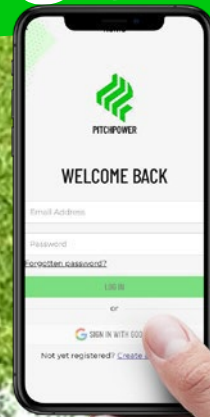




GRASS PITCH IMPROVEMENT GUIDE



GRASS PITCH REVOLUTION



Data from the grassroots football survey shows that the number one issue impacting the game according to players is the below standard quality of pitches. Currently 2 in 3 pitches nationwide are rated as 'poor'. This poor quality of pitch not only leads to a poor quality playing experience, but also forces 150,000 postponements each season.

The FA, the Football Foundation and the Grounds Management Association (GMA) are working together to revolutionise the state of pitches across England, ensuring that by 2030, grassroots football has 20,000 'good' quality pitches to enjoy. The Football Foundation's revolutionary web-app PitchPower will be the driving force behind the pitch improvement programme. By partnering with the GMA, clubs and organisations will now be able to access both detailed guidance along with Football Foundation funding to improve the nation's grassroots pitches.

PITCH POWER

PitchPower is the Football Foundation's free revolutionary web app for inspecting and improving grass pitches. Using your mobile phone or tablet, you can complete a pitch inspection at the touch of a button.

After undertaking an inspection, the GMA will send you back a report detailing what you need to do to improve the pitch. This report also unlocks the Football Foundation's grass pitch improvement funding.

FUNDING

After receiving your PitchPower report, you can apply for financial support to help you carry out the works suggested by the GMA in the report.

The Football Foundation have three funds to apply for to help you with the cost of improving your pitches.

- Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund
- Grass Pitch Machinery & Equipment Fund
- Grass Pitch Drainage Fund



PITCH POWER

You'll need to begin PitchPower with the following pre assessment ABCDEF actions before you head out to undertake the inspection.

- A Account** - Create an account to log in to www.PitchPower.org.uk. Add yourself to your organisation (e.g. club or league etc). Add your grounds to your organisation. Add your pitches to your grounds. You may find it easier to add your pitches on a computer rather than phone.
- B Budget** - Collate details of the annual budget for both pitch maintenance and renovations for the site.
- C Cancellations** - Note details of how frequently you have to cancel games due to pitch issues and how many times this is due to waterlogging.
- D Drainage** - Note details of existing drainage at the site. If you have drainage, note what type it is and what year it was installed.
- E Equipment** - Note details of maintenance equipment used on the site, including the make and model plus the year of purchase and condition.
- F Fixtures** - Note down how many hours on average each pitch has match play on it per week, along with training hours and whether it has any recreational use

It is worth trying to collate the above information several days before you intend to carry out the inspection as you may need to consult the pitch owner, contractor, fixture secretary or treasurer for some of this information

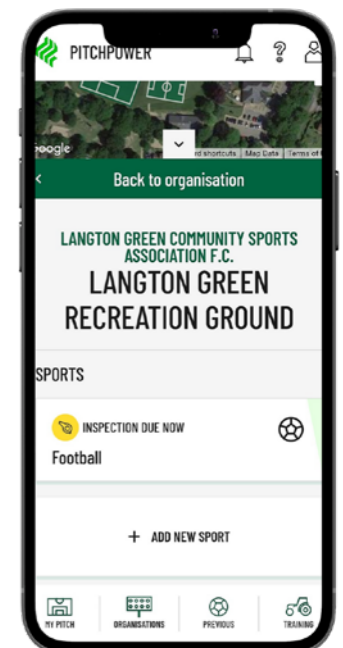
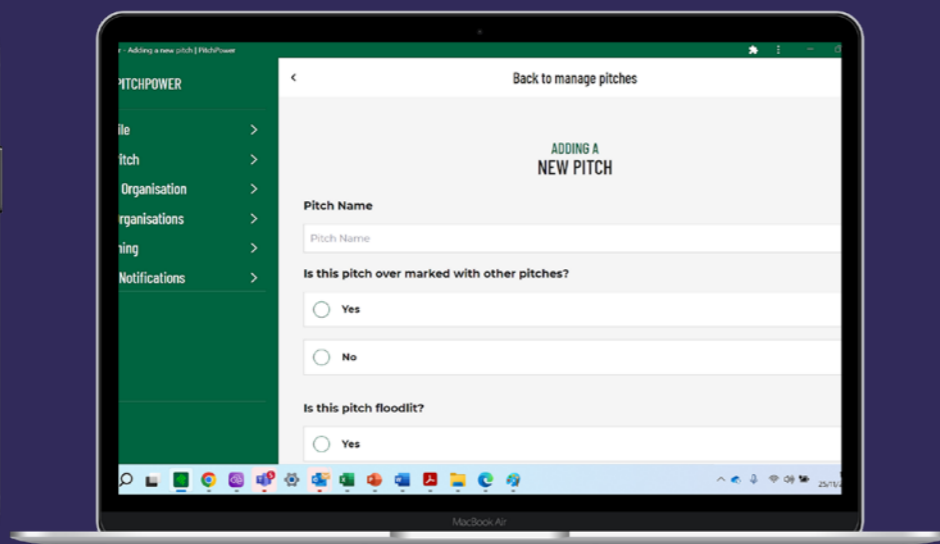
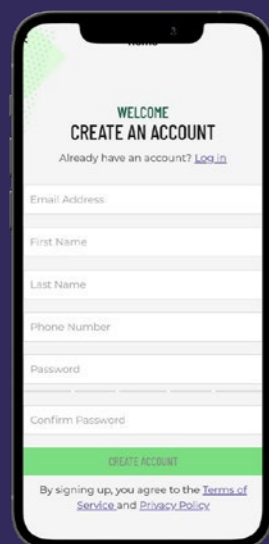


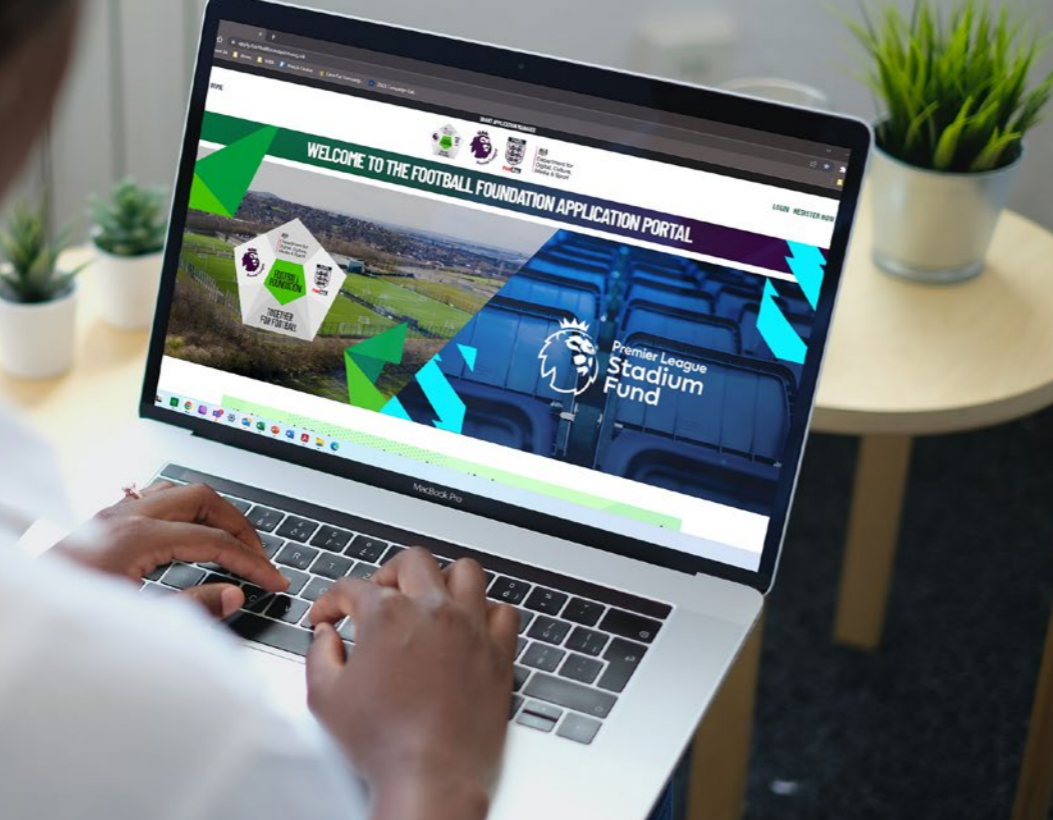
On the day of the inspection, you'll need the following:

- A soil sampler and mallet (a spade is fine as an alternative)
- A measuring tape
- A smart phone to access the PitchPower web app and take photos.

The app will ask you for the information you prepared beforehand related to budget, cancellations, drainage, equipment and fixtures. It will also require you to take some measurements and photos of the pitch both above and below the surface.

The app has hints and tips listed next to each item to guide you if you're not sure how to measure or take a photo of a particular part of the pitch. For parts such as the soil sample, this includes a YouTube video which shows you exactly how to take the soil sample out of the ground and how to measure each part.



FUNDING


Now that you have completed the PitchPower process and received your report, you can apply for the Football Foundation's grass pitch improvement funds on the application portal apply.footballfoundation.org.uk.

Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund

This is a six year tapered fund with the grant reducing by a third every two years. The amount applicants are eligible for depends on their pitch composition and whether their Pitch Quality Standard identified for each pitch in the PitchPower report is 'poor', 'basic', 'good' or 'advanced'.

Grass Pitch Machinery & Equipment Fund

This is a small grant of up to £25,000, though the you would need to contribute at least 25% of the total costs towards the project. To be successful for this it is essential that a PitchPower assessment has been completed on all the pitches on the site, and likely to require a recommendation in the PitchPower report that machinery is purchased.

Grass Pitch Drainage Fund

This is again another small grant of up to £25,000 though the total cost could be quite significantly higher than this. Installing drainage is considered a last resort and the Football Foundation would prefer to see at least two years of Grass Pitch Maintenance Funding going into the site first before drainage installation is considered.

PITCH GRADING FRAMEWORK

for the professional and volunteer

This framework uses a highly tested and developed set of parameters to benchmark the quality of each surface, across all levels of sports – from community, to professional sport at iconic venues.





GRASS PITCH MAINTENANCE FUND

A PitchPower assessment **must** have taken place first as the PitchPower report has a four digit ID code which will be required during the application process.

Eligible lead applicants are

- Grassroots clubs & leagues (up to and including Step 7)
- Charities
- Educational sites that have affiliated community football that takes place
- Step 1-6 clubs only for pitches that are used for community football and not stadium pitches

You will need security of tenure in the form of

- Ownership of the freehold or;
- A lease or licence which has more than 12 months left to run and permission from the landlord to undertake improvement works

Grass Pitch Maintenance Funding can only be used for the following

- To employ contractors to carry out pitch improvement works (e.g. slitting, scarification or decompaction)
- Purchasing materials (e.g. seed, fertiliser, or topsoil)
- Purchasing equipment (e.g. soil sampler)

Routine maintenance such as grass cutting and line marking are **not** eligible. This fund must be used in addition to existing pitch maintenance budget.

The PitchPower report will suggest a PQS for each pitch. Pitches that come back with a PQS of 'poor' or 'basic' will be entitled to an enhance grant to improve the quality of the pitches. Any pitches that come back with a PQS of 'good' or 'advanced' will be entitled to a sustain grant to keep the pitches at that level.

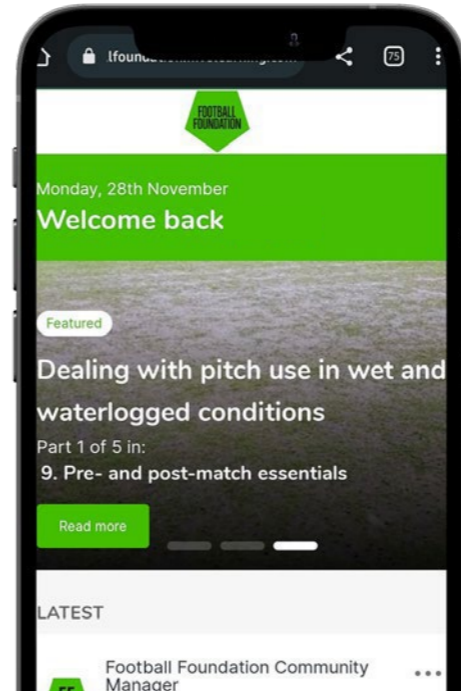
Pitch Size	Enhance Grant PQS Poor /Basic	Sustain Grant PQS Good /Advanced
11v11	£3,200	£960
9v9	£2,560	£640
Mini Soccer 7v7 or 5v5	£1,920	£384

Both types of grant are tapered across 6 years. The enhance grant has an applicant contribution expectation of 33% to the total project cost. Not investing this does not preclude you from the grant, however you should plan towards this investment to ensure your pitch standard gets to a 'good' level and stays there. The sustain grant carries no expectation of applicant contribution. For both grants, you will need to evidence that you have spent the previous year's grant correctly though from year 2 onwards.





HIVE GROUNDKEEPERS COMMUNITY



Sign up to the Football Foundation's Hive Groundkeepers Community. It's free to use and connects you to others involved in maintaining grassroots football pitches.

There are lots of helpful tips from both other users and staff at the Football Foundation and the GMA. Join using the link below and search 'Liverpool FA Grass Pitch Improvement Hub' to find the Liverpool community. footballfoundation.hivelearning.com

Here is an example of how the grant tapers over the six year period for one 11v11 pitch that was initially rated as 'basic' after it's initial PitchPower assessment.

Year	Football Foundation Grant	Applicant Contribution	Total Project Cost
1	£3,200	£0	£3,200
2	£3,200	£0	£3,200
3	£2,133	£1,067	£3,200
4	£2,133	£1,067	£3,200
5	£1,067	£2,133	£3,200
6	£1,067	£2,133	£3,200
Total	£12,800	£6,400	£19,200

GET IN TOUCH

Contact us today for support with improving your grass pitches.



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