



Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

Annual report - June 2023





Welcome to our annual Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) report. The aim of this report is to share our progress on the EDI agenda over the last season, and look forward to our next season in the Premier League.

At Brentford FC, our values are togetherness, respectful and progressive and we want to ensure we live our values wholeheartedly. EDI is a big part of this – we strive to place inclusivity and safety at the heart of everything we do.

This was our second season in the Premier League and this year we recruited Kaammini Chanrai, our first Equity & Inclusion Director at Brentford FC, who joined in February 2023. Kaammini will help us to accelerate our work in this space.

There is so much more for us to do, especially with the continued presence of discrimination within football and society. We want to do more to support our staff, players, fans, community and partners, and we hope that next season, we can make further progress to ensure football is for everyone.

I would like to thank the Board, our staff, our players and our fans for their continued commitment to embrace the need to make Brentford FC an inclusive environment for all. In particular, I'd like to thank Monique Choudhuri who steps down from the Board at the end of this season, for her leadership, passion and knowledge in this important area.

Jon Varney - CEO



2. Bee Together

Football is for everyone, it belongs to and should be enjoyed by anyone who wants to participate in it, whether a player, official, staff member or spectator. We aim, therefore, to bring people together in a way that supports positive change, makes people feel valued and improves the lives and inclusive experience of our fans and wider community.

We aim to promote equity, diversity and inclusion across all aspects from our buildings to our policies, our recruitment to our communications, all under the club's campaign, Bee Together.

We are committed to confronting and eradicating any form of discrimination, whether it is of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race (including colour, ethnic origin, nationality and national origin), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

At Brentford FC, we treat everyone fairly and with respect.

3. Equity, Diversity & Inclusion at Brentford FC

We want to ensure Equity, Diversity & Inclusion is embedded throughout Brentford FC. We believe this is everyone's responsibility, and our structure aims to reflect this.

This agenda is supported by our EDI Sub-Committee, which includes members of the Board who are responsible for the oversight of the club's delivery outcomes in this area. They are in place to check, challenge and provide strategic support in the clubs' aims in this area.

We would like to especially thank Monique Choudhuri, our Board EDI Lead, and Preeti Shetty and Deji Davies, Board members on our EDI Sub-Committee, for their support on our progress in this area. This has been testament to their leadership, and we are grateful for their guidance.

This is led by our Equity & Inclusion Director, a new role we created this season, replacing the existing Head of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion position. We wanted to ensure Equity & Inclusion was recognised as a priority by recruiting a more senior role, and shifted from equality to equity to emphasise our continued focus on fairness depending on need and circumstance, not just in opportunity.

Key to this agenda is Marcus Gayle, our Club Ambassador and Lead Educator. Marcus is an ex-Brentford FC first team player and previously worked at Kick It Out. Marcus has continued his work on anti-racism at Brentford FC, with staff and players, but also in the community with the Brentford FC Community Sports Trust. We are privileged to have Marcus on board.



4. Compliance

Premier League Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Standard (PLEDIS)

This year, Brentford FC was awarded the Preliminary level of the Premier League Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Standard (PLEDIS). The award recognises Brentford's EDI work after our second season in the Premier League. In particular, the panel recognised our leadership commitment towards EDI, and that we have one of the most diverse Boards in the Premier League.

We continue our EDI work to achieve the next PLEDIS standard (Intermediate) and ensure we are inclusive and accessible to all.

PLEDIS was launched in 2021 to build on the Premier League equality standard, which was created in 2015. It provides a framework to help clubs progress EDI across all areas of their business, including the work of Community Sports Trusts (or equivalent).

Football Leadership Diversity Code

Brentford FC was one of the first voluntary signatories of the Football Leadership Diversity Code (FLDC), to ensure English football better represents today's society. The code has ambitious hiring targets, ensuring clubs hire the best person for any job by welcoming, reaching out and encouraging applications from much broader, diverse communities.

During the second season of the FLDC, progress was made within Brentford FC, with positive increases made across almost all targets. In this period, 33 per cent of senior leaders, 31 per cent of team operations staff, 33 per cent of coaches for our men's teams and 100 per cent of our senior coaches hired by Brentford are Black, Asian or Mixed-Heritage.

We fell short however, for our targets to hire females into senior leadership positions and in team operations roles. However, this is an area we continue to focus on and with the number of females hired since this recent set of data, we are confident and optimistic that next year's results will paint a different picture.

Gender Pay Gap

This year, we published our annual Gender Pay Gap report, which covers data from April 2022. The report shares the club's figures, its approach to recruitments and its inclusion policies.

The gender pay gap is the difference between the average earnings of men and women across a workforce.

It does not show differences in pay for comparable jobs. It is different from an equal pay gap, which refers to men and women being paid differently for the same or similar work.

5. Staff & Players

Data

We continue to collect diversity demographic data on applicants who apply for roles at Brentford FC. We recognise there are significant areas for improvement in order to ensure all candidates want to apply to Brentford FC, and to ensure we are more representative of our local population. However, we have made significant strides in recruitment, including practices such as anonymous recruitment, and we are hopeful that this will be reflected in our data next season.

Brentford FC Applicant Data

Age		Disability		Gender	
18-25	38%	No	95%	Female	16%
26-34	36%	Yes	3%	Male	83%
35-49	19%	Other...	0%	Other...	0%
50-64	5%	Prefer not to say	2%	Prefer not to say	1%
65+	0%				
Prefer not to say	2%				

Religion		Ethnicity	
Buddhist	1%	Asian or Black Asian	19%
Christian	31%	Black, African, Caribbean or Black British	13%
Hindu	6%	Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	5%
Jewish	1%	White	58%
Muslim	12%	Other ethnic group	5%
Sikh	2%		
Atheist	8%		
Non-religious	31%		
Other	3%		
Prefer not to say	6%		

In April 2023, we launched our new HR system, Bob. This allowed us to collect diversity demographic data on our employees.

In May 2023, we launched our staff survey to better understand the experiences of working at Brentford to influence us in future.

This data is an important tool to help us understand our organisation better, and we will use it to inform our Equity & Inclusion Strategy and plan. It is also essential for us to report to the Premier League in line with the Premier League Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Standard (PLEDIS).

Employee Networks

An employee network or affinity group is a group of employees within an organisation who share a common identity or interest, and come together to support each other and promote their shared goals.

At Brentford FC, we now have two established groups:

- Our Women's Network
- Our Multicultural Inclusion Network

Women's Network: Our Women's Network continued to progress this year, bringing together all women working at Brentford FC. We've held workshops with this group, and will be meeting multiple times a year for events and socials, aligned under the three pillars of Inspiration, Community and Mentoring.

Multicultural Inclusion Network: Our Multicultural Inclusion Network launched in March 2023. This affinity group is for staff from ethnically under-represented backgrounds to have a safe space to network, discuss key issues which might be affecting them and celebrating and raising awareness of different heritages and experiences. We are excited to support both groups to grow next season.

Training & Events

This year, we increased EDI learning for staff and players across the season. In October 2022, in parallel to the Premier League backed Rainbow Laces Campaign, we ran a series of workshops looking at LGBTQ+ Inclusion in football. These were interactive sessions, which explored language, terminology and allyship.

In February 2023, Brentford FC's B team took part in an educational session learning about the events and experiences during the Holocaust with Eva Schloss MBE, an Austrian-English Holocaust survivor. Schloss spoke openly about her childhood in Germany and her experiences of having to flee the country while Jews were under persecution by the Nazis.

In March 2023, we hosted an Afternoon Tea and Talk session for staff in honour of International Women's Day. The session focused on understanding gender inequality, how it shows up in society and what we can do about it. Our CEO personally addressed all staff on the subject.

In April 2023, we were honoured to host Dr Neville Lawrence and Dr John Azah (CEO of Kingston Race & Equalities Council) to speak to players and staff in honour of Stephen Lawrence Day. This year marked the 30th anniversary of the murder of Stephen Lawrence, a Black British teenager from southeast London killed in an unprovoked racist attack on 22 April 1993. The sessions were an important learning opportunity for staff and players to gain more awareness about Stephen's murder, his life and his legacy.

In June 2023, we marked Windrush 75 with a staff panel event, featuring staff members and their family members. Windrush Day is an annual event celebrated in the United Kingdom on June 22nd to commemorate the arrival of the Empire Windrush ship in 1948. The ship carried hundreds of Caribbean people, who were invited to help rebuild Britain after World War II and were known as the Windrush generation. This year marked the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the Empire Windrush.

Menopause Policy

This year we launched our Menopause Policy to better support staff.

The policy sets out the guidelines for employees and managers on providing the right guidance and support to manage perimenopausal, menopausal and postmenopausal symptoms at work. It is important to us that those employees going through such a transition are treated with dignity, understanding and respect.

Working in collaboration

We are delighted to be members of both Women in Football and Inclusive Sport.

Women in Football are a network of professionals working in and around the football industry who support and champion their peers. They support organisations with their vast experience and expertise in becoming truly 'gender-friendly' employers.

Inclusive Sport, part of Inclusive Employers, has supported hundreds of organisations to be more inclusive and diverse, including a broad range of organisations across sport, physical activity and leisure.

As part of our #BeeTogether campaign, the club joined forces with Her Game Too - an organisation initially set up by 12 passionate female football fans who are campaigning to eradicate sexism from football, encourage allyship and get more women and girls playing football. Her Game Too were instrumental in ensuring that the club provided free sanitary products in bathrooms in the stadium.

We look forward to our continued collaboration with these organisations.



6. Fans

Reporting Discrimination

In January 2023, we launched our new method of reporting discrimination and abuse on matchdays, via a QR code located on the backs of seats. These can be easily scanned via a smartphone directing fans to a quick form via SafetyCulture, one of the club's official partners.

The form allows fans to report a safety concern, fan behaviour issues, an away fan in a home area, or provide feedback on services in the stadium. Fans can add videos or images to evidence their report and add further details.

The QR codes give fans a faster method of informing the club of any negative experiences at the stadium. Incidents in the stadium, such as discrimination or anti-social behaviour, can be dealt with more effectively when reported in real time.

Reports at the stadium provide staff with the best opportunity to resolve incidents, whether through steward intervention or escalation to the police. Real-time reports also help staff to gather more evidence, compared to when reports are made after matches.

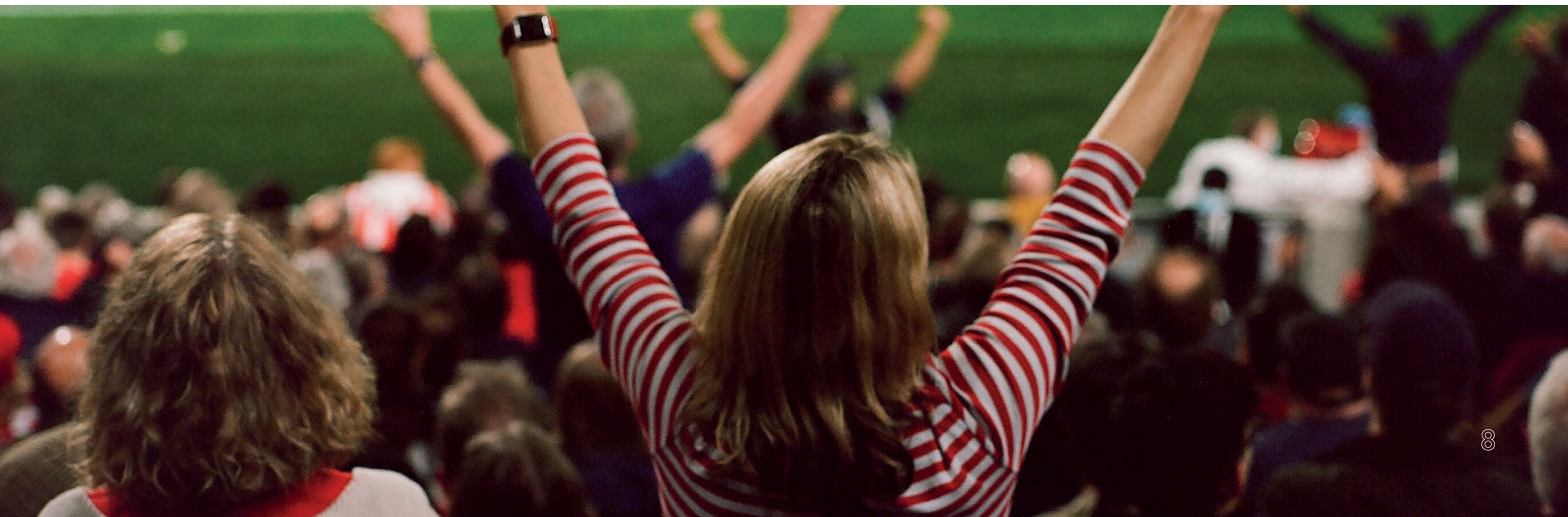
Fans can also text us, report via the app, email post-match, and can, of course, continue to raise issues within the stadium with the nearest matchday steward or member of Brentford FC staff.

Disabled Supporters' Association

Our Brentford Disabled Supporters' Association (DSA) held their first meeting in March 2023. The Brentford DSA was recently formed to promote the needs and interests of disabled supporters. During their first meeting, the committee laid out their vision for the formation of a DSA constitution ahead of the 2023/24 season, their involvement with the Premier League Disability Advisory Group, and potential DSA season events.

Disabled supporters were given the opportunity to raise any issues they may have experienced, with the Brentford DSA committee pledging to work closely with members to address any concerns.

The Brentford DSA is a positive step towards greater inclusivity and accessibility within the Brentford fan base, with the hope that it will create a more inclusive and accessible community. Next season, we will continue to encourage more disabled supporters to be involved.



Women & Girls Fan Forum

Our Fan & Community Relations Team continued to host our fan forum, providing an opportunities for female fans to share their experiences of engaging with the club.

In February 2023, supporters and staff gathered at the Gtech Community Stadium for a fans' forum that focused on women and girls' experiences as Brentford fans. Recent home fixtures; results from the club's mid-season survey; the Premier League's gender equality strategy; and updates from Brentford FC Community Sports Trust were among the talking points.

LGBeeTs

We continue to work with the LGBeeTs to ensure greater inclusion for and engagement with the LGBTQIA+ community with football.

Formed in 2016, the group is a dedicated supporters group for Brentford fans from the LGBTQIA+ community. They aim “for all fans to be able to support and follow Brentford FC home and away safely, without fear, and without hearing homophobic, biphobic or transphobic abuse.”

Working with the LGBeeTs and West London Queer Project, the club and Trust hosted a Football 101 LGBTQIA+ skills at Gunnersbury Park Sports Hub for LGBT+ History Month. The session was an opportunity for anyone from the LGBTQIA+ community and allies to try out football. The training was provided by the Trust and over 50 people attended. We will be running more regular sessions with the West London Queer Project, LGBeeTs and Community Sports Trust from June 2023.

The LGBeeTs and West London Queer Project also gathered for a 6-a-side tournament at the Hub before attending Brentford's match against Crystal Palace.

We are supporting the West London Queer Project and LGBeeTs to march in Pride of London this year, alongside Brentford FC and Community Sports Trust Staff.

International Women's Day

We worked closely with Her Game Too on our International Women's Day fixture against Fulham. We shared content on our big screens in the stadium on female role models of our players. Our matchday programme featured interviews with Monique Choudhuri and Rachel Woods (Fulham matchday groundsperson). We hosted half-time interviews with members of the Brentford and Fulham's Women's teams.

Players were welcomed by a Guard of Honour of young women, and Her Game Too T-shirts were worn during the warm-up and fired into the crowd. Head coaches also wore Her Game Too pin badges.

No Room for Racism

In line with the Premier League's No Room for Racism campaign, Club Ambassador and Lead Educator Marcus Gayle has been working with the Community Sports Trust on the Bee A Hero campaign to encourage more people to donate blood, particularly donors with Black heritage. Supporters had the opportunity to find out their blood type before Brentford played Crystal Palace in February. A video showcasing player heritage was shared on the big screen, and a map was set-up in our offices to showcase a visual representation of staff heritage.

7. Community

Education

Brentford FC works closely with the Trust, supporting many of its programmes locally and helping to advertise opportunities and support its work in the community.

Over the last 12 months, Brentford FC Club ambassador Marcus Gayle, and former Brentford FC women's player Salma Mahamud, have been touring primary schools across our local community with the Championship Play-Off final trophy to deliver anti-discrimination workshops. These workshops aim to educate primary school pupils across our local community on a range of issues, while also promoting unity against all forms of racism, as well as championing equality, diversity and inclusion.

The Tackling Discrimination Through the Power of Football initiative was awarded the Community Project of the Year award at the London Football Awards.

LGBTQ+ Skills Sessions

The Trust and club worked together, in partnership with local LGBTQ+ charity – the West London Queer Project – and our LGBTQ+ supporter group – the LGBeeTs – to pilot a new inclusive football session for LGBTQ+ community and allies. This is now being rolled out monthly.

Refugees

The Trust continues to work with the local authority to provide inclusive health programmes for refugees and those seeking asylum. The Brentford Welcomes programme delivers social cafes, targeted women's only activity, and football session at local home office hotels.

Disabilities

In the most recent round of the PL PFA funding available to the Trust, they have committed funding to developing and expanding our disability programmes. The Trust will hire a new role to grow the work into new areas and to increase engagement in sport amongst those with disabilities, trying new programmes and approaches.

Mental Health

Mental health is a priority area of work for the Trust and they have recently moved into a new Community Hub, with a mental health and wellbeing recovery college on site. The Trust has developed new programmes to support men's mental health, our comedy for thought and football for thought programmes, use sport and stand-up as tools to get men talking. In addition, the Trust used a second PLPFA fund to roll out a new mental health and wellbeing curriculum in local primary schools.



8. Summary

We hope that with this report we were able to provide a comprehensive overview of our activity this year. However, we recognise that with Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, the work is never ‘done’. We acknowledge the existence of gaps and challenges, and we want to emphasise the importance of confronting them head-on.

We are committed to raising the bar for ourselves. This involves more investment, better data and an acceleration in progress. We will increase our activity in the anti-racism space, especially in tackling anti-Black racism in football and society. We will do more to support women and girls internally and externally – improving representation and inclusion. We will work closely with our fan groups and Employee Networks to ensure our approach is iterative and inventive. Most importantly, we will ensure Brentford FC is for everyone, regardless of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, religion or sexual orientation.

Thank you for reading our EDI Annual Report. We look forward to sharing more information with you throughout next season.

