



# AUTISM FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

## USING THE POWER OF FOOTBALL

to break down barriers and  
provide a learning platform for  
neurodiversity to flourish



TEAM UNITED  
**AUTISM  
LEAGUE**



TEAM  
**UNITED**  
Autism and  
Neurodiversity Football



SCOTTISH  
PARA-FOOTBALL



# INTRODUCTION

**The Autism Football Association is an initiative of Team United, the Game Leader for Autism & Neurodiverse Football in Scotland. Affiliated to The Scottish Para Football Association, an ANA to The Scottish FA.**

Football is one of the most socially challenging sports. Football is not a natural sport that people with Autism and other Neurodivergent conditions choose. To overcome these difficulties and inspire young people, Team United developed a pathway to meet their needs. Recognising the wide spectrum of difficulties and challenges and the different learning needs, the pathway promotes learning through football as a tool of breaking down social barriers. Players become more confident as an individual to then be united as a team.

The Team United Autism League is currently run for young people aged 10 to 16 years. The League structure currently comprises of a Championship and Premiership division. The Championship is non-competitive and for young people who need more time to adjust to a team environment or new teams and players that are entering the League structure for the first time. There is no pressure on a player to take part in a competitive environment.

The Premiership has grown incredibly over the past 2 years with a number of grassroots and premiership clubs now taking part. The League is played on a regional basis.

Once a player reaches the age of 16, they can transfer to the Social Communication League where there is a focus on social participation.

With the diagnosis of Autism and other Neurodivergent conditions being more prevalent, Clubs across Scotland seek the support of The Autism Football Association to develop a team. The Club becomes affiliated to The Autism Football Association and the player becomes a Member. Both the Club and players benefit from the social participation on offer as well as the training, resources and support the Club needs to ensure sustainability of the team.

The Autism Football Association work with community coaches, up-skilling them and provide the tools and resources for the team to succeed.



**SOCIAL  
COMMUNITY  
LEAGUE**



# PLAYER PATHWAY



**Come and Try Sessions**



Player Workbook



**Awards Scheme**



Sports Panel



**Transitions**

Coach Enablers



Bespoke Projects



**Academy**



Social



Social Community League



10-16+ years



Player Passport

**Autism Scottish Cup**



**Autism League**



Premiership



Championship

**Non-Competitive Games**



Team United All Stars



Training



Experienced Coaches



Support Staff



Partnerships



Volunteering and Work Experience



## FEEDBACK

“ I don't feel alone anymore.

“ Thank you for giving Ben a place where he can be himself, when no-one else would.

“ My son has more focus, has learnt and understands rules and taking turns which was a huge barrier before.

“ It's awesome.

“ There is no judgement just encouragement.

“ I have loads of friends now.

“ I've been with Team United for 4 years and about to start my work experience with them.

“ World's First – Autism League and Autism Scottish Cup.

# 50%

OF YOUNG PEOPLE FROM TEAM UNITED EAST LoTHIAN HAVE TRANSITIONED TO MAINSTREAM FOOTBALL.

# 150

YOUNG PEOPLE WITH AUTISM TAKE PART IN WEEKLY SESSIONS.

## SESSIONS

We are expanding our services and sessions all the time. Our weekly sessions are currently running in :

- Edinburgh
- Fife
- East Lothian
- Glasgow
- West Lothian
- Dundee
- Midlothian
- Angus



**TEAM  
UNITED**  
Autism and  
Neurodiversity Football

**Team United** Scottish Charity SC047640 (SCIO)

c/o Hibernian FC | 12 Albion Place | Edinburgh | EH7 5QG

✉ [enquiries@teamunited.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@teamunited.org.uk) ↗ [team-united.org.uk](http://team-united.org.uk)

f [TeamUnitedSCO](https://www.facebook.com/TeamUnitedSCO) t [@TeamUnitedSCO](https://twitter.com/TeamUnitedSCO)