NEWS RELEASE

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**SSE Wildcats Girls’ Football Centres from The FA**

**offer Derbyshire girls the chance to play**

SSE Wildcats Girls’ Football Centres from The FA will provide Derbyshiregirls aged 5-11 with regular opportunities to play football. The initiative offers organised sessions in a fun and engaging environment created exclusively for girls. More than 200 clubs have been established throughout England in 2017 and a further 800 are set to launch in 2018

SSE Wildcats Girls’ Football sessions take place on a weekly basis, either after school or at weekends, and provide a safe environment where girls can try football for the first time. SSE and The FA hope the initiative will inspire participants to engage with football, meet new friends, develop fundamental skills, learn new things and create the foundation for a lifelong love of football.

Sessions in Derbyshireinclude:

* **Chesterfield FC Community Trust:** Heritage High School, Clowne
* **Chesterfield School Sport Partnership:** Brookfield School, Chesterfield
* **Derwent Valley Junior League:** Various locations across the peak district
* **Heanor Town FC :** Heanor Town FC Ground, Heanor
* **Hilton Harriers FC:** Etwall Leisure Centre, Hilton
* **Long Eaton United:** Long Eaton United Ground, Long Eaton
* **Mickleover Sports Juniors FC:** Varsity Grange Sports Complex, Mickleover
* **High Peak School Sport Partnership:** Locations across the North and South of the High Peak
* **Pride Park Juniors & Ladies FC:** The Racecourse Steve Bloomer Pitch, Derby.
* **Sandiacre Town Youth FC:** Lees Brook School, Derby
* **SoccerstarsUK:** Delivery at Long Eaton School,
* **SoccerstarsUK:** Delivery at University of Derby
* **SoccerstarsUK:** Delivery at Chellaston Junior School
* **Stapenhill Swans JFC:** Blessed Robert Sutton School
* **Shardlow United FC:** Osmaston Park, Osmaston

**For further details, please visit the Derbyshire County FA website:** <http://www.derbyshirefa.com/players/youth/girls/wildcats>

Each SSE Wildcats Girls’ Football Centre will be run in conjunction with local County FAs and will utilise qualified coaches and local facilities.

Lauren Mellor, Football Development Officer (Youth & Education) at Derbyshire County FA, said “I started playing football at a similar age to a lot of the girls taking part in these sessions and that’s when my love of football began.

“It’s so important to encourage them to enjoy the game from a young age and SSE Wildcats provide a great resource for that. It’s fantastic to have sixteen SSE Wildcats Centres across Derbyshire and through this initiative; we hope to get as many girls playing football as possible.”

The initiative is in line with The FA’s Gameplan for Growth, with the target of doubling girls’ participation in the sport by 2020. The strategy for women’s and girls’ football at grassroots level includes initiatives alongside SSE Wildcats, such as FA Girls’ Football Week.

Kelly Simmons, FA Participation and Development Director, said: “Since the launch of SSE Wildcats we have seen great enthusiasm from the girls taking part to continue learning and playing football. The 200 existing clubs have proved a huge success and we are pleased to be able to considerably grow the size of the initiative in 2018, offering a much higher percentage of girls across the country the opportunity to enjoy football in a safe and inspiring environment.”

**-ENDS-**

**Notes to Editors:**

**About The Gameplan for Growth:**

The Gameplan for Growth details how The FA will double participation in the game by 2020, and create a sustainable and successful high performance system which will ensure England teams at every age group compete with distinction on the world stage.

**About *For All*:**

*For All* is the new brand purpose of The FA. For All champions the organisation’s provision and support of football for all people at all levels. The brand purpose will sit at the heart of The FA, internally and externally from a grassroots level right through to England’s 24 national teams.

**About SSE:**

SSE plc is one of the UK’s leading energy companies, involved in the generation, distribution and supply of electricity and in the extraction, storage, distribution and supply of gas. Its core purpose is to provide the energy people need in a reliable and sustainable way. It supplies energy to around 8.08 million energy customers throughout Great Britain and Ireland, is frequently ranked number one for customer service and is the UK’s leading generator of electricity from renewable sources. It became a Living Wage employer in September 2013 and was accredited with the Fair Tax Mark in October 2014.