

SHROPSHIRE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20



CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

Introduction

I have pleasure in submitting my Annual Report for the period April 2019 through to October 2020. During this period we have experienced challenges and risks never before seen in the 143-year history of the Shropshire Football Association. The following sections will explain the journey we've been on over the past 18 months.

Successes

In both Saturday and Sunday adult football numbers have increased with both the Telford Sunday League and Shrewsbury Sunday League seeing an upsurge in membership.

In February 2019 the Shropshire Football Association was successful in their application for a Step 7 league and the securing of a major sponsorship deal with Salop Leisure. The County FA staff a first for any County Association will solely manage the administration of this new league.

Our KPI's show continued growth in both boys and girls football with the latter experiencing a huge increase due to the delivery of Wildcat Centres strategically placed with clubs to give the greatest impact in delivering opportunities for girls to play football. I can also report increased numbers of applications for the running of Wildcat Centres for the 20/21 season.

Our work with Telford College is still on going and I can report completion of the geological surveys, this now puts us in a position to go for full planning on an additional community 3G pitch on the site. Mick's work with the Football Foundation as delivered a successful application for funding and we await the College's response for the next stage, Covid 19 as played a big part in delaying the progress of this so important project.

A successful application for £100k was secured to deliver a much-needed overhaul to the pitch and drainage system at AFC Telford's Bucks Head ground.

We continue to work on our priority projects across the County and are now working more closely than ever with both Local Authorities to deliver much improved and new facilities for the County.

Targeted projects include Clubhouse and changing rooms at Shifnal Town, A new ground for Newport Town, Shawbury Utd's hub site, Market Drayton's multi sport centre and the Newdale project which is still in its infancy.

Safeguarding

Following a successful SOS inspection we remain dedicated to keeping young people who play football safe with increased investment and resources to support our footballing community. I am pleased at how, in the last few years, the whole game has risen to the challenge of reviewing and continuously improving our safeguarding work. Our safeguarding capability has never been stronger, and we strive to continue to improve year on year working alongside our leagues, clubs and partners to meet the challenge of the FA's Safeguarding Operating Standard.

Challenges

Early 2020 saw Covid-19 enter our lives followed by an early termination of the 2019-20 season. The FA experienced unprecedented reductions to their various income streams with projected losses of over £300m,



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which meant very painful times ahead for all. The FA took the decision to split the loss evenly over the next four years, which equates to a reduction of £75m per annum; this was a reduction of 38% against the 2019 budget.

The FA also made the decision to take Coach Education, Referee Courses and Safeguarding courses away from County FA's which resulted in a massive loss of revenue and as a consequence job losses around the County FA network. For Shropshire this meant our commercial income lay at zero with no plan B in place to support the business.

Reduction in Funding

Covid-19's impact on football has been considerable resulting in over £22million of reductions to the National Game Budget for each of the next four seasons. The impact on County FA's has been immense seeing a reduction in overall funding of 23%, which impacts our workforce grant and football development delivery.

Workforce Re-structure

With drastic losses in revenue and funding the Shropshire FA needed to make savings of over £100k to make the business sustainable over the next 4 years and beyond. We were spending far too much on salaries, which far exceeded the salary grant awarded by the FA.

The re-structuring is now complete with the loss of one job the CEO, who decided the new structure and challenge was not for him so he took the decision to take voluntary redundancy, with the payment covered by The FA.

The new structure sees a number of new positions, a Business Manager to develop a more commercially orientated business, a dedicated Participation Officer for the Telford & Wrekin area who is based at AFC Telford Utd. The remaining staff are going through a period of up-skilling to cover the areas of Facility Investment, Refereeing Development, League Administration and Marketing.

The Future

There are difficult times ahead for all County Associations with some near the state of collapse, currently I can report that Shropshire are in a far better place than where we were six months ago and the business is now on a stable footing following the re-structure. We now have to focus our efforts on new challenges of Governance reforms within the organisation and from 2021 a new funding methodology will replace the current system where we will be measured on performance and ROI (Return on Investment). Our new commercial strategy is showing early promise with a number of projects bearing fruit; we will continue this approach with the monies earned being invested back into various footballing projects. My apologies for not posing a more 'Rosie' picture but these are difficult times where we all need to pull together for the future of this Association, its leagues, clubs and volunteers.

My final words are one of gratitude to the many people young and not so young who dedicate their lives for football, without you there is no game, please stay safe and above all look after yourselves and families through these very difficult and challenging times.

My sincere thanks to you all.

Dave Simpson (Chairman)



A MESSAGE FROM THE BUSINESS MANAGER

The 2019-2020 season has been like no other in the history of the Association, only wartime has come close to having the effect that Covid-19 has had on the local game and the Association. I would like to send out my thoughts and best wishes to all those who have been adversely affected by the pandemic and place on record our sincere thanks to all essential workers and particularly those who are part of the Shropshire Football Family.

In tough times you see the best in people and it has been fantastic to see how the football family has come together and supported the local community with their efforts, particularly in those most difficult days of lock-down; we should never underestimate the power of football and the impact that it can make beyond the game itself.

The 2019-2020 season offered much promise for the Association as work continued on the Telford Hub project to enhance the game in the County, with the aim to provide a facility where we can deliver our objectives and to sustain the game within the Telford and Wrekin area for many years to come. Unfortunately, the effect of the pandemic has meant that this project has been put on hold, but we will continue to review the situation while working with our partners in an attempt to assure the long term future of the site when the full impact of Covid-19 is understood.

The pandemic has had a detrimental impact on the Association, and we have been hit financially. The Association survives on funding from the Football Association and income from the game such as membership fees, coach education and discipline monies received. Without the game being played the Association simply does not have a business model. It is therefore inevitable that the 2019-2020 has been a disaster in terms of finance, but we are acutely aware that this is the case with businesses and individuals across the Country.

The money that we bring in enables us to provide the service that we do to support the grassroots game, and as a not for profit organisation, all our finances are reinvested into the game.

We have supported the return to the game by significantly reducing fees for the forthcoming season and we hope that this goes some way to assisting our member clubs during these unique times.

It is essential that the impact of Covid-19 does not mean that our service levels are compromised, however, it is inevitable that there will be changes to the way in which we work moving forward. I am confident that we can recover but there is no hiding from the fact that there are tough times ahead. The furlough scheme has enabled us to continue to provide a service throughout this period and I would like to thank you all for your patience during this time. Likewise, I would like to pay special tribute to the staff, most of whom have been on furlough leave for a significant period, but all understand that this will go a long way to ensuring the future of the Association. To those that have

continued to work and go above and beyond during this period, I am in awe of the dedication that you have to the local game.

Prior to its premature conclusion, the 2019-2020 season was a particularly challenging one for our volunteers and especially the grounds workers. To say that the winter was a damp one would be an understatement, and this was particularly testing for our grounds staff.

For the League and Club Officials these have been challenging times but once again you have come through with flying colours enabling the game to be played. The enforced changes to the game have been difficult but you have rallied round to make this work, it's been an incredible effort by all of you and we are all extremely grateful for the outstanding work that you do. Adapting to the 'new normal' will be challenging for the grassroots game but we have already seen how this can be done when people pull together. I would like to congratulate the winners of our Grassroots Football Awards, The awards are a great opportunity for us to recognise and reward the outstanding contributions of individuals and organisations across the county. This year's winners are a reflection of the fantastic work which takes place across the County to make grassroots football happen.

This report highlights our key achievements in the 2019-2020 season and despite its premature end, we have managed to make great strides in the development of the local game. There is no doubt that there are challenges ahead, but the commitment and enthusiasm of our voluntary and professional workforce will mean that we will support you all to get through these tough times and into the future.

With the very best wishes for the new season.

Mick Murphy
Business Manager





OUR 2019/20 STRATEGY

VISION		MISSION		
TO BE AN ORGANISATION THAT INSTILLS PRIDE IN ALL INVOLVED BY: QUALITY SERVICE AND SUPPORT/ SAFE AND ENJOYABLE FOR ALL		STRENGTHEN PLAYER PATHWAYS / BULD CAPACITY / DEVELOP INTERNAL CAPACITY / EMBED SAFEGUARDING IN SHROPSHIRE CFA'S DNA		
ENABLERS	PEOPLE	RESEARCH & MEASUREMENT	COMMERCIAL	COMMUNICATION
	RECRUIT, RETAIN AND DEVELOP EXCELLENT PEOPLE WHO ARE PROUD TO SERVE THE GAME	BETTER UNDERSTAND AND ANTICIPATE THE NEEDS OF THE GAME	OPERATE FROM A STRONG FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL BASE TO INVEST IN THE GAME	COMMUNICATE POSITIVELY & PROACTIVELY TO PROMOTE OPPORTUNITY
GOALS	CHARTER STANDARD	EDUCATION	PARTICIPATION	
	AWARDED TO CLUBS AND LEAGUES RIGOROUSLY ADJUDGED TO BE WELL-RUN AND SUSTAINABLE	A LEADING EDUCATION PROGRAMME FOR A DIVERSE FOOTBALL	FLEXIBLE, INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE PLAYING OPPORTUNITIES FOR EVERYONE	
SAFEGUARDING		DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT	REGULATION & ADMINISTRATION	VENUES
ENSURING THE GAME IS SAFE AND ENJOYABLE FOR ALL		DIRECT ENGAGEMENT WITH EVERY FAN, PLAYER AND PARTICIPANT	TRUSTED REGULATION, EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION AND WORLD-CLASS COMPETITIONS	WEMBLEY STADIUM AND ST. GEORGE'S PARK AS WORLD-LEADING INSPIRATIONAL VENUES



Back, from left, SJFL chairman Mike James, SJFL referee appointments officer Regan Gough, Lynette Williams (founder/chairperson of the Georgia Williams Trust) and Shropshire FA football development manager Darren Beech. Front: SJFL secretary Jan Butler and ex-England international Karen Carney

Wemb-glee for Shropshire Junior League

THE Shropshire Junior Football League were Wembley winners as they picked up a national award.

League representatives attended the 2019 FA & McDonald's Grassroots Football Awards, held at the national stadium, to collect an award after being named winner of the We Only Do Positive Respect award.

The Shropshire Junior Football League was the first county league to have a Respect partner, the first to deliver the Rainbow Laces/Kick It Out campaign and the first to implement Respect marshals on match days.

Former England women's international Karen Carney presented the award ahead of the Community Shield between Manchester City and Liverpool.

"Shropshire Junior Football League should be proud of their work and grassroots football in Shropshire is a much better place with them a part of it," said McDonald's ambassador Sir Geoff Hurst. "It was a pleasure to meet Mike and Jan."

Do you know

How the County FA supports grassroots football?



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Players

The Shropshire Football Association is a not-for-profit organisation which runs grassroots football in Shropshire. Football remains the most popular sport in England and the contribution that grassroots football can make to building stronger communities, improving health, reducing crime and tackling obesity is clear.

**14,000
DIVERSE
PLAYERS
OF ALL
AGES**



1250 TEAMS



Who's involved?

An army of volunteers ensures that football is played across Shropshire each week. The SFA is committed to creating a culture of continuous improvement and working towards higher standards of service delivery to support football in Shropshire.



**4,000
VOLUNTEERS**

**99% OF
YOUTH TEAMS
HAVE A FA
QUALIFIED
COACH**



**160 YOUNG
LEADERS
SUPPORTED TO
COMPLETE 200
VOLUNTEERING
HOURS**

Equality & Inclusion

This includes the formation of The SFA Inclusion Advisory Group [IAG], strict anti-discrimination regulations with robust reporting mechanisms and tough sanctions across the game, clear inclusion structures

**ACTIVE INCLUSION
ADVISORY GROUP SINCE
2014**



**BAME
35 new players**

**FIRST BAME
FOOTBALL CLUB
CREATED IN
SHROPSHIRE**

**2500 RAINBOW LACES
distributed to clubs**



Enjoying the game

The FA has changed youth football so it's more fun and helps develop better skills. There are more FA Charter Standard clubs - a status awarded to well-run clubs. The Respect programme has increased Referee numbers and improved player behaviour.



MORE



TOUCHES

SKILLS

DRIBBLING

SHOTS



98%

of all Mini-soccer and youth teams now play in an FA Charter Standard Club

RESPECT

Descent
cautions down

Referee
promotion up



30%

8%

Funding

Local authorities are critical to the development of grassroots football in Shropshire, with over 90% of the pitch and facility stock owned by the public sector. This lays the ground for local relationships to increase the capacity of clubs and leagues to engage in trusted relationships with local authorities.

£8,000
INVESTED VIA
COACH EDUCATION
BURSARIES



£10,250,000
TOTAL INVESTMENT



supported by Football
Foundation grants

£7,500,000
INVESTMENT

into new
or improved
FACILITIES



Women's football

The FA took over the women's game in 1993 and it has gone from strength to strength in Shropshire, with participation at its highest ever level and more females becoming qualified coaches and registered Referees.

WILDCATS

37



ACTIVE WILDCATS
CENTRES IN SHROPSHIRE



61

QUALIFIED
FEMALE COACHES

NUMBER OF WOMEN'S
AND GIRLS' TEAMS
IN SHROPSHIRE

111



Disability Football

Disability football is not only the most played disability sport in Shropshire, but also the in terms of all team sports in England. There is a clear disability football player pathway in with recreational, league and representative opportunities available.

270

DISABILITY FOOTBALL
PARTICIPANTS WEEKLY



SET UP

▶ **1 SHROPSHIRE**
FA DISABILITY
LEAGUE

▶ **1 DISABILITY**
TALENT
IDENTIFICATION
CENTRE



27 **DISABILITY**
TEAMS



Competitions

County Cup competitions and over 50 local cup competitions that play in Regional and National areas. Our Under 18's won The FA County Youth Cup in 2010 and our Under 16' and Ladies both won their Regional Competitions in previous season.

7

COUNTY CUPS



LOCAL CUP
COMPETITIONS

▶ **40** **BOYS**
COMPETITIONS

▶ **8** **GIRLS**
COMPETITIONS

▶ **10** **ADULTS**
COMPETITIONS



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Governance

The SFA governs, regulates, promotes and protects grassroots football in Shropshire. Each year the SFA runs a Community Awards event to recognise the contribution made by our volunteers. The Shropshire Football Association administers local football via a progressive Council and professional network of staff.

227

QUALIFIED
REFEREES
KEEP THE
GAME
RUNNING



107

WELFARE OFFICERS
MAKING FOOTBALL
SAFE AND FUN!



1,750

DISCIPLINARY
CASES PROCESSED
DURING SEASON

