



GUERNSEY FOOTBALL // STRONGER TOGETHER

A UNIFIED, WELCOMING AND ACCESSIBLE GAME FOR ALL
THE 2022-23 SEASON REVIEW FOR GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL IN GUERNSEY



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FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIRMAN

// CHRIS SCHOFIELD

As Chair of the Guernsey Football Association (GFA), I am pleased to be able to look back on this the second year of our 2021-24 strategy, Guernsey Football – Stronger Together, which is structured around the key aspects of football delivery that will enable us to ensure a unified, welcoming and accessible game for all.

The 22/23 season is the first season, post pandemic, in which football has returned to relative normality and the GFA has been able to fully resume its intended strategy delivery. This has been most prominent in respect of the provision of, and upgrade to, facilities which forms the core of our strategy. Thanks to the generous investment provided by the Football Foundation we have, since my last review, overseen the completion of works on improving club facilities through the provision of improved floodlighting at four of our club grounds and the provision of access for all our clubs to specialist and affordable grass pitch maintenance equipment. Utilising this specialist equipment will ensure the provision, in the long term, of significantly better playing surfaces throughout the year for the thousands of players across the Island.

Whilst the floodlight and equipment bank projects will undoubtedly provide tangible, long term benefits to association members it is the project to develop the GFA HQ/SG stadia community facility that is particularly exciting. Having secured funding support from The Football Association and Football Foundation, and from private sources, construction work is now expected to commence

in the early part of the 2023/24 season, and the project will be completed in the Spring of 2025., providing Guernsey football with a much needed all-weather facility as well a hub that will become a focal point for the football community for many years to come.

The 22/23 season is also one that has seen further positive growth in both male and female participation, largely due to the ongoing efforts of our very committed development team. Through collaborative partnerships with our key partners and funding support from the FA Football Delivery Fund we have been able to provide increased opportunities for female participation within primary schools, as well as continuing to be able to provide football-based sessions in secondary schools, which has led to a considerable increase in targeted player numbers. This school-based delivery programme will continue in the future as the GFA continues working towards securing equal opportunities for girls within education settings and supporting a stronger female pathway.

The strong club network on the Island continues to provide male participation opportunities from school reception age through to veterans, which along with the extensive programme of football opportunities provided by the GFA workforce in local primary and secondary schools, has again led to a considerable increase in targeted player numbers. However, the male pathway still faces well documented challenges from player dropout and domestic league structures that are fit for purpose. In this respect the GFA Youth Council

has introduced a recreational in door turn up and play opportunity which together with the new indoor Aztech Arena facility, which is proving very popular with young participants, is addressing this issue. In order to address the domestic league structure challenge the GFA has, during the 22/23 season begun the process of working with key stakeholders to review the opportunities to introduce more needs based changes.

Critical to the successful delivery of our strategy is the ongoing commitment of the hundreds of volunteers who constitute the grassroots workforce and ensure that the opportunities which we have highlighted continue. The value and importance of this work force cannot be understated and the GFA greatly appreciates the time and energy this workforce provides for the greater good of the game.

Whilst our strategy focusses on improving the football facilities across the island, enhancing the opportunities for girls to access football, strengthening our club network and supporting the football workforce it is also critical to ensure that the game continues to be played in a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment. In this respect the GFA safeguarding team continues to ensure that appropriate and effective safeguards are embedded within the game and that the importance of safeguarding is fully understood by all concerned. It is particularly pleasing that our Youth Council has now taken on an active and important role in raising awareness about safeguarding for young people through the provision of child friendly safeguarding

posters and designing a safeguarding related cartoon which features on the GFA website.

Our strategy is committed to the provision of a high level of service and support to the various stakeholders across the game. Having achieved the required Safeguarding Standard this commitment includes achieving the County FA Code of Governance along with the Preliminary Level of the Equality Standard for Sport. The GFA Board is fully committed to achieving the Code of Governance and having reviewed and revised our Memorandum and Article of Association (approved by the members at a Special General Meeting) the process to achieve the Code of Governance will continue through into next season with a view to all required actions being completed by the end of this calendar year. Considerable progress has also been made towards achieving the Preliminary Level of the Equality Standard for Sport, through the development of an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan aimed at ensuring that football in Guernsey is inclusive and fully accessible to all within the football and wider Island community, supporting equal opportunities and the promotion of a positive and safe environment.

The key to the success of any strategy is the buy in by all the stakeholders involved and the commitment to date by all typifies the chosen strategy slogan of 'Stronger Together' and we look forward to making the local game even Stronger by working Together as we move into the 2023/24 season.

FOOTBALL IN GUERNSEY SEASON REVIEW // 2022-2023

£1.5M OF FUNDING FOR GFA
HQ/3G STADIA PROJECT

1500+


GIRLS ATTENDING FOOTBALL
SESSIONS IN PRIMARY SCHOOL



400+ HOURS OF PRIMARY
& SECONDARY SCHOOL
FOOTBALL DELIVERED



100%
OF COACH CPD
TARGET ACHIEVED

 **2521**
MALE PLAYERS

13

SAFEGUARDING
VALIDATION VISITS
COMPLETED

416 
FEMALE PLAYERS

55K

OF SPONSORSHIP
AGREEMENTS RENEWED

8

ENGLAND
ACCREDITED
CLUBS

115K

OF FUNDING FOR
EQUIPMENT BANK

200

VOLUNTEER LEARNING
INSTANCES



7 WILDCAT CENTRES/1 SQUAD SESSION

98.5% REFEREE
MATCH COVERAGE



FOCUS ONE //

FACILITIES

£1.5m funding secured to develop new community hub with GFA HQ & 3G Stadia

£115k funding secured to introduce an Equipment Bank

When preparing the 2021-24 strategy for grassroots football in the island, the Guernsey FA identified that investment and improvements to the football facilities would be crucial for the long-term health of the game and rightly placed this work at the centre of the strategy. Prioritising facility-based projects is a result of the recognition and acceptance that enhancing both the quality and quantity of football facilities, including grass pitches, is required to best support the grassroots game.

The strategy and work to enhance facility provision has looked at two key areas, with the first being the development of a Guernsey FA HQ/3G Stadia community facility, and the second being investment to support club facilities and pitches. Previously, and towards the end of the 2021/22 season, the Guernsey FA secured £100k of Football Foundation investment to upgrade existing floodlights at four club grounds. This bespoke funding award was a direct result of the Guernsey FA working in collaboration with key stakeholders to develop a solution which,

not only removed the threat of losing floodlit facilities, but also ensured overall participation opportunities were not reduced. The four club grounds – Northfield, Corbet Field, Blanche Pierre Lane, and the Track Cycling Ground – all successfully completed the upgrades to the existing floodlights during the 2022/23 season, with feedback from the footballing community being unanimously positive about this project.

The second project designed to support local clubs is the Guernsey FA 'Equipment Bank Scheme', with significant progress having been made during the 2022/23 season, and which led to another bespoke Football Foundation funding application for over £115k being submitted. This application was also successful, and with additional external funding support, the Guernsey FA has successfully introduced access to specialist and affordable grass pitch maintenance equipment for every club in Guernsey. Utilising this specialist equipment will ensure that the quality of club-based grass pitches will be enhanced over the long-term, which will ensure better quality

GUERNSEY FA GOAL // ENHANCE FACILITIES WITHIN THE ISLAND TO SUPPORT INCREASED PARTICIPATION AND NEW FORMATS OF PLAY

playing surfaces that are also better equipped to cope with periods of inclement weather for the thousands of players across the island.

Whilst the Floodlight and Equipment Bank projects have secured significant investment, and will provide tangible improvements for the local game, it is the project to develop the Guernsey FA HQ/3G Stadia community facility that has the potential to be transformative for football in the island. Work has continued in relation to bringing this project to life throughout the 2022/23 season, which culminated in securing over £1.5m of funding support from The Football Association and Football Foundation. This funding, along with that from other private sources, has ensured that work to build this new community facility will commence in the Summer of 2023. This project, which will be completed in the early part of 2025, will provide Guernsey football with a much-needed all-weather facility, and a hub that will become a focal point for the football community for years to come.

QUALITY PITCHES //

2021 BASELINE	2022/23 TARGET	2022/23 MEASURE	2023/24 TARGET
6	9	9	10

**146 female players
ahead of target**

**7 Wildcat Centres
& 1 Squad Session**

FOCUS TWO //

FEMALE PARTICIPATION

The 2022/23 season has been one in which there have again been further positive strides in growing female participation. This is evidenced through the increased number of participants regularly playing the game across a variety of formats, with the majority of these coordinated and delivered by the Guernsey FA Development Team, which remains committed to developing a coordinated female pathway.

Over the past 12 months, that pathway has expanded to now include a Girls Player Development Centre, seven Wildcat Centres, a Girls Academy that now includes players from school year 5 – 11, along with the introduction of a weekly Guernsey FA Squad session for players aged 12-14. This new recreational opportunity has been well received and, along with the Wildcat Centres, provides an appropriate exit route for players who enjoy participating within school-based sessions, which remain an integral part of the overall female pathway. Through collaborative partnerships with our key partners, along with securing funding support from the FA Football Delivery Fund, Guernsey FA has been able to provide increased opportunities within primary schools, along with continuing to provide football-based sessions in secondary schools. The increased participation across schools has ensured that the Guernsey FA workforce has been able to coordinate an inter-school festival for the primary

year 5 and 6 age groups, along with secondary school tournaments for year groups 7-10.

This delivery programme in local schools will continue into the 2023/24 season as we continue working towards securing equal opportunities for girls within education settings and to supporting the overall female pathway. This pathway has strengthened in recent years, evidenced by the return of a senior Guernsey FA Women's Representative team, which will participate in the 2023 Island Games being held in Guernsey. This achievement has only been possible because of the foundations established in the female

GUERNSEY FA GOAL //
SUPPORT & DELIVER SUSTAINABLE
EQUAL PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES
FOR GIRLS TO PLAY AND ENJOY THE
GAME ACROSS SCHOOL & CLUB
ENVIRONMENTS

game in Guernsey in recent years, with many former Girls Academy players now representing Guernsey at senior level.

Looking ahead, the next challenge in the 2023/24 season, and beyond, is to further expand on participation opportunities by working with interested clubs to introduce a female pathway within a club environment. This project will require a coordinated approach, which utilises the support of various stakeholders and partners that are committed to working with the Guernsey FA Development Team to achieve this ambitious goal.

FEMALE PLAYERS //

2021 BASELINE	2022/23 TARGET	2022/23 MEASURE	2023/24 TARGET
227	270	416	295

WILDCAT CENTRES //

2021 BASELINE	2022/23 TARGET	2022/23 MEASURE	2023/24 TARGET
7	7	7	8

**123 male players
ahead of target**

FOCUS TWO //

MALE PARTICIPATION

A consistent strength of the local game remains the strong club network, which continues to provide male participation opportunities from school Reception age through to Veterans. Primarily, these opportunities exist with England Accredited clubs, which remain a cornerstone of the affiliated game in Guernsey and provides regular football for over 2000 male participants. Additionally, participation opportunities within local primary and secondary schools, and the links into local clubs, remains a positive element within the overall football structure and pathway in Guernsey.

Through the hard work and dedication of the numerous volunteers across the club network, who are invaluable in facilitating so many opportunities, the 2022/23 season has once again seen male participation exceed the stated target. This club-based participation is complemented through an extensive program of football opportunities provided by the Guernsey FA workforce in local primary and secondary schools, which has seen

over 400 hours of delivery across the Education environments. However, and whilst the male pathway and the current participation levels are a positive testament to how football remains the largest and most popular participation sport in Guernsey, it is important to understand and recognise the risks and challenges being faced within the game.

When developing this strategy, the Guernsey FA identified some of the risks being faced by the male pathway, which subsequently became focal points and strategic priorities. At the time of preparing the strategy, the biggest challenge to the male game in Guernsey was identified as being the drop-out observed in some youth age groups. This understanding was supported by a Youth Participation Survey undertaken by the Guernsey FA Youth Council during the 2022/23 season, which again highlighted this trend, along with providing insight into the demands of young participants. This feedback ultimately led to the

GUERNSEY FA GOAL //

SUPPORT GROWTH & RETENTION PLANS TO GROW STRUCTURED FOOTBALL IN TRADITIONAL & NEW FORMATS

Youth Council introducing a recreational indoor turn up and play opportunity and the new Aztech Arena, which has proven to be very popular with young participants and will continue into the 2023/24 season.

Another potential challenge for local football is ensuring that the local league structure, and associated fixture programmes, remains fit for purpose. To ensure that the future model for the structured game meets the relevant demands, the Guernsey FA has, during the 2022/23 season, begun the process of working with key stakeholders to undertake a review and identify opportunities to implement needs-based changes. Looking ahead to the 2023/24 season, this collaborative approach will continue as the Guernsey FA focusses on ensuring positive football opportunities for all age groups, which are attractive to players and offer football in a variety of formats.

MALE PLAYERS //

2021 BASELINE	2022/23 TARGET	2022/23 MEASURE	2023/24 TARGET
2398	2398	2521	2398

INNOVATION FUND PROJECT //

FOOTBALL DELIVERY FUND

Ahead of the 2022/23 season, the Guernsey FA developed a project plan to support the local work, which is aligned with The FA strategy to see equal access too football for girls in 90% of primary and secondary schools.

This project, which secured funding from the Football Delivery Fund, has been focussed on increasing the availability of football opportunities for young girls – both to promote equal access, but also to enhance the female pathway. Prior to the 2022/23 season the Guernsey FA workforce provided access to football for Year 5 and 6 girls through the Primary School PE programme it offers in all local primary schools. However, for many girls this could be the first time they have defined access to football specific sessions and the Guernsey FA was committed to addressing this gap in provision.

Through the direct support of the Football Delivery Fund, the project has enabled the Guernsey FA workforce to increase overall participation opportunities for girls in school environments through delivery of girls only lunch and after-school

football clubs for a six-week period in each primary school. These additional sessions, which have specifically targeted school year groups 1, 2, 3 and 4, have proven to be both popular and successful, and have contributed to the overall growth in female participation during the 2022/23 season. For many of the participants, these school-based sessions have represented the first time they have had the opportunity for defined access to football specific sessions for girls, in what have been fun and enjoyable environments. The extended football delivery programme in schools for girls has resulted in an increased attendance at the Wildcat Centres in Guernsey, five of which are based at school sites and continue to provide clear and identifiable exit routes.

With a strategy vision to establish a unified, welcoming, and accessible game for ALL, this project, to provide access to girls in these four school age groups in every primary school has proven to be successful in aligning with the Guernsey FA objective to support and deliver sustainable and equal participation opportunities for girls to play and enjoy the game.



**Sessions delivered in 13 schools
to over 1500 girls aged 5-9**

98.5% referee match coverage

100% of CPD target achieved

161 Introduction to First Aid
courses completed

FOCUS THREE //

FOOTBALL WORKFORCE

There are thousands of players regularly playing football in Guernsey but, without the commitment of hundreds of volunteers which comprise the grassroots workforce, there would not be same opportunities across the game.

The value and importance of that volunteer workforce, which includes coaches, referees, administrators, welfare officers, committee members and grounds staff, cannot be underestimated, and the Guernsey FA greatly appreciates the work of everybody who commits their time to the game. This commitment to the game is shown on a daily and weekly basis through providing coaching, organising fixtures, preparing pitches, monitoring safeguarding requirements, and officiating matches. It is also shown through the commitment

that the volunteer workforce has to education and training, not least in relation to safeguarding. The Guernsey FA is pleased that both the youth coaching and refereeing workforces are compliant with safeguarding and DBS training requirements, whilst the extensive work to raise awareness of upcoming safeguarding requirements in open age football has produced positive results with most teams already compliant.

During the 2022/23 season, the Guernsey FA has coordinated a programme of CPD delivery in partnership with the FA Education Department.

This programme, which has been delivered at a number of club facilities, has been well attended by coaches committed to their own ongoing

GUERNSEY FA GOAL //

PROVISION & PROMOTION OF QUALITY LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCES FOR VOLUNTEERS ACROSS THE GAME

learning and development for the benefit of those playing the game, and has ensured Guernsey FA has exceeded the CPD target for the season. The partnership and collaboration with the FA Education Department has also been instrumental in enabling the Guernsey FA to host a UEFA C (Level 2) course for the first time in several years, whilst almost all youth teams now have a qualified coach.

The commitment shown in various ways by the coaching workforce, is mirrored by the volunteer referees, with over 98% of youth and open age matches covered by a qualified referee during the 2022/23 season. Additionally, the same referee workforce is providing more support to the game when 16 referees are volunteering to referee outside of the football season for the 2023

REFEREE DEVELOPMENT //

2022/23 RECRUITMENT TARGET	2022/23 RECRUITMENT MEASURE	2022/23 CONVERSION TARGET	2022/23 CONVERSION MEASURE
8	6	5	4
2022/23 RETENTION TARGET	2022/23 RETENTION MEASURE	2022/23 PROGRESSION TARGET	2022/23 PROGRESSION MEASURE
25	23	3	0

FOCUS THREE //

CONTINUED

Island Games football tournament being held in Guernsey during July. This commitment typifies how football in Guernsey is Stronger Together.

Looking ahead to the 2023/24 season, one of the main challenges identified by the Guernsey FA is to recruit, convert and progress referees to ensure that football matches continue to be officiated by a qualified referee workforce that is supported with learning and development opportunities, along with appropriate support and mentoring. Football requires referees and, therefore, this work will be a focus of the Guernsey FA, along with the continued work to recruit the next

generation of the volunteers to support the game. Recruiting volunteers will be the first step in the process, with the second being to ensure they are retained within the game, and sign-posted to appropriate learning and development opportunities – both locally and through The FA's online educational training opportunities.

COACH DEVELOPMENT //

2021 YOUTH TEAMS BASELINE	2021 YTWAQC BASELINE	2022/23 YTWAQC TARGET	2022/23 YTWAQC MEASURE
170	93.50%	89.50%	96.8%

2022/23 CPD TARGET	2022/23 CPD MEASURE	OVERALL SCORE
76	83	100/100



FOCUS FOUR //

ENVIRONMENT FOR FOOTBALL

100% of Open Age Team
officials with a DBS

13 Safeguarding Validation
Visits completed

100% of Youth Team officials
with Safeguarding Course
compliance

100% of Referees are
Safeguarding & DBS compliant

Football should be a game for All, and the Guernsey FA remains committed to ensuring that football is safe, enjoyable and accessible for every player, coach, referee, administrator, spectator, and volunteer.

Within this commitment is a focus from the Guernsey FA Safeguarding team to ensure that appropriate and effective safeguards are embedded within the game, and that the importance of safeguarding is recognised, accepted and actioned. During the course of the 2022/23 season, the Guernsey FA Safeguarding team has diligently monitored and supported safeguarding within club environments, undertaking 12 validation visits across the local clubs, and by once again providing in-service training for the invaluable Club Welfare Officers who are often the first point of contact for safeguarding related matters. That training has included raising awareness of the new safeguarding requirements for open age football, which will come into effect from the 2023/24 season. Through working in partnership with the local clubs, Guernsey football was already 95% compliant with these new requirements during the 2022/23 season, which is testament to the commitment within the clubs to maintaining effective safeguards for everyone involved in the game.

The work to promote safeguarding has not been confirmed to the Guernsey FA Safeguarding Team

because the Youth Council has taken on an active and important role during the 2022/23 season in raising awareness about safeguarding for young people. This has included creating child-friendly safeguarding posters, along with designing a safeguarding related cartoon, which can be found in the Youth Zone on the Guernsey FA website.

The high level of support to the local game when it comes to safeguarding will continue throughout the course of this strategy – and beyond – because it is rightly regarded as being of the highest importance. However, as well as ensuring football is appropriately safeguarded, the Guernsey FA recognises that the game must be played in enjoyable and respectful environments. Therefore, sharing and promoting the Respect campaign messages, which advocate positive behaviours across the game, will likewise remain a priority moving into the 2023/24 season.

GUERNSEY FA GOAL //
FOSTER A FOOTBALL ENVIRONMENT
THAT IS INCLUSIVE, RESPECTFUL,
ENJOYABLE FOR PARTICIPANTS AND
SAFE FOR ALL IN THE COMMUNITY



FOCUS FIVE //

BUSINESS EXCELLENCE

The strategy produced by the Guernsey FA for the 2021-24 period included a commitment to retaining a high level of service and support to the stakeholders across the game. This commitment included achieving the County FA Code of Governance, along with the Preliminary Level of the Equality Standard for Sport. Additionally, the Guernsey FA has once again retained the Guernsey Sports Commission 'Sports Mark', which is awarded to sports with the required governance and safeguarding standards in place. Indeed, Guernsey FA is recognised by the Sports Commission as being an exemplar of good governance within local sport.

In relation to the Code of Governance, the Guernsey FA Board has continued the process of guiding the work to achieve this important kitemark, which included a detailed review of the Memorandum and Articles of Association that led to various amendments being adopted at a Special General Meeting during the 2022/23 season. The process to achieve the Code of Governance will continue into the 2023/24 season, with the Guernsey FA Board aiming to have completed all required actions by the end of the calendar year.

Significant progress has also been made towards achieving the Preliminary Level of the Equality Standard for Sport with the Guernsey FA workforce engaging with various local stakeholder groups

to secure 327 individual responses to an equality, diversity, and inclusion survey. The results of this survey have subsequently been used to develop an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan that will be used to direct specific actions that are focussed on specific goals and objectives. These goals include ensuring that football in Guernsey is inclusive and fully accessible to All within the football and wider island community, supporting equal opportunities, and promoting a positive and safe environment.

Effective governance structures across the business operations underpin the required service standards to the local game, whilst retaining a supportive workforce culture, with employee well-being prioritised, is crucial to ensuring the Guernsey FA is consistently in position to best support the grassroots game. Investing in role specific learning for the workforce has been a priority during the 2022/23 season, with individual training and development opportunities also focussed on enhancing the business continuity plans through the FA Aspiring Leaders Programme.

Throughout the 2022/23 season, Guernsey FA has continued to support the club network with increased use of The FA's digital platforms ensuring administrative efficiencies are achieved. Additionally, the Guernsey FA workforce has provided club specific support to all existing

GUERNSEY FA GOAL //

A CULTURE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE & EMPLOYEE WELLBEING EMBEDDED TO SUPPORT BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AND HIGH QUALITY SERVICE TO THE GAME

England Accredited clubs as they worked through the renewal process, whilst Alderney achieved Accreditation for the first time during the 2022/23 season. The commitment of the local clubs to maintaining the England Accreditation is further testament to the strength of the club network and its continued focus on maintaining positive playing environments for All players across the game.

The work of the Guernsey FA across the game is only possible through effective partnerships, including with The FA, the Guernsey Sports Commission, Guernsey Football League, and corporate partners. During the 2022/23 season, corporate partnerships worth £55k have been retained and secured, and it is important to recognise and acknowledge that this support is integral to the work that the Guernsey FA undertakes across the football community.

FOCUS FIVE //

CONTINUED

GOVERNANCE

CODE OF GOVERNANCE TARGET - JUNE 2023	EQUALITY STANDARD TARGET - JUNE 2013	SAFEGUARDING OPERATING STANDARD
IN PROGRESS	IN PROGRESS	ACHIEVED JULY 22

YOUTH TEAMS IN ACCREDITED CLUBS //

2021 BASELINE	2022/23 TARGET	2022/23 MEASURE	2023/24 TARGET
100%	90%	100%	90%

ADULT TEAMS IN ACCREDITED CLUBS //

2021 BASELINE	2022/23 TARGET	2022/23 MEASURE	2023/24 TARGET
76%	65%	87.5%	70%



CEO REFLECTION //

As we reach the end of the second year of the Guernsey FA strategy – Guernsey Football, Stronger Together – and head into the final year during the 2023/24 season, there is time to reflect on great progress that has been made in many areas of the game. However, we are also mindful, and accept, that there are strategic objectives, which continue to remain a challenge and will be a focus for the workforce for the remainder of this strategy period.

When developing this strategy, the Guernsey FA identified five key areas of the game that required attention, either because there was an opportunity to enhance the game, or because of the need to respond to an existing challenge. Of those five areas, it was recognised that Football Facilities were the priority area, presenting both an opportunity, and a challenge, which required equal significant focus. The opportunity existed to bring about some positive changes to ensure that the football facilities across the island, including grass pitches, were fit for purpose and would provide a bright future for future generations playing the game. The challenge for the Guernsey FA was to secure investment and funding so that football facilities could be improved, and increased, as part of the process to ensure fit for purpose provision across the island.

Successfully addressing the challenge, through strong and persuasive project plans and collaboration with key stakeholders, including the Football Foundation and The FA, has enabled the Guernsey FA to achieve significant progress in

relation to the Football Facilities objectives within the strategy. Securing over £200k of bespoke funding support from the Football Foundation led to floodlight provision being retained at four club grounds, whilst the introduction of the Equipment Bank, and the access to specialist grass pitch maintenance equipment for local clubs, will have long-term benefits in relation to the quality, condition and robustness of club pitches. However, arguably the most important development in relation to Football Facilities in Guernsey is confirmation that work to build the new Guernsey FA and 3G Stadia community hub is now reality. Plans for this project were first developed back in 2015 but, after securing over £1.5m of funding from The FA and Football Foundation, construction will soon begin on the new 'home for Guernsey football' at Victoria Avenue.

Football in Guernsey will always be measured by the number of participants regularly playing the game and it is pleasing to see that once again both male and female registered players area ahead of target, whilst we have also seen an increase in disabled participants through the work of the Guernsey FA development Team in SEN schools. Within the female game, we have again seen tangible growth, with funding from the Football Delivery Fund enabling the Guernsey FA to increase delivery of girls only sessions within primary schools, which has resulted in increased attendance at Wildcat Centres. Whilst football is measured by the number of participants, the Guernsey FA is mindful that most participation opportunities are only possible through the

commitment of the volunteer grassroots workforce, and we would like to thank all those that consistently give their time and energy to the game in various roles. During the 2022/23 season there have been almost 200 individual instances of learning completed by the volunteer workforce, either through a formal training course or CPD. Without this commitment to learning and development, and without the commitment of these volunteers to provide opportunities for players, the game in Guernsey would be in a different position. However, we also recognise that the volunteer workforce needs support and we will continue to develop plans to recruit the next generation of committed volunteers, which includes referees, coaches and administrators.

Within the volunteer workforce are the Club Welfare Officers who play a significant role in maintaining a positive football environment in Guernsey, and one that is safe and inclusive for all participants. It is reassuring to know that we have trained, knowledgeable and experienced Club Welfare Officers, all of whom have attended the in-service training sessions delivered by the Guernsey FA during the season, and that safeguarding practices and procedures are embedded across the local game. The importance of this cannot, and should not, be underestimated because football should be safe and accessible for all. However, this is only possible when all stakeholders work collaboratively and in partnership, and this approach will continue to be adopted by the Guernsey FA during the 2023/24 season, and beyond. Guernsey FA

remains committed to driving the need for positive change through working collaboratively, and in partnership, with key stakeholders as we move towards a more sustainable and modernised local football infrastructure. This includes reviewing the league and fixture schedule to ensure it remains fit for purpose. Importantly, for current and future generations, this also includes ensuring the Association has the highest standard of governance and drives equality across the game so that it is accessible for those that want to participate. In this regard, work continues as we aim to achieve the FA Code of Governance, and Preliminary Level of the Equality Standard, before the end of 2023.

As always, the 2022/23 season has seen many successes and challenges along the way, but once again it has been a pleasure to work with our Board, staff and the many partners and stakeholders across the game over this period. It is one that has been particularly busy and challenging as we have worked tirelessly to bring the football facility projects to life, whilst preparing for the upcoming Island Games being hosted in Guernsey, and always maintaining our work towards delivery of the annual operational plan for the local game. It is therefore important to note my appreciation and thank the Guernsey FA workforce, including those that support as volunteers, for their continued commitment to the game, and maintaining our work towards uniting the football community in a unified, welcoming and accessible game for ALL.

