

# DELIVERING THE YOUTH STRATEGY

**FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

September 2018



Foundation

*Serving the community  
through football*



## Girls' and Women's Football

### Grit and Goals

A new Partnership began in April with Ascentiv Consultancy and Generation Women, Coach Facilitators who are working with the U19 Development teams. The focus of the Development workshops is to encourage and develop emotional resilience and leadership qualities within our young athletes. (picture)



### Mentor Programme

The Irish Football Association is delighted to work in partnership Belfast City Council and Sport NI. Our aim is to strengthen Women and Girls' Clubs in the Belfast area by providing a mentor coach to assist in developing club structures and improving on the field coaching. The programme has grown from seven initial clubs to 20.



### Female Football Leadership Programme

The Irish FA is committed to taking positive action to address the low levels of women in key decision-making roles within football. Since its launch in 2013 the Female Football Leaders Programme has been a great success with 42 graduates to date! The aims of project are to develop and extend the skills, knowledge and network of women in leadership and decision-making roles within football with the intention of:

- Increasing the confidence, competence & capacity of women in a range of effective leadership behaviours;
- Proactively supporting women to apply and progress in leadership roles within football clubs or governing body committees and boards.

Kathy Johnston coach for Hillsborough girls said "I found the course very informative. Seeing the insights of how a club runs and the governance has been very beneficial for myself in serving on the committee of Hillsborough football club".

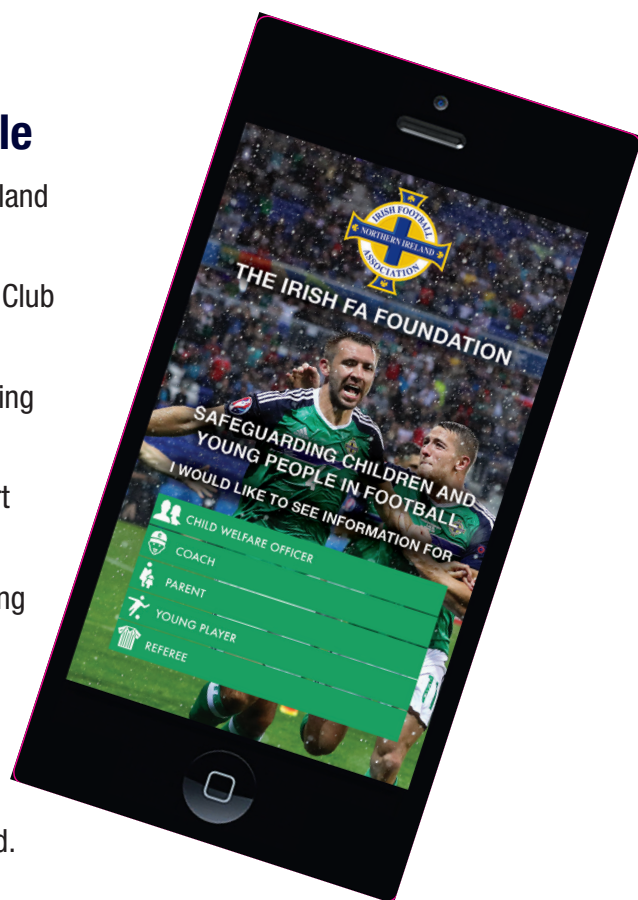
**Kathy Johnson**  
Coach, Hillsborough Girls





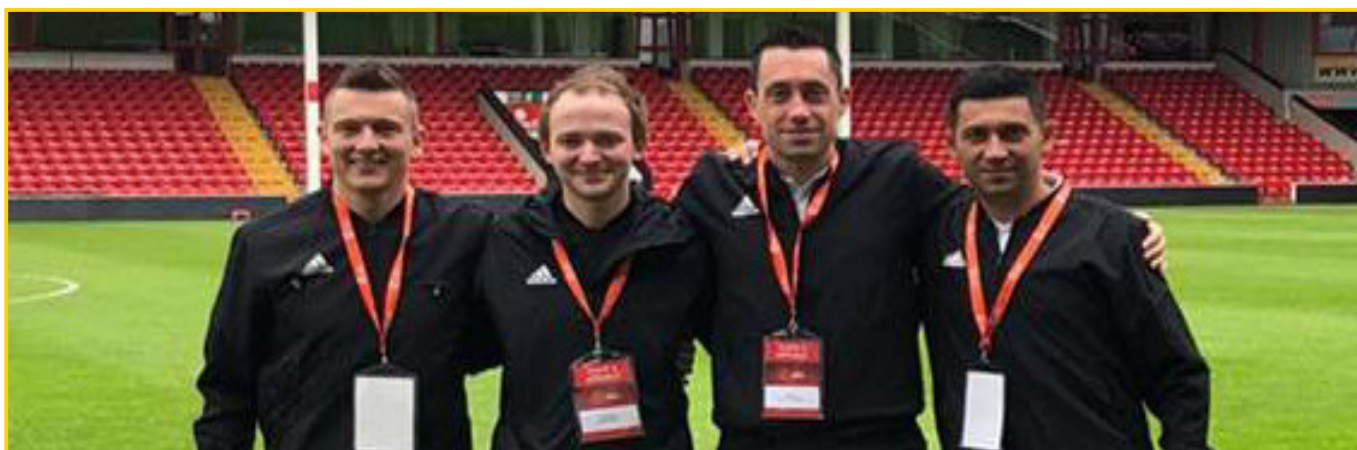
## Safeguarding children and young people

- 40 Safeguarding Courses delivered throughout Northern Ireland to approximately 700 participants
- Development of a football specific Safeguarding Course for Club Welfare Officers currently being piloted
- Regular attendance at the All Ireland Designated Safeguarding Children's Officer Forum
- Represent the Irish FA on the Safeguarding Children in Sport Strategic Group was
- Secured approval from the Irish FA Board to mandate existing Safeguarding Services for any club affiliating to NIBFA or entering Small Sided Games programmes
- Liaison with Home Nations Safeguarding leads with a view to better joint working and shared practice
- The safeguarding app remains active and has been updated.



## Refereeing

The summer months is traditionally one of the busiest periods for the Referee's Department as this is when the national referee fitness test programme takes place to inform referee gradings for season 18/19. This is also the time when the training and developing arrangements for the various referee panels are finalised, while referee recruitment class arrangements for the new season are finalised. The Association's National Referee Development Officer, Andrew Davey, also carried out a number of referee talks and information sessions. FIFA referees Keith Kennedy (see below) and Tim Marshall were both appointed as 4th Officials at the Under 17 UEFA Championships which were held in May 18 in England - a prestigious honour for both officials.



## NIBFA

All youth leagues have resumed their programmes for the season and clubs are getting to grips with the new Comet registration system. It will take a while to have all the youth sector up to speed with the system and while that is happening we are offering as much practical as possible including registering players on their behalf.

NIBFA Leagues and teams enjoyed a successful summer with The National League U15 winning the All Ireland Inter League Cup and the U15 Derry & District Side winning the Plate in the same competition. The U13 National League side won the Plate in that section while the cup was won by Cavan & Monaghan. This tournament was held at Limerick University.

In the NI Supercup Greenisland gave us local success by winning the first year of the new U13 section while Co. Antrim were successful in the Junior Section.

Discussions are ongoing with the Scottish Youth, Welsh Youth and North Dublin Football Associations about adding a Celtic Cup Tournament to the calendar aimed at end of season. Having discussed this addition with Club NI this would appear to be a good opportunity to prepare the Supercup squad ahead of that tournament.

The NIBFA National League have been invited to send a representative team to Las Vegas in February 2019, NIBFA are currently assessing costs for that trip and in discussions with Club NI about the additional benefit this would give to players currently in the development squads. Trials will be arranged for team selection in conjunction with Club NI staff if the trip gets the go ahead.

Ongoing registering of clubs for Affiliation, Insurance and NIBFA Cup Entries.

## Football and Social Responsibility

### Stay Onside

The Stay Onside programme re-commenced its work with HMP Maghaberry, starting programme number 3 in August 2018. 12 participants commenced a 6 week programme focusing on coaching skills, laws of the game, Futsal, Employment Pathways and Mental Health Awareness.



The Stay Onside team have also started planning for two community courses in L'Derry and Lisburn which are due to be completed before the end of 2018 as well as a further course in HMP Magilligan in October and Shannon Clinic Vulnerable Offenders Unit in September. Planning also continues for a Showcase of the programme that will be held at the National Stadium @ Windsor Park on 14th September, showcasing work completed so far and plans for the future. Participants and partners of the programme will be presenting the benefits of the programme and how it impacted on them.

## PEACE IV Sport Uniting Communities

### Youth Leadership Programme

During the month of August Community Sports Development Officers from the Irish FA, Ulster GAA and Ulster Rugby ran a Youth Leadership Programme for young people at Devenish Partnership Forum, Enniskillen. The aim of the programme is for young people aged 14-24 to engage in training in volunteer/personal development, progressing through the Sports Leaders UK Level 1 Award. 9 girls from the local area participated in the programme. They learned leadership skills and how to plan, deliver and evaluate coaching sessions. As a result we hope the girls will become ambassadors in their area, contribute to good relations events that the project will run and learn lifelong skills to help them in the future.



### Game of 3 Halves

On Friday 3rd August, a Game of 3 Halves event was held at Sally Gardens, Belfast. The event was attended by 28 participants from three clubs from each code -Cooke Rugby Club, Lamh Dhearg GAC & Crusaders FC. This event was the first day that a Game of 3 Halves had the benefit of the 3 inflatables from the Irish FA, Ulster GAA and Ulster Rugby.

The event included coaching from Community Sports Development Officer's from each of the 3 sporting bodies as well as a 'Have a Go' element with the inflatables.

Participants were mixed throughout the day with the aim of ensuring that they had the opportunity to work with people from different communities.

The video of the event can be seen at:

<https://www.irishfa.com/news/2018/august/get-involved-in-sport-uniting-communities>



## Disability Football

### Cerebral Palsy

The Northern Ireland Cerebral Palsy Squad competed in the 2018 European Championships in Zeist, Holland from 23 July to 6 August. We finished in a credible 8th position considering we had the youngest and least experienced squad at the competition. Charley Emerson made a great impact in his first competition scoring goals against Germany, Spain and the winning goal against Denmark. Northern Ireland remain 13th in the World Rankings.



### Powerchair Football

We received 11 new Strikeforce Powerchairs with £80k funding secured from The Department of Communities and support from Disability Sport NI. The new state of the art chairs are with the long-list of 11 players in the Northern Ireland Squad as they prepare for their first International tournament, the Nations Cup in Finland in May 2019.

### Scort Special Youth Camp

Lisburn Rovers Junior Visual Impairment Club attended the Scort Foundation Special youth Camp in Basle Switzerland from 22 – 27 July. Our relationship with the Scort Foundation continues to develop and this has been the third visit to the Special Youth Camp. The players and staff attending had a great experience.

### Marc Bigger Memorial Cup 2018

We hosted a 4 team Powerchair Competition in Lisburn Leisureplex on 25th August in memory of our former player Marc Bigger who passed away in 2016. Dublin based DCU Storm won the event with Marcs team the Belfast Trailblazers in second place. The standard of play was great and Marcs parents who were in attendance were very pleased with the Event.



## Club and Community Development

Gavin Nelson joined the Irish FA as the new Club and Community Development Officer at the start of August. Gavin started his coaching career with the Irish FA in 2002 by completing his Junior Team Leaders Award at the age of 16 before moving to England to complete his degree in Sports Development and Coaching. Since He spent time working for Major League Soccer in Michigan and then nine years working for the English FA.

Gavin will be involved in the creation of the new Club and Volunteer strategy working alongside Michael Carvill. To gain an insight for the new strategy they will be conducting a variety of consultations across the country starting this month. Once all results and recordings from the consultations have been evaluated the new strategy will be written. The aim of Better Clubs, Better Volunteers strategy is to better support our clubs and volunteers with new and innovative ways to help them increase participation.

## Volunteering

The Grassroots Volunteer application is now available on the Irish FA website. The volunteers will be situated within the Irish FA Let Them Play Hubs that launch in 2019. They will support clubs in their area with guidance from the Regional Grassroots Development Officers and receive specialised training to help them personally develop whilst enhancing our local clubs. Those recruited will also be involved in the Irish FA's Mental health programme "Ahead of the Game".

The aim of the role is to provide volunteers with an opportunity to get involved within their local community and specifically assist our clubs.

## Grassroots and Youth Development

### Let Them Play Hubs

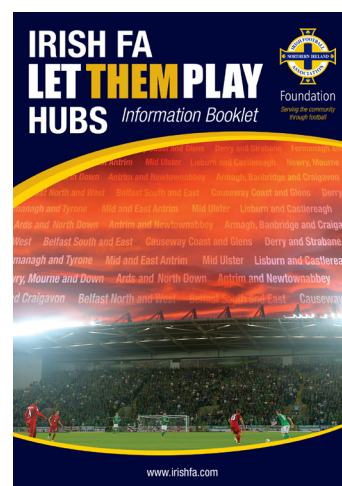
Meetings have been set up with councils as part of the Let Them Play Hubs programme that will see 12 hubs across Northern Ireland. The Let Them Play Hubs will provide councils and communities with a more integrated approach to developing football on a local basis.

As set out within the Let Them Play strategy the aim of the new structure is to provide more support to local partners and deliver a more effective and efficient service to the community.

A new website is being launched, information booklets have been printed and service level agreements agreed.

### Summer Football Camps

The 2018 Hughes Insurance Irish FA Summer Football camps finished in the last week of August. 84 camps played host to 4,515 children, 430 of whom were girls.



**FOOTBALL CAMPS**