

# DELIVERING THE YOUTH STRATEGY

**FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

June 2019



Foundation

*Serving the community through football*



## Peace IV

### Sport Uniting Communities PEACE IV Programme



## Volunteer Development Programme

On May 30th, a Volunteer Development Workshop took place with Tristar Boys FC and Dergview FC at University of Ulster, Magee Campus. This training was part of the PEACE IV 'Sport Uniting Communities' Volunteer Development Programme for 2019 as both clubs couldn't attend the training day in March. Community Sports Development Officer for the area, Daniel Chambers delivered the workshops which consisted of the following:

- Defining Roles and Responsibilities within Clubs
- Volunteer Recruitment and Retention (focusing on marginalised groups)
- Succession Planning for Volunteers
- Becoming an Inclusive Club
- Volunteer Leadership and Mentoring

The evening started with registration, tea/coffee and a background to the 'Sport Uniting Communities' project. We then started into the workshops with plenty of discussion and group work with both clubs sharing ideas and solutions. To end the evening we looked at action planning to plan events where clubs can work together to bring people from different backgrounds together through the power of sport and football. We also distributed our 'Sport Uniting Communities' Volunteer Club Handbooks to the participants which contain a wide range of information and advice on volunteer development.

## Game of 3 Halves

**A number of Game of 3 Halves have taken place recently in Derry/L'Derry, Enniskillen, Rasharkin and Donegal with clubs from all three sports participating.**

The purpose of these events is to bring people from different backgrounds together and offer them the opportunity to play sports they may not have had the opportunity to participate in previously. Participants are mixed with others from different backgrounds and receive coaching and matches in each sport. The sessions are designed not only to develop sport specific knowledge but also adopt, practice and endorse principles such as fair play, respect for other participants and inclusion.



**Pupils from St. Cecilia's and Oakgrove Integrated who were involved in a Game of 3 Halves with Foyle Belles FC**

## Getting to Know the Irish FA Schools Programme

During the past number of months, 17 schools (primary and post-primary) have benefited from the programme by visiting the National Football Stadium at Windsor Park for a tour of the stadium and a visit to the Education and Heritage Centre. The aim of the programme is to help schools build knowledge of the Irish FA, its cultures and traditions, thereby addressing any perceptions they may have had.

## Dare to Win

**The Dare to Win initiative was a pilot programme delivered to young people in care in conjunction with the PSNI.**

The object of the programme was to build better relations between the Irish FA, Social Services, the PSNI and a very vulnerable group of young people whilst allowing them to participate in various physical activities and learn new skills. The young people achieved their Grassroots Introductory Award and several of them are now considering signing up to the Irish FA Goal's programme in September. This pilot initiative is now completed but due to the very positive feedback from the young people and other partners it will recommence in October to further invest in these young people and help create positive and life changing opportunities.



## Disability Football

### International U19 Learning Disability Squad

**The Northern Ireland U19 Learning Disability Squad won the 2019 Home Nations Championships in Newport Wales.**

A hard fought 1-0 win over the Republic of Ireland in the Semi-final was followed with a comprehensive 4-0 win over hosts Wales in the Final. The young squad did exceptionally well and all but one of the squad are eligible in 2020 through their age.



### Northern Ireland Powerchair Squad

**The Northern Ireland Powerchair Squad finished in fifth place at the recent European Championships in Finland and have therefore qualified for the World Championships that will be held in Sydney, Australia in 2021.**

The squad warmed up for the Championships with a Tri-Nations Friendly competition at the Blair Mayne LC in Newtownards. In their first ever International fixtures they managed a 0-0 draw with Scotland and a 2-2 draw with the Republic of Ireland.

In Finland they won four games out of eight and clinched that all important fifth place with super wins in the play-off games against Austria (2-1) and hosts Finland (1-0).

### Northern Ireland Cerebral Palsy Squad

**The Northern Ireland Cerebral Palsy Squad finished runners-up in the recent International Competition in Barcelona, Spain. The squad contained five teenagers making their International debuts.**

The squad won their first three games beating Italy (1-0), hosts Catalunya (4-3) and England Development (4-3). They unfortunately lost the Final to Scotland 4-0 but it was a very positive experience and the young squad will now aim for a good showing in the 2022 European Championships.



## School Competitions

**Over 30 schools competed in the Irish FA National Games for Special Education in May. Over 250 players with a disability enjoyed competitions for schools catering for moderate and severe learning disability.**

Moderate Years 8-10: Winners St Gerards, Belfast.

Moderate Years 11+: Winners St Gerards, Belfast

Severe Years 8-10: Winners Riverside, Antrim

Severe Years 11+: Winners Sandleford, Coleraine

## Coach Education

**One Irish FA Level 1 Coaching Disabled Footballers Award was delivered in this period with 16 participants at Stranmillis College, Belfast.**

We have just started a two-week education programme in partnership with USEL. Eight participants with a disability will complete nine Irish FA Workshops/Courses and hopefully engage in disability football projects across Northern Ireland.

## Education and Employability Programme

**The second year of the Education and Employability programme is coming to a close. It has been a hugely successful year that has seen the programme grow in all areas.**

We have recently completed three Level 1 courses with 43 students from Ashfield Boys, Mercy college (LLS) and SRC Lurgan with a hope to continue to build these relationships for the future.

We have completed most of our school courses in the past few weeks and are in the process of meeting schools to plan for next year and put timetables in place. We are delivering certificates to all of our students for this year's work. We are particularly excited about finalising our partnership with Ashfield boys as the first football



## Let Them Play Programme

### Schools Programme

**The Irish FA Foundation Let Them Play Officers are currently delivering the DENI Schools Programme to Key Stage 2 pupils across Northern Ireland during curriculum time.**

The 12 Officers are currently active delivering multi sports activities and mentoring teachers and classroom assistants in the process. The Officers are also active in delivering a variety of after schools and community outreach programmes until the end of the academic year.

### Player Development Programme

**The Irish FA Foundation Player Development Programme concluded in June with a National Festival at Allen Park, Antrim.**

Players from across 12 regions of Northern Ireland participated in small sided matches which provided an opportunity for them to showcase their talent in front of Irish FA talent development coaches.

Over 450 children have participated in the programme this season across two age groups. Participants completed 16 week of football coaching session, eight weeks of futsal sessions and participated in a variety of regional games.

This year the programme sought to identify talented footballers born in 2007 and 2008 across all 11 local council areas. The programme was open to boys and girls and each region aims for 25% of participants to be female.



The purpose of the programme is to provide a quality structured coaching environment that will provide a platform to best equip participants to graduate into the Irish FA Girls Excellence or Club NI programmes.

Speaking about the conclusion of the programme, Schools and Futsal manager Jonathan Michael said, “It has been another successful year for our Player Development Programme and the National Festival event is really a celebration for the players. It is evident that their hard work and perseverance is having a positive impact on their technical ability and game awareness.” He added, “I would like to thank our Let Them Play Officers who provide this excellent support to the players throughout the year. Their knowledge, enthusiasm and passion for development is what makes this programme successful.”

The Irish FA Foundation plan to review the programme over the summer months and will launch a new Player Development Programme for 2009 and 2008 born players next season. Even greater numbers of players across Northern Ireland will have an opportunity to learn from the UEFA qualified staff and develop their potential for future Irish FA talent programmes.

## Football For All Schools Programme

### Translink Schools Gold Cup Launch

**The Irish FA are delighted to announce that the Translink Schools Gold Cup will be running again this year. The competition proved a major success last year with Our Lady & St Patrick's Knock narrowly defeating St Columb's College on points on the final's day.**



The Translink Schools' Gold Cup involves the only eight post-primary schools who have been awarded the Gold Schools Quality Mark accreditation by the Irish FA Foundation.

The Schools Quality Mark accreditation supports schools to put structures in place to develop football. The competition involving schools playing each other across three age groups (U13, U15, U17).

Schools will again be ranked by their performances over all age groups with one school winning the Translink Gold Cup and claiming 'Top Football Performance School' status in Northern Ireland.

The Irish FA are delighted that Translink are again the sponsor and transport provider for the competition.

Michael Boyd, Director of Football Development in the Irish FA Foundation, said: "It is fantastic that Translink have renewed the sponsorship this year. The Schools Quality Mark is a vital aspect of the Irish FA's 'Let them play' strategy and this competition celebrates schools that have worked hard to ensure participants have the best opportunity to play football in schools.

"Last year competition provided some enthralling football all culminating in a fantastic final's day for all involved. I feel that this year the competition will exceed all expectation and look forward to the start in September."

Chris Conway, Translink Group Chief Executive, said: "As the main school transport provider in Northern Ireland, we're committed to supporting pupil development and wellbeing. In particular, we value the importance of promoting an active and healthy lifestyle – something this competition is all about. After the fantastic success of the inaugural competition, I think we can all expect even more end-to-end action, talent and all-round good sportsmanship.

"I'd like to thank the Irish FA for working in partnership with Translink to deliver this fantastic initiative. I'd also like to pay tribute to all the coaches who train, motivate and inspire their players to be the best they can be. Good Luck to all the teams - I hope you enjoy another fantastic competition!"

# Futsal

## Domestic Futsal

### **Sparta Belfast Crowned Northern Ireland Futsal Cup Winners.**

**Newry Leisure Centre was the venue for the Northern Ireland Futsal Cup final between Sparta Belfast and Belfast United.**

Both teams were hoping to build upon their strong league performances which could still see them both crowned league champions.

This cup was a thrilling game with both sides creating early chances. Belfast United defender Kris Lindsay was sent off for a deliberate hand ball in the penalty area. The resulting 6m penalty was missed by Sparta's Luis Marcote. Sparta Belfast did take the lead moments later when Darius Roohi's shot was deflected by Matthew McErlain in the Belfast United goal.



Belfast United got back into the game when Sparta's Erenstas Verenka was judged to have handled the ball in the penalty area. Craig Taylor converted the 6m penalty. In an incredibly physical contest, both teams saw their foul count rise early in the first half. Sparta Belfast were the first to concede a sixth foul and Craig Taylor took the ball to take the resulting 10m spot kick. Horatiu Puica in the Sparta goal pulled off a good save to keep the scores at 1v1.

Sparta came close again to taking the lead as Verenka hit the ball from a wide left position. Craig Taylor's foul on Darius Roohi resulted in Belfast United conceding a sixth foul. This time Marcote did not miss to give Sparta Belfast a 2v1 lead into half time.

In the second half Sparta Belfast scored first through Roohi again. The Northern Ireland International was clinical in front of goal after great work from Marcote to create the opening. McErlain in the Belfast United goal made a succession of saves to keep his Belfast United side in the tie. However, the pressure kept coming and a great solo effort from Luis Marcote gave Sparta a 4v1 lead.

Jonny Pierce pulled one back for Belfast United, but Josh Lowry sealed the victory for Sparta Belfast who capitalised on an excellent lay off pass from Verenka. The final buzzer sounded with Sparta Belfast running out 5v2 winners and worthy Champions relating the Northern Ireland Futsal Cup for a second time.

The rivalry will continue in the coming weeks in the league campaign as both teams may have to meet in a final play off game to decide the league title.



## International Futsal

### Male and Female Futsal Internationals Recognised in Caps Ceremony

**The Irish FA Foundation has presented international caps to Northern Ireland's male and female squads.**

The male squad have participated in twenty-two International games whilst the female squad have competed in five matches. The male players started back in December 2016 making their bow at the Futsal Home Nations Championships in Wales. The females started in August 2018 at the European Championship Preliminary Round in Newry.

The caps presentation ceremony was held at the Stormont Hotel and both the achievements of the squads and backroom staff were celebrated. The event also highlighted the rapid development of the sport here in the past three years.

Irish FA President David Martin presented the players with their caps and also spoke about the work that was being delivered to grow the game in Northern Ireland.

He said, "The Association has fully embraced this new version of the game and as I go around visiting school tournaments and club games, as well as International games, it is wonderful to see how much it has grown already. I look forward to seeing the continuous development of Futsal at all levels. It is a pleasure to be able to present the caps to this ground breaking group of players."



Senior men's head coach Jonathan Michael said: "It has been wonderful to recognise the hard work, commitment and determination that goes into performing at the highest level and to congratulate the players on their achievements. I hope that their experiences and influence will inspire many more to become involved in the game."

Senior women's head coach Keith Gibson said, "Since the team started 18 months ago the level of commitment shown by these players has been impressive. To learn the game and develop their skill levels to be able to compete against Sweden, Belgium and the Netherlands was incredible. These players are great role models and fully deserved their recognition from the Association tonight. I look forward to seeing them develop the female game here in Northern Ireland further."



Jonathan added, "It is also important to thank the Irish FA and Irish FA Foundation for their support of Futsal over the past three years. They have championed the sport and continue to put it high on the agenda. I thank them and their boards for their continued backing and guidance."

The male squad will now focus their attention to preparations for the Home Nations Championships that will take place in England in December and then Euro Qualification in January 2020. The female squad will participate in warm up games against English club sides this summer and will participate in another Euro Qualification in May 2020.

## **NI Senior Women's Futsal team register double success against Gibraltar**

**Keith Gibson's side played two games away to Gibraltar – and they won both.**

In match one at the Tercentenary Centre the Northern Ireland team scored after just two minutes and went on to win 3-0. And in game two at the same venue they came from behind to secure a 3-2 victory.

Winger Beth McKay was the early scorer for Gibson's side in the first game. And forward Amber Dempster grabbed the second with nine minutes gone. Northern Ireland led 2-0 at half-time.

In the second period the game was pretty even, however Dempster pounced again to seal the win.

Gibraltar flew out of the blocks in the second game at the Tercentenary Centre and broke the deadlock after 11 minutes. And they increased their lead four minutes before the end of the first half.

Gibson's side staged a thrilling comeback in the final seven minutes of the game as Gibraltar began to tire. The comeback was triggered by a goal from winger Hannah Firth.

With three minutes to go Northern Ireland were back on level terms, Olivia Brown netting with a low drive.

And Brown proved to be the hero in the very last minute when she popped up to sweep home the winner.

## Electric Ireland Super Schools Football Festival

**The 2019 Electric Ireland Super Schools Football Festival attracted schools from all over Northern Ireland once again.**

With the Women's World Cup attracting great attention, it's no surprise there was extra excitement at the annual event which took place yesterday in Mallusk.

There were 1,200 schoolgirls competing across 314 matches at the biggest annual female football participation event in Northern Ireland. The tournament has been an annual event for the past five years where young aspiring female footballers compete in a 7-a-side competitions.



A total of 118 teams, representing 70 schools, took part in the large-scale tournament for teams featuring players from Years 8/9 and Years 10/11.

The school teams played in the group stage of the tournament with matches through to lunchtime before the group winners each progressed to the knock out stages after lunch.



Following dramatic quarter and semi-final contests involving several penalty shootouts, Holy Cross Strabane won the Under 13 competition beating Ballymoney High School 3-0 in the final and Ballyclare High School beat Ballymoney also in a closely contested 1-0 win to secure the Under 16 title.

The annual football festival is supported by Electric Ireland as part of the #GameChangers campaign, which aims to inspire the next generation of female footballers and get more women playing football.

Una Lavery, Northern Ireland Marketing Manager for Electric Ireland, commented: "It's fantastic to see that the football game is beginning to get the attention it deserves. The Game Changers campaign is really having an impact at all levels."

Irish FA Foundation Schools' Officer Jackie Blyth said: "I would like to thank the schools and teachers that take time out every year to bring the girls along to participate in the competition.

"Each year we have more and more schools coming from all over Northern Ireland with the standard of football improving with each competition. "

## Football & Social Responsibility

### Stay Onside

Focus has been back on the prisons for the Stay Onside team with courses completed at Hydebank, Magilligan and Maghaberry in May and June. This saw a total of 35 participants complete modules on coaching, futsal, mental health, safeguarding and teamwork.



The course at Hydebank was the first female course which was delivered by Gail Redmond, Clare Carson and Nadine Murphy. The participation on the course was one of the highest of any female programme with the positive feedback leading to further courses planned for 2019.

Funding has also been secured for community courses in Ballymena, Carrick and Larne as well as East Belfast.

We also partnered with Kick Off @ 3 to deliver a cross community tournament for various BME communities held at Midgeley Park. The tournament was a great success with an East Timorese from Dungannon securing the victory and a trip to the finals in London.

## Safeguarding

From January to June 2019 we carried out 18 safeguarding courses for club volunteers and five safeguarding courses for Club Welfare Officers.

Kevin Doyle represented the Irish FA at UEFA's Safeguarding Conference, Safeguarding Children in Sport Strategic Group and at the All Ireland Designated Officers Forum.



## Grassroots and Youth Development

### Nutty Krust Irish FA Foundation Football Camps

#### Record number of girls at Easter Football Camps

The Irish FA Foundation is delighted that a record number of girls attended his year's Nutty Krust Irish FA Easter Football Camps. 298 girls aged 5-13 attended the camps, several of which once again included girls only sections.

Participation among girls has increased by over 200% since 2014 with a 70% increase on last year alone. This year also saw another successful girls only Easter Football Camp take place at Crossgar, and more girls only camps and sections are planned for the summer.

The camps are a major part of the Irish FA Foundation's Let Them Play Strategy and by 2024 the Irish FA hopes to double the number of registered female players from 1,600 to 3,200.



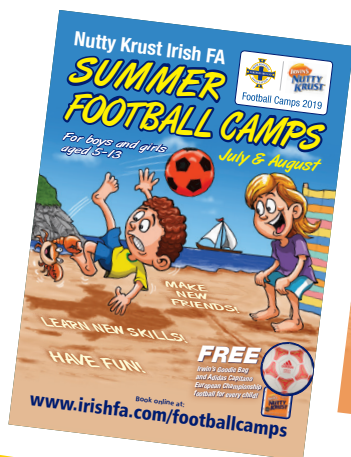
#### Applications live for Summer Football Camps

Applications are now live for the Nutty Krust Irish FA Summer Football Camps which will be held in 65 locations across Northern Ireland.

The five-day camps will take place throughout July and August following on from record numbers attending our Easter Football Camps. As well as enjoying five days of top top class coaching, children aged 5-13 will learn new skills, make new friends and above all have fun.

We are also running a girls only camp and six of the camps have girls only sections.

On top of this there will be 16 Summer Goalkeeping Camps across Northern Ireland and each child attending a Nutty Krust Irish FA Foundation Summer Football or Goalkeeping Camp will receive a Nutty Krust goodie bag and an Adidas Capitano European Championship football.



## McDonald's Fun Football

### National McDonald's Fun Football Festival

**Children from across Northern Ireland attended the National Football Stadium at Windsor Park to play on the pitch and participate in an exciting and unique Fun Football Festival.**

From skills and drills to bouncy castles and music there was something for all the family at this major Irish FA Foundation event in association with McDonald's.

The event was part of the McDonald's Irish FA four-year partnership which will run until 2022. Fun Football Festivals are a core element of the programme along with Fun Football Sessions and the annual Grassroots Football Awards.

McDonald's is now the longest-standing supporter of grassroots football across the UK, with 2019 marking 17 years in partnership. Free Fun Football festivals and sessions are designed to introduce thousands of children, aged 5-11, regardless of gender or disability to football and will deliver 250,000 hours of coaching, games and fun to more than 75,000 children from across Northern Ireland.

National McDonald's



## Girls' and Women's Football

The Irish FA Foundation 'Stay Onside' Programme completed its first ever women's programme at Hydebank Wood college with special guests Marissa Callaghan (Northern Ireland Women's Captain) and Eliza Downing (Ulster Rugby player).

14 female participants graduated from programme which included various football and life skills workshops.

It is hoped that a number of these participants will progress to one of our community programmes where participants complete their Level 1 Coaching Award, Referee & Respect Workshop and develop their interview and presentation skills.

The Irish FA Foundation is proud to partner with the Department of Justice, PSNI and NI Prison Service in providing a programme that has a real impact on the lives of the participants and the communities that they live in.

