WEST BROMWICH ALBION FOOTBALL CLUB
EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ANNUAL REPORT
SEASON 2016-2017
Introduction
West Bromwich Albion Football Club is proud of its tradition of being at the forefront of equality and diversity with our ground-breaking team of the 1970’s as Cyrille Regis, Brendon Batson and Laurie Cunningham paved the way for many future generations of young footballers from the BAME community.

We are also extremely proud of our work in the local community through The Albion Foundation which is recognised both locally and nationally for its immense contribution to changing lives for the most deprived members of our community. The Foundation has been a leader in the development of disability sport and we are rightly portrayed as one if not the best deliverer of disability provision in the country.

We are committed to not resting on our laurels and we welcome the Premier League’s Equality & Diversity Standard which has focused the Club on ensuring we are a welcoming and inclusive Football Club to all.

As Chairman of West Bromwich Albion Football Club I and the Board understand the importance of Equality & Diversity and the need for this to be an integrated throughout the Club. We were delighted to receive the Intermediate level award from the Premier League in the Summer of 2016 and we have continued to progress towards the Advanced level during the 2016-2017 season.

This report gives an overview of our aims, objectives, our current situation, our areas for improvement and focuses on some of the many highlights of our work during the season.

John Williams
Chairman

Equality & Diversity Statement
West Bromwich Albion Football Club is committed to embracing the Premier League’s vision to achieve greater commitment to inclusion and to removing discrimination whether by reason of age, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity.

We recognise by promoting equality and tackling discrimination we will provide a positive and harmonious environment where all members of our community feel welcome and valued.

We will ensure we address the following:
• Greater insight to enable us to use this intelligence to improve our offer
• Greater training and development for all staff
• Updating our policies and ensuring they are live documents that are imbedded in the culture of the Club
• Continue and expand our community activities to ensure that under-represented groups are part of our Club
• Ensure we are constantly reviewing our marketing and communication to improve our accessibility to all

The West Bromwich Albion Football Club Chairman and Board of Directors are committed to equality and diversity and will ensure this is cascaded down to all departments of the Club.
Equality & Diversity Working Group
Equality & Diversity Sub-Group & Disabled Supporters Sub Group

Equality & Diversity Sub Group of the WBA Fan’s Assembly – The Assembly is the Club’s Official Forum. Martin Swain and Rob Lake from the Equality & Diversity Working Group both sit on the Assembly and have developed a sub-group of The Assembly to specifically focus on equality and diversity.

The Club also has a Disabled Supporters Club and we have a sub-group of the Club which meets quarterly to discuss all issues and concerns specifically that our disabled supporters may have. Mark Miles from the Equality & Diversity Working Group chairs this meeting.

The members are:
1. Richard Garlick, Equality Lead & Director of Football Administration
2. Simon Carrington, General Council
3. Martin Swain, Director of Comms
4. Darren Moore, Professional Development Phase Coach
5. Mark Harrison, Academy Director
6. Rob Lake, Director of Albion Foundation
7. Mark Miles, Director of Operations
8. Jane Taylor-Kane, Head of HR
Insight
Data was captured in April 2016

**Number of Responses:**
- **EMPLOYEES:** 92
- **MATCHDAY STEWARDS:** 178
- **FOUNDATION:** 36
- **SANDWELL CENSUS 2011:** 308,063
- **CATERING:** 145
- **SUPPORTERS:** 993
Progress against Priorities & Areas for Improvement

Priorities for West Bromwich Albion Football Club

To address the diversity imbalance in full time staff at the Football Club and Foundation

• To prioritise, as identified from the Audit, engaging with and creating a greater fan base from the BME and Emerging Communities in our region.

We identified from the Insight data that the diversity of our full-time staff at the Football Club and the Foundation does not replicate the diversity of our local population.

We are mindful that to achieve this objective it is a long term strategy.

We have employed an Engagement Officer Gurdial Singh who works closely with the Director of the Albion Foundation and has a specific remit for engaging with diverse community groups to participate in Foundation activities, introduce them to a match day experience and inform and educate the community to the employment opportunities within the Foundation and the Club.

We have developed partnerships with local religious groups, community groups and worked in schools with majority BAME population.

We were present at the Vaisakhi Festival in April 2017 with over 100,000 people attended from diverse communities.

We launched ‘Apna Albion’ a new supporters club for the Punjab community but with a remit to engage with all diverse communities to encourage new fans to the Club.

We provided complimentary tickets to 4 Premier League games during the 16-17 season for diverse community groups.

• To establish the Equality Working Group to ensure all task in the Equality Action Plan are achieved and to review major policy and practice. To ensure this is a live document that is acted upon and embedded in the organisation.

The Equality Working Group has a strong WBA FC Board representation and every department of the Club has senior representation. The group have had set bi-monthly meetings. The Equality Action Plan is reviewed at all meetings and progress reported at Board level.

There was a delay with the recruitment of the HR Officer which meant that areas that were her responsibility were naturally delayed.

There was also a review period from the Premier League as they assessed the criteria for the Equality & Diversity Standard which meant a delay and loss of momentum. Once criteria agreed this meant a realignment of the plan.

• To ensure all our Communications are accessible to all members of our community.

The Football Club launched a new official web-site in the summer of 2017 which meant any developments to improve the communications for this platform were not taken.

The Football Club improved its radio broadcast service on match days for our blind supporters.

We are working closely with the Engagement Officer and Sub Groups to constantly review all our materials and communication to ensure we are as inclusive as possible.

• To ensure training and development in this area is maintained and constantly reviewed for all staff.

This is the area we have progressed the least. We have introduced an on-line portal for all contracted staff and they have all completed the Equality & Diversity module. The Football Club has new owners and there has been an overhaul of senior executive positions, with a new Chief Executive being appointed in the middle of the 16-17 season. This matched with the delay on the HR appointment and the delay in the criteria from the Premier League has meant we have not developed training during this period.
1. WBA AND SWEDEN STAR JONAS OLSSON VISITS SLUMS IN INDIA AND SETS UP HIS OWN FOUNDATION
2. WEST Bromwich Albion v Delhi Dynamos International Friendly Saturday 4th September 2016
3. THE ALBION FOUNDATION INVITED TO BE ONE OF 3 PIONEERING CLUBS TO LAUNCH BT/PREMIER LEAGUE PROJECT AT THE LONDON STADIUM
4. WBA FC POWERCHAIR TEAM ARE RUNNERS UP IN EUROPEAN CHAMPIONS LEAGUE AND THE ALBION FOUNDATION LAUNCH THE FIRST ELITE POWERCHAIR POST 16 EDUCATION PROGRAMME
5. WBA FC CHRISTMAS MESSAGE – 41 TEAMS REPRESENT WBA INCLUDING WOMEN & GIRLS, BASKETBALL AND DISABILITY TEAMS
6. THE ALBION FOUNDATION CELEBRATES ITS 25TH ANNIVERSARY AND REWARDS STAFF FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS
7. BLIND DAVE HEELEY GIVEN THE “FREEDOM OF THE WHITWORMS” FOR HIS FUNDRAISING FOR DISABILITY
8. PAUL HUNT RECEIVES OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO DISABILITY SPORT
9. THE ALBION FOUNDATION & WBA FC LAUNCH “ALBION CARES” TO GET ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES AND LEARNING DIFFICULTIES INTO WORK
10. WBA V CRYSTAL PALACE SATURDAY 4TH MARCH 2017 – KICK IT OUT DAY
11. WBA V SOUTHAMPTON – ALBION CARES DAY – CLUB AND FOUNDATION GIVES BACK TO FANS
12. WBA AND ALBION FOUNDATION TAKE PART IN VAISAKHI FESTIVAL – APRIL 2017
13. WBA LAUNCH APNA ALBION
14. WBA COMPLETE ACCESSIBILITY STADIUM WORK DURING CLOSE SEASON
Next Steps

- Collate new Equality & Diversity Data and use this insight to inform our work
- Review our Equality & Diversity Action Plan, present to Board and disseminate to all staff
- Produce a WBA Strategic Vision and Core Values that imbeds Equality & Diversity at all levels
- Develop further our focus work on diversifying the fan base and staffing
- Expand our work to cover all 9 protected characteristics
- Imbed Equality & Diversity Impact Assessment Framework in to all policies and procedures
- From the data insight develop a comprehensive Equality and Diversity training programme for all staff
- Deliver a Diversity Day Match Day – ‘Together We are Albion’
- Deliver a BAME focused initiative incorporating:
  - Raise the profile of the Football Club in key targeted BME communities and be seen and recognised as an inclusive Club is welcoming to a diverse audience
  - Internally provide training for staff regarding Cultural awareness and diversity.
  - Develop a ticket initiative for key targeted groups
  - Develop a Coach education programme
  - Support and be present at Key Asian football tournaments and festivals and providing a talent ID pathway.