





# Introduction

The FA Small Sided Football Good Practice Guide 2011/12 is a comprehensive report covering the expanding landscape of 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 brings to life a collection of successful small sided football projects to demonstrate the positive impact that a number of FA Small Sided Focus County FAs have achieved in developing small sided football provision and participation.

A key part of this year's report will demonstrate the success of a number of projects that have been established through the support of The FA Small Sided Football Development Fund. The FA Small SSF Development Fund is 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 supported a growing number of innovative projects that continue to contribute to the growth of adult 16 years+ small sided football as well as promoting positive partnership work via the Get into Football Officers, College and Community Football Co-ordinators and County FA Football Development Officers. This collective approach across a number of football themes and formats will continue to drive participation throughout the small sided sector and develop key outcomes for the National Game Strategy 2011-2015.

Since successfully launching the FA SSF Development Fund the following delivery milestones have now been reached which clearly demonstrate the positive impact the fund is having on delivering support and growth to the small sided football sector.

- 46 projects approved by the FA Small Sided Funding Panel contributing to £215,000 being awarded for FA SSF Development Fund projects
- Total number of 'new' adult male and adult female (16 years +) participants playing SSF via FA SSF Development Fund Projects = **13,200**
- Total number of 'new' adult male and adult female (16 years +) affiliated SSF teams developed via FA SSF Development Fund Projects = **1,100**

The FA SSF Development Fund will continue to play a vitally important role in helping to build positive and constructive relationships with the SSF commercial providers and will offer The FA a significant degree of influence and leadership within the SSF industry in the coming years.

# Small Sided Football within the National Game Strategy 2011-2015

The new FA National Game Strategy 2011-15 details the importance and significance that small sided football's growth and continued development can have on providing local and flexible formats of football to suit changing consumer lifestyles. Small sided football encompasses both 5v5 football and Futsal along with other formats such as 4v4, 6v6, 7v7 and Beach Soccer. Each format provides a different football experience for the football consumer to participate in.

The National Game Strategy 2011-2015 again emphasises the role small sided football has in impacting upon 'Growth & Retention' objectives as well as achieving aims aligned to creating 'Better Players' through the wider outcomes of the Youth Development Review and the publication of the FA Future Game document for grassroots coaches. The strategy sets out the target of increasing adult small-sided teams from 28,370 to 30,000 (5.75% increase) as well as contributing to the growth of adult football by 150,000 new participants playing football once a week. The FA will also continue to lead on affiliating and developing football in the commercial small-sided sector.

By sharing knowledge and ideas amongst key stakeholders within small sided football we can begin to fully understand new challenges ahead but also explore further opportunities that are available within small sided football that can begin to address key areas such as the youth drop-off of at ages 14-19 years. The flexible formats of the game along with other aspects of small sided football clearly appeal to young people and help to encourage them to remain within football. Once a young 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 or continue to enjoy small sided football on a recreational basis.

Small sided football has a leading role to play in supporting the FA's wider offer to children and young people within the educational setting. The flexibility and adaptability of this format of football makes them ideal for teachers and sports staff to utilise and establish structured or informal formats. Facility and playing field restrictions at schools, colleges and universities, along with 11 a-side pitches suffering from inclement weather or over use, means that small sided football can help to sustain and grow Intra and Inter-school teams as well as create a recreational offer through Intra-mural College and University small sided football.

Given the acknowledgement that small sided football receives within the FA National Game Strategy 2011-2015 and as this Good Practice Guide will further demonstrate, we are clearly entering a period where small sided football will continue to underline itself as a key component at all levels of the modern game within England. It is the responsibility of the FA and its many stakeholders to ensure that this established football sector will continue to 'develop football for everyone' in a quality assured environment. This includes supporting the many thousands of people who already choose small sided football as their regular competitive or recreational commitment.

By continuing to 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 within the National Game.

**Simon Walker**  
National Manager - Adult Grassroots Football  
The Football Association



# East Riding FA

## Hull and East Yorkshire SSF World Cup



### Objective

The Hull and East Yorkshire World Cup was developed to provide a multi cultural celebration that showcased the multi ethnic nature of the city of Hull and the surrounding area. The event successfully secured third party funding to provide local residents with access to organised football at high quality local facilities. The aim of the project was to use football to aid integration and to embrace the wide variety of cultures, religions and customs in the local area. The competition was intended to promote active participation through football and to encourage community cohesion. By working collaboratively a number of agencies were able to develop activity, maximise resources and deliver mutually beneficial outcomes.

### Delivery

The Hull and East Yorkshire World Cup was a significant SSF project that required extensive partnership working to successfully coordinate the intended activity. A steering group was established and this was used to plan and develop ideas. The Get into Football programme along with the East Riding County FA played a crucial role in helping to shape and influence the project's intended outcomes as well as the long-term benefits to community based football development. This included planning, formatting and managing the football side of the event but also ensuring inclusiveness was at the heart of all the projects actions.

### Outcomes

Over 200 players participated, representing 32 different national teams that have communities within the region. All players were given a high quality SSF experience as well as the necessary information to inform them of the local based football opportunities available to them through the Get Into Football programme and East Riding FA. These players were also supported by hundreds of spectators who turned up to watch the football and experience the multi cultural entertainment on offer.

The Goodwin World Cup also helped to identify some new volunteers. Two of these, both students at the University of Hull, have now been recruited as FA Mars Just Play Coordinators and have now started facilitating weekly football sessions across the university campus. As a further development both volunteers have been registered for 'Football Futures' the FA's volunteer development programme for young people and will now be able to access further support and mentoring.

By promoting the potential links between SSF and 11v11 East Riding FA have supported the Ghanaian and Kurdish teams to develop their own 11-a-side teams which now participate in affiliated local football on a weekly basis. This outcome clearly demonstrates how SSF can be a gateway for those participants on the fringes of affiliated football to be encouraged to commit to regular football participation.

### Problems Encountered and Solutions

Given the diverse backgrounds of participants within these local communities there were a number of barriers to acknowledge and overcome when developing this activity. For many community groups cost was a key issue. This was overcome by securing a range of third party investment which enabled kits and equipment to be provided. Another key issue was how to effectively communicate to such a diverse range of groups and nationalities. By working with key partners we were able to use specialist knowledge and skills to deliver key messages and information that could be effectively communicated through the power of football.

### Partnerships Developed

Through delivering this pilot project it has enabled East Riding FA and the Get Into Football Officer to foster key partnerships throughout the region which will continue to enable more participants from various communities to access SSF opportunities.

Goodwin Development Trust  
Humber All Nations Alliance  
Bonus Arena  
Humberside Police  
University of Hull  
Humber Sports Partnership

### The Future – What Happens Next?

In line with the FA National Strategy 2011-15 a key focus of the Get into Football programme is the Growth and Retention of adult players. An application was successfully submitted to the FA Small Sided Development Fund to secure investment to develop a weekly small sided league. This development will provide and deliver significant increases in SSF participation by offering regular football playing opportunities as part of an affiliated league. It is hoped that this activity will encourage players to remain within affiliated football and may be a stepping stone towards 11-a-side football involvement. The small sided league will be developed in partnership with a range of key partners and will provide access to coach development and further playing opportunities. The legacy of the Hull and East Yorkshire SSF World Cup will be a structured and affiliated SSF league which will be delivered in partnership with a commercial SSF provider to ensure that all participants will begin to understand the dynamics and environment that this format of the game offers. All members of the steering group are committed to ensure that community cohesion and development can be promoted and sustained through the projects outcomes.



# FA SSF Development Fund

## The Willows Sports Centre Adult Futsal Leagues

### Objective

Following a successful application to the FA SSF Development Fund the Willows Sports Centre were committed to developing a project which would see the launch of Futsal being played within Derby amongst adult male participants. Prior consultation with the Get Into Football Officer for Derby City Council enabled a proposal to be brought to life in the form of developing a series of weekly adult Futsal leagues. The Willows Sports Centre saw an opportunity to expand upon their current SSF provision and introduce Futsal which could offer an alternative to 5v5 and would complement their indoor venue.

### Delivery

Through market research the centre had identified a gap in the SSF market within Derby that they wanted to fully embrace by being the pioneers for developing an affiliated adult Futsal league in the city. A strategic marketing plan was established that would reinforce the benefits and differences in playing Futsal as opposed to traditional SSF. This was put into action throughout the city via various local media channels with the end result being a series of Futsal tournaments and taster events. At these events the Willows Sports Centre were able to provide support for those teams that were new to the game and also as a direct result recruit new teams to sign-up to the first weekly league. By linking in with the support of the GIFO they were able to undertake partnership meetings with Derbyshire FA, Derby Council, Derby City FC and The University of Derby University which provided valuable marketing and promotional opportunities.

### Outcomes

The Willows Sports Centre have developed a series of Adult Futsal league competitions throughout the week that have currently engaged over 150 new participants and created 24 new Futsal teams over three leagues. This growth has been driven through providing an affordable alternative to other forms of recreational small sided football but also ensuring that all players are provided with a quality experience.

As part of the league development a FA Futsal Referees Course was delivered and this has produced 12 new Futsal Referees that are developing their skills within the leagues themselves. Further outcomes which have directly impacted on the emerging Futsal landscape have been as a result of a desire to see Futsal really embed itself within the city. The University of Derby have developed a Futsal team that now regularly competes in the British University Colleges Sport competition and train at the Willows Sports Centre. Added to this Team Derby Futsal Club have emerged to become part of the FA National Futsal League Division 2.

### Problems Encountered and Solutions

Being an experienced SSF provider The Willows Sports Centre were able to ensure that all areas concerning league development and administration could fit within their existing operations. The biggest challenge was ensuring that the marketing materials that were produced were able to have an impact on a potential market that have had limited exposure to Futsal. By working in close co-ordination with the GIFO and the SSF Development Fund Manager they were able to create resources and promotional features that would inform and educate.



Giving new teams a period of time to become introduced and familiar with the rules and regulations of Futsal it also ensured that there were no potential challenges with team retention when the league was underway. Once it became clear that there were varying abilities in playing levels the league co-ordinators were able to create a tiered divisional model for the leagues.

Due to a lack of qualified Futsal referees the Willows Sports Centre organised alongside Derbyshire FA a Futsal Referees Course. These referees have been mentored and integrated into all of the league programmes and have been a key part of educating new teams and ensuring the league runs effectively.

### Partnerships Developed

In applying for the FA SSF Development Fund the Willows Sports Centre have actively engaged with both Derbyshire FA and the Get Into Football Officer for Derby. Both partnerships have ensured that the centre have received the appropriate advice and guidance about establishing their adult Futsal Leagues.

By leading on the development of Futsal locally Willows Sports Centre have provided some joint outcomes through working with The University of Derby and Derby City FC and opening up their facility for Futsal specific bookings and events. All of this partnership work will significantly impact on the long term growth of Futsal in the city.

### The Future – What Happens Next?

The priority for the Willows Sports Centre will be to ensure that they can sustain the current levels of demand for their leagues to grow and embed themselves – this will include reviewing how the facility can service new leagues on different days of the week. Due to the phenomenal success in supporting Futsal development in Derby it will be necessary to ensure that where opportunities exist to offer exit routes to players, teams and referees into national FA Futsal programmes then these will be explored with the support of Derbyshire FA and the Get Into Football Officer.

# Pitch Invasion

## Small Sided Football Accreditation



### Objective

Since the inception of the FA Charter Standard programme the FA has embraced the role quality assurance can play in the provision of grassroots football. The Football Association has taken that a step further by introducing a new accreditation scheme for Small Sided Football. The concept behind the FA Small Sided Football Accreditation Scheme underpins the FA's philosophy and National Game Strategy on Raising Standards within all levels and forms of the game.

The FA Small Sided Football Accreditation scheme is intended to reward and recognise excellence in the industry but to also assist organisations in raising standards and developing the quality of their Small Sided Football business structures. This will not only benefit Small Sided Football organisations, but will also help to raise the quality of the football experience and provision for the customer (i.e. the grassroots football player).

### Delivery

The FA SSF Accreditation was launched in September 2011, and towards the end of year the FA was delighted to celebrate the achievements of Pitch Invasion who were given the honour of being the first Small Sided Football organisation in the country to have successfully been granted the prestigious FA Small Sided Football Accreditation. In obtaining the award, Pitch Invasion have set the bar by being the first FA affiliated small sided provider to attain this award.

The Hampshire based football provider was established in 1998 and currently operates in excess of ninety Small Sided Football leagues to approximately 20,000 players across the country every week. Pitch Invasion currently provide a range of adult leagues based on 5v5, 6v6, and 7v7 formats of the small sided game and in their short history have formed collaborative relationships with both the FA and a number of County FA's.



Pitch Invasion have had to prove the high quality of their Small Sided Football operations to The FA through an extensive assessment and quality assurance process, in which all elements of Pitch Invasion's business were examined and scrutinised. A range of methods were used by an external assessor in order to gather evidence against the accreditation;

A self-assessment application was completed by the provider. Fifteen visits were conducted on the providers sites based on the criteria. A Head Office visit was conducted to view all operational documents and evidence was duly collated. The website and social media platforms were also reviewed. This valuable information then formed the basis of an assessment report with areas of good practice highlighted and recommendations made to the FA Small Sided Football Committee for approval.

### The Future – What Happens Next?

The FA Small Sided Football Accreditation has been aligned to other industry leading quality assurance kitemarks to ensure rigour and integrity. This helps to ensure that the Accreditation is fit-for-purpose and not only meets the football aspects but also the business elements in operating Small Sided Football provision in what is a rapidly evolving area of the national game.

The FA will continue to guide and lead the development of the small sided sector through encouraging more commercial small sided operations to undertake The FA Small Sided Football Accreditation. Goals Soccer Centres and Complete Football are the latest small sided providers that have demonstrated that they are committed to ensuring that all areas of the small sided game are being improved for the benefit of the industry but more importantly those players choosing to play this exciting format of the game.

# West Riding FA



## West Riding 5ives County Cup

### Objective

Following the development of the West Riding FA Small Sided Working Group which was established to create a forum for all commercial SSF providers within West Riding, a collective decision was made to plan and implement a unique SSF County Cup competition that could support the needs of the SSF providers and their local target market. Collectively, these strategic developments would ensure that the County FA could harbour and strengthen positive relationships with the sector on a number of levels. Establishing the event would also allow West Riding FA to promote a positive relationship between SSF and 11v11.

### Delivery

The West Riding FA SSF Working Group conduct meetings on a quarterly basis and discuss key initiatives and ideas around developing Small Sided Football. The meeting focuses on a number of areas, including affiliation, discipline, access to funding, increasing the number of teams playing within leagues, links with education establishments/local 11-a-side leagues, updates from the CFA's Small Sided Committee and how as a County FA work could be undertaken to create a benefits/membership package for those leagues that are established within the West Riding area. One of the key outcomes of the Working Group was the establishment of a County FA led SSF event.

The West Riding 5ives County Cup was delivered for the very first time during the off season of 2010 and brought together seven SSF commercial providers who worked in partnership to support and advise West Riding FA on the most appropriate format. Hosting the tournament at the West Riding FA Headquarters was key in showing an open and inclusive relationship with all of the SSF providers and teams that were successful in being recruited into the event.

### Outcomes

By engaging with local SSF providers from the outset they were each given the option of running pre-qualifying tournaments to determine their representative teams or through a nomination process of selecting from their league winners from across various league programmes. Being flexible enabled each provider who may have a variety of league programmes and small sided football formats to actively be part of the event planning process.

Throughout the one-day tournament a total of 13 men's small sided teams in took part in the competition. This was the culmination of seven small sided football providers submitting representative teams. A large emphasis was placed on providing a quality experience for all of the teams taking part to try and create a profile for what is planned on becoming an annual small sided event which will grow in capacity year on year.

All referees were recruited by the County FA through working alongside the West Riding FA Referee Development offer who was able to identify those officials that had experience within small sided football at a local and national level.

Teams were placed in groups formats on the day. Following on from the group fixtures, the top 4 teams from each of group then progressed onto the quarter-finals, semi-finals and overall finalists. This ensured that all of the teams had an extended amount of playing time throughout the day and that players were guaranteed to get a positive playing experience against a number of teams from throughout the region.

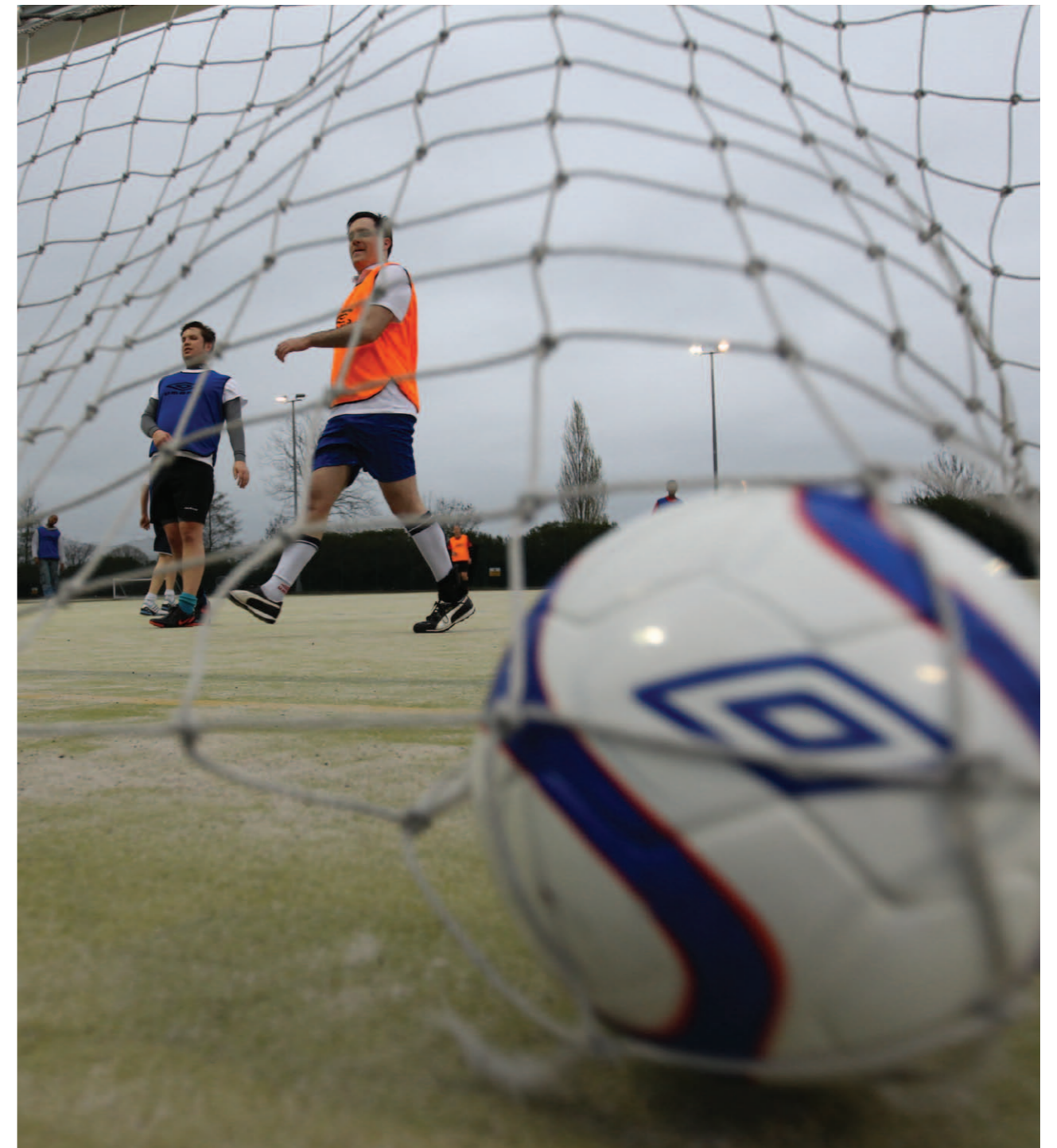
### Problems Encountered and Solutions

On reflection the timing of the competition could have been staged during a different period of the out of football season window. Through consulting with a number of the teams and the SSF providers it was discovered that the event clashed with pre-season training for many 11-a-side teams. The timing of the event also presented some challenges with the amount of turnaround there was for SSF providers to deliver their pre-qualifying events. By actively working with all of the SSF providers through the SSF Working Group the necessary changes can be made for the West Riding 5ives County Cup 2012.

### Partnerships Developed

The strategic outcome of the West Riding 5ives County Cup was to provide an annual event that would maintain positive relationships with the following nationally and locally affiliating commercial small sided football providers –

Goals Soccer Centre  
Champion Soccer  
Football Evolution  
Striker Leagues  
Leeds Soccer City



### The Future – What Happens Next?

The strategic lessons learned from delivering the West Riding 5ives County Cup have provided a platform for growing the competition on an annual basis which will enable a growing number of small sided football providers within West Riding to value their involvement in both the West Riding FA SSF Working Group and the event itself. By continuing to invest in building positive relationships with commercial small sided football providers it will ultimately impact on the number of affiliated SSF teams within the county but also increase participation for those players that wish to take place in a structured and high profile SSF event.

# FA SSF Development Fund

## Paignton Community Sports College SSF Leagues

### Objective

The project would create a unique Small Sided Football Hub site that would increase the number of teams and players playing small sided football in the local community which would begin to address the identified drop out in the adult 11v11 game. The project would also offer provision for ladies small sided football in South Devon where research undertaken had identified a lack of SSF opportunities for adult female players. By developing an adult Futsal League there was a dual outcome of educating new players about this format of SSF as well as providing a local opportunity to play.

With the large number of post-16 colleges in the area, the league would aim to provide new opportunities for these students. In addition it was identified that there was no specific small sided Veterans league in Devon. The project also aimed to provide 35 years+ veterans small sided football to keep more players in the game.

### Delivery

Through the funding received from the FA SSF Development Fund Paignton Community Sports College were able to bring to life a comprehensive SSF league programme that could drive new participation across a number of SSF formats and cater for some of the most challenging target groups. The project was able to utilise the fantastic college facilities to maximise the profile and experience of SSF and Futsal leagues that were on offer to the local community.

A strategic marketing plan was developed to ensure that local media, Devon FA, Active Devon, Torbay Sports Council and a host of 6th Form Colleges could drive the awareness and support team recruitment. On the back of a successful marketing campaign an Adult Men's Futsal League, a Women's Futsal League and a Vets 7v7 League have been created and run on a back to back seasonal basis.

### Outcomes

The Paignton Community College SSF Leagues have delivered a substantial increase in the number of affiliated SSF teams and participants which has continued to promote the college as a key site for SSF activity and development. Across all league formats the project has reached over 450 new participants and generated 26 new teams (16 adult male and 10 adult female).

The project is currently in its second season of league delivery and is on course to develop the number of league teams even further. A wider outcome has been the development and training of a pool of FA Futsal Referees through the support of the Referee Development Officer at Devon FA. The project has also enabled Devon FA to support the delivery of county-wide tournament events with the delivery of the Devon Women's Futsal Championships and the Devon Men's Futsal Championships.

### Problems Encountered and Solutions

The main challenges addressed initially centred around the education and awareness of Futsal amongst the local community and being able to generate an acceptance of this format of SSF. In order to overcome this it was important to deliver a series of taster sessions whereby interested teams were invited to take part in some practice games and receive some further guidance from the Football Development Officer based at Paignton Community College.

Due to Futsal being a new game to the local region there were challenges in sourcing a referee workforce. An FA Futsal Referees course was delivered to ensure that the leagues had access to high quality referees who were capable of supporting the educational needs of the players and coaches. These referees could also gain further experience in further Futsal specific events delivered by Devon FA with exit routes for progression into FA competitions.



Paignton Community  
& Sports College

### Partnerships Developed

The project's initial success in creating an impressive surge in SSF participation has been underpinned by the effective partnership work between Devon County FA, Torbay Sports Partnership and Active Devon. These networks have provided valuable support and advice in ensuring that Paignton Community College could access their target market effectively and that more importantly there was a full endorsement of the project outcomes. More local based partnerships with neighbouring 6th form colleges have enabled the Football Development Officer at Paignton Community College to signpost new players to commit to a weekly SSF programme outside of college hours and integrate adults 16 years+ male and females who do not play in a club environment.

### The Future – What Happens Next?

Ensuring the project continues to be a commercially viable programme that can support itself to grow provision and maintain high standards are the immediate priorities for the Paignton Community College SSF Leagues project. By reviewing the business model and investing in further marketing and promotion it will ensure that new teams and participants can be added to the league programmes as well as retaining the current teams. A medium term aim will be to ensure that there is an overriding county-wide adult Futsal competition supported by Devon FA that can deliver upon further profile to Futsal throughout the region and a unique playing experience for the teams and referees involved.



## Female 7's SSF League

### Objective

To undertake a structured SSF project that can inform Essex FA with insight around the best delivery model for providing adult females with an alternative format of football. Research has demonstrated that adult females participation within SSF is not as popular and accessible as the male SSF game. This project would engage with females that are new to the game as well as those that have previously come from the 11v11 game. By working closely with the participants we wished to provide a safe and non-pressurised environment where participants are able to learn and develop at their own pace.

### Delivery

Delivery of the Essex FA Female 7's League began back in 2008 where the concept of the project was established and a recreational format was devised with 5 teams from the outset. To date there have been seven seasons delivered and the programme has grown to include eleven SSF teams from across the County.

The delivery model is based around running two four month seasons each year (Autumn / Winter and Spring). During these seasons Essex FA co-ordinate one women's SSF event per month. As part of this format the teams involved are not obliged to attend each event. However, all points generated at each event go towards an overall league table. This helps to promote retention and long-term commitment from the players and teams. A Fair Play system is also embedded into the programme to ensure that teams are respectful of one another. The cost to join the league is minimal and there is an additional cost for each league event that teams attend. New teams that wish to commit to joining the league have the added incentive of a receiving a free Umbro Kit.

### Outcomes

Since 2008 the Essex FA Women's 7's league has engaged with over 200 females. A high percentage of these teams have been retained and currently the league has 11 SSF teams regularly taking part with 110 participants. Over the duration of the project 21 SSF teams have taken part which represents a significant impact on the growing the SSF format of the women's game within Essex. Also, the league caters for a wide age range of participants. 16 – 20 years (22%), 21 – 25 years (23%), 26 – 30 years (24%), 31 – 35 years (12%), 36 – 40 years (13%), 41 – 45 years (5%). This represents a diverse breakdown but ensures that the league caters for a range of player needs.

Through consulting with the players on a regular basis Essex FA discovered that 81% of participants classed their 7's league team as the only team they play for with 71% having played 11v11 football previously. Seven of the teams were created via the work Essex FA have lead around delivering women's 'Get into Football' sessions around the County. Two of the teams were established from community groups whilst other teams were current or ex-11v11 teams.

By working closely with Essex FA registered referee's it was discovered that they played a significant part in introducing the new players to the game. Using the same referees each time helped to build a good rapport and sense of trust with the female participants.

Three teams have used the Essex FA 7's league as a platform to engage players back into 11v11 football. The 7's league also acted as a safety net for three 11v11 teams who no longer had enough players to play league football and wanted to keep their players together.

Through actively seeking a funding partnership with the London Southbank University and the Big Lottery scheme Essex FA have been successful in providing a number of female participants with free FA Level 1 Coaching course. To date up to five females have successfully undertaken their FA Level 1 in Coaching Football and it will be the intention to offer this opportunity again in 2012.

A further compelling outcome has been that two female participants have progressed into managing an 11v11 team because of their experience in running a 7's league team in the Essex FA programme.

### Problems Encountered and Solutions

By ensuring regular contact and consultation at every stage of the project with the teams and participants Essex FA have enabled the teams to have an ownership of the league and value their participation. This has led Essex FA to review and consistently look at ways to improve the programme to suit the needs of the participants. Essex FA offer a flexible approach to those teams that take part and as a result revising the format accordingly ensure that Essex FA continue to attract and sustain the number of teams involved in the programme.



### Partnerships Developed

The most valuable partnership that Essex FA has built up is with the teams themselves. Maintaining a strong relationship with the teams enables the County to support their needs in other developmental areas such as 11v11 progression, recruiting new players and funding opportunities.

Ensuring a positive and collaborative relationship with the small sided provider that hosts the league events has been crucial to ensuring that Essex FA can offer consistency and accessibility to all of the teams that participate on a regular basis.

Essex FA have enhanced their relationship with the Essex County Women's League who notify the league co-ordinators of any teams that may be struggling so that they can be offered a small sided format. A two-way relationship with the league ensures that those teams want to move up to 11v11 football can do this in a straightforward manner.

### The Future – What happens next?

The main priority is to continue to offer the league to those females that want an alternative format of football. Essex FA will also continue to help to develop teams that can potentially progress into the 11v11 game and to also support those coming out of the 11v11 game so that they can be retained within the women's game.

Essex FA will continue to use the 7's League as a tool for engaging with community groups and when delivering further 'Get into Football' sessions. The league is often the first form of structured competition that these groups will experience so it is vitally important that the league serves to be an educational tool for these hard to reach players.

MAP LADIES FC

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# FA SSF Development Fund

## Durham FA 'Every Player Counts' SSF Programme



### Objective

Through applying to the FA SSF Development Fund Durham FA established the Every Player Counts programme to use small sided football to target groups and services for participants predominantly with learning disabilities, but also with physical or sensory disabilities. By developing a programme of coaching and SSF playing opportunities, the increased levels of activity would support reducing anxiety, depression and negative mood and ultimately contribute to an improved quality of life for individuals involved in the programme.

Through working with the professional clubs in County Durham and utilising their experienced coaching and development staff to work with local disability care services, the project has introduced small sided football to service users who may not normally have the opportunities to play football or undertake regular exercise. By creating a committed player and team base through care services across County Durham a regular central venue league for service users has been established.

### Delivery

Following the establishment of an overriding Project Working Group the program began with 3-4 weeks of coaching for the service users to develop their understanding and establish a routine to allow them to feel comfortable and confident enough to play regularly. A launch festival was delivered to support the joined up working between services across the county before the initial mini-league fixtures were due to be delivered. Following meetings with the service providers it was agreed to have mini-regions within County Durham who play at fixed venues on a weekly basis to reduce travel costs but also provide familiarity and routine for those with greater mental disabilities.

Provision of kit and equipment so the services can continue to offer football for all their members was factored into the support that was offered to all of the project partners by the Durham FA Disability Football Development Officer. It was also essential to provide training and support to qualify coaches and referees to support the long-term development of the league. Durham FA were successful in applying for further funding through the Tony Blair Foundation to meet the costs of these training needs.

### Outcomes

Whilst the project is still in its infancy given the long-term aspirations, the localised venues has proven to be a very successful model to increase participation of disabled people in small sided football formats across the county. Within the five established local programmes there are now in excess of 180 participants playing on a regular basis across a variety of ability and impairment levels. This has helped to establish a total of 20 new SSF teams with a further capacity to grow as each of the local leagues becomes further established and more outreach support and coaching provision is provided to new participants.

The effective collaboration between Durham FA, Sunderland FC, Hartlepool FC and a host of local authorities and care service providers has ensured that this project has delivered a series of strategic outcomes for all partners, not to mention a commitment to a quality assured programme of small sided football coaching and delivery that each partner has driven.

### Problems Encountered and Solutions

Co-ordination of such a wide reaching programme of activity and the host of prospective partners who have all had a role to play in the project's planning and delivery has been a significant challenge in itself. Ensuring that the coaching sessions and launch event could all be delivered with the maximum output and profile was essential for ensuring that the project got off to a positive start and all stakeholders remained fully engaged. This strategic overview has been lead by Durham FA through the expertise and skills of their Disability Football Development Officer. Ensuring that the project had a clear vision which could be communicated and supported through the Project Working Group was essential, as well as gaining expert advice and support from those partners who were supporting the needs of the participants to get them to attend the football sessions.

Where challenges have initially arisen with low numbers attending some of the SSF coaching sessions it has been important to give the programme time to establish and not proceed into the league format until all participants were ready. This has been carefully managed by the Durham FA Disability Football Development Officer.



### Partnerships Developed

Meaningful partnerships have in essence been one of the many positive outcomes of this project and Durham FA have been supported through key relationships with:

Darlington, Hartlepool, Sunderland and Gateshead Councils  
Hartlepool United CSF  
County Durham Sport  
Tees Valley Sport  
Sunderland AFC Foundation  
Sunderland Council Youth Services  
The Tony Blair Foundation  
County Durham Community Foundation

### The Future – What happens next?

The Durham FA 'Every Player Counts' SSF programme will continue to provide central venue SSF leagues throughout the region on a long-term basis to ensure that there can be a regular provision for new players with learning and sensory disabilities to participate at their chosen level. The next steps will be to explore the exit routes for some of these players to be integrated into the NE Ability Counts League. Through developing new teams this project can directly impact on the number of new clubs that join the league over the coming season.

# Manchester FA



## The Manchester College Intra-Mural SSF League

### Objective

The Manchester College Intra-Mural SSF leagues have grown new small sided teams through a recreational SSF offer that targets players aged 16-19 years across a multi-campus site. By providing for students that are not currently engaged through the college's own football academy it has enabled access to regular, structured and competitive SSF opportunities. A further underlying aim was to ensure high standards of behaviour were maintained in the league and this has been embedded by trialling a 'Respect' League throughout the programme. In order to provide workforce opportunities for Young Leaders (YL's) the Manchester College have created a Football Futures SSF workforce programme.

### Delivery

The league was developed off the back of a series of informal intra-mural tournaments delivered by the College & Community Football Coordinator (CCFC) to enable a greater understanding of the target market needs and playing trends. The CCFC devised a marketing programme to promote SSF opportunities through posters displayed internally, through the college website, and through word of mouth by the CCFC and YL's. Throughout the 2010/11 academic year three seasons were delivered, with the YL's taking further ownership of the league operations and delivery. A league website was also set up as a point of contact for teams, to display fixtures, results and league tables. This helped to promote interaction with all of the league participants and resolve issues around team retention.

### Outcomes

A total of 80 male participants were engaged through delivering a six team 6v6 small sided competition. The league also provided workforce opportunities for several students with two female and eight male YL's supporting delivery throughout. In order to make the programme self-sufficient seven YL's (1 female and 6 male) also achieved the FA Small Sided Referees qualification following their voluntary involvement in the league.

The league, which was hosted on the Nicholls Campus of The Manchester College was the first structured intra mural competition which actively engaged students from across three campuses. The league also linked in closely to Ardwick FC, an FA Charter Standard Club with both open age and under 17 provision. This allowed for a clear pathway to be developed into a local community club. A co-ordinated club links programme with the club supported nine participants from the

league join and train regularly with the team and ensured that they had a quality 11v11 experience out of college hours.

### Problems Encountered and Solutions

The difference in ability levels of teams was a challenge that had to be managed to prevent players being disengaged and having a negative playing experience. Initially the league was set up in a 5v5 format with 50 minute games. This ultimately led to heavy defeats for certain teams due to difference in ability levels of teams. By actively consulting with teams and Young Leaders a decision was reached to adjust the format to 6v6, with 2x 20 minute games being played back to back each week. By adopting more flexible formats to cater for the players needs it ensured that the students remained engaged and committed to the league.

### Partnerships Developed

By working with Manchester FA the CCFC was able to set-up a joint partnership with Ardwick FC. As a result of this a number of players have made the transition from the college activity to an FA Charter Standard club off the back of the intra-mural league and further SSF programmes delivered at The Manchester College.

At an early stage the CCFC explored a potential partnership with the local SSF provider Powerleague. The first outcome of this partnership was the successful delivery of an FA Small Sided Referees course. This has resulted in 10 newly qualified referees being fully trained and now linked into the pool of referees that have benefitted from employment opportunities with Powerleague.

### Future Plans – What happens next?

The partnership with Powerleague has been developed even further through a joint programme whereby Powerleague are now successfully running an out of college hours student league alongside The Manchester College. The greater capacity of the pitches at Powerleague has allowed for further teams to participate in the Intra-Mural League and for it to grow to 12 teams regularly competing. Furthermore, Young Leaders that have been signed up to the FA Football Futures programme will be able to access direct opportunities through Powerleague with the potential for paid work in the future. By working effectively with Powerleague it has also enabled further benefits such as student memberships which are designed to ensure participants are retained within SSF.





# Sheffield FA

## Adult Futsal Sessions



### Objective

By obtaining a funding award through the Sport England Sportivate grant scheme Sheffield FA have targeted the adult 16 year plus age group to become involved and have the opportunity of learning about the key fundamentals of Futsal. The intention of the programme was to increase the playing opportunities for a new generation of Futsal players. By working effectively with Sheffield FC Futsal club, University of Sheffield, Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield College and a number of post-16 schools Sheffield FA could ensure that the programme had a wide target audience to engage with and through joint delivery the programme would become sustainable. The programme would be focussed on providing Futsal coaching and games which would ultimately link into an FA Futsal Fives league. Sheffield FA also ensured that there would be a talent exit route for the better players to link in to Sheffield FC Futsal club and their development squads.

### Delivery

A series of 6-8 week sessions were held in accessible venues across four areas of Sheffield - North, South, East and West. Each session was delivered by qualified Futsal coaches who were tasked with educating and providing a positive environment for players to demonstrate their playing ability. The sessions were tailored to supporting individuals attending and the coaches being flexible in creating Futsal teams that could participate in the practical activities. Ensuring that Sheffield FC Futsal club were present at the sessions has ultimately enabled players to recognise that there are wider Futsal opportunities to explore in the city of Sheffield. By targeting 60 participants and understanding their thoughts around the game of Futsal and playing habits Sheffield FA will explore the opportunity to roll out a similar delivery model for girls/women to expand their Futsal schemes across other regions within the County FA.

### Outcomes

Increasing the opportunities for a challenging target to embrace a different form of small-sided football has ultimately become the most successful outcome of delivering this project. By learning new skills and becoming physically active the participants that were mostly outside of the traditional football

family have been integrated into Sheffield FA driven Futsal programmes. By incorporating a Futsal competition at the end of the coaching programme it has ensured that players have remained motivated throughout and has also seen those teams become interested playing in regular organised local Futsal leagues. Sheffield FA are also fortunate to have a successful partnership with Sheffield FC Futsal Club whereby talented players can be signposted into development squads where they can continue to develop their understanding of the game and potentially become players with the club's first team.

### Problems Encountered and Solutions

The main problem has been locating suitable facilities that will help give players the best sense of what Futsal is all about. The vast majority of facilities presented challenges with delivering the project in a sustainable format that could have prevented a barrier to getting the programme off the ground. By negotiating with the main facility supplier in the area and coming to an agreement for the use of facilities Sheffield FA have demonstrated that the project could have longer term prospects for the game growing within Sheffield and therefore the need for access to facilities on a regular basis.

### Partnerships Developed

Funding from Sport England's Sportivate programme via South Yorkshire Sport. Working with a number of key partners was the key enabler in allowing this project to be undertaken. Adopting a collaborative approach with the following partners will ensure that this project can be fully sustained over a long-term basis and build upon this early intervention work and support the local needs of Sheffield FC Futsal Club, Sheffield Hallam University, University of Sheffield, Sheffield College and Sheffield and Hallamshire FC.

### Future Plans – What happens next?

The aim is to establish a sustainable Adult Male Futsal League in South Yorkshire that will give players the opportunity to play recreational Futsal on a regular basis. This will enable Sheffield FA to actively shape the adult Futsal offer throughout the region. By exploring further funding opportunities Sheffield FA will adopt a similar process of targeting Female Adult players with the aim of establishing a Female Futsal League within Sheffield.

# FA SSF Development Fund



## Goals Soccer Centre Leeds 16-22 Years SSF Leagues

### Objective

The project was seeking to create a model for capturing a large male youth market within the city of Leeds and provide an entry point into small-sided football through delivering a 5v5 league that would progress into a 7v7 league prior to offering exit routes into local Charter Standard Youth and Adult clubs. The target groups were primarily students from Leeds City College as well as players that were involved in informal football programmes with community agencies based in close proximity to the Goals Soccer Centre. A specific focus was given to participants that were not engaged in any format of football. The project would also include a programme of Coach Education for selected participants to be enrolled on an FA Level 1 in Coaching Football. This educational opportunity would provide an employment link at the Goals Soccer Centre.

### Delivery

A key priority for the project was ensuring that the marketing of the programme was specific to the target group and communicated a flexible offer that would be attractive to their playing needs and accessible in terms of the cost of joining the programme. A significant amount of consultation was carried out between the project partners – Goals Soccer Centre, West Riding FA, Get Into Football Officer (Leeds) and the College and Community Football Co-ordinator at Leeds City College. This ensured that the relevant networks were identified at an early stage but also that the timing of the league delivery was suitable for the target audience. Having a direct access into a significant student target audience was key to the success of the project and this was facilitated effectively via the CCFC alongside the GIFO who provided support to a number of community agencies that wished to signpost participants from their outreach programmes.

### Outcomes

The 16-22 years male 5v5 leagues have delivered two seasons and have progressed into two further 7v7 leagues with a total of 16 teams competing on a weekly basis. Over the 12 months of the initial FA SSF Development Fund Project a total of 215 participants have been engaged through the project with 4 new teams being formed to compete in additional SSF leagues that are hosted at the Goals Soccer Centre. Work continues to provide further exit routes into 11v11 football through the direction and support of the GIFO. Having delivered the Coach Education element of the project to 25 students there now follows a period of mentoring and training to ensure that a selected number of candidates now progress into coaching programmes delivered at the Goals Soccer Centre as an employment outcome. Candidates will also be integrated to support the CCFC at Leeds City College and the GIFO in delivering further external projects.

### Problems Encountered and Solutions

Providing a SSF programme that would be engaging for a challenging target group was the first initial barrier to overcome. By having flexibility in changing the format from 5v5 to 7v7 the players were able to see a progression. This was also supplemented with one-off cup competitions at the start, during and end of the league seasons. Weekly attendance and team retention during the season was also a frequent challenge due to difficulties with teams communicating with Goals Soccer Centre. Data capture and regular team briefings ensured that each team were aware of their responsibilities and were educated around the terms and conditions they can expect in competing in a commercial SSF league. Goals Soccer Centre also introduced weekend 'Player Passes' to allow those teams that were reliable and engaged the opportunity to continue their SSF playing experience in their free time.

### Partnerships Developed

The project's success continues to be driven by the interaction between Goals Soccer Centre, the CCFC, the GIFO (Leeds) and West Riding County FA. Communication and partnership development has ensured that the project needs have always been responded to efficiently in order to prevent a risk to the league delivery. A further additional element to this has been centred around the partnership with the teams, in that those that have effectively supported the programme with regular attendance and commitment have been able to benefit from an opportunity to proceed to enrol on Coach Education as well as access to the facility during their own free time.

### Future Plans – What happens next?

The primary aim for the project will be to continue to deliver the SSF leagues for this target group but also ensure that where there is an interest to engage with other formats of the game or join more competitive SSF leagues then these players can be supported. All project partners have benefitted from the insight into creating a youth model for SSF delivery and the continued partnership will ensure that new students that enrol at Leeds City College can be directly engaged into this established SSF league which will support their playing needs.



# Essex FA



## Thurrock 'Just Play' 6v6 Business League

### Objective

The Essex FA 'Just Play' Business League provides a flexible format of football for male participants who are 16 years plus to become involved in a structured small sided league that can cater for players who are unable to participate in weekend 11 a-side leagues. The ethos of the project is to ensure that these players can continue playing or get back in to playing through a small sided format that matches their day to day lifestyles and commitments. The programme will ensure that an affordable format of football can deliver on a high quality playing service in order to encourage participants to take exit routes to other formats of football. The programme has developed out of a number of Get into Football initiatives as well as the highly successful Just Play programme.

### Delivery

The first season of the Thurrock Just Play 6 a-side Business League was established in October 2011 as an initial pilot scheme to enable Essex FA to identify whether the programme matched the desired outcomes of a growing number of participants who had been engaged via recreational football opportunities. Ten teams were recruited and committed to attending the league on a weekly basis. Fixtures were based around 12 week season with teams playing each other twice. During the course of the season teams would play 30 minute matches charged at £20 per team per night. Essex FA took the decision to allow teams to register up to 15 players to enable flexibility and engage more participants. All league details including fixture, results and a league table were developed on the FA Full Time website. Essex FA also ensured that teams could be interacted with and recruited by marketing the Thurrock 'Just Play' 6v6 Business League via Get into Football Essex Facebook page but also by encouraging the local business community forums to be reached effectively.

### Outcomes

A number of co-ordinated turn up and play sessions were developed alongside the FA Just Play sessions which directly contributed to encouraging a greater number of males 16 years+ to get back to playing football. Establishing this informal basis for recreational football enabled players to grow in confidence and for Essex FA to understand their target market more closely.

This was followed up by directly targeting local businesses within Essex to establish a one-off tournament for these business teams to become familiar with the required level of commitment to progress into joining the official league. Ten business based teams and over 90 participants have since joined the Thurrock Just Play 6 a-side Business League which has demonstrated that the format and proposal has real interest from the local business community.

### Problems Encountered and Solutions

It has been necessary for Essex FA to produce guidance on the need for this to be a programme that is driven specifically via local businesses and their employees. Whilst there has been a certain amount of interest from other casual small sided teams it has been important that the principles of the league are maintained and that we support more businesses to become involved.

### Partnerships Developed

Moving forward with the programme Essex FA will seek to maintain an effective partnership with all of the local businesses that have currently committed to the league in order to ensure that they can support all their footballing needs – including the wider coach education, refereeing and volunteer initiatives that the County FA are responsible for. This role has primarily been undertaken by the Thurrock Just Play 6 a-side Business League Co-ordinator who is responsible for forming positive relationships with all of the teams and the players.

### The Future – What Happens Next?

As the Thurrock Just Play 6 a-side Business League develops it will be the intention to form a developmental relationship with the Thurrock Association Sunday League. By working in co-ordination with the league it will help to raise the profile of the competition amongst affiliated clubs as well as supporting the transition of players between the small sided and 11v11 format of the game. In order to keep the league programme fresh and engaging for all of the teams currently registered Essex FA will deliver an end of season tournament that will seek to provide extra incentives for new teams to join the league and subsequently expand the reach of the current league. Following the successful delivery of this first initiative Essex FA will also explore the viability of establishing a further small sided Business League in another region of the County.





## Kent FA



# Access and Inclusiveness of SSF Centres for Disability Football

### Objective

Kent FA have been focussed on providing greater awareness to commercial small sided football providers in order to improve and grow the opportunities to deliver Disability SSF events throughout the County. By undertaking a period of consultation with Play Football Gillingham, Kent FA sought to encourage and facilitate the delivery of a large scale disability football event at the Play Football site in Gillingham. The project was part of an on-going partnership that Kent FA has with Play Football across a number of football development initiatives that have been delivered successfully with this commercial small sided football provider.

### Delivery

By working alongside the management staff of Play Football, Kent FA were able to create a vision for the centre to be at the heart of disability football development within the County. The project was part of a joint initiative between Kent FA and Play Football whereby the County FA would offer support and advice to Play Football around the considerations that have to be undertaken when working with disability football providers to deliver a small sided football event. Play Football worked in partnership with the Kent FA Disability FDO and the host club Swanscombe Tigers FC to plan and deliver Round Two of the Kent Junior Disability League. This would enable Play Football to experience all elements that go into the providing an inclusive football event where wider considerations around the suitability of the venue and officials must be specific to the need of the players. This involved a site visit to review disabled access and several planning meetings with Play Football staff. The meetings were also used to brief referees as to the specific rules regarding disabled players as well as a meeting with the local press to create some positive publicity for the event.

### Outcomes

A total of 225 disabled players aged 8-16 took part in the Kent Junior Disability League event that was hosted at Play Football Gillingham. All of the teams that took part in the event were part of a number of affiliated junior football clubs from across the County. For many this initiative was their first experience of playing at a commercial small sided football centre.

In adopting this joint initiative with Kent FA, Play Football Gillingham have successfully undertaken a review of how their small sided football centre can be adapted to be more inclusive in their support of such events. This project has provided some collective learning outcomes for all of the project partners and has enabled a cohort of referees to undertake specific training for disability football provision.

### Problems Encountered and Solutions

The project has identified a number of key considerations that have to be recognised when delivering a small sided Disability Football event at a commercial small sided centre. By working side by side with Play Football, Kent FA were able to support them to overcome any potential problems and build a positive working relationship with the centre. The initial challenge with the lack of training of the referees was addressed by providing an informative workshop on Disability Football for the Play Football staff and referees.

### Partnerships Developed

Kent FA has been able to offer their expertise in the field of Disability Football to support the needs of Play Football Gillingham. This has further strengthened their relationship with the provider and will ensure that they continue to share good practice across all areas of small sided football development. Likewise, Play Football have been proactive in seeking to develop closer relationships with the disability football club network that exists within the region so that they can continue to provide their excellent facilities for the use of players and teams with a variety of needs.

### The Future – What happens next?

There are plans in place to hold future Disability football events at the venue. A further club from the Kent Junior Disability League intends to host their annual event at the venue in February 2012. The Kent FA are also confident in the service the venue provides and has booked the Champions Schools Cup disability football event for April 2012 which will raise the awareness of the venue amongst local special schools from across the County. Play Football also intend to train all their qualified referees in disability football as a commitment to being inclusive to all disabled participants and formats of disability football.

## Devon Schools Futsal Championships



### Objective

Develop a co-ordinated approach to raising the profile of Futsal within the education sector throughout Devon that can effectively lead to an established and sustainable competition structure for schools Futsal. By consulting with all education stakeholders provide the necessary support and guidance to staff, coaches and players in order for all parties to understand this format of small sided football. Create an annual competition structure that can directly link into the FA National Youth Futsal Festival.

### Delivery

By thoroughly researching potential target areas Devon FA then took steps to meet with all of the local School Games Organisers to discuss their thoughts and ideas around a potential competition structure that would engage secondary schools from Torbay, South Dartmoor and Plymouth. This was followed up by taking a lead role in delivering a series of teachers inset events in selected partnerships. This positive approach enabled all schools and teachers to have a direct insight into the reasons for integrating Futsal into the school games and PE offer. The basis of this training also allowed for teaching the rules of the game as well the necessary demands of officiating Futsal. From this stage of communication it enabled Devon FA to confirm venues, dates, times and formats of events and advertise to schools with relative ease. It also ensured that by working collectively with various partnerships transparency of dates in the lead up to a County Final day could be factored in and that generic rules and formats were adhered to. By engaging with the School Games Organiser and external Football Development Officers it ensured that the competition structure was manageable and participation was maximised.

### Outcomes

Given the joined up approach to the programmes delivery it helped to ensure that Devon FA could maximise the number of participants that took part across all of the local events that were delivered.

A total of 718 males at (U12, U14, U16 & U18)

A total of 366 females at (U12, U14, U16 & U18)

An on-going legacy of the programme and a positive outcome for the development of Futsal within the education sector in Devon is the fact that 36 teachers were engaged in the initial inset training programme. Devon FA will now work with this cohort of teachers to ensure that they can take the next step in their Futsal education by obtaining the FA Beginners Guide to Futsal Coaching Award.

The development of the competition structure also enabled Devon FA to activate 30 Young Leaders to become involved in officiating and event management responsibilities. These workforce members can now be retained for wider small sided football and Futsal events that will be delivered by Devon FA in the future.

### Problems Encountered and Solutions

Given that this was a new format of small sided football that Devon FA were trying to introduce in a challenging environment for the development of new competitions, all areas of the programme were well received. Initial challenges with the awareness of Futsal for both the teaching staff and pupils were overcome by providing an informative and interactive training programme. By ensuring that Schools Games Organisers were consulted with at the outset and specific target areas were researched thoroughly the quality of the competition was not undermined at this early stage. Challenges to overcome in the future will be around the availability of suitable facilities given the size of the current competition.

### Partnerships Developed

Delivering the Devon Schools Futsal Championships has enabled Devon FA to formalise a number of key partnerships within the education sector and clearly demonstrated that the County FA can be relied upon to lead on the development of accessible and high quality small sided competitions. Futsal will be used as a tool to continue the successful partnerships with PE Staff, Young Leaders, Community Football Leagues, the HE Education Sector and the development of the School Games Programme.

### The Future – What happens next?

Given the initial success of the Devon Schools Futsal Championships amongst players at secondary school ages, Devon FA will investigate the feasibility of introducing a Primary Schools U10 competition in 2012. In order to ensure that all Futsal competitions are inclusive to all regions of the County Devon FA will explore expanding the current secondary schools competition in East and North of the County.

As part of a wider football development programme Devon FA intend to work towards integrating Futsal into Charter Standard League Development Plans to offer an alternative to Mini Soccer over winter months and current evening youth leagues. Also a proportion of FA funding will be ring-fenced to deliver coaching sessions in schools and further support teachers in implementing Futsal into the Schools Games Programme.





# Summary

The FA Small Sided Football Good Practice Guide helps to recognise and acknowledge that small sided football will continue to drive football participation and customer engagement in England. The FA are confident that through the continued investment and knowledge sharing of their expertise in small sided football they can provide the necessary leadership to shape and raise standards that will deliver long term growth of small sided football.

Supporting key projects that can grow all formats of the game and add to the quality of our Get Into Football, Just Play, Umbro Fives and Vauxhall Youth programmes will ensure that small sided football is a key driver in delivering 'Football for Everyone'.

The FA Small Sided Football Good Practice Guide emphasises how delivery in partnership can enhance the way County FAs, commercial providers, schools, colleges and universities, local authorities and County Sports Partnerships deliver impactful and sustainable football programmes.

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

[TheFA.com/GetIntoFootball/Small-Sided-Football](https://www.thefa.com/GetIntoFootball/Small-Sided-Football)

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