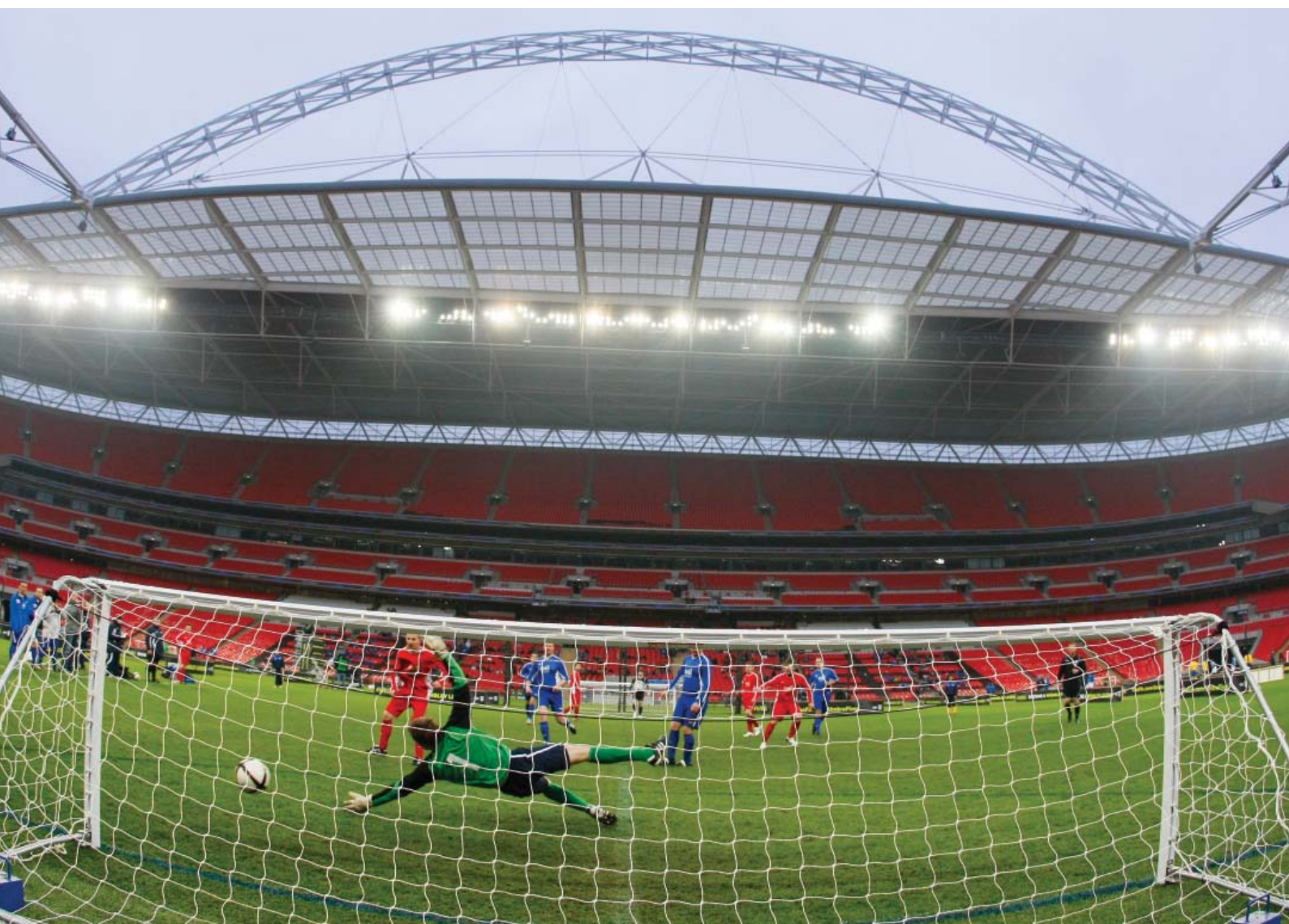


Small Sided Football

Good Practice Guide

2010/11



THE FA
SMALL
SIDED
FOOTBALL

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Introduction

The FA Small Sided Football Good Practice Guide is a comprehensive report covering the extensive small sided football development work that has taken place across England between County FAs, commercial small sided football providers and a host of local level partnerships between clubs, leagues, schools, colleges and universities.

The report showcases a collection of successful small sided football projects and demonstrates the positive impact that a number of FA Small Sided Focus County FAs have achieved in developing small sided football provision and participation.

Also included are recent examples of projects that have directly benefitted from investment from The FA Small Sided football Development Fund. The FA small sided football Development Fund is particularly focused on attracting new players into football, and encouraging those players that have dropped out of the 11 a-side game to continue playing in the small sided formats of the game. The fund has been introduced to support new projects targeting the growth of adult 16 years+ small sided football to achieve their potential by promoting partnership work and innovation within this growing sector of the National Game.



Strategic context for developing good practice in Small Sided Football

The FA recognises that small sided football, if appropriately managed and structured can deliver impressive results to help support the growth and further development of 11 a-side football within England. In recent years The FA's National Game Strategy and the FA's Vision document set a clear pathway for the development of football within England up to 2012. Both strategies identify and remark upon the importance and significance that small sided football's growth and continued development have upon the general health of football within the country. By sharing knowledge and ideas amongst key partners we can begin to fully understand how to harness sustainable growth and further opportunities that are available within small sided football.

The National Game Strategy in particular emphasises the roles small sided football has in impacting upon 'Growth & Retention' objectives as well as achieving aims aligned to creating 'Better Players.' The strategy sets out the target of increasing small sided football between 2007-2012 by 50%, from 25,000 teams to 37,500. The National Game Strategy acknowledges that small sided football, and other flexible formats of the game can have a pivotal role in modern day society in both retaining and attracting new participants to football. Once a player is involved in some form of the game, there is a good chance that he or she will be encouraged to participate to some extent in 11 a-side football at a later date.

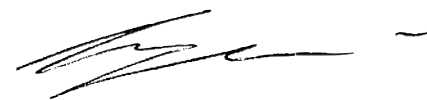
It is realised that small sided football can play a part in helping to retain players who are aged 14 -18 and are susceptible to dropping out of football for various reasons. The flexible formats of the game along with other aspects of small sided football appeal to young people and help to encourage them to remain within football. This is reflected in the demographics of participants that play at 5 a-side commercial providers, the majority of whom are under 25 years old.

Small sided football also has a growing role in supporting the introduction to football within school environments. The flexibility and adaptability of this format of football makes

them ideal for teachers to utilise in conjunction with delivering 11 a-side sessions. Facility and playing field restrictions at schools, along with 11 a-side pitches suffering from inclement weather or over use, means that small sided football can be a useful ally to support a teacher's football delivery, rather than turning to a completely alternative sport.

Small sided football encompasses both 5 a-side football and Futsal along with other formats such as 4v4, 6v6, 7v7 and Beach Soccer. Small sided football is played within England for a variety of purposes and reasons. Some 11 a-side clubs and coaches use it as method of skill and technical development for their players in training sessions; schools and junior clubs regularly use a small sided format of the game as an early enjoyable introduction to football for children; many adults play small sided football for the fun, social experience that it offers.

However, and for whatever reason it is played, as this Good Practice Guide will demonstrate, it cannot be denied that small sided football is a thriving element of the football fraternity within England that many thousands of people enjoy and relish playing. By ensuring that we share knowledge around the growing number of key projects that County FAs and commercial providers are delivering we will ultimately enhance the experience for the thousands of participants that commit to playing small sided football on a regular competitive or recreational basis.



Simon Walker
National Manager - Adult Grassroots Football
The Football Association





Futsal development sessions with The Norfolk and Suffolk Youth League

Objective

Suffolk FA has been instrumental in leading a unique project that explores working in partnership with one of its largest youth football leagues, The Norfolk and Suffolk Youth League. The project aimed to build awareness amongst youth football clubs of Futsal and how the introduction of Futsal provision could increase playing opportunities for youth players playing in the Norfolk and Suffolk Youth League. Working alongside league and club officials the strategy was to introduce Futsal to specific age groups.

Delivery

The initial starting point for the project was to set up a Futsal In-Service Event for clubs from the Norfolk and Suffolk Youth League. Following some consultation with the clubs officials and team coaches, a practical session was delivered to encourage interested teams to sign up for a Futsal festival. All teams which signed up received free Futsal balls to help them develop Futsal within their clubs.

During the Suffolk FA Futsal festival teams played as England or USA throughout the event and also enjoyed a Futsal skills session. This session was delivered by qualified Futsal coaches and was supported by Young Leaders, Suffolk FA staff and the Suffolk FA Tesco Skills Team.

Outcomes

A number of FA Charter Standard Clubs from Norfolk and Suffolk took part in the event which involved 19 teams and up to 120 players from age groups across U7 to U13s.

The Norfolk and Suffolk Youth League have demonstrated a long-term commitment to the project and now plan to run a Junior Futsal League provision for teams at U10/U12/U14. The league is scheduled to be underway in February 2011 and will run alongside existing league competitions. The clubs involved see the league as an opportunity to keep peripheral players engaged as well as aiding player retention and adding new teams.

Problems Encountered and Solutions

The original plan of supporting the national competition ages in 2010-11 of U11, U13 had to be amended as a number of clubs with U7/U8/U9 teams wished to be incorporated in the project. Indoor facility constraints lead to Suffolk FA making use of outdoor Astroturf pitches. This solution enabled all teams to be accommodated and the project delivery schedule to remain in its original format.

Partnerships Developed

By delivering the Futsal festival event it has allowed Suffolk FA to further its relationship with the Norfolk and Suffolk Youth League. The neighbouring Norfolk FA also supported the event by supplying Futsal balls to each of the teams. The Suffolk FA Skills Team were able to liaise with the local Tesco stores to support the event with free gifts for all of the players involved. There are also now further plans to link in the Suffolk FA Tesco Skills Team to deliver a Futsal skills centre in the area.

The Future - What Happens Next?

Suffolk FA's plans to deliver an U14 league have now been expanded to include U10 and U12 sections. Further Futsal taster sessions have been planned to support more teams to work towards taking part in the league. The winners of the leagues will progress through to the FA Regional Futsal Finals which will offer a pathway for successful teams to reach The FA National Youth Futsal Finals.

In order to offer further support in developing the Norfolk and Suffolk Youth League's Futsal development plan an FA Beginner's Guide to Futsal and a Futsal Referees course will also be held to support workforce development.



Liverpool FA



Liverpool FA Corporate Business Leagues

Objective

Liverpool FA has developed their Corporate Business Leagues as an engaging small sided football offer for local businesses. By creating a 7 a-side league it has delivered a flexible form of football for players not affiliated to 11v11 clubs or registered with weekly commercial SSF leagues. The project is an attempt to engage with the local business community and target players that may have fallen out of the game due to work or personal commitments.

Delivery

In partnership with Liverpool City Council and Walton Lifestyles Centre a 7 a-side league was established on a Friday night which was identified as a time which did not conflict with work or further football commitments of the participants. Both partners offered support in engaging with local businesses that were using their facilities on a casual basis. Initially the league was split into two leagues of eight teams and then a knockout stage was held to determine overall winners.

Outcomes

16 teams were created with a maximum of ten players per squad although it is estimated that the average players used per squad over the duration of the league was 12. Teams played weekly fixtures, playing 25 minutes each way. Referees and volunteers were recruited through the support of the Liverpool FA Referee Development Officer along with a key link to a local secondary school that had recently delivered an FA Small Sided Referees Course and where a number of students were enrolled on the Liverpool FA Football Futures Programme.



Problems Encountered and Solutions

Initial engagement with local businesses was a challenge as this was a new area of SSF development work for Liverpool FA. By linking in the Liverpool FA Get Into Football Officer they were able to dedicate a member of staff to develop the proposals for the Corporate Business League and research which small sided format and entry costs would be attractive to local businesses.

Partnerships Developed

Partnerships were developed with Liverpool City Council and Walton Lifestyles Centre who offered reduced facility hire rates as the Friday evening bookings were previously not utilised. The Liverpool FA Get Into Football Officer also developed a partnership with the World Corporate Cup of Soccer who deliver an annual international event for businesses across the UK and Europe. With the final of 2011 event taking place at Liverpool FC The World Corporate Cup of Soccer offered the Liverpool FA Corporate Business League a free place into their cup completion. This incentive for the league winners was a significant factor in promoting the recruitment of teams for the league.

The Future - What happens next?

The conclusion of the league will see the winners represent the Liverpool FA Corporate Business League in the World Corporate Cup of Soccer at Anfield at the end of May. The success of the first league has enabled the revenue generated to be invested in expanding the size of the league. In an attempt to link players back into other formats of football, all teams have been given information on local leagues and teams with the aim of populating 11v11 leagues at a weekend.

Sheffield FA



South Yorkshire Schools Futsal Programme

Objective

To create a sustainable competition structure within the education system in South Yorkshire that will increase schools Futsal provision. The project has enabled Futsal training sessions, FA Beginner's Guide to Futsal courses and teacher training to take place due to the interest that has been generated from the competitive element of Futsal. This delivery plan has also supported Sheffield FA in selecting teams to represent the county as part of the pathway for the FA National Youth Festival.

Delivery

By developing a comprehensive competition plan, Sheffield FA has supported the following events:

- Primary – 10 Events (2 County Finals)
- Secondary – 26 Events (2 County Finals)

This competition plan has been supported by Sheffield FA through the integration of some Futsal training sessions that were designed to give all participants further exposure to the rules and regulations of Futsal and an enjoyable playing experience.

- Y8 – 8 sessions
- Y10 – 8 sessions
- Y12 – 8 sessions

Outcomes

Since the South Yorkshire Schools Futsal programme has been established, Sheffield FA have recorded 358 male and female participants taking part in organised competitions. These competitions have been aligned with a schools training programme that has delivered substantial growth in the number of players that are getting regular exposure to Futsal to support player development outcomes.

- Y12 – 88 participants
- Y10 – 270 participants

Overall by the end of June 2011 Sheffield FA have predicted significant growth in the number of participants that will have taken part in the South Yorkshire Schools Futsal Programme. This reflects the ongoing investment and partnership work that the Sheffield FA have committed to growing school's Futsal and delivering a quality experience for young players.

Problems Encountered

The only problem that Sheffield FA encountered in delivering the project related to the availability of facilities to support Futsal. In many cases Sheffield FA were flexible in adapting and making use of sand-based and 3G astroturf playing facilities.

Partnerships Developed

- South Yorkshire School Sports Partnerships, Competition Managers and Heads of Physical Education
- Ponds Forge International Venue
- Schools and Community facilities
- Sports Unlimited.

The Future - What happens next?

Sheffield FA have committed to expanding this current schools Futsal programme over the next 12 month. The necessary funding options for sustaining project delivery will be explored. Other future plans include school leagues that will replace the once a year tournaments and make Futsal more sustainable. Further provision to develop elite player sessions that have a focus of 16 years+ participants will enable a club link to be formed with the local FA National Futsal League Club Sheffield FC.



Manchester FA



Local league provider engagement: Fallowfield Sixes League Development

Objective

Fallowfield Sixes were a local unaffiliated small sided football provider until Manchester FA carried out some outreach work that included supporting the league to affiliate and improve their knowledge of the benefits of working with the local County FA. On-going support has led to the creation of a new small sided league for students and local residents in the Fallowfield/Rusholme area of Manchester. Manchester FA has promoted the Fallowfield Sixes development as an example to other local leagues and providers who they are engaging with on a regular basis.

Delivery

A total of three new 6v6 leagues have been developed which are now all affiliated to Manchester FA. The leagues are predominantly student based and run at weekends (Saturday 4 – 6pm and Sunday 10 – 4pm) which is an ideal time for this particular target audience. Manchester FA has worked with the league organisers to source qualified local referees so that the leagues can run effectively and most importantly any disciplinary issues can be dealt with effectively.

Outcomes

Over the three new leagues there have been a total of 84 new small sided football teams created from a mixture of students from Manchester University, Fallowfield and Salford. Approximately 504 new players have been given an opportunity to play small sided football through the creation of the leagues. As a response to this demand Manchester FA are now working with the league to explore other areas for expanding league provision.

Problems Encountered and Solutions

Initial problems with getting the league to affiliate were experienced as there was a lack of knowledge from the local provider as to how affiliation to Manchester FA could support their leagues to develop. Also with Fallowfield Sixes being a new commercial small sided provider there was a lack of money available from the organisers to pay for the affiliation of all new teams in the league. Manchester FA's solution was to be patient with the league and explore opportunities that their Get Into Football Officers could support the provider with. One of the solutions was to develop an application for The FA Small Sided Football Development Fund.

Partnerships

Fallowfield Sixes Limited

The Armitage Centre – The University of Manchester

Castle Irwell Centre – Salford Leisure and Community Trust

FA Get Into Football Officers – Manchester, Tameside and Salford

The Future - What happens next?

Fallowfield Sixes are currently in the process of developing new initiatives for a women's small sided football league. This project will form part of an application to The FA Small Sided Football Development Fund that Manchester FA is applying for via their Get Into Football Officers. This adult football development workforce will be a key driver for the development of further small sided football projects within Greater Manchester.



Norfolk FA Small Sided Football Development Fund Project



County 5ives League Development

Objective

In applying to The FA Small Sided Football Development Fund Norfolk FA were seeking to support further small sided league development within their already established County 5ives programme. The project scope focussed around implementing an introductory pricing scale for three seasons that were 14 weeks in duration. Norfolk FA were specifically focussing their attention on returning football players and partial participants of the small sided and 11v11 game.

Delivery

Norfolk FA's Football Development Centre was the chosen project delivery site and project co-ordination was overseen by the Centre Manager along with further support from the Norfolk FA Football Development Team. Project delivery centred around increasing adult 5v5 participation with the creation of 32 new adult teams integrated into four SSF Leagues. The marketing and recruitment strategy was aimed at recruiting eight Vets teams, eight Business teams, eight mainstream and eight women's small sided teams.

The funding award from The FA Small Sided Development Fund enabled a robust marketing strategy to be implemented. This was achieved by utilising the Norfolk FA County Magazine and National Game Strategy marketing plan that maximised the use of electronic resources such as email shots and e-flyers. Norfolk FA also proactively engaged with the local Chamber of Commerce to enable a recruitment drive towards local businesses. Norfolk FA was also able to add value to the project by implementing a policy with free insurance and player registration.

Outcomes

The project has successfully achieved creating 32 new adult small sided football teams that have been integrated into the Norfolk FA County 5ives programme. All teams have benefitted from the excellent playing environment but also the support and advice that Norfolk FA are able to provide in terms of further opportunities to get participants back into other formats of the game. In total approximately 320 participants are now engaged

in the project on a weekly basis demonstrating the positive impact that this FA SSF Development Fund project has had on the local football community.

Problems Encountered and Solutions

Norfolk FA have developed a thorough knowledge of the local small sided football market and have understood the key challenges in attracting new participants into small sided football. Despite being in direct competition with a number of other commercial small sided football providers they have maintained a quality-based approach to their league development. The increased competition from new commercial providers coming into the market has been overcome by a strategy of developing a customer focussed approach to all of their teams and participants so that their provision remains competitive and quality driven.

Partnerships

Throughout the project development Norfolk FA have utilised a network of local partners such as Active Norfolk CSP, The Chamber of Commerce, City College Norwich and Norwich City FC.

The Future - What happens next?

Through applying to the FA SSF Development Fund Norfolk FA has been able to establish small sided provision in a number of new target areas such as Vets, Business Leagues and Women's. By developing a structured offer for these target groups they will now be able to invest resource into growing these leagues with further teams and new participants. A wider outcome as the project develops will be to identify those participants that have a desire to commit their time to other formats of the game. Here, Norfolk FA will be able to utilise their local knowledge to signpost players to clubs and leagues and create a positive link between small sided football and 11v11.





Raising Futsal participation in Further Education & Higher Education settings



Objective

Develop an HE and FE partnership with Anglia Ruskin University and Chelmsford College to introduce a structured programme of Futsal taster sessions to engage the local student population. By delivering the initial taster sessions it would allow Essex FA to consider how a long-term programme of Futsal leagues and coach education could be implemented at both institutions.

Delivery

Interactive one hour sessions were delivered at Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) in Chelmsford over a period of 8 weeks in order to identify the target market and initial interest in Futsal. A series of structured 1 hour sessions were also delivered at Chelmsford College over a period of 8 weeks during curriculum time and out of college hours.

The continued success of this format has seen Essex FA staff deliver further taster sessions in one of the local academy schools. This has lead to a number of approaches by other secondary schools from across the region who are now interested in implementing some taster sessions with their students.

Outcomes

The ARU sessions engaged around 14 students, however the majority of these were foreign students (aged 19-25 years old) who were studying at the university for one semester as part of an exchange programme with other European Universities. This was interesting in the fact that the students were already familiar with the game and its benefits in comparison to the traditional 5-a-side format. Ultimately this gave Essex FA an insight into the potential challenges of recruiting English students due to their unfamiliarity with Futsal.

The Chelmsford College sessions engaged around 40 students aged 16-21 years old and benefitted from working closely with sports staff and tutors to recruit students during their enrichment time.

The taster sessions were delivered with a ball familiarity warm-up to get participants familiar with the Futsal ball. This was followed by a controlled 5-a-side game that incorporated Futsal rules as the players became more familiar with the different concepts of Futsal. As the sessions developed students were organised into round robin type Futsal games in order to give the players a greater opportunity to experience the dynamics of the game.

Problems Encountered and Solutions

From delivering the sessions Essex FA learnt that the project would benefit from only committing to the delivery of three taster sessions to any one school/college. It was felt that this revised format would provide sufficient time for students to get an overview of the game, the skills required and how it compares to traditional 5-a-side. Beyond three sessions the challenge that became evident was recruiting a teacher willing to take Futsal forward within schools/colleges. To overcome this Essex FA will implement a Service Level Agreement with the schools/college or university that will specify the need to commit two staff onto an FA Beginner's Guide to Futsal course.

Challenges at Anglia Ruskin University:

- Not a highly populated campus with many mature students
- Sports Hall availability meant the session was delivered at 7pm. This clashed with social events in the first few weeks of term
- No Futsal goals – ECFA samba goals used

Challenges at Chelmsford College:

- No Futsal goals – ECFA samba goals used
- Numerous challenges in recruiting a staff member to further develop the Futsal provision following the taster sessions.

Partnerships Developed

Chelmsford College, Anglia Ruskin University, and local academy schools.

The Future - What happens next?

Essex FA has planned to deliver further taster sessions in 2011 using a revised template for delivering the project. Of paramount importance will be engaging teachers to enrol on the FA Beginners Guide to Futsal course so that further delivery of Futsal can be sustained. Essex FA also plan to initiate a series of inter-college Futsal fixtures with a long-term aim being the introduction of an Essex FA FE/HE Futsal league.

Bedfordshire FA



Friday Night 4v4 Football Social Inclusion Project

Objective

A pilot project to engage 13–19 year olds through informal small sided football activity was developed to address a growing need for social and recreational activity at a key site. Through this intervention strategy Bedfordshire FA pursued working with local partners to reduce anti-social behaviour, but also to implement a pathway for young adults to take part in organised football opportunities.

Delivery

The 10 week project took place on Friday nights between 8-10pm. This had been identified through local research from the CSP and Police as a key time for anti-social behaviour. By accessing a full-size facility with floodlights the activity was easily identifiable to young players in the local community. Bedfordshire FA employed qualified coaches to support small sided informal kick-about amongst young people and to engage their input into the project through peer support.

Outcomes

Up to 30 young people between the ages of 13-19 attended the Friday night sessions each week. This culminated in a Friday night small sided tournament which involved 6 teams taking part.

The Police Safer Neighbourhood Team who have supported the intervention project from the outset donated trophies for the event following the noticeable drop in anti-social behaviour in the area since the project commenced.

A number of positive relationships were built up with the young people and this has helped Bedfordshire FA to use them as role models to engage them in some of the other leadership opportunities that the county were delivering. The project also provided two local young coaches from the BME community with coaching hours and valuable experience as a result. They have engaged and managed the young people and provided a positive and safe environment for the participants to thrive.

Problems Encountered and Solutions

The project was initially set up to deter the young people from scaling the facility fence in the dark. By engaging them in the project they have taken a sense of ownership of it which has resulted in them becoming more involved and taking pride and care with the facility rather than causing damage.

Partnerships Developed

Chiltern School Sports Partnership and Team Beds and Luton CSP

The Community Engagement Officer for 16-19 years and Sport Development Officer have been significant partners in promoting the programme amongst the local secondary schools, colleges and community groups.

Dunstable Police SNT

The Safer Neighbourhood Team have committed support to the project by providing patrol support on the evenings, promotional information with regards to drugs and alcohol awareness and donations of money and trophies.

The FA Small Sided Football Development Fund

The application to the SSF Development Fund will enable further support for the initial six months of the programme now that the pilot project has been completed. The project will now seek to achieve a transfer of recreational opportunities for young players into affiliated teams in small sided leagues that are delivered by Bedfordshire FA. The project has a target of 30 new teams in the first six months of delivery.

What happens next – the future?

The revised pilot project now has clear pathways and sustainability at the forefront of delivering the Friday night informal 4v4 tournaments. The pathway into an established adult small sided league and engagement of local 'partner' clubs to advertise opportunities has been implemented and the income generated from teams moving into regular small sided leagues will be utilised to maintain the Friday night project beyond the funded six months of provision.



Nottinghamshire FA



Futsal drop in sessions at The Sycamore Centre, Nottingham

Objective

To work alongside a project partner in an area of high deprivation in Nottingham city centre to develop an opportunity for young players to take part in regular Futsal sessions.

Delivery

Nottinghamshire FA provided support and funding for local coaches to deliver weekly two hour Futsal sessions to adult 16 years+ participants in the local inner-city community. In order to allow The Sycamore Centre to take ownership and manage the future direction of the project, Nottinghamshire FA provided staff and participants with the opportunity to complete The FA Beginners Guide to Futsal and an FA Futsal Referees course.

Outcomes

In its initial stages the project commenced as a starting point for the Nottinghamshire FA Futsal League which included a nucleus of six-eight committed teams. As the project progressed it became evident that there were a number of differing participants. With 40 players involved on an ad-hoc basis and a core set of around 20 players, the project partners reached a decision to change the format of the delivery plan. A more flexible format to suit the participants was devised and thus a Futsal 'drop in session' was developed for the same participants.

The project also delivered qualifications for some of the participants achieving their FA Beginners Guide to Futsal and FA Futsal Referees qualification.

Problems Encountered and Solutions

With the local area being disadvantaged and disengaged it was difficult to provide exit routes and integrate new people in to the Futsal project. The solution was to take away the structured environment and give the participants ownership by up-skilling them. This added responsibility and ownership, engaged current participants in accepting new participants into the project.

Partnerships

Nottinghamshire FA built up a good relationship with The Sycamore Centre and the Nottingham City Council throughout the duration of this project. These partnerships also played a pivotal role in supporting the delivery of various education initiatives with local schools and FE and HE institutions that were interested in implementing Futsal taster sessions and intra-mural competitions.

The Future - What happens next?

Through the support of Nottinghamshire FA The Sycamore Centre is formalising a number of proposals to begin the process of developing a Nottingham Futsal Club. This is a long-term project that will ultimately allow the players to gain further experience in playing friendly and competitive fixtures. The provision is also to be extended to younger age groups and explore new forms of education and engagement through Street Football and Freestyle Football formats.



Leicestershire and Rutland FA



Leicestershire School FA Girls Futsal Competitions

Objective

Leicestershire and Rutland FA to work in partnership with The Leicestershire Schools FA to introduce and deliver a Girls Futsal Competition that would evolve from the traditional 5 a-side competition structure that had previously been delivered in the region on a yearly basis.

Delivery

The Leicestershire and Rutland Women and Girls Development Officer supported Leicestershire Schools FA with formalising a realistic delivery plan for the Futsal competition. This included providing the association with Futsal equipment and fact sheets to develop their knowledge of Futsal, along with providing teachers with in-service training to support pre-competition coaching of the players.

Outcomes

Throughout the competition programme 50 new school teams participated in Futsal fixtures. The winning teams in district competition progressed on to the County Finals. The eventual winners of County Finals took part in The FA East Midlands Youth Futsal Festival. This successfully created a education pathway for Futsal throughout Leicestershire and Rutland that could directly proceed through to The FA National Youth Festival.

Problems Encountered

The project has ultimately developed a progressive working relationship with the Leicestershire Schools FA which can now be sustained for future joint projects.

Partnerships

The project has enabled the Football Development Team at Leicestershire and Rutland FA to further their partnership working relationship with the Leicestershire Schools FA Secretary and the local district associations.

The Future - What Happens Next?

From the key successes learned out of the Leicestershire Schools Association Women's Futsal Competition, the plan for season 2011/12 will be for the programme to be duplicated for the Boys school 5-a-side competitions where a further transition will be made to playing Futsal. This will ensure that a co-ordinated education pathway for Futsal participation in the county can be delivered for Boys small sided football.



Hertfordshire FA

Futsal Referees Development Project



Objective

Through a series of courses and workshops Hertfordshire FA wanted to increase the number of Futsal referees available to support the wider Futsal development programmes currently being delivered across Hertfordshire. The growth of Futsal has been a key objective for Hertfordshire FA and having an active referee workforce in place has allowed existing and new referees to gain further experience.

Delivery

By delivering a number of FA Futsal Referee courses over the past 2 years and providing quality exit routes for these candidates it has also enabled wider promotion of these achievements to the existing refereeing audience in Hertfordshire.

Outcome

Through focussing on delivering a series of FA Futsal Referee course there are currently 34 referees qualified to officiate Futsal in Hertfordshire. By becoming qualified they are able to be part of the process for selection to officiate at National FA Futsal competitions and events such as The FA National Futsal Leagues, The FA Futsal Cup and FA National Youth Futsal Festival.



Problems Encountered and Solutions

The biggest challenge facing Hertfordshire FA was making referees aware of this new opportunity for their personal development. A solution came through an extensive promotional campaign that included the Hertfordshire FA Football Development Officer attending a series of referee society meetings to promote the game.

Once a number of referees became qualified they were used as role models to other referees. Through their new found knowledge of Futsal and the Laws of the Game it helped Hertfordshire FA to promote Futsal and the opportunities that currently exist locally and nationally for Futsal Referees. Certificates and badges are also presented at the Hertfordshire FA Referee Association Annual Conference to show other referees the success that can be achieved from being involved in Futsal.

Partnerships

Referees Societies throughout Hertfordshire
Partnership working with Referee Development Officer and Referees Committee
The FA National Futsal League
Local Authorities have been engaged by referees to source venues for Futsal activity
School Sports Partnerships were engaged to source young referees that want to make the transition to Futsal

The Future - What Happens Next?

The majority of the qualified Futsal referees have been champions for the game of Futsal in their local area. With a small number of local leagues Hertfordshire FA are challenging the referees to source venues for new activity that the referees can co-ordinate. Along with a series of in-service events a long term aim will be to establish a mentoring programme where more senior and longer serving referees are used to support the newly qualified referees. Referees will be assessed locally by local assessors to help maintain the standard of officials coming through and then being passed on to the FA National Futsal Referees list.

Futsal Coach Education



Objective

To develop a generation of qualified Futsal coaches throughout Hertfordshire that can adopt the principles of Futsal and use their knowledge to raise awareness about this small sided game in both Futsal specific and football scenarios.

Delivery

By establishing a dedicated Futsal Coach Education Programme between 2006 and 2010, Hertfordshire FA has delivered 12 FA Introduction to Coaching Futsal courses to their grassroots coaching community. This has included working with the local School Sports Partnership to deliver 3 Futsal Education Modules in education environments throughout the region.

Outcomes

In delivering 12 FA Introduction to Coaching Futsal and FA Beginners Guide to Futsal courses, Hertfordshire FA have achieved notable progress in raising the profile of Futsal in the region and provided a significant workforce to support their strategic Futsal Development Programme. By successfully marketing the courses to grassroots clubs, coaches, community groups and private coaching companies the number of qualified Futsal coaches in Hertfordshire has grown significantly.

Current Total - 266 FA Introduction to Futsal qualified coaches

Working closely with local Schools Sports Partnerships has enabled Hertfordshire FA to develop their schools Futsal provision and level of competition. In delivering three Futsal Education modules an impressive 49 teachers and coaches from an education environment have improved their knowledge of how Futsal can be successfully delivered to young players. All of the candidates were given the opportunity to take this module as a lead into the FA Beginners Guide to Futsal. This project was delivered in partnership with Stevenage Schools Sports Partnership and North Hertfordshire College.

Problems Encountered and Solutions

Hertfordshire FA encountered some problems with coaches who took the initial FA Introduction to Futsal course before February 2010. With the restructure of the course format to the FA Beginners Guide to Futsal a number of coaches had to retake the course. Communicating this change of circumstances for the qualification was a difficult task and one which was resolved by looking into offering coaches subsidised places on future courses as a “refresher option” that will allow them to progress as Futsal coaches in the future with the appropriate qualification in place

Partnerships Developed

Local Charter Standard Clubs
Schools Sports Partnerships
Watford FC Community Sports & Education Trust
Commercial Coaching Companies

The Future - What Happens Next?

In order to continue to support this current network of qualified Futsal coaches, Hertfordshire wish to be a key deliverer of the upcoming FA Level 1 Futsal Coaching Course. Further opportunities talented coaches will be explored by linking coaches to The FA and clubs within the FA National Futsal League.

Pitch Invasion FA Small Sided Development Fund Project

BME League Development and Inclusion Strategy

Objective

In applying to The FA Small Sided Development Fund Pitch Invasion were committed to demonstrating how a demographic analysis of their small sided leagues had identified that a small number of teams were made up of participants from BME backgrounds. Through a targeted marketing campaign the project was focussed on increasing BME participation at five specific Pitch Invasion sites with the intention of achieving a 50% increase in male 18-44 years 6v6 and 5v5 participation.

Delivery

In identifying their target groups Pitch Invasion understood the need to engage with key partners to ensure that the marketing and communication strategy for the project was appropriate for the BME community. In order to truly understand the potential barriers to BME small sided football participation, Pitch Invasion sought consultation with key partners such as The FA Equality and Child Protection Department and Kick it Out. This provided Pitch Invasion with the necessary guidance in developing suitable marketing materials, not to mention key learning outcomes for developing an Equality and Inclusion Policy to underpin the company's business development model.

Pitch Invasion also actively engaged with Middlesex FA, Surrey FA, Kent FA, London FA and Berks and Bucks FA in order to develop a greater local knowledge of the BME communities that these County FA's were currently working with in and around the sites that had been identified by Pitch Invasion to deliver the project. This included being invited to County FA Race Equality Advisory Group Meetings. This opportunity provided and ideal forum to communicate with local networks around the intended outcomes for the project and gauge initial feedback and suggestions.

Outcomes

The project has delivered a 40% increase in the number of BME players that are taking part in small sided football at five Pitch Invasion sites which represents an increase of approximately 320 new players. The project has undoubtedly had wider outcomes for Pitch Invasion in allowing the provider to reflect upon their own Equality and Inclusion policy and for their website to support a process of reporting any incidents of discrimination towards participants in any of their small sided football leagues. This is a positive outcome for the commercial small sided football industry as a whole and Pitch Invasion has shown great leadership in this development.

Problems Encountered and Solutions

A key challenge for the project was ensuring that Pitch Invasion were able to effectively engage with key partners on a local level in order to raise awareness of the project and its intended outcomes. Understanding how to communicate with the BME community was ultimately going to determine the overall success of the project. By working closely and exchanging ideas around project delivery with The FA Small Sided Development Fund Manager it enabled Pitch Invasion to broker meetings with Kick it Out and local County FA's in regions where the project would be delivered.

Partnerships Developed

This particular FA Small Sided Football Development Fund Project has been a fantastic example of the strength in project delivery that can be achieved through effective partnership work, particularly when addressing the needs of challenging target groups though small sided football participation.

- Kick it Out
- Middlesex FA
- Surrey FA
- Kent FA
- London FA
- Berks and Bucks FA

The Future - What happens next?

Upon project completion Pitch Invasion will continue to adopt the principals and lessons learned for the BME Inclusion project throughout all of its current operation of 80 sites across the country. The Equality and Inclusion Policy that Pitch Invasion have developed will enable the company to demonstrate to all of its customer base that discrimination will not be tolerated and that the company has effective reporting procedures to ensure that any matters can be dealt with effectively and reported to the relevant bodies such as The FA and Kick it Out.



Hertfordshire FA



Open Age Male Futsal Leagues

Objective

Hertfordshire FA has embraced many key projects that have developed Futsal within the region. By creating a network of adult Futsal leagues their key objective was to improve awareness and increase opportunities to play Futsal. This network of Futsal clubs would act as a direct link into regional and national competition structures.

Delivery

By liaising with local authorities to gauge their level of interest, Hertfordshire FA was then able to gain support in identifying suitable venues and league co-ordinators to deliver the project on a week-to-week basis.

Part of the support which Hertfordshire FA provided included subsidies for affiliation and equipment. In order to quality assure the Futsal leagues regular monitoring visits were conducted twice a season and leagues were uploaded onto FA Full Time by the Football Development Officer responsible for the project. Promotional materials and branding were also provided by Hertfordshire FA which the leagues were able to tailor to their needs. This included access to posters, flyers, pens, notepads etc.

Outcomes

Current provision and long-term projections -

- Year 1 – 1 league, Grundy Park (8 teams)
- Year 2 – 2 leagues, Grundy Park (8 teams) & Sportspace (6 teams)
- Year 3 – 2 leagues, Sportspace (8 teams) & Khalsa (6 teams)
- Year 4 – 2 leagues, Sportspace (8 teams) & Khalsa (6 teams)
- Year 5 – 2 leagues, Sportspace (8 teams) & Khalsa (6 teams)
- Year 6 – 3 leagues proposed, Sportspace (8 teams), Khalsa (6 teams) & Grundy Park (8-10 teams)

Year 3 also saw the introduction of the Hertfordshire FA Men’s Futsal Cup which delivered an additional qualifying competition for The FA Futsal Cup. This allowed the top three teams from all active leagues to be entered into a one day knockout competition. The leagues have averaged an additional 12 teams per year

including the forthcoming season. This investment in Futsal league development has contributed to an increase in profile of Futsal in Hertfordshire amongst both youth and adult clubs.

Problems Encountered and Solutions

Recruiting a league organiser at each venue to oversee the league delivery can be a difficult task. In some sites Hertfordshire FA has used sports centre staff. However, high staff turnover has in many cases increased the need for retraining of staff. Hertfordshire FA has also used external companies to deliver the leagues with the county’s support rather than on its behalf. Moving forward, a key challenge that needs to be considered is that the leagues needs to be profitable to keep commercial providers interested. This is in direct comparison to sports centres which, with the support of the local authority, will run at a minimal profit if necessary.

Partnerships Developed

- Local Authorities
- Khalsa Football Academy
- FA National Futsal League
- University of Hertfordshire

The Future - What Happens Next?

Moving forward Hertfordshire FA plans to increase the network of leagues throughout Hertfordshire and work towards developing a pyramid system that mirrors the 11 a-side game in the county. This would enable an elite and recreational Futsal pathway to be implemented.

To supplement the community Futsal leagues Hertfordshire FA is also developing both a recreational and competitive Futsal programme at the University of Hertfordshire. On-going discussions with North Hertfordshire College around a Further Education League pilot programme that will eventually be rolled out to all four FE colleges in Hertfordshire would support increased competition in the Hertfordshire Futsal Cup in future years.



Dorset FA



Junior Beach Soccer Tournaments

Objective

Dorset FA were keen to establish an alternative format of small sided football for a number of local youth football teams within Dorset by utilising the local beach facilities to raise the profile of Beach Soccer participation.

Delivery

By working in partnership with Weymouth & Portland Borough Council and the Sport Development Unit, Dorset FA was able to plan and successfully deliver a comprehensive Beach Soccer event which was held in July 2010.

Outcome

By utilising the local network of junior football clubs, Dorset FA successfully recruited 14 teams of Under 13 boys to participate within a structured Beach Soccer tournament. This opportunity enabled participants to learn an entirely new format of small sided football that had numerous rules and playing variations. In many ways this challenged the players' learning and development and proved incredibly popular through the enjoyment that playing Beach Soccer provided.

Problems Encountered and Solutions

In delivering the Beach Soccer tournament the project utilised large areas of beach that were shared by the general public. Whilst this provided a great backdrop for the event, a thorough risk assessment and safety measures were put in place by Dorset County FA and Borough Council in order to ensure that the players had a safe and enjoyable experience.

Partnerships Developed

The tournament was successfully delivered in partnership with the sport development workforce from Weymouth and Portland Borough Council. It offered the opportunity for clubs, schools and youth groups to participate in a new format of small sided football and for the County FA to showcase Beach Soccer to a new captive audience.

The Future - What happens next?

This was the second tournament of this kind to be delivered by Dorset FA and it has encouraged them to deliver a wider range of events for Beach Soccer within the annual football calendar. The format of the competition is well suited to junior clubs and the intention will be to deliver a number of age categories to ensure that more teams can take part to sustain this small sided football competition as an annual event.

Dorset FA is intending to discuss expanding to a Beach Soccer League with other Local Authorities in the region in 2011.



Middlesex FA



Born to Succeed – Muslim Women's Sports Foundation Futsal Taster Sessions

Objective

The Muslim Women's Sport Foundation (MWSF) is a volunteer led charity set up in 2001 with the aim of increasing the number of black and minority ethnic women, particularly Muslims, involved in sport through playing, coaching, refereeing or volunteering. Middlesex County FA has been engaged with the Muslim Women's Sport Foundation to support more opportunities for young Muslim women to take up football.

Delivery

Funding was received from the Football Foundation to run a series of adult female coaching sessions, competitions and also personal development opportunities for volunteers and players to get involved with coaching & refereeing. A schools programme also runs alongside this project helping to attract girls that are not currently participating in mainstream sporting activities.

Outcomes

Now entering its second year, the 'Born To Succeed' project has gone from strength to strength. Funding from the Football Foundation has enabled the MWSF to host female only Futsal tournaments and leagues as well as extending their current school's football provision.

Weekly Futsal training in Acton, West London attracts approximately 15-20 female participants and is co-ordinated by a female coach. The Muslim Women's Sport Foundation Futsal Festival 2010 in London involved six non-competitive community teams taking part from as far as Glasgow and Bradford. The event was a huge success bringing together approximately 100 players, coaches, officials, volunteers and spectators in attendance.

Problems Encountered and Solutions

Finding suitable all female environments for training events and tournaments within close proximity to public transport has been a significant challenge for the project. Middlesex County FA has played a supportive role in the project by helping to identify potential new venues and female coaches who are interested in developing their experience in delivering Futsal coaching sessions.

Partnerships

Middlesex County FA

Active Ealing

Kick it Out

The Future - What happens next?

The taster sessions have been well received and there is now the interest and enthusiasm amongst female players to develop the project into a league-based competition. Starting in London, league fixture days will take place once a month over a four month period. Middlesex FA will again continue to engage with MWSF to support their needs so that the Muslim Women's Sport Foundation Futsal league makes further strides in engaging more female players into Futsal.



Kent FA

Kent Schools FA Futsal Competition



Objective

The objective of the Kent Schools Futsal Competition was to increase the number of young people participating in a structured Futsal competition, helping to raise the profile of the sport and incorporating it into the competition structure of the Kent Schools Football Association.

Delivery

By working in partnership with the Schools Competition Managers and the Kent Schools FA, district competitions were held from which the winning schools were entered into the County Youth Futsal Finals day. Competitions were held across a number of age groups in the following areas: Boys Cup, Boys Plate (for those who had not represented the School) and Girls Cup.

Outcome

The Kent Schools Futsal Competition has delivered the following outcomes:

- 110 new Futsal teams
- 800 young people engaged in playing Futsal
- A comprehensive competition structure that includes intra-school, inter-school as well as District and County Finals.

Problems Encountered and Solutions

The initial major problem that was encountered by Kent FA related to the shortage of dedicated Futsal facilities within the county and the number of qualified Futsal referees. To overcome this Kent FA staged some of the district competitions on 3G pitches and delivered a Futsal referee's course to young leaders and school teachers.

Partnerships

Kent School Sport Partnerships
Kent School Competition Managers
Kent Schools FA

The Future - What happens next?

The Kent Schools Competition will continue under the remit of the Kent Schools FA with support from the Kent FA. For the 2011-12 season Kent FA intend to support Year 7 – 10 boys and girls competitions to be staged within the county.

The competition will be linked into work around Active Universities with the aim to develop a Community Futsal Club based at Canterbury Christ Church University. This will enable for there to be a player pathway for young people playing Futsal in schools and into Higher Education.



Birmingham FA

Birmingham County FA Start Again Accommodation League



Objective

Birmingham FA wished to utilise small sided football to engage young men living in supported accommodation through football and introduce them to mainstream services such as GP registration and an education programme which includes advice and education around sexual health, nutrition and drug awareness.

Delivery

By consulting with local agency 'Start Again' Birmingham FA was able to suggest a project proposal that would support their needs and, most importantly, those of the players involved. The development of a 5 a-side league which was delivered on Wednesday nights between 6.00pm – 8.00pm at the PowerLeague Aston site enabled a close relationship to be developed with the local commercial small sided football provider.

Outcome

During the development of the league six small sided teams were created enabling 60 new players to be engaged in the project on a weekly basis.

The project also served to influence participants to pursue qualifications that they may not have had the opportunity to obtain given their personal circumstances. In all, six participants gained their FA Level 1 Coaching Award with a further two participants progressing to undertake their FA Level 2 Coaching Award. In referee development, four participants attended their Small Sided Referees course and are now seeking to use this qualification to gain employment.

Problems Encountered and Solutions

Birmingham FA were aware that this project would involve engaging a challenging target audience but were able to foresee the positive benefits that this small sided football intervention project could achieve. The only problems encountered were with regards to the participants respecting the opposition and match officials, due to long standing issues of territorial conflict. Another issue Birmingham FA faced was that of participants smoking illegal substances. A solution emerged through getting all players to adhere to a code of conduct and also hosting drug awareness workshops run by the local Health Exchange.

Partnerships

'Start Again' were the key deliverers of the project and were fundamental in developing the network of partners. The partners who funded the project were the Birmingham PCT and Health Exchange. Birmingham County FA Social Inclusion Officer, Mohammed Juned, led the project on behalf of the Birmingham FA and helped to support the longer term sustainability for the project.

The Future - What happens next?

The consolidation of the existing delivery is a priority for all partners as well as expanding the number of teams in the future. A long-term goal is to develop a regional competition structure to feed into the England Homeless Football Network. In order to achieve this Birmingham FA will continue to develop partnerships with local agencies to implement a succession strategy to create a stronger legacy.



PlayFootball.net and Essex FA



16-19 years Small Sided Football and 11v11 football retention project

Objective

Playfootball.net and Essex FA's joint application to The FA Small Sided Football (SSF) Development Fund was based around an audit of structured opportunities for 16-19 year old male players to play small sided football and 11v11 within the Southend region. This analysis provided clear evidence that there was a specific need to develop more provision for U21's male football that could address the drop off of participants in 11v11 adult football. By working closely to identify project partners, Playfootball.net and Essex FA targeted two School Sports Partnerships within Southend as well as the Southend Campus of Essex University and South East Essex College. In establishing the educational based partnerships the project would deliver a regular small sided football offer for new participants that would provide the basis for developing new SSF teams that could be linked into a pilot U21's 11v11 League based at Playfootball.net in Southend.

Delivery

Following a successful award offer from The FA Small Sided Football Development Fund, Playfootball.net and Essex FA set up a series of project planning meetings with key partners in order to get their input into the delivery model so that the SSF leagues could be delivered at key times that fitted with the availability of the target audience that the project was seeking to engage. This established further ownership of the project from the educational partners and enabled both Playfootball.net and Essex FA to directly communicate to potential participants by visiting the schools and colleges and promoting the SSF offer to students through key messages and marketing materials.

Essex FA also played a key role in consulting with representatives of The Sceptre Adult League in order to directly link their league expansion plans of developing an U21's 11v11 League into the project. By recruiting an established adult 11v11 league provider it ensured that a direct pathway for the project participants into 11v11 football could be established as realistic project outcome. By working closely with the League Secretary during the planning stage of

the project it enabled The Sceptre League to fully understand the concept of how small sided football could help grow the number of 11v11 teams in their U21's league.

Outcomes

The outcome of the partner meetings created a delivery plan that will establish 12 new teams within 16-19 years 5v5 league provision, with up to 95 male participants engaged in the project on a weekly basis. Each week the educational partners will ensure that participants can be transported to take part in the hour long fixture programme in order for participation figures to be retained. Also the flexible nature of the 5v5 element of the project will enable new teams to join the project during successive cup competitions which will be staged every four weeks of the league programme.

Throughout the 5v5 league delivery Essex FA will undertake a player consultation exercise aimed at gathering further information around the playing habits of 16-19 year old male players. The intention of this will be to create further knowledge and awareness of the barriers that currently exist for young players both within small sided football but also identify some of the reasons for why players are not always making the transition from junior to adult 11v11 football. This interaction with the participants will help to develop a relationship with those players that are seeking to get back into 11v11 football and will enable both Essex FA and The Sceptre League to promote the benefits of joining the new league upon the conclusion of the SSF element of the project.

This unique project between Playfootball.net, Essex FA and The Sceptre League will provide the basis for further understanding of how small sided football can create a two-way link with 11v11 provision.

Problems Encountered and Solutions

The most challenging aspect of this project has been trying to influence the current playing habits and attitudes of young 16-19 year old male players and move them from unstructured social football into a flexible league competition that meets



their playing needs. Playfootball.net have been effective in utilising their corporate sponsors to offer prizes and awards to teams for taking part in both the 5v5 league and cup competitions and have placed a real emphasis on achieving a fun and interactive playing experience for all participants. A further emphasis has been placed on ensuring that the recruitment of players and teams has not been solely focussed on players that already have experience of playing small sided football. This has ensured that non/partial participants can also take part at a level that is suitable for their level of ability.

Partnerships Developed

This FA Small Sided Development Fund project has provided some key learning aims for both Playfootball.net and Essex FA. For Playfootball.net the experience gained in delivering this project will help them to develop a model for developing similar projects that can utilise their facility and playing experience for both small sided football and 11v11 football. It has also provided a key link to educational institutions within the local area. For Essex FA it has enabled them to identify and address a key need from their County Plan and implement a structured outcome for The Sceptre Adult League and their development of an U21 Male 11v11 league.

Essex FA

Southend SSP

The Sceptre League

South Essex College

Essex University

The Future - What happens next?

Upon the completion of the small sided league delivery in May 2011 all project partners will finalise the transition plan for implementing The Sceptre U21 11v11 League that will be based at Playfootball.net. Essex FA will therefore continue to work with the League Secretary to implement a flexible league structure that is attractive to new teams from The FA Small Sided Development Project, but also those 11v11 clubs from within the local region that have existing youth teams at U16s and U18s.

Summary

The FA Small Sided Football Good Practice Guide helps to recognise and acknowledge that small sided football is playing an ever increasing role in football participation in England. The FA fully realise and appreciate that to have the greatest impact and long term effect on the growth of small sided football, new projects that can grow all formats of the game cannot be delivered in isolation. The FA is therefore reliant on forging effective relationships with other key delivery partners in implementing their plans for the future direction of small sided football.

The FA Small Sided Football Good Practice Guide clearly demonstrates how key delivery partners such as County FAs, commercial providers, schools, colleges and universities, local authorities and County Sports Partnerships can all assist in developing Small Sided Football through understanding the intended direction that The FA is planning for small sided football in this country.

The FA Small Sided Football Good Practice Guide is intended to advise, support and inspire all key delivery partners to continue to develop further small sided football projects that can have a lasting impact and further enhance the football landscape within this country.

For further information about small sided football and The FA's Small Sided Football National Competitions, please visit:

TheFA.com/GetIntoFootball/Small-Sided-Football



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