‘Developing football for everyone’
National Game Strategy 2011–15
### Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forewords</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Growth &amp; Retention</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Raising Standards</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Better Players</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Running The Game</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Workforce</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Facilities</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Visit thefa.ceros.com/national-game-strategy/ngs-2011 to browse the interactive online strategy document.
How important is it to publish this Strategy?

We are proud of the success we have achieved over the past three seasons since the last National Game Strategy was published and by publishing our strategy for the next four years we continue to be open and transparent on the goals we wish to achieve.

The FA is focussed on delivering its vision of providing football for everyone. By publishing the NG strategy we are able to let all stakeholders know that we have a robust framework in place to ensure that the funding is used to get more people playing the game, to protect and improve facilities and provide a safe and fun football experience.

The investment of a further £200m in grassroots football over the next four years has to be undertaken with a clear vision and some challenging but achievable targets. This will ensure that by the end of the strategy period, we have continued to deliver improvements to the game.

What are the key priorities for the next four years?

Our key priorities haven’t changed and the structure remains the same. Our extensive consultation has shown that we are on the right track and focusing on areas that are important to everyone playing the game.

Linked into our overall FA Group strategy we will continue to raise the standards in the game to provide a safe and fun experience which keeps people involved in football for many years. We will do this by raising standards of coaching, administration and child protection using our Charter Standard programme to drive this forward, recruiting and developing more match officials and addressing negative touchline behaviour.

Football is the nation’s number one female team sport and key for us is making sure that the women’s game continues to thrive by promoting participation from all communities at all levels.

We also need places for people to play the game and another key priority is to protect and improve facilities across the country and make sure that everyone who wants to play has access to these.

There are some challenging targets in the Strategy. What will be key to achieving these?

We all have to work together to see the changes and improvements we want in our national game. The FA will lead its County FAs to support our incredible volunteer force, continuing to develop their skills, to meet the economic and social challenges that we have head on.

Without these dedicated people there would be no grassroots football.

In terms of developing better players, our focus on coach development and the exciting opportunities that St George’s Park will bring will be crucial to this.

We will also continue work with our dedicated partners on programmes such as the Tesco Skills Programme and Mars Just Play centres to ensure we make the most of our resources and together create an environment for everyone to enjoy the game.

It’s nearly four years since the last National Game Strategy was published. What’s been achieved?

An enormous amount has been delivered and it’s important that the hard work of all of those involved at the grass roots level of football is acknowledged and everyone congratulated. Almost all of the targets set back in 2008 have been reached which is a remarkable achievement.

There are more boys and girls playing the game than ever before, more coaches and officials gaining qualifications than ever before and behaviour both on and off the pitch has shown significant improvement.

So, what is different about this new Strategy?

The first point to make is that this is not a completely different approach to our work at grassroots; it’s more of a refresh of our objectives and targets and a refocus of where our key priorities are for the next four years.

The philosophy for coach and player development recently detailed in our FA Future Game guides is now firmly embedded within the National Game Strategy.

Also, the principle of inclusion, equality and fairness is at the heart of everything we do and we have now identified specific priorities and set targets which will deliver on diversity outcomes across grassroots football.

What are the real challenges facing the grassroots game over the next four years?

We live in extremely difficult economic times and football is not immune to the current financial climate. Attracting further investment into the game from both the public and private sectors remains challenging. It is important that we do everything we can to attract and maintain investment into new facilities, work with Sport England and others to champion the protection of playing fields and ensure we manage existing resources more effectively.

Alex Horne
General Secretary

Roger Burden
Chair – National Game Board
Achievements 2008–11

- Increasing the number of affiliated teams:
  1. mini-soccer from 21,800 to 25,932 (18.95% increase),
  2. male youth from 34,300 to 36,740 (7.11% increase),
  3. female youth from 4,500 to 5,163 (14.73% increase),
  4. female adult from 1,179 to 1,437 (21.88% increase),
  5. disability from 88 to 1,100 (1250% increase),
  6. small-sided from 25,000 to 28,370 (13.48% increase).

- Launch of the Get Into Football Programme to increase adult participation.
Challenges

- Halting the decline of male adult 11-a-side football
- Providing local and flexible formats of football to suit changing consumer lifestyles
- Addressing the drop-off of at ages 14–19
- Supporting the transition from mini-soccer to youth, and youth to adult
- Widening affiliation and integrating teams and leagues from diverse communities
- Affiliating and developing football in the commercial small-sided sector
- Working effectively with the changing school sport and sports development structures.

2015 Targets

- Retain 30,355 adult male 11-a-side teams and grow to 30,550 teams
- Retain 1,437 adult female 11-a-side teams and grow to 1,500 teams
- Grow adult football by 150,000 new participants playing football once a week
- Increase male and female disability teams to 1,264 and 238 teams respectively
- Increase adult small-sided teams from 28,370 to 30,000 (5.75% increase)
- Retain and grow mini-soccer, male and female youth teams
- Retain 30,500 Intra and Inter-school teams
- Further develop Intra-mural College and University football – retain 1,100 16–19 College teams and grow 5,340 new teams; retain 1000 university teams and grow 3,000 new teams.

Priorities

1. Focus resources on retaining and developing the existing 129,087 affiliated teams
2. Halt the decline in male adult 11-a-side and retain female 11-a-side teams by improving the access and quality of pitches; providing a referee for every game; supporting volunteers, using technology and increasing participation through FA Just Play Centres and the Get Into Football programmes
3. Develop The FA’s Children and Young People offer to sustain participation and to address the drop out at key phases mini-soccer to youth, 14–16, 16–19
4. Continue to support existing and diverse communities to participate in affiliated football
5. Develop different affiliation and benefits packages for groups not traditionally affiliated e.g. HE, FE, Intra-mural and small-sided
6. Embed flexible formats of football such as 60 minute matches, shorter competition programmes and turn up and play, and develop playing opportunities to meet changing player lifestyles.
Achievements 2008–11

1. Every youth club and league has a Welfare Officer
2. 74% of all youth teams have The FA Charter Standard (baseline 40%)
3. 536 FA Charter Standard Community Clubs (baseline 360)
4. 191 FA Charter Standard Leagues (baseline 0)
5. 70% of people agree/strongly agree that The FA Charter Standard Programme has raised standards
6. 56% of people think The FA Respect Programme has improved their football experience.
Challenges

- Implementing mandatory legislation regarding safeguarding children and vulnerable adults
- Continuing to raise standards of behaviour and ensure Respect is underpinned by robust sanctions
- Increasing costs of running football clubs and achieving and retaining The FA Charter Standard
- Creating an improved benefits package for FA Charter Standard Clubs and Leagues and ensuring the Charter Standard programme raises standards
- Uneven coverage of leagues at step 7 nationally causing inconsistent opportunities for clubs to progress through the National League System
- The sustainability of clubs in the National League System in terms of finance and governance.

2015 Targets

- Increase the percentage of mini-soccer and youth teams in FA Charter Standard Clubs from 74% to 80%
- Increase the number of FA Charter Standard Community Clubs from 536 to 650
- 30% of all adult and youth teams to be playing in an FA Charter Standard League
- An increase in people who think that the Respect Programme has improved their football experience from 56% to 65%.

Priorities

1. Publish a clear CRB strategy including guidance for clubs and leagues, develop succession plans for Club Welfare Officers/Youth League Welfare Officers and improve the ratio of Club Welfare Officers to teams

2. Continue to implement The FA Respect Programme including providing a range of Respect resources; integrating Respect into The FA Youth Development Review; reducing the level of assaults on referees; devising a more effective range of measures to change behaviour in adult grassroots football and building on the commitment and profile of Respect in the professional game

3. Implement The FA Charter Standard Club Programme including providing relevant support for clubs and volunteers; integrating IT services; developing training and support for the club workforce and enhance the benefits package for FA Charter Standard Clubs

4. Implement The FA Charter Standard League Programme supporting leagues to increase and sustain participation, raise standards, develop better players and support volunteers

5. Focus support to develop a robust National League System and Women’s Pyramid and implement the recommendations in the step 7 review.
Achievements 2008–11

- Developed and communicated a player-centred coaching philosophy
- 55,723 Level 1 and 14,370 Level 2 qualified coaches
- Over two and a half million 5–11 year olds have benefited from The FA Tesco Skills Programme (58% male, 42% female)
- Designed and delivered Age Appropriate Coaching Qualifications
- Launch of The FA Women’s Super League
- Review of Disability and Girls Centres of Excellence Programmes
- No league tables at U8 to encourage development.

Visit thefa.ceros.com/national-game-strategy/ngs-2011 to browse the interactive online strategy document.
Challenges

• Implementing the recommendations in The FA Youth Development Review
• Securing funding to sustain and expand The FA Tesco Skills Programme
• Implementing The FA Licensed Coaching Scheme in the grassroots game
• Costs of qualifications
• Implementing the new female and disability talent development pathways.

2015 Targets

• Increase the number of player opportunities within The FA Tesco Skills programme from 2,669,339 to 5,502,238
• 80% of youth teams with an FA qualified coach.

Priorities

1. Implement The FA Youth Development review including children’s formats, number of players/pitch size, competition and relative age effect
2. Continue to deliver and expand The FA Skills Programme nationwide
3. Support coaches and teachers to undertake coaching qualifications including The FA Youth Awards so that every youth team has a qualified coach
4. To signpost qualified coaches to The FA Licensed Coaches’ Club, to establish recognition and value and to embed a culture of CPD
5. Implement the new girls talent development pathways producing better players and coaches
6. Implement the new disability talent development pathways producing better players and coaches.
Achievements 2008–11

- 67% of people think County FAs are doing a good job developing grassroots football
- 70% of people think The FA are doing a good job developing grassroots football
- Embedding a performance culture throughout the National Game
- The introduction of online Member Services.

Visit thefa.ceros.com/national-game-strategy/ngs-2011 to browse the interactive online strategy document.
**Running the Game**

**Challenges**
- Embracing new and maximising current technologies
- Addressing systems and processes within Running the Game that are overly bureaucratic and paper-based (e.g. discipline, affiliation)
- Increasing revenues to support the development of the National Game
- Continuing to support County FAs to be successful businesses
- Using and developing data and local knowledge to develop priorities
- Supporting County FAs to adhere to minimum standards in terms of Corporate Governance and widening the skills and diversity of County Boards of Directors
- Giving children and young people an opportunity to contribute to the running of the game.

**2015 Targets**
- Increase the public’s perception that County FAs are successfully developing grassroots football from 67% to 75%
- Increase the public’s perception that The FA are successfully developing grassroots football from 70% to 75%.

**Priorities**

**Technology**
1. Develop a co-ordinated National Game Technology Strategy
2. Implement The FA Player Pass (the National Participants Database) incorporating a national insurance scheme and offering players a range of benefits and effective communication channels.

**Governance**
1. Implement online disciplinary processes and payments
2. Implement a simplified and consistent online affiliation process across the country
3. Ensure appropriate and effective registrations and sanctioning processes are in place.

**Running the Business**
1. Support County FAs to be efficient and sustainable businesses
2. Establish appropriate financial systems and financial management within County FAs
3. Refine the NG Marketing and Communications plan to deliver the NGS 2015 priorities
4. Develop and implement a customer service ethos across the National Game
5. Develop public, private and commercial sector partnerships to grow revenues into the game.
Achievements 2008–11

- 18% increase in the number of male and female active referees (from 22,525 to 26,771)
- 56% of volunteers think that County FAs have improved their experience as a volunteer
- 74% of volunteers are very, or quite, optimistic about the future of the grassroots game in 2015
- The impact of focusing the County Workforce in specific roles e.g. Child Welfare and Refereeing
- Volunteers shaping priorities through the ‘Your Game Your Say’ research and online surveys
- Football Futures supporting 7,500 young leaders
- Investment to improve the knowledge and skills of FA and County Workforce e.g. CEO Leadership and National Game Training Programme.
WORKFORCE
SKILLED AND DIVERSE PAID AND VOLUNTEER WORKFORCE

Challenges

- Implementing the National Game workforce review
- Expectations on volunteers - course costs, time, bureaucracy and lack of succession plans
- Providing a referee for every game
- Increasing opportunities and the visibility of women, disabled people and ethnic minorities in senior coaching, refereeing and administrative positions
- Maximising legacy opportunities of high profile events

2015 Target

- Increase the number of registered and active male and female referees to 28,200 (27,200 male referees and 1,000 female referees).

Priorities

1. Support County FAs to identify the County Workforce and changes required to implement the NGS
2. Develop Performance Management systems in each County FA (appraisals, work programmes, training for staff and Board) and improve HR systems
3. Support County FAs to widen diversity in the decision-making process, implementing the best practice from REAG and DEAG and local football Equality, Race Equality and Disability Groups
4. Continue to invest in and deliver the Referee Development Programme
5. Support club and league volunteers through recruitment & retention programmes; flexible training; business models; online support services and provide bursaries for training courses
6. Deliver the Football Futures programme supporting 25,000 young leaders and tracking the participants to assess the number of young leaders that become volunteers in the game
7. Implement equality monitoring of FA and CFA paid and volunteer workforce, coaches and referees and set targets to widen diversity.
FACILITIES
BUILD, PROTECT AND ENHANCE SUSTAINABLE FOOTBALL FACILITIES
TO IMPROVE THE EXPERIENCE OF THE NATION’S FAVOURITE GAME

£253M

Achievements 2008–11
• Over £253 million invested in improving the quantity and quality of facilities
• Over 1,000 playing pitches improved or protected from development
• Increased external investment despite the economic climate
• Produced improved and updated technical standards.

Visit thefa.ceros.com/national-game-strategy/ngs-2011 to browse the interactive online strategy document.
Challenges

- Funding cuts in local authorities leading to loss of playing fields, reduction in access and increased costs
- The impact of public sector transferring community facilities to new providers
- Protection of playing fields
- Managing and supporting the workforce involved with facilities – paid and voluntary
- Developing facilities with reduced dependency on public subsidy
- Lack of research to underpin facility spend
- Implementing the recommendations in The FA Youth Development Review.

2015 Target

- £150 million invested into facilities.

Priorities

1. Maximise all investment into facilities including Football Foundation grants and other sources of capital
2. Champion and promote the Protection of Playing Fields (PPF) by working with Sport England as a statutory consultee and with other agencies to promote PPF through granting of covenants and long-term leases and producing resources to support County FAs, leagues and clubs
3. Develop sustainable facility models, new procurement opportunities and cost effective facility designs and options
4. Manage existing resources more effectively by providing specific guidance and support regarding Localism and the impact on facilities; updating FA technical standards; reviewing delivery models with current pitch/facility providers; developing a support/advice/maintenance package for existing pitch/facility providers and a self-help facility improvement programme for clubs and leagues.
PARTNERS

Vauxhall

Vauxhall is The FA’s new Youth programme partner. Vauxhall will sponsor the Vauxhall Cup, a competition for Under 13s, 14s and 15s to take part in. They will support the grassroots game in a variety of ways through initiatives such as their Football Champions programme.

www.vauxhall.co.uk

McDonald’s

McDonald’s is The FA’s Community Partner, supporting our education arm, FA Learning, and its training and support of coaches, volunteers and administrators. McDonald’s supports our FA Charter Standard programme, Mini-soccer and young volunteer schemes and this year launched the ‘Your Game’ website for parents and volunteers.

www.thefa.com/yourgame

Carlsberg

Carlsberg supports both men’s football and referee recruitment. Carlsberg is supporting a national referee recruitment and retention drive.

www.carlsberg.co.uk

Mars

Mars supports the FA’s player recruitment and retention campaign for men’s 11-a-side football. This has been activated during the 2010–11 season with 190 Just Play centres delivering 233 weekly sessions. The number of centres grow every week and will continue to ensure that people continue to enjoy the national game.

justplay.thefa.com

Tesco

Tesco funds 106 full-time coaches who deliver The FA Tesco Skills Programme, with over two million 5–11s having received the best-possible skills coaching in the first four years of the scheme.

tescoskills.thefa.com

Umbro

Umbro supports The FA’s work in Small-sided football, specifically in developing participation in Futsal and also the Umbro Fives competition. It also provides kit to the value of £500,000 per season to the grassroots game.

www.umbroonline.com

Sport England / Football Foundation

Sport England’s aim is to get one million more people physically active through sport by 2013 as well as importantly retaining current playing levels. Sport England are specifically investing in The FA/Mars Just Play programme for Adult players, the women’s and disability pathways and is committing £6m to The FA Tesco Skills Programme. The Football Foundation via its funding from partners such as government, Sport England, Premier League and The FA has delivered over £1bn of investment into grassroots facilities over the past 10 years.

www.sportengland.org
www.footballfoundation.org.uk

ITV Sport

Income from our broadcast partners ITV, plus our commercial partners allows The FA to fund this Strategy. In particular we have 6 commercial partners who invest directly to support National Game Programmes.

www.itv.com/sport/football

ESPN

Income from our broadcast partners ESPN, plus our commercial partners allows The FA to fund this Strategy.

www.espn.co.uk

Continental & Yorkshire Bank

The Women’s Super League, launched in April 2011 was supported in its inaugural season by Continental and Yorkshire Bank.

www.fawsl.com
Visit thefa.ceros.com/national-game-strategy/ngs-2011 to browse the interactive online strategy document.