ensure that disabled sports fans eager to return can do so by creating guides and forums and working with clubs to be accessible from the earliest point of re-opening.

The Weeks of Action campaign this year was like nothing we had done before. It was completely virtual at a time where there were no fans at the grounds, and I am pleased to say that it was the most successful in terms of social media impressions, with a 27% increase over the previous year. We saw players have video chats with their disabled fans, along with fans being virtual mascots and heading out on the pitch with the players via a selfie stick and Facetime. It is commendable that the appetite to adapt and to be there for each other has often prevailed during tough times and that was particularly evident during these Weeks of Action.

As a part of our strategy, we have further invested and prioritised in developing our research. Our annual fans survey had over 1400 respondents (the largest to date), and the findings will help tackle key areas whilst showcasing what's being done well. 25% of respondents said that “anxiety or lack of confidence was a barrier when attending live sport”.

Our fan engagement continues to grow and develop with 'The Level Playing Field Podcast' now having monthly episodes and focusing on topics such as Matchday Travel, Disability Abuse, Return of Fans and more. The podcast has over 140 regular monthly listeners, something we are keen to grow.

Level Playing Field's achievements in the past 12 months would not have been possible without our brilliant staff. Often going above and beyond working with Disabled Supporters Associations, fans, clubs and partners who support our work to raise awareness of access and inclusion.

We are very grateful to the Premier League Fans Fund and the EFL for their continued support.

Owain Davies

Level Playing Field

For disabled sports fans

Level Playing Field
The Junction
Station Road
Watford
WD17 1ET



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info@levelplayingfield.org.uk



levelplayingfield.org.uk



[@lpftweets](https://twitter.com/lpftweets)



[@levelplayingfielduk](https://www.instagram.com/levelplayingfielduk)



[/lpftweets](https://www.facebook.com/lpftweets)



Company Number: 11109719
Charity Number: 1177415

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD
DIRECTORS' REPORT AND
UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2021

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

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LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

CHARITY REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

CHARITY NUMBER: 1177415

COMPANY NUMBER: 11109719

TRUSTEES/DIRECTORS: A Taylor (Chair)
S Evans
J McNicol
R Burton (until 5 January 2022)
J Deagle
J Beddard

COMPANY SECRETARY: S Evans

REGISTERED OFFICE: Greville House
10 Jury Street
Warwick
Warwickshire
CV34 4EW

PRINCIPAL ADDRESS: The Junction
Station Road
Watford
WD17 1ET

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER: Mark Harwood FCA FMAAT
Michael Harwood & Co
Greville House
10 Jury Street
Warwick
Warwickshire
CV34 4EW

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (INCL DIRECTORS' REPORT)

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st December 2021. The Trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Level Playing Field, a charitable company limited by guarantee (Company no. 11109719 and Charity no. 1177415), was incorporated on the 13th December 2017 and is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association. The directors of the charitable company (who are its trustees for the purposes of charity law) have no interest in the company's assets or surplus and receive no remuneration.

The Trustees meet at least once a quarter and are actively involved in the strategic direction of the charity. Level Playing Field uses both in-house and external sources for appointing trustees in order to operate in line with best practice. Level Playing Field is an inclusive employer and recruiter. The Charity actively promotes the positive impact of having a diverse workforce and trustee board. This commitment allows Level Playing Field to represent the community it serves. Level Playing Field has signed up to the Disability Confident Scheme.

A business continuation policy is in place which clearly reviews risks and provides a plan to react to changing circumstances should they occur. The plan covers financial, operational and strategic areas and is supported by a detailed risk assessment.

The charity works on a collaborative basis with a number of other charities, including the Wheelchair Football Association which in 2021 a partnership agreement was signed. The charity also works closely with the Centre for Access to Football in Europe, but has no formal agreements or links in situ.

OBJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

Level Playing Field believes that disability is a social issue and that an individual only becomes disabled as a result of the social, attitudinal and environmental barriers that the individual faces (this is known as the social model of disability).

The charity is focussed on removing these barriers in all sports. Level Playing Field and its members are committed to achieving an environment where:

- all fans can enjoy an equal experience at live sports events
- all stadia and sports venues are fully accessible and inclusive
- all customer and/or fan services are equal and inclusive
- disabled people are seen as customers with a commercial value

We are guided by the following principles:

- Anti-discrimination – so that disabled people do not face discrimination arising from poor or misinformed practice
- Equality of opportunity and fairness – for disabled people in every aspect of their contact with sports clubs and venues
- Increasing the independence and choices offered to disabled people
- Individual requirements – recognising that a disabled person is an individual who, in a diverse society, has his or her own requirements, abilities, human rights and responsibilities
- Integration/inclusion – such that services are made accessible to disabled people and offer choice

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

DIRECTORS' REPORT (Continued)

- Involvement in decision-making – so that disabled people, and/or their advocates, are consulted before decisions which affect them are made
- Acknowledgment of the social model of disability which explains that it is social and physical barriers that cause 'disability' not impairments.

Level Playing Field is working to remove the barriers that currently exclude disabled people. These barriers include:

- Prejudice and stereotypes
- The way things are organised and run
- Lack of/inadequate access to information, buildings and transport

The directors have had due regard to the guidance published by The Charity Commissioners on public benefit in managing the activities of the charity.

The main activities of the charity during the year are as follows (a more detailed summary of the charity's activities can be found in the Annual Report):

Fan Engagement

In 2021 Level Playing Field continued to evolve its work (in line with its charitable objectives) with the relaxation of restrictions and to support the current climate. A balance of dealing with key Covid-19 related issues and 'Business as usual' was a key priority.

- **Regional forums** continued to be hosted virtually with specific attention on the return of fans to stadia and how restrictions would impact access and inclusion
- **The Level Playing Field podcast** increased its frequency from quarterly to monthly to also include high profile guest such as Tanni Grey-Thompson
- **Disabled Supporters Association** were established at clubs for the first time.
- **Fan Insights** were shared as news articles to raise awareness of the impact of not attending sport in person.

Covid-19 – Event Research Programme

Having seen the announcement that the World Snooker Championship at the Crucible in Sheffield and other test events refused entry to Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) fans, Level Playing Field expressed concerns that this act would set a potentially discriminatory precedent.

According to the UK government, all people who are CEV or with underlying health conditions have been urged to be vaccinated and yet the World Snooker Championship seemingly placed a blanket ban on their participation in attending this event. As an organisation we viewed this as an attack on freedom of choice and human rights.

Level Playing Field was pleased to see that after weeks of lobbying, the government had taken the correct steps in reviewing its Events Research Programme's approach to Clinically Extremely Vulnerable individuals attending pilot events.

The policy change would no longer exclude CEV people from attending government test events and will empower CEV fans to make their own decisions and risk assessments, which they have done both throughout this pandemic.

Euro 2020 Final

Level Playing Field responded to the deeply concerning scenes that took place outside of Wembley Stadium ahead of the Euro 2020 final (in 2021) between England and Italy.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

DIRECTORS' REPORT (Continued)

In a match which saw truly abhorrent behaviour towards players there were also major issues affecting the safety of disabled supporters attending.

The issues at the final could have been catastrophic for all fans but particularly disabled supporters caught in the violence or injured as a result of reported breaches at the accessible entrance and wheelchair user viewing areas.

The Charity welcomed the independent review that was commissioned after the events that took place at the Euro 2020 final in July. We demanded that this review should go into fine detail about the targeted abuse of accessible entrances, stewarding processes and procedures and the lasting impact on disabled fans.

The independent review led by Baroness Casey has been conducted and to which Level Playing Field submitted evidence. The charity hopes that the findings from the review will deliver recommendations that will ensure the chaos at the Euro 2020 final will not be repeated and that the safety of disabled supporters and, indeed, all supporters remains of paramount importance.

Surveys

Our knowledge centre pillar of work has been important in 2021 to gather real life experiences to bring about change. Throughout the year the charity has had over 1500 fans take part in two Level Playing Field surveys (TV streaming survey and Annual Fan Survey).

Weeks of Action

With the coronavirus pandemic causing sport to come to a standstill in March 2020, including the postponement of last year's Weeks of Action, the 2021 campaign was in doubt. After a period of planning and consideration, Level Playing Field had little option but to make this year's campaign a virtual one, for the first time ever.

Over 100 clubs supported the campaign, including those from the Premier League, the EFL, National League, non-league, the Women's Super League and Championship, as well as contributions from the Welsh Cymru leagues.

Clubs published content across websites and social media platforms, expressing their support for the campaign by engaging with disabled fans during what has been an especially difficult year.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The financial position of the charity at 31st December 2021, as more fully detailed in the accounts, can be summarised as follows:

	2021 £	2020 £
Net income/(expenditure)	8,950	(4,890)
Unrestricted Revenue Funds available for the general purposes of the charity	186,411	177,461
Restricted Revenue Funds	-	-
Total Funds	186,411	177,461

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

DIRECTORS' REPORT (Continued)

RESERVES POLICY

The reserves policy is to maintain a level of unrestricted reserves which covers 6-12 months of operating costs.

The report of the directors has been prepared having taken advantage of the small companies' exemption in the Companies Act 2006.

On behalf of the board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A Taylor', written over a faint, illegible stamp or background.

A Taylor
Chair

Date: 18th May 2022

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD**INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS' REPORT**

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the company for the year ended 31st December 2021 which are set out on pages 6 to 16.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your company's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

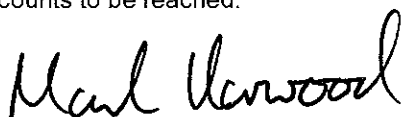
Independent examiner's statement

Since the company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Mark Harwood FCA FMAAT
Michael Harwood & Co
Chartered Accountants
Greville House
10 Jury Street
Warwick
CV34 4EW

Date: 20th May 2022

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(Incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account)
For the year ended 31st December 2021

	Note	2021 Unrestricted £	2021 Restricted £	2021 Total £	2020 Unrestricted £	2020 Restricted £	2020 Total £
Income from:							
Donations & grants	2	818	-	818	11,454	-	11,454
Charitable activities	3	74,107	270,902	345,009	34,297	289,439	323,736
Total income		74,925	270,902	345,827	45,751	289,439	335,190
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds		212	-	212	221	90	311
Charitable activities	4	36,706	290,195	326,901	34,985	291,481	326,466
Other	5	2,105	7,659	9,764	722	12,581	13,303
Total expenditure		39,023	297,854	336,877	35,928	304,152	340,080
Net income/(expenditure) for the year		35,902	(26,952)	8,950	9,823	(14,713)	(4,890)
Transfers between funds		(26,952)	26,952	-	(14,713)	14,713	-
Net movement in funds for the year		8,950	-	8,950	(4,890)	-	(4,890)
Fund balances brought forward		177,461	-	177,461	182,351	-	182,351
Fund balances at 31st December 2021	14	186,411	-	186,411	177,461	-	177,461

The notes on pages 9 to 16 form an integral part of the accounts.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD
(Company no. 11109719)

BALANCE SHEET
As at 31st December 2021

	Note	2021		2020	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	8		1,356		3,516
Current assets					
Debtors	9	9,785		7,939	
Cash at bank and in hand		225,069		205,434	
Total current assets		<u>234,854</u>		<u>213,373</u>	
Current liabilities					
Creditors	10	(49,799)		(39,428)	
Net current assets			<u>185,055</u>		<u>173,945</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u><u>186,411</u></u>		<u><u>177,461</u></u>
Funds of the Charity:					
Restricted funds			-		-
Unrestricted funds			186,411		177,461
Total charity funds	14		<u><u>186,411</u></u>		<u><u>177,461</u></u>

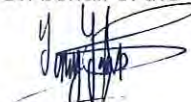
Directors' statements:

- The company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies;
- No members have required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006;
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 18th May 2022

On behalf of the Trustees


A Taylor
Chair

The notes on pages 9 to 16 form an integral part of the accounts.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the year ended 31st December 2021

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) **Basis of Accounting**

Level Playing Field is a company limited by guarantee in England & Wales. In the event of the charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity. The address of the registered office is given in the charity information on page 1 and the nature of the charity's operations and principal activities are given in the Annual Report.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis under the historical cost convention, modified to include certain items at fair value. The financial statements are presented in sterling which is the functional currency of the charity and rounded to the nearest £1.

The significant accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years presented unless otherwise stated.

(b) **Income**

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is legally entitled to the income after any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

For donations to be recognised the charity will have been notified of the amounts and the settlement date in writing. If there are conditions attached to the donation and this requires a level of performance before entitlement can be obtained then income is deferred until those conditions are fully met or the fulfilment of those conditions is within the control of the charity and it is probable that they will be fulfilled.

Investment income is earned through holding assets for investment purposes such as cash and is comprised of bank interest.

(c) **Government Grants**

Government grants are recognised at the fair value of the asset received or receivable when there is reasonable assurance that the grant conditions will be met and the grants will be received.

A grant that specifies performance conditions is recognised in income when the performance conditions are met. Where a grant does not specify performance conditions it is recognised in income when the proceeds are received or receivable. A grant received before the recognition criteria are satisfied is recognised as a liability.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2021**1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)****(d) Expenditure**

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Expenditure is recognised where there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that the settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. It is categorised under the following headings:

- Costs of raising funds includes the monthly charges of donation collection organisations.
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into the categories above and includes governance costs.

(e) Fixed Assets

Items of equipment costing over £200 are capitalised and are stated at cost (or deemed cost) or valuation less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Cost includes costs directly attributable to making the asset capable of operating as intended.

Depreciation is provided on tangible fixed assets, at rates calculated to write off the cost, less estimated residual value, of each asset on a systematic basis over its expected useful life as follows:

- Computer Equipment 3 years straight line

(f) Debtors and creditors receivable / payable within one year

Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in expenditure.

(g) Funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds subject to specific restricted conditions imposed by donors. The purposes and use of restricted funds are set out in note 13 to the financial statements.

(h) Taxation

The charity is an exempt charity within the meaning of schedule 3 of the Charities Act 2011 and is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2021

2. DONATIONS AND GRANTS

	2021 Unrestricted £	2021 Restricted £	2021 Total £	2020 Unrestricted £	2020 Restricted £	2020 Total £
Small donations individually less than £100	318	-	318	330	-	330
Manchester United Disabled Supporters Association	-	-	-	500	-	500
National Association of Disabled Supporters	-	-	-	624	-	624
Watford Borough Council (Coronavirus Small Business Grant Fund)	-	-	-	10,000	-	10,000
W3RT	500	-	500	-	-	-
Total donations and grants	818	-	818	11,454	-	11,454

3. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2021 Unrestricted £	2021 Restricted £	2021 Total £	2020 Unrestricted £	2020 Restricted £	2020 Total £
Income from Audits	14,453	-	14,453	4,625	-	4,625
Training Income	11,518	-	11,518	7,100	-	7,100
Membership Income	387	-	387	-	-	-
Performance-Related Grants:						
- Premier League Fans Fund	-	270,902	270,902	-	289,439	289,439
- The Football League	47,749	-	47,749	22,572	-	22,572
Total income from charitable activities	74,107	270,902	345,009	34,297	289,439	323,736

Reclassification:

The money received from the Premier League Fans Fund has been reclassified from Donations and Grants to Income from Charitable Activities to more accurately reflect the nature of the income. £289,439 has therefore been moved within the comparative figures when compared to the filed 2020 accounts.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2021

4. EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2021 Unrestricted £	2021 Restricted £	2021 Total £	2020 Unrestricted £	2020 Restricted £	2020 Total £
Direct spending						
Expenses recharged	(256)	1,452	1,196	(2,093)	631	(1,462)
Weeks of Action & Campaigning	633	12,572	13,205	479	9,050	9,529
Regional DSA Forums	2	33	35	-	-	-
Event Costs	(14)	(264)	(278)	30	569	599
Total direct spending	365	13,793	14,158	(1,584)	10,250	8,666
Support costs						
Staff costs (see Note 6)	32,678	220,324	253,002	33,131	220,762	253,893
Travel and subsistence	95	1,810	1,905	577	7,741	8,318
Telephone costs	33	1,343	1,376	98	970	1,068
Premises	2,188	41,579	43,767	2,096	39,842	41,938
Publicity	21	396	417	44	835	879
Administration & office supplies	728	6,006	6,734	331	5,737	6,068
Professional fees & insurance	316	1,677	1,993	105	2,000	2,105
Website & email hosting	250	2,993	3,243	108	2,052	2,160
Training	12	228	240	6	109	115
Postage	5	46	51	73	1,183	1,256
Bad debts	15	-	15	-	-	-
Total support costs	36,341	276,402	312,743	36,569	281,231	317,800
Total expenditure on charitable activities	36,706	290,195	326,901	34,985	291,481	326,466

5. OTHER COSTS

	2021 Unrestricted £	2021 Restricted £	2021 Total £	2020 Unrestricted £	2020 Restricted £	2020 Total £
Bank charges	83	6	89	22	146	168
Governance travel costs	18	337	355	106	1,202	1,308
Other legal and professional	1,885	5,046	6,931	478	9,032	9,510
Depreciation	119	2,270	2,389	116	2,197	2,313
Sundry expenses	-	-	-	-	4	4
Total other costs	2,105	7,659	9,764	722	12,581	13,303

Independent examiner's remuneration

Included in the above figures are independent examination fees of £3,000 (2020 - £3,000) and other financial services of £756 (2020 - £576).

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2021

6. STAFF COSTS

	2021 £	2020 £
Gross wages	227,725	228,700
Social security costs	20,116	20,169
Pension costs	4,915	5,024
Other costs	246	-
Total salaries, wages and related costs	253,001	253,893

Average number of employees 6 6

The number of employees who received total employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs of more than £60,000 is as follows:

£60,001 - £70,000 1 1

7. TRUSTEE REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

No Trustee or connected person received any remuneration or expenses either directly or indirectly.

8. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Computer Equipment £	Total £
COST		
At 1 st January 2020	6,939	6,939
Additions	229	229
Disposals	-	-
At 31 st December 2021	<u>7,168</u>	<u>7,168</u>
DEPRECIATION		
At 1 st January 2020	3,423	3,423
Charge for the year	2,389	2,389
Eliminated on disposal	-	-
At 31 st December 2021	<u>5,812</u>	<u>5,812</u>
NET BOOK VALUE		
At 31 st December 2021	<u>1,356</u>	<u>1,356</u>
At 31 st December 2020	<u>3,516</u>	<u>3,516</u>

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2021

9. DEBTORS

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade debtors	6,519	4,623
Prepayments	3,266	3,174
Other debtors	-	142
	<u>9,785</u>	<u>7,939</u>

**10. CREDITORS:
AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR**

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade creditors	1,326	203
Accruals	3,270	8,789
Social security & other taxes	7,041	6,874
Deferred income (see Note 11)	38,162	23,562
	<u>49,799</u>	<u>39,428</u>

11. DEFERRED INCOME

	2021	2020
	£	£
Balance brought forward	23,562	49,036
Amounts released to income	(23,562)	(49,036)
Additions during the year	38,162	23,562
	<u>38,162</u>	<u>23,562</u>

Deferred income comprises performance-related grants covering the year ended 31st December 2022 (£25,962) and Access Audit income received in advance (£12,200).

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2021

12. MOVEMENT ON FUNDS

	Balance at 01.01.2021 £	Income in year £	Expenditure in year £	Transfers £	Balance at 31.12.2021 £
Unrestricted & designated funds					
Unrestricted revenue funds	177,461	74,925	(39,023)	(26,952)	186,411
Total unrestricted funds	177,461	74,925	(39,023)	(26,952)	186,411
Restricted funds					
Fans' Fund	-	270,902	(297,854)	26,952	-
Total restricted funds	-	270,902	(297,854)	26,952	-
Total charity funds	177,461	345,827	(336,877)	-	186,411

13. RESTRICTED FUNDS

The purposes for which the restricted funds are held by the charity are:

- Fans' Fund Grant funding from the Premier League Fans' Fund to be used for the following outcomes:
- Outcome 1 - To Improve engagement between fans and fan groups and the key operational staff who deliver supporter liaison, disability access and any related facilities and services.
 - Outcome 2 - To make fans voice more representative, through the promotion and development of effective membership organisation.
 - Outcome 3 - To improve the matchday and non-matchday experience for all fans by making football more diverse and inclusive.
 - Outcome 4 - To fund use of not-for-profit skilled or professional services that create and support innovative fan engagement projects.
 - Outcome 5 - To improve the away fan experience.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2021

14. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Fixed Assets £	Current Assets £	Current Liabilities £	Total £
At 31st December 2021				
Restricted funds	1,288	32,719	(34,007)	-
Unrestricted funds	68	202,135	(15,792)	186,411
	<u>1,356</u>	<u>234,854</u>	<u>(49,799)</u>	<u>186,411</u>
At 31st December 2020				
Restricted funds	3,340	35,250	(38,590)	-
Unrestricted funds	176	178,123	(838)	177,461
	<u>3,516</u>	<u>213,373</u>	<u>(39,428)</u>	<u>177,461</u>

15. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

During the year the company made no transactions with related parties.

16. FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

At 31st December 2021, the charity had total commitments under non-cancellable operating leases of £9,166.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

England & Wales - Charity number 1177415

Accounts



Level Playing Field

Annual Report

2020

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President's foreword

David Bernstein CBE

As President, I am pleased to welcome you to the latest Level Playing Field Annual Report. Since our last report, we have all had to suffer the effects of a global pandemic. This has meant the charity has had to adapt its work to support disabled fans whilst still delivering against its charitable objective in innovative ways.

The staff at Level Playing Field have gone above and beyond throughout this difficult period to ensure disabled sports fans feel supported and their views and experiences are a prominent factor in plans moving forward as football clubs and sport, in general, prepares to welcome back spectators.

The Weeks of Action 2020 campaign was the charities biggest to date, despite having to postpone the final week due to the pandemic.

Several successful initiatives were introduced by staff to help supporters battle isolation during the initial lockdown. After months of planning the charity launched an official podcast, the only podcast of its kind that focuses solely on disabled sports fans. This will be an important platform enabling Level Playing Field the opportunity to grow as a charity and raise the national profile of the organisation as it tackles crucial topics in disability sport.

Again, I am very grateful to the Board of Trustees, the Ambassadors and my fellow Honorary Officers in doing what they do to ensure that Level Playing Field delivers on its charitable objectives. Level Playing Field is fortunate to have a passionate and determined team of staff who always go the extra mile to achieve our objectives.

I look forward to the year ahead and to yet more progress.

With best wishes,

David Bernstein CBE



Chair's report

Tony Taylor



Disabled sports fans are at the heart of what Level Playing Field exists for, and this has never been as evident as it has been throughout 2020, when we were hit with a global pandemic, restricting fans from attending stadia and live events. On behalf of the Board of Trustees at Level Playing Field, it gives me great pleasure to formally welcome you to our latest Annual report.

I would like to thank our President, David Bernstein CBE along with our Vice Presidents Lord Faulkner of Worcester, Lord Rosser of Ickenham and David Davies OBE, for their work during a difficult year amid the coronavirus pandemic. We have found their wise counsel, guidance and continued support to be of great support as we have navigated through the challenges presented by Covid 19. I would also like to express my thanks to our Ambassadors who do so much to represent the values and objectives of Level Playing Field – a world in which all disabled fans are able to freely access and enjoy live sporting events.

The potential impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on a charity such as ours could be devastating and I want to place on record my thanks to the staff team at Level Playing Field who have gone above and beyond anything we could have asked of them. They have been innovative in developing new ways of engaging with fans, clubs and governing bodies - and receptive to new ways of working - and we benefit greatly from having a staff team which works tirelessly to improve access and inclusion for disabled sports fans.

Throughout the year, they have been firmly committed to ensuring fans are made to feel as close to sport as possible, in a world where meeting friends, watching from the 'terraces', and supporting a team in the flesh was simply not an option. The team created several initiatives throughout the year to generate a social atmosphere and combat loneliness. Working closely with governing bodies, clubs, disabled supporters' associations and fans themselves to ensure there is a holistic approach to tackling these obstacles and making progress.

I want to place on record my thanks to fellow Trustees, who work in an entirely voluntary capacity but always go above and beyond the call of duty. This year, more than ever, we have depended on their input and unwavering support. They play a significant role in ensuring that the charity is governed effectively and that our charitable objectives are achieved. Our sights are now firmly set on the 2020/21 season and beyond. We remain determined to work collaboratively to continue the improvements in accessibility and inclusion for sports fans, on the return of live sport.

I look forward to updating you in our next annual report regarding our progress.

About Level Playing Field

Level Playing Field is a registered charity in England and Wales, which acts as a campaigning and advisory organisation to its membership and other parties across all sports. We have a team of dedicated staff with specialist knowledge, skills and experience around issues concerning access and inclusion.

Level Playing Field embraces 'the social model of disability' and promotes the removal of barriers that might prevent a disabled spectator from attending or enjoying a live sports event. We want to ensure that disabled people enjoy an equality of experience as they attend live sport. Level Playing Field is driven to address the current inequality of experience for disabled fans attending live sport. Whether it's lack of choice, availability of tickets or a second-rate experience we use a proactive and constructive approach to tackle these and other issues.

Our Vision



A world in which all disabled fans can freely access and enjoy live sporting events.



Our Mission

Level Playing Field promotes a positive, inclusive experience for disabled sports fans

We believe that attending and engaging with live sporting events has a positive impact on wellbeing. We work at every level to ensure that disabled fans can freely access and enjoy live sport.



Our Aims

- Providing support and advocacy for disabled sports fans.
- Offering advice, access audits and training to sports clubs and governing bodies.
- Working with architects and design teams to ensure an inclusive and accessible physical environment at live sporting events.
- Building relationships and partnerships with sports clubs, DSAs, fans and sector organisations.
- Campaigning to keep the disability agenda top of mind for the government.

Level Playing Field delivers its work through its four Key Pillars:



For the Clubs

For the Fans

Knowledge Centre

Campaigns

Putting it simply, Level Playing Field campaigns and works towards improving the matchday experience for disabled fans by driving an equal matchday experience.

Why we do what we do

It is estimated that 50% of disabled people don't take part in recreational or physical activity.

The barriers to why a disabled fan chooses not to attend live sport can be addressed through training, raising awareness, and updating facilities and services. Last year Level Playing Field received hundreds of enquiries and complaints and we aim to address these common recurring issues.

Level Playing Field are guided by the following principles:

- Anti-discrimination – so that disabled people do not face discrimination arising from poor or misinformed practice.
- **Equality of opportunity or making things fairer – for disabled people in every aspect of their contact with sports clubs and venues.**
- Increasing the independence and choices that disabled people have.
- **Individual requirements / diversity – recognising that a disabled person is an individual who, like all others, has his or her own requirements, abilities, human rights and responsibilities.**
- Integration/inclusion – such that services are made accessible to disabled people and offer choice.
- **Involvement in decision-making – so that disabled people, and/or their advocates, are consulted before decisions that affect them are made.**
- The social model of disability explains that it is social and physical ‘barriers’ that cause ‘disability’ not impairments.

Level Playing Field is working to remove the barriers that currently exclude disabled people. These barriers can be prejudice and stereotypes, the way things are organised and run, and little to no access to information, buildings and transport.



Weeks of Action 2020

Covid-19 hit

The suspension of live sport occurred on the final weekend of the 2020 Level Playing Field Weeks of Action campaign. This resulted in a number of planned matchday activities being cancelled across the football pyramid. The senior leadership team at Level Playing Field acted quickly to suspend the campaign ahead of official government guidance. Despite the suspension of activities during the final weekend, Level Playing Field recorded its most successful campaign to date, as it enjoyed involvement from governing bodies, clubs, disabled supporters associations and fans.

The 2020 Weeks of Action made a significant contribution towards inclusion, engagement and awareness. Videos were produced through our partnership with the English Football League which show-cased the matchday experience of fans across football.



Fan engagement

Following the restriction and the impact of the pandemic, Level Playing Field adapted its work (in line with its charitable objectives), to support its beneficiaries.

Several projects were adapted to meet the new challenge, for example regional forums which were being hosted virtually. New projects and activities were also created to support the well-being of fans. These projects include:

The Level Playing Field podcast

Membership Steering Group

Match of the Day... Before!

Talking Sport

Weekly quiz

The Level Playing Field Podcast

A Podcast For All

After thorough research, preparation and planning, in November 2020 Level Playing Field was excited to announce the launch of an official podcast. The podcast is released on a monthly basis and uses the tagline: 'A Podcast For All'. Each episode has a theme, some published episodes have included disability abuse, disability language, Covid-19 passports and certificates, along with a number of important and interesting topics.

The one-of-a-kind podcast created by our fans liaison officer is the only podcast available that focuses solely on disabled sports fans. After nine episodes, the podcast continues to be a great success with a growing audience, as fans and clubs continue to buy into the project and enjoy the content on offer.

The podcast provides a range of guests each episode, including staff from various sports clubs, fans, Level Playing Field ambassadors and others from partner organisations and charities.

Membership Steering Group

Level Playing Field membership

A membership steering group was conducted to enhance the experience of Level Playing Field members ahead of the 2020/21 season. The group was made up of new and existing members, who contributed feedback to the membership team, suggesting ideas and changes, what works well about the membership programme and what could be improved. The information gathered led in part to record-breaking membership numbers and increased quality and quantity of content, with future meetings scheduled.



Match of the Day... Before!

One of the most important parts of live sport is the social aspect and experiences football, rugby, cricket and many other sports offer to supporters. During the Covid-19 pandemic, that resulted in fans being unable to join family, friends and colleagues to enjoy live sports events, Level Playing Field decided to try and re-create this atmosphere with a new initiative, 'Match of the Day... Before!'.

The name, which is based on the Saturday night football show 'Match of the Day', wasn't the only aspect from BBC's show that inspired Level Playing Field's 'Match of the Day... Before!' The idea of the project was to host a live video chat every Monday, where fans could join from all different clubs and sports to discuss all the latest action from the previous weekend's fixtures and events.

This allowed supporters to re-connect with fellow fans and enjoy heated discussion and debate, usually on their own team's performance!

Talking Sport

Level Playing Field launched the Talking Sport initiative during the original Covid-19 lockdown in an attempt to combat loneliness during a period of isolation for so many regular match-going sports fans.

The initiative was launched on the back of the Office For National Statistics report, disabled people have stated that loneliness had affected their well-being during the COVID pandemic.

Level Playing Field's fans liaison officer led on the project, inviting Level Playing Field members, fans and disabled supporters association's to join in a private video chat to talk all things sport!

Weekly Quiz

To generate some competition and positivity during March's lockdown, we began a weekly quiz that took place every Monday across Level Playing Field's social media platforms.

Level Playing Field acted as quiz host, compiling a list of questions to challenge some eager fans with in a quiz made up of three rounds. The rounds were general knowledge, specialist subject and a picture round,

An average of 15 people joined the quiz weekly, with others joining live or catching-up later on across social media.



Covid-19

Right from the initial stages of the pandemic, Level Playing Field took an approach based on being a part of the solution, being proactive, responsive and responsible in its relationship with governing bodies, clubs and other stakeholders to offer meaningful guidance to assist disabled fans. A programme of work was delivered in order to support club staff, with the focus on disabled fan engagement and the plans for an (inclusive and accessible) re-opening of stadia. This was delivered through a range of channels, including webinars, Level Playing Field Guidance and FAQ documents, 1 to 1 club telephone/online calls, and other standard means of communication.



Football fights back

Level Playing Field produced a short video to highlight the good work football clubs were doing behind the scenes during the suspension of live sport. Football clubs, players and athletes across the country had voluntarily put in the work to make sure those vulnerable are as comfortable as possible during challenging times. There was so much good work being done by clubs, that we wanted to highlight some of it in a short video - only a small snapshot of what clubs and community trusts are involved in.

Ambassador support



Stephen Miller's message

“

Decorated Paralympic athlete Stephen Miller offered words of advice and encouragement at the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic during the testing times for sport and it's fans:

"What a time to be alive, eh?"

This is undoubtedly the most unprecedented and challenging situation most of us will ever have experienced. Sure, there have been outbreaks and pandemics in the past but not one that has shut down the entire world the way that COVID-19 has.

The world can seem scary and stressful right now, worrying about our own health and safety as well as that of others, but the best way to help is to follow Government advice by staying at home as much as possible, avoiding social interaction and washing your hands.

We are very much social creatures and love to be outdoors so it's very alien to have to stay in and avoid people, but we just have to do what we humans do best – adapt to these new conditions and be resilient. If we can do that, I'm sure we'll come through this stronger and wiser, with a greater sense of togetherness and empathy, and perhaps the world might even be a better place for it.

With all live sport and entertainment events postponed or cancelled, shops and parks closed, the outside world feels a bit like a zombie movie right now. It's easy to let fears and anxieties take over but it's important to stay active and healthy both physically and mentally over the next few weeks or months.

It was recently announced that the Tokyo Paralympics has been postponed until next year, I was planning to try and qualify for what would be my 7th games this year and had been training and preparing all winter. Indeed, a Paralympics is something you prepare for over many years, so to have that target taken away and moved is a strange feeling, although the decision was totally correct and necessary in the circumstances. Just like people who have lost business and work, it leaves a massive void in my life – being told to stay at home and not go to work is probably most people's idea of heaven, but filling time without purpose is harder than it sounds and after a few days when the novelty has worn off it may start taking it's toll physically and mentally.

When this is all over, we don't want another crisis with everybody being depressed and unwell, so here are some tips that I am employing to maintain good physical and mental health during this crisis: Stay connected, exercise, eat well, sleep, journaling, focus on what you can control, and stay positive."

”

Webinars and club support

Level Playing Field have worked with clubs and governing bodies throughout the Covid-19 pandemic to offer support and guidance concerning disabled sports fans.

SGSA webinars - reopening stadia

Level Playing Field worked with the Sports Ground Safety Authority (SGSA) to put on a webinar for both clubs and fans on the re-opening of stadia guidance: SG02 - Planning for Social Distancing. The webinar took place on the 18 August 2021 with the potential that stadiums would have a partial re-opening in October. We had SGSA Inspector Rick Riding who provided an update on the guide with key information along with taking part in a Q&A with Level Playing Field and finally taking questions from fans and clubs. The session was recorded and made available to all clubs across the football pyramid and across other sports where the SG02 guidance would be applicable. There were 99 webinar participants with 27 clubs being represented.

Club drop-in sessions

Level Playing Field hosted several drop in sessions for club staff to receive further information around how to engage with fans during the pandemic, how best to support fans on their return to stadiums, and what accessible considerations they need to factor in. At the time of these sessions there was a tiered system with only some clubs having fixtures all be it with a reduced capacity. Level Playing Field hosted a Q&A with clubs who had hosted a game to share challenges and what went well.



Club and governing body guidance

Following the very successful survey and other fan engagement (1 to 1 talks, fan forums and group discussions) Level Playing Field produced several Covid-19 guides:

- Covid-19 guide for clubs – focusing on several key areas (fan wellbeing, communication, operational challenges, alternatives to attending and ticketing). The guide also included case studies and good practices that clubs were doing.
- Covid-19 Club disabled fans FAQ guide and solutions - A detailed guide was created that outlined frequently asked and potential questions ahead of stadiums re-opening. The guide also provided sensible solutions to ensure clubs had sufficient support to provide an accessible re-opening.
- Disabled Fan Engagement - This guide outlined a step-by-step process for clubs to engage with disabled fans ahead of stadiums re-opening. There is anticipated anxiety and a lot of changes due to Covid-19 measures and to alleviate this having a structured and regular communication process is essential.



Level Playing Field guidance

In addition to the Covid-19 guidance already mentioned, Level Playing Field updated previous guidance documents on disability identifiers (such as sunflower lanyards), virtual navigation tools (which help supporters to navigate stadiums virtually), our 'Proof Of Disability' guidance and also the 'Introduction to disability' guide that accompanies our training.

We also created an 'About Level Playing Field' guide, which outlines our work and services, and have begun work on a 'Terminology Guide' to help educate clubs and fans about appropriate and inappropriate language relating to disability.

Surveys

Impact of Covid-19 on disabled sports fans

Level Playing Field released a first-of-its-kind survey with the aim of ascertaining the impact of the pandemic on fans so that the charity could formulate data-driven guidance and support. The survey also aimed to help the organisation understand how disabled supporters feel about live sport moving forward when fans are able to return to stadia. The survey was open for five weeks and saw close to 600 respondents from fans across the football pyramid. The survey showcased the thoughts and expectations of match-going fans as sport began to reconvene behind closed doors.

Some of the key findings found that:

43% said the suspension of live sport had a significant impact on their mental health

79% of supporters were in the government's 'high risk' category, but **81%** of fans intend to renew their season ticket

12% of respondents state that they'd been put off attending live sport ever again

Streaming survey

13 November - 18 December 2020

We wanted to hear from disabled supporters about their experience of watching live sport on these streaming services, in particular, whether the services are accessible for their particular disability. When so many other facilities, events and venues had been put on hold, the option to watch live sport on TV had an increased significance. Therefore it's essential that TV streaming services met the requirements of all viewers, particularly disabled fans. The results of the survey are being used to advise and support clubs, leagues and streaming service providers where possible.

A year in review

January

National Forum film

Stadium MK would be the destination in November 2019 Level Playing Field would invite clubs, DSAs, fans, partner organisations and its members to meet to discuss access, best practices, and share the great ideas we all have to provide a better match day experience for disabled sports fans.

Working alongside Stanley Road Film and Media Limited, LPF produced a 'National Forum Film' that captured a significant day in Level Playing Field history.

March

EFL filming

Level Playing Field staff travelled to Old Trafford neighbours 'Hotel Football' in Manchester to conduct a handful of short films to release during March in the build-up to the Weeks of Action campaign.

Pub quiz

March marked the beginning of Covid-19, and more importantly, the weekly Level Playing Field pub quiz!

May

Covid-19 fan survey

The survey was the first of its kind to measure the current impact of Covid-19 on disabled sports fans in England and Wales and to also look forward at particular challenges. Fast-forward to June, we published the results of the survey which saw close to 600 responses from disabled fans.

February

Weeks of Action 2020

Despite the disruption caused by the sudden suspension of live sport, Weeks of Action 2020 still went above and beyond previous years as Level Playing Field recorded record numbers in its 16th season celebrating the campaign.

102 clubs, 38 disabled supporters association's, 42 other organisations and 13 leagues took part in total.

April

Football Fights Back

During the suspension of sport, we noticed plenty of clubs working hard in and around their respective communities, especially with disabled supporters. Most clubs were communicating with fans by reaching out on the phone, some clubs had club legends getting involved! There was a lot of good going on up and down the country, so LPF decided to do some research and create a video, on how football fought back.

August

Stephen Miller MBE becomes Ambassador

Level Playing Field were delighted to announce the signing of Stephen Miller MBE as the latest to join what is growing to be a fantastic list of ambassadors. Stephen was a founding member of the Newcastle United Disabled Supporters Association, an association that is now in its 22nd year of continuous service to represent the views that improve the matchday experience of disabled supporters visiting St James Park. It is this passion the key reason for Stephen wanting to work with Level Playing Field as an ambassador in supporting the charity in its work and vision: A world in which all disabled fans can freely access and enjoy live sporting events.

October

Match of the Day... Before!

Continuing our work around Covid-19 and keeping fans engaged during this difficult time, we decided it was time for another Level Playing Field initiative; Match of the Day... Before!

July

Membership Steering Group

Level Playing Field decided to put together a 'Membership Steering Group' made up of current LPF members and DSA members, to help develop the three membership types we offer. We recruited eight members and had a successful first meeting at the beginning of the last season.

Talking Sport

We decided to introduce a new initiative to encourage social interaction, combating loneliness during the COVID-19 pandemic. We invited fans to get in touch with us for a session of sport discussion. The feedback we've received has proved to us just how important it is to reach out to fans in these periods of isolation.

September

Virtual forums

During September, Level Playing Field arranged several DSA and Fan forums to discuss the return of disabled supporters to stadiums, and what part Disabled Supporters Associations (DSA) can play in the process.

November

The Level Playing Podcast

In what has probably been Level Playing Field's biggest introduction of 2020, the long-awaited Level Playing Field podcast launched.

TV streaming survey

This survey focussed on TV Streaming Services, or any other platform fans have used during the time sport has been played behind closed doors. We wanted to know if these streaming services are accessible to everyone.

Staff



Owain Davies

Chief Executive



Ruth Hopkins

General Manager & Head of Access
and Development



Liam Bird

Fan's Liaison Officer



Nicky Baker

Access and Development Officer



Ben Southby

Media and Communications
Officer



Daniel Townley

Development Officer

Board of Trustees



Tony Taylor

Chair



Steve Evans

Secretary



Jo McNicol

Trustee



Rex Burton

Trustee



Jo Deagle

Trustee



Jamie Beddard

Trustee

A message from our Chief Executive

Owain Davies

The past 12 months have been highly challenging for everyone. The impact of Covid-19 has ravaged our day to day lives, restricted our community activity, taken away watching live sport and far worse. However, we have seen clubs, disabled supporters associations and fans come together and fill voids where they can and keep people connected and offer support.

January, like most years, is a busy period for Level Playing Field with preparation for our Weeks of Action campaign taking centre stage. This year's target was to build on last year's achievements, which was a great challenge, with the 2019 campaign being the most successful to date. I'm pleased to report that this was the case, and we exceeded all our measures from previous campaigns despite the suspension of live sport (due to Covid-19) taking place on the final weekend of the campaign (13th of March).

When the pandemic hit, Level Playing Field acted quickly, and as a charity, we adapted our work to address the current situation. Our mantra 'to support clubs and governing bodies' was to be a part of the solution and be decisive and quick. Our focus for fans was to be there and to keep people connected.

We are still in the middle of a tough time, and we must stick together and support where we can. We featured a news story in July from our ambassador Steven Miller (six-time Paralympic medalist), and his words of advice ring true now "we will get through this".

Finally, I would like to thank our funders, the Premier League Fans Fund and the EFL, who have been incredibly supportive during this period and allowed us to be responsive to the situation. Disabled Supporters Associations and fans for supporting our work and also supporting fellow fans. Lastly, the clubs who have often filled some of the gaps that this pandemic has taken from us.





For Disabled Sports Fans

Level Playing Field
The Junction
Station Road
Watford
WD17 1ET



 01923 545 370

 info@levelplayingfield.org.uk

 levelplayingfield.org.uk

 @lpftweets

 @levelplayingfielduk

 /lpftweets



Company Number: 11109719
Charity Number: 1177415

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD
DIRECTORS' REPORT AND
UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

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LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

CHARITY REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

CHARITY NUMBER: 1177415

COMPANY NUMBER: 11109719

TRUSTEES/DIRECTORS: A Taylor (Chair)
S Evans
J McNicol
R Burton
J Deagle
J Beddard

COMPANY SECRETARY: S Evans

REGISTERED OFFICE: Greville House
10 Jury Street
Warwick
Warwickshire
CV34 4EW

PRINCIPAL ADDRESS: The Junction
Station Road
Watford
WD17 1ET

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER: Mark Harwood FCA FMAAT
Michael Harwood & Co
Greville House
10 Jury Street
Warwick
Warwickshire
CV34 4EW

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (INCL DIRECTORS' REPORT)

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st December 2020. The Trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Level Playing Field, a charitable company limited by guarantee (Company no. 11109719 & Charity no. 1177415), was incorporated on the 13th December 2017 and is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association. The directors of the charitable company (who are its trustees for the purposes of charity law) have no interest in the company's assets or surplus and receive no remuneration.

The Trustees meet at least once a quarter and are actively involved in the strategic direction of the charity. Level Playing Field uses both in-house and external sources for appointing trustees in order to operate in line with best practice. Level Playing Field is an inclusive employer and recruiter. The Charity actively promotes the positive impact of having a diverse workforce and trustee board. This commitment allows Level Playing Field to represent the community it serves. Level Playing Field has signed up to the Disability Confident Scheme.

A business continuation policy is in place which clearly reviews risks and provides a plan to react to changing circumstances should they occur. The plan covers financial, operational and strategic areas and is supported by a detailed risk assessment.

The charity works on a collaborative basis with other charities, including Centre for Access to Football in Europe (CAFE), but has no formal agreements or links in situ.

OBJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

Level Playing Field believes that disability is a social issue and that an individual only becomes disabled as a result of the social, attitudinal and environmental barriers that the individual faces (this is known as the social model of disability).

The charity is focussed on removing these barriers in all sports. Level Playing Field and its members are committed to achieving an environment where:

- all fans can enjoy an equal experience at live sports events
- all stadia and sports venues are fully accessible and inclusive
- all customer and/or fan services are equal and inclusive
- disabled people are seen as customers with a commercial value

We are guided by the following principles:

- Anti-discrimination – so that disabled people do not face discrimination arising from poor or misinformed practice
- Equality of opportunity and fairness – for disabled people in every aspect of their contact with sports clubs and venues
- Increasing the independence and choices offered to disabled people
- Individual requirements – recognising that a disabled person is an individual who, in a diverse society, has his or her own needs, abilities, human rights and responsibilities
- Integration/inclusion – such that services are made accessible to disabled people and offer choice

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

DIRECTORS' REPORT (Continued)

- Involvement in decision-making – so that disabled people, and/or their advocates, are consulted before decisions which affect them are made
- Acknowledgment of the social model of disability which explains that it is social and physical barriers that cause 'disability' not impairments.

Level Playing Field is working to remove the barriers that currently exclude disabled people. These barriers include:

- Prejudice and stereotypes
- The way things are organised and run
- Lack of/inadequate access to information, buildings and transport

The directors have had due regard to the guidance published by The Charity Commissioners on public benefit in managing the activities of the charity.

The main activities of the charity during the year are as follows (a more detailed summary of the charity's activities can be found in the Annual Report):

Fan Engagement

Following the restriction and the impact of the pandemic Level Playing Field adapted its work (in line with its charitable objectives) to support their beneficiaries. Several projects were adapted to meet the new challenge, such as Regional Forums being hosted virtually. New projects and activities were also created to support the well-being of fans, such as:

- **Online Weekly Quizzes**, embracing questions on sport and accessibility
- **Talking Sport**, offering 1 to 1 telephone calls with disabled fans who were isolated and lonely
- **Match of the Day Before**, group virtual coffee mornings
- **Level Playing Field Podcast**, available through all the main streaming channels

The feedback received from stakeholders to these activities and their impact has been positive and it is likely that these will continue when the pandemic is no longer a threat and restrictions ease.

Covid-19

Right from the initial stages of the pandemic, Level Playing Field took an approach based on being a part of the solution, being proactive, responsive and responsible in its relationship with governing bodies, clubs and other stakeholders to offer meaningful guidance to assist disabled fans. A programme of work was delivered in order to support club staff, with the focus on disabled fan engagement and the plans for an (inclusive and accessible) re-opening of stadia. This was delivered through a range of channels, including webinars, Level Playing Field Guidance and FAQ documents, 1 to 1 club telephone/online calls, and other standard means of communication.

Surveys

In May/June 2020, Level Playing Field conducted a Covid-19 Fan Survey, with the aim of ascertaining the impact of the pandemic on fans so that the charity could formulate data driven guidance and support. 570 fans took part in the survey, at the time the most extensive survey in Level Playing Field's history, with 43% of respondents to the survey highlighting that the suspension of live sport had significantly impacted their mental health.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD**DIRECTORS' REPORT (Continued)**

Weeks of Action

The suspension of live sport occurred on the final weekend of the 2020 Level Playing Field Weeks of Action campaign. This resulted in a number of planned matchday activities being cancelled across the football pyramid. The senior leadership team at Level Playing Field acted quickly to suspend the campaign ahead of official government guidance. Despite the suspension of activities during the final weekend, Level Playing Field recorded its most successful campaign to date, as it enjoyed involvement from governing bodies, clubs, disabled supporters' associations and fans. The 2020 Weeks of Action made a significant contribution towards inclusion, engagement and awareness. Videos were produced through our partnership with the English Football League which show-cased the matchday experience of fans across football.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The financial position of the charity at 31st December 2020, as more fully detailed in the accounts, can be summarised as follows:

	2020	2019
	£	£
Net income/(expenditure)	(4,890)	182,351
Unrestricted Revenue Funds available for the general purposes of the charity	177,461	182,351
Restricted Revenue Funds	-	-
Total Funds	177,461	182,351

This was the second period of activity as a company following the transfer of the assets, liabilities and activities from the unincorporated charity named The National Association of Disabled Supporters (charity number 1079740) on the 1st September 2018. The comparative figures in these financial statements are for the 16-month period from this date to the 31st December 2019.

RESERVES POLICY

The reserves policy is to maintain a level of unrestricted reserves which covers 6-12 months of operating costs.

The report of the directors has been prepared having taken advantage of the small companies' exemption in the Companies Act 2006.

On behalf of the board

A Taylor
Chair
Date:

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS' REPORT

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the company for the year ended 31st December 2020 which are set out on pages 6 to 16.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your company's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Mark Harwood FCA FMAAT
Michael Harwood & Co
Chartered Accountants
Greville House
10 Jury Street
Warwick
CV34 4EW

Date:

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(Incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account)
For the year ended 31st December 2020

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2020 £
Income and Endowments from:				
Donations & grants	2	11,454	289,439	300,893
Charitable activities	3	34,297	-	34,297
Investments		-	-	-
Total income		45,751	289,439	335,190
Expenditure on:				
Raising funds		221	90	311
Charitable activities	4	34,985	291,481	326,466
Other	5	722	12,581	13,303
Total expenditure		35,928	304,152	340,080
Net income/(expenditure) for the year		9,823	(14,713)	(4,890)
Transfers between funds		(14,713)	14,713	-
Net movement in funds for the year		(4,890)	-	(4,890)
Fund balances brought forward		182,351	-	182,351
Fund balances at 31st December 2020	13	177,461	-	177,461

The notes on pages 9 to 16 form an integral part of the accounts.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(Incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account)
For the 16 months to 31st December 2019

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	01.09.18 to 31.12.19 £
Income and Endowments from:				
Donations & legacies	2	2,356	416,884	419,240
Charitable activities	3	256,177	-	256,177
Investments		12	-	12
Total income		258,545	416,884	675,429
Expenditure on:				
Raising funds		198	36	234
Charitable activities	4	54,997	426,616	481,613
Other	5	653	10,578	11,231
Total expenditure		55,848	437,230	493,078
Net income/(expenditure) for the year		202,697	(20,346)	182,351
Transfers between funds		(20,346)	20,346	-
Net movement in funds for the year		182,351	-	182,351
Fund balances brought forward		-	-	-
Fund balances at 31st December 2019	13	182,351	-	182,351

The notes on pages 9 to 16 form an integral part of the accounts.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD
(Company no. 11109719)

BALANCE SHEET
As at 31st December 2020

	Note	2020		2019	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	8		3,516		2,219
Current assets					
Debtors	9	7,939		9,442	
Cash at bank and in hand		205,434		231,562	
Total current assets		<u>213,373</u>		<u>241,004</u>	
Current liabilities					
Creditors	10	(39,428)		(60,872)	
Net current assets			<u>173,945</u>		<u>180,132</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>177,461</u>		<u>182,351</u>
Funds of the Charity:					
Restricted funds			-		-
Unrestricted funds			177,461		182,351
Total charity funds	13		<u>177,461</u>		<u>182,351</u>

Directors' statements:

- The company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies;
- No members have required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006;
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 11th August 2021

On behalf of the Trustees

A Taylor
Chair

The notes on pages 9 to 16 form an integral part of the accounts.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS****For the year ended 31st December 2020**

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES**(a) Basis of Accounting**

Level Playing Field is a company limited by guarantee in England & Wales. In the event of the charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity. The address of the registered office is given in the charity information on page 1 and the nature of the charity's operations and principal activities are given in the Annual Report.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis under the historical cost convention, modified to include certain items at fair value. The financial statements are presented in sterling which is the functional currency of the charity and rounded to the nearest £1.

The significant accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years presented unless otherwise stated.

(b) Income

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when the charity is legally entitled to the income after any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

For donations to be recognised the charity will have been notified of the amounts and the settlement date in writing. If there are conditions attached to the donation and this requires a level of performance before entitlement can be obtained then income is deferred until those conditions are fully met or the fulfilment of those conditions is within the control of the charity and it is probable that they will be fulfilled.

Investment income is earned through holding assets for investment purposes such as cash and is comprised of bank interest.

(c) Government Grants

Government grants are recognised at the fair value of the asset received or receivable when there is reasonable assurance that the grant conditions will be met and the grants will be received.

A grant that specifies performance conditions is recognised in income when the performance conditions are met. Where a grant does not specify performance conditions it is recognised in income when the proceeds are received or receivable. A grant received before the recognition criteria are satisfied is recognised as a liability.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)**
For the year ended 31st December 2020

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)**(d) Expenditure**

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Expenditure is recognised where there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that the settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. It is categorised under the following headings:

- Costs of raising funds includes the monthly charges of donation collection organisations.
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into the categories above and includes governance costs.

(e) Fixed Assets

Items of equipment costing over £200 are capitalised and are stated at cost (or deemed cost) or valuation less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Cost includes costs directly attributable to making the asset capable of operating as intended.

Depreciation is provided on tangible fixed assets, at rates calculated to write off the cost, less estimated residual value, of each asset on a systematic basis over its expected useful life as follows:

- Computer Equipment 3 years straight line

(f) Debtors and creditors receivable / payable within one year

Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in expenditure.

(g) Funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds subject to specific restricted conditions imposed by donors. The purposes and use of restricted funds are set out in note 12 to the financial statements.

(h) Taxation

The charity is an exempt charity within the meaning of schedule 3 of the Charities Act 2011 and is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2020
2. DONATIONS AND GRANTS

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2020 £	16 months to 31.12.19 £
Donations				
Small donations individually < £100	330	-	330	653
Football Conference	-	-	-	1,000
Manchester United Disabled Supporters Association	500	-	500	500
Wolverhampton Wanderers FC	-	-	-	217
National Association of Disabled Supporters	624	-	624	-
Total donations	1,454	-	1,454	2,370
Grants				
Premier League Fans Fund	-	289,439	289,439	416,870
Watford Borough Council (Coronavirus Small Business Grant Fund)	10,000	-	10,000	-
Total grants	10,000	289,439	299,439	416,870
Total donations and legacies	11,454	289,439	300,893	419,240

3. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2020 £	16 months to 31.12.19 £
Income from Audits	4,625	-	4,625	36,325
Training Income	7,100	-	7,100	4,450
Other Income	22,572	-	22,572	23,343
Funds transferred from The National Association of Disabled Supporters	-	-	-	192,059
Total income from charitable activities	34,297	-	34,297	256,177

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

For the year ended 31st December 2020

4. EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2020 £	16 months to 31.12.19 £
Direct spending				
Expenses recharged	(2,093)	631	(1,462)	1,696
Weeks of Action & Campaigning	479	9,050	9,529	27,986
Regional DSA Forums	-	-	-	4,898
Event Costs	30	569	599	3,481
Total direct spending	(1,584)	10,250	8,666	38,061
Support costs				
Staff costs (see Note 6)	33,131	220,762	253,893	301,963
Travel and subsistence	577	7,741	8,318	40,858
Telephone costs	98	970	1,068	1,367
Premises	2,096	39,842	41,938	58,555
Publicity	44	835	879	3,939
Administration & office supplies	331	5,737	6,068	16,368
Professional fees & insurance	105	2,000	2,105	2,641
Website & email hosting	108	2,052	2,160	17,016
Training	6	109	115	845
Postage	73	1,183	1,256	-
Total support costs	36,569	281,231	317,800	443,552
Total expenditure on charitable activities	34,985	291,481	326,466	481,613

5. OTHER COSTS

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2020 £	16 months to 31.12.19 £
Bank charges	22	146	168	223
Governance travel costs	106	1,202	1,308	3,181
Other legal and professional	478	9,032	9,510	6,705
Depreciation	116	2,197	2,313	1,110
Sundry expenses	-	4	4	12
Total other costs	722	12,581	13,303	11,231

Independent examiner's remuneration

Included in the above figures are independent examination fees of £3,000 (2019 - £3,000) and payroll services of £576 (2019 - £1,308).

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2020
6. STAFF COSTS

	2020 £	16 months to 31.12.19 £
Gross wages	228,700	271,814
Social security costs	20,169	22,399
Pension costs	5,024	5,500
Other costs	-	2,250
Total salaries, wages and related costs	<u>253,893</u>	<u>301,963</u>

Average number of employees	6	6
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The number of employees who received total employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs of more than £60,000) is as follows:

£60,001 - £70,000	1	1
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7. TRUSTEE REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

No Trustee or connected person received any remuneration or expenses either directly or indirectly.

8. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Computer Equipment £	Total £
COST		
At 1 st January 2019	3,329	3,329
Additions	3,610	3,610
Disposals	-	-
At 31 st December 2020	<u>6,939</u>	<u>6,939</u>
DEPRECIATION		
At 1 st January 2019	1,110	1,110
Charge for the year	2,313	2,313
Eliminated on disposal	-	-
At 31 st December 2020	<u>3,423</u>	<u>3,423</u>
NET BOOK VALUE		
At 31 st December 2020	<u>3,516</u>	<u>3,516</u>
At 31 st December 2019	<u>2,219</u>	<u>2,219</u>

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2020
9. DEBTORS

	2020	2019
	£	£
Trade debtors	4,623	5,255
Prepayments	3,174	3,038
Other debtors	142	1,149
	<u>7,939</u>	<u>9,442</u>

**10. CREDITORS:
AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR**

	2020	2019
	£	£
Trade creditors	203	2,629
Accruals	8,789	3,069
Social security & other taxes	6,874	6,121
Other creditors	-	17
Deferred income	23,562	49,036
	<u>39,428</u>	<u>60,872</u>

11. DEFERRED INCOME

	2020	2019
	£	£
Balance brought forward	49,036	-
Amounts released to income	(49,036)	-
Additions during the year	23,562	49,036
	<u>23,562</u>	<u>49,036</u>

Deferred income comprises grant income received in the year which relates to the year ended 31st December 2021.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2020

11. MOVEMENT ON FUNDS

	Balance at 01.01.2019 £	Income in year £	Expenditure in year £	Transfers £	Balance at 31.12.2020 £
Unrestricted & designated funds					
Unrestricted revenue funds	182,351	45,751	(35,928)	(14,713)	177,461
Total unrestricted funds	182,351	45,751	(35,928)	(14,713)	177,461
Restricted funds					
Fans' Fund	-	289,439	(304,152)	14,713	-
Total restricted funds	-	289,439	(304,152)	14,713	-
Total charity funds	182,351	335,190	(340,080)	-	177,461

12. RESTRICTED FUNDS

The purposes for which the restricted funds are held by the charity are:

- Fans' Fund Grant funding from the Premier League Fans' Fund to be used for the following outcomes:
- Outcome 1 - To Improve engagement between fans and fan groups and the key operational staff who deliver supporter liaison, disability access and any related facilities and services.
 - Outcome 2 - To make fans voice more representative, through the promotion and development of effective membership organisation.
 - Outcome 3 - To improve the matchday and non-matchday experience for all fans by making football more diverse and inclusive.
 - Outcome 4 - To fund use of not-for-profit skilled or professional services that create and support innovative fan engagement projects.
 - Outcome 5 - To improve the away fan experience.

LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)
For the year ended 31st December 2020

13. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Fixed Assets £	Current Assets £	Current Liabilities £	Total £
At 31st December 2020				
Restricted funds	3,340	35,250	(38,590)	-
Unrestricted funds	176	178,123	(838)	177,461
	<u>3,516</u>	<u>213,373</u>	<u>(39,428)</u>	<u>177,461</u>
At 31st December 2019				
Restricted funds	2,108	49,425	(51,533)	-
Unrestricted funds	111	191,579	(9,339)	182,351
	<u>2,219</u>	<u>241,004</u>	<u>(60,872)</u>	<u>182,351</u>

14. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

During the year the company made no transactions with related parties.