

TOYOTA

TOYOTA

TOYOTA

TOYOTA

TOYOTA

2020 Report

# Weeks of Action



# Contents



6



8



10



12



14



16



20



22

3 Message from Chair 4 Campaign overview 5 Who took part 6 Premier League  
 8 Championship 10 League One 12 League Two 14 Disabled Supporters Associations  
 16 National League 18 Non-league 20 Welsh clubs 22 Partner organisations  
 24 Social media 26 Staff visits 27 The stats 28 Covid-19 29 Message from CEO

# Message from Chair

Level Playing Field's Weeks of Action continues to drive the standards of access inclusion and showcase what Clubs, Fans and Disabled Supporters Associations (DSA) are doing across the country to make watching live sport more inclusive.

Yet again we have seen more clubs sign up to this important campaign than previous years. In its 16<sup>th</sup> season, Weeks of Action was initially set up to showcase the good work done across the football community to make the beautiful game more accessible.

**“Yet again we have seen more clubs sign up to this important campaign than previous years.”**

We have seen some great matchday activities across the period and the important thing is that we push on and continue to make access the top of the agenda. There must be an ongoing legacy and commitment which we are seeing, however there is still more to do.

Our final weekend coincided with the suspension to live sport across the county, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This is having a significant effect on all, but more so on disabled people and those deemed most vulnerable. It's pleasing to see how the sporting community has come together to support these individuals, and we must ensure we continue to do this and look to keep people connected with their community.

**“Our final weekend coincided with the suspension to live sport across the county, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.”**

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who took part and supported this year. We couldn't have done it without the ongoing backing of both the Premier League and the EFL.

Thank you and stay safe.



**Tony  
Taylor**  
Chair

The planning for this season's Weeks of Action has been ongoing for the past year. Year on year, since the campaign began 16 years ago, it has become bigger and better, with the challenge for this year being to overtake last year's achievements.

The message of the campaign has never deviated. The Weeks of Action showcases good access and inclusion for disabled fans celebrating what is done well. It aims to drive greater standards of inclusion, whilst also highlighting that watching sport is a positive activity for everyone.

We also seek to create an environment where anyone who wants to attend sporting events is able to do so.

For more information visit

[www.levelplayingfield.org.uk](http://www.levelplayingfield.org.uk)

Year on year, since the campaign began 16 seasons ago, it has become **bigger** and **better**

## Campaign Overview



Clubs

102

DSAs

38

Organisations

42

Leagues

13

Who took part?



Premier  
League



## Watford FC

Saturday 29th February 2020

vs **Liverpool FC**

On a day she will never forget, young Hornet Molly Hall was mascot for Watford in their home match against Liverpool during Weeks of Action.

Molly was the first to use the club's recent accessible provision, as she was wheeled out before kick-off by Watford goalkeeper Ben Foster. The new wheelchair is able to be used on the pitch without causing any damage to the turf, as it uses pneumatic wheels.

Watford decided to showcase their new equipment in line with Level Playing Field's Weeks of Action.



The club's Supporter Liaison and Disability Access Officer, Dave Messenger, said:

*"It's great to remove another barrier and enable us to further promote a culture of accessibility here at Vicarage Road."*

*"Our research was pivotal and to know that we can enable our young wheelchair users to be mascots whenever we like is definitely something to celebrate."*

Molly became a viral sensation that afternoon, with Watford's tweet of the photo of Ben wheeling her out pre-match reaching over 100,000 interactions on Twitter.



Watford FC





# The Championship

## Middlesbrough FC



Monday 2nd March 2020

vs **Nottingham Forest FC**

Middlesbrough's players warmed up before the game wearing Weeks of Action t-shirts in support of the campaign. They also decided to use their Weeks of Action game to honour one particular disabled supporter – acknowledging the help that Owen Swift has provided the club in recent years and his continued support of Middlesbrough. Owen and his family were guests of honour for the game and to say thank you further, was presented with a signed Middlesbrough shirt.

Owen commented on his beloved Boro:

*"I think the club are great, the facilities are always improving and they listen and take on board any suggestions that are made. They work and communicate very closely with their disabled fans and do go the extra mile to ensure disabled fans get the most out of their match day experience!"*

Development officer Daniel Townley, said:

*"It's so important for clubs to work with their disabled supporters to continue making positive changes at the club. I was encouraged to hear from Owen that he feels his voice is heard at Middlesbrough, as communication is vital to improving that matchday experience for disabled supporters."*





# Middlesbrough FC



# League One



## Burton Albion FC

Tuesday 10th May 2020

vs **Bolton Wanderers FC**

Burton Albion and the club's foundation celebrated both Weeks of Action and the EFL Day of Action in their home game against Bolton. The players and mascots wore t-shirts to highlight the importance of both, whilst the club's participation was profiled in the matchday programme.

Level Playing Field ambassador Morgan Parry attended the match with his dad. Before the game Morgan was interviewed by the EFL Trust about his experience of visiting all 92 league clubs in the country.

Development Officer Daniel Townley was also in attendance and was interviewed by the EFL Trust about the importance of creating inclusive environments for disabled supporters.

*"Burton are a great example of a foundation working really well with the club to help create those inclusive environments that are so important for spectators. Around 50% of disabled people have never attended a live event such as a football game because of the barriers that they face. The Weeks of Action is all about highlighting the importance of removing those barriers and increasing awareness of disability access and inclusion."*



Burton Albion FC



# League Two

**21**  
Clubs

## Salford City FC

Saturday 7th March 2020

vs **Bradford City AFC**

On Saturday 7th March our Chief Executive, Owain Davies, visited The Peninsula Stadium as the entire club got behind Weeks of Action during their fixture against Bradford City.

The Salford City players showed their support for this year's campaign by warming up in Level Playing Field t-shirts.

As the teams ran out to the tune of Dirty Old Town by The Pogues, both captains were pictured holding our Level Playing Field scarves.

Throughout the day, members of staff and stewards were supporting the event wearing badges and the social media team were plugging the campaign across all their channels.

Level Playing Field's Chief Executive said:

*"We were delighted to have the support of Salford City this weekend. They really did the campaign proud by raising the profile of access and inclusion. The more we talk about the power of inclusion and how important it is, the better it will get."*





# Salford City FC



# Disabled Supporter Associations

## A word from our Fans Liaison Officer

I would like to take this moment to thank all the DSAs that took part in this year's Weeks of Action.

Sadly, I wasn't able to come and celebrate with you all. But I know many DSAs came together and draped themselves in Weeks of Action merch to raise the profile of the campaign and I thank you all for that support.

Still, I did get the opportunity to witness the work that was being done by Burnley and Fulham DSA as they invited all supporters to come and speak to the respective DSAs, ask questions about disability and find out more about the work that DSAs do.

I visited Old Trafford and saw first-hand the work that MUDSA and Manchester United have been doing in the run-up to Weeks of Action by working together to improve the home and away

disabled supporters' matchday experience at the Theatre of Dreams. I know that sadly some DSAs didn't get chance to celebrate this year's Weeks of Action, despite big plans having been made. We hope to be back soon enough to celebrate access and inclusion for all up and down the sporting pyramid.

Lastly, I would like to give a special thank you to football supporters Jo, Claire, Brian, Owen and Jess as well as DLOs Christine and Heidi for making their way up to Manchester to film the Weeks Of Action film.

It was a very long day, but we created a fantastic film showcasing why Weeks of Action is such a vital campaign for disabled sport-loving fans.

**38**  
DSAs

**Liam Bird**  
Fans Liaison Officer



# Fulham DSA

Saturday 29th February

vs **Preston North End FC**

Members of Fulham's Disabled Supporters Association (DSA) were set up at a stall outside Craven Cottage on the day of their dedicated Weeks of Action game vs Preston North End on the opening day of this season's campaign.

Chair of Fulham DSA Mark Davies, who was running the stall on the day, educated the Fulham faithful in the hope of recruiting further members.

The club also put the annual campaign front and centre of their game.

Nicola Walworth, Fulham FC Supporter Relations Manager and Disability Liaison Officer, commented on Weeks of Action:

*"We at the club are delighted to support Level Playing Field's Weeks of Action at today's game against Preston. We have a great understanding and collaborative relationship with our Disabled Supporters Association and Level Playing Field's guidance has been instrumental in this."*

Club manager Scott Parker highlighted our Weeks of Action in his programme notes, whilst the club also took the opportunity to launch new sensory packs, that came about through working with the DSA.



# National

**10**  
CLUBS



# League

## Wrexham AFC



Saturday 7th March 2020

vs **Eastleigh FC**

Disability Liaison Officer Kerry has headed the celebrations at Wrexham AFC this year for their Weeks of Action game against Eastleigh. The club had two very special mascots for the day, both of whom have a disability and very happy to be part of these celebrations.

Erin (9) comes to every home game and loves listening to the audio descriptive commentary. Harry (10) has only started attending live football matches at Wrexham AFC since they launched the quiet zone in the ground, as

he has autism and finds it easier to sit in this area.

Wrexham Disability Liaison Officer Kerry said:

*"I have also got the first team involved in the day's celebrations, as last week I met up with them to do a team picture with the Level Playing Field T-shirts, to show our support for this important event."*

The 'Sign of the Times' choir from St Christopher's School, the largest special needs school in Wales, were in attendance. They performed a 15 minute set before kick off and another set at half-time. A fantastic way to celebrate this year's campaign.





# Wrexham AFC



# Non-league

**5**  
Leagues

**7**  
Clubs

**3**  
National  
League North

**1**  
Northern  
Premier Division

**1**  
Northern South  
East Division

**1**  
Isthmian League  
Division 1 North

**1**  
Northern Counties  
East Premier Div

# Newcastle Town FC



Northern Premier League Division One South East

Newcastle Town FC have recruited their first inclusion officer to ensure the club is disability friendly, inclusive and providing opportunities for individuals in the local community. Creating a link with Regent College, learners have been supporting match days to develop key social skills.

Julia has been involved in the club for 12 months since it formed a partnership with Regent College, enabling more people to access local football and community opportunities. Julia will concentrate on ensuring the club is disability friendly, inclusive and creates many more opportunities for local people.

*Julia added: "Regent College is a specialist College for young adults with learning difficulties, autism and complex needs. We're really enjoying our Saturday afternoons volunteering, socialising and watching football. Sam and Stacey frequently attend home games and they are thoroughly enjoying the responsibility of selling the programmes and golden goal tickets to the fans. These roles give our learners the chance to develop social and communication skills in a safe environment and they are vital employability skills which will help for the future."*

*"Attending the football at the weekend has really opened the social network for our learners and it's great to see them getting involved with the atmosphere of the game, alongside families and the local community. I am looking forward to developing this with Newcastle Town and local disability groups so together we can increase community inclusion and opportunities for all."*





# Welsh Clubs

1



1



9  
Clubs

5



2



# The New Saints



Friday 6th March 2020

vs **Barry Town United FC**



As part of Weeks of Action, The New Saints invited responses from parents whose children attend The New Saints FC Foundation's 'All-In' sessions, to hear about their experiences at Park Hall Stadium.

The 'All-In' session is a club for children and young people with additional needs. It takes place weekly on a Friday evening, with alternative weeks for different age groups. Participants get to take part in a wide variety of activities, including sports and arts & crafts, whilst being supported to meet their needs in the process.

Here are some of the responses from parents whose children attend the club and attend regular New Saint games:

**What are the positive things your club does to make your match day as inclusive and enjoyable as possible?**

*We wouldn't have normally contemplated attending a live game due to the difficulties in concentrating, but the club are sure to include you in as much as possible, like playing the drums and cheering on the team!*

**Why is it important for disabled people to have access to live sport?**

*It's a positive experience promoting teamwork and inclusivity as much for fans as for those taking part.*

# Partnership Organisations



13

County FAs



18

Foundations



7

Disability  
Organisations

fcbusiness

4

Non-disability  
Organisations

# Staffordshire Football Association



Saturday 29th February 2020

vs **Scunthorpe United FC**

Staffordshire FA partnered up with a number of local clubs including Port Vale FC to plan and carry out various match day activities for local students and organisations.

On Saturday 29th March, the County FA teamed up with the Port Vale Foundation for the club's home game against Scunthorpe United, their dedicated Weeks of Action 2020 fixture.

For this game, pupils from Portland School and Specialist College took part in the pre-match build up as flag bearers, whilst the players warmed up in Level Playing Field branded t-shirts.



## Social Media Stats

**523,000**  
Impressions

**263**  
New Followers

**7,658**  
Engagement

**23**  
News Articles

**773**  
Mentions



## What was used?

**1,108**

T-Shirts

**329**

Flags

**1,719**

Badges

**205**

Scarves

# Staff & Ambassador Visits

**4,666** miles travelled  
**22** clubs visited

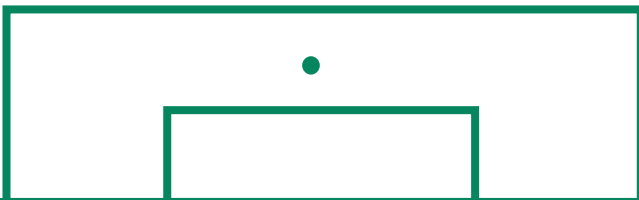


All Clubs Involved



the  
**Stats**

	2019	2020	Increase/Decrease
<b>Premier League</b>	19	18	-5.3%
<b>Championship</b>	23	23	-
<b>League One</b>	14	18	+ 28.6%
<b>League Two</b>	20	21	+ 5%
<b>DSAs</b>	35	38	+ 8.6%
<b>Non-league (inc NL)</b>	3	17	+466.7%
<b>Welsh Clubs</b>	9	9	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>+17.1%</b>





# Covid-19



On the 13<sup>th</sup> of March the decision was made to suspend football (at Premier League and English Football League levels) due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This suspension is still in place (now across all sport) and is a necessary action to safeguard the wellbeing of supporters, club staff and others involved in live sport.

On the very same day, Level Playing Field had made the decision to postpone the final weekend of the campaign across every level of football and in other sports. The final weekend had been lined up to be the biggest of the campaign, however, the health and wellbeing of disabled fans, club staff and others is absolutely paramount.

Immediately from this point Level Playing Field turned its attention to see how we could support disabled fans and clubs during this difficult time. Staff have created a number of new programmes and guides for the benefit of disabled fans and clubs. If you need support, we urge you to get in touch with Level Playing Field, we're here to help even if it's just for a chat or something more.

Going forward the impact of the coronavirus is not just immediate but also it will have a future impact. We are hearing from disabled fans about the anxiety and concerns they're feeling in relation to live sport recommencing, and the uncertainty around when that may be. We have put together a survey to capture this data so that it can better inform governing bodies clubs and other stakeholders to ensure they can support disabled fans during this challenging time.

The figures outlined in this report included clubs that were due to take part in the final weekend which was postponed due to the Covid-19 outbreak.

Since the beginning of lockdown, Level Playing Field has been hosting a weekly quiz via social media to keep disabled fans engaged during the suspension of live sport, and will continue to do so until supporters are able to return to stadiums. Premier League and EFL clubs have supported the initiative by offering free tickets to the winners of the quiz when fans can return.

Stay safe

**Level Playing Field team**

# Message from Chief Executive

This year yet again we have received the incredible support of clubs, Disabled Supporters Associations and fans across the whole football pyramid throughout England and Wales.

Our focus is to drive an inclusive culture towards access and inclusion by raising awareness of the good work that is being done and the areas that can be improved.

**“Clubs got behind the campaign with players wearing t-shirts during warm ups, hosting programmes and matchdays through the club’s trusts and foundations.”**

We saw clubs deliver new services and provisions such as Watford FC, providing wheelchairs for disabled mascots to lead their team out. Clubs got behind the campaign with players wearing t-shirts during warm ups, hosting programmes and matchdays through the club’s trusts and foundations and all of

this helps drive the awareness of good access and in turn raises the standard.

**“The Coronavirus pandemic has impacted us all and it again highlights the importance of watching live sport for so many disabled and vulnerable people.”**

The Coronavirus pandemic has impacted us all and it again highlights the importance of watching live sport for so many disabled and vulnerable people. For some it may be the only time they connect with their community. This year our campaign was cut short due to the virus, with our last weekend being suspended

but nothing trumps the health and safety of fans and we hope that you are all safe and well.

Thank you to all who took part and please continue to improve the matchday experience for disabled fans.



**Owain  
Davies**  
CEO



# Weeks of Action

For Disabled Sports Fans



[levelplayingfield.org.uk](http://levelplayingfield.org.uk)



[@lpftweets](https://twitter.com/lpftweets)



[@levelplayingfielduk](https://www.instagram.com/levelplayingfielduk)



[/lpftweets](https://www.facebook.com/lpftweets)