

Irish FA Disability Strategic Plan 2016-2020



**LET THEM
PLAY**



Foreword

The Irish FA are proud to present the 2016 – 2020 Disability Strategy. This strategy will meet the disability targets presented in the Irish FA Corporate Strategy “We’re not Brazil, We’re Northern Ireland” and the Youth Strategy “Let Them Play”. The Irish FA believe in ‘Football For All’ and are committed to building a football environment in Northern Ireland where people with disabilities have the same opportunity as non-disabled people.

We will strive to give those with a disability the opportunity to participate in schools, to become a member of a football club, to play in regular structured competitive opportunities and to create pathways for talented players to play representative football. We will support the development of the many opportunities created by our stakeholders and provide accessible coach education that improves the services provided to those with a disability across Northern Ireland. We will work with clubs and disability organisations to improve the experience of the spectator with a disability. We believe this document will contribute to building a more inclusive society where people with disabilities have the same opportunity as non-disabled people to lead a full, active and healthy lifestyle through sport.

This strategy is the result of consultation, planning and development with many valued stakeholders in the disability sector and is endorsed by Disability Sport NI, the key body responsible for the development of sport and active recreation opportunities for people with disabilities in Northern Ireland. The Irish FA would like to thank Disability Sport NI and our partners for their support in the development of this strategy.

The Irish FA are confident that this strategy will complement “Let Them Play” and this document will create, develop and support opportunities for those with a disability to participate in The Beautiful Game at all levels across Northern Ireland.



Patrick Nelson
Irish FA Chief Executive



David Martin
Irish FA President



Michael Boyd
Irish FA Director of
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Vision

To create an inclusive football environment in Northern Ireland where people with disabilities have the opportunity to participate, compete and excel at a level of their choice. To be the leading sport in Northern Ireland in terms of the provision of opportunities for those with a disability.

Introduction

The Irish FA has created opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in football activities for the past 20 years. A full-time disability football development officer has been employed by the Association in Football Development since 1995. During this time, we have seen participation numbers increase from around 400 people with a disability involved in football programs in 1995 to 5360 in 2015. Initially, opportunities were created and developed in special education and specifically for those with a learning disability. From 2003 opportunities were created for those with a physical disability and for those with a sensory impairment. Disability specific coach education courses were created and developed to support this increase in participation.

Over the past 20 years we have witnessed participation increase, the development of competitive opportunities and the development and success of several impairment specific programs including Learning Disability, Visual Impairment, Deaf, Cerebral Palsy and Powerchair Football. Over 800 coaches have passed the IFA Level 1 Coaching Disabled Footballers Award.

There are good disability football programs in place across Northern Ireland but there remains a gulf in provision at local level for those with a disability in comparison for non-disabled people. There are barriers in place preventing people with disabilities access to local football opportunities. This is not an issue isolated to football. The DCAL Continuous Household Survey 2014/15 highlighted that disabled people are less than half as likely to participate in sport, half as likely to be a member of a sports club and half as likely to attend a live sports event in Northern Ireland, compared to non-disabled people.

We believe that the "Let Them Play" Youth Strategy and the 2016 – 2020 Disability Strategy and specifically the integration of disability provision across all areas of football development will be the vehicle we can use to address these barriers. We will strive to create a more inclusive football environment in Northern Ireland, supporting the 'Football For All' ethos of the Association.

Strategic Context



Corporate & Youth Strategy

- Qualify for a Major Tournament
- Foster a balanced, flourishing senior domestic game
- Create a healthy game at all levels
- Reach beyond the game
- Build a culture of lifelong participation in football



Sport Matters

- Promote sport & physical recreation as a primary health improvement tool
- A world class start and lifelong involvement in sport and physical recreation for all people
- World class performance by teams and individuals
- A sustainable sporting and physical recreation culture that contributes to broader government objectives



Programme for Government

- Creating opportunities and tackling disadvantage
- Improving health and well-being
- Building a strong and shared community



UEFA Charter Mark

- Football should not be exclusive to any particular groups or individuals – UEFA believes football should be ‘for all’. UEFA points to football as a tool for broadening the inclusion of players of all abilities and marginalised or excluded groups, with the associated social benefits that would bring.



Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020

- A more equal and inclusive society, where more people with disabilities routinely participate, compete and excel in sport and recreation at a level of their choice.
- The improved health and wellbeing of people with disabilities.

Objective 1 – Increase Participation by 10% by 2020

Increase participation across Northern Ireland for those with a disability in high class, well structured football opportunities.

Education

Target	Delivery Partner Internal	Delivery Partner External
Free Coaching in Special Education throughout Northern Ireland	Primary School Coaches (PSC)	Department of Education Northern Ireland (DENI)
Develop School/Clubs Links	PSC Regional Grassroots Development Officers (RGDO) Northern Ireland Boys Football Association (NIBFA) Northern Ireland Schools Football Association (NISFA) Northern Ireland Womens Football Association (NIWFA)	DENI Northern Ireland Football League (NIFL) Disability Football Clubs Special Olympics Ulster Mencap Disability Sport Northern Ireland (DSNI)
Engage those with a Disability in Mainstream Education into Disability Football Programmes	PSC RGDO Football For All School Officers (FFASO)	DENI
Festivals (10 per annum) Bringing pupils of similar age and ability together on an annual basis SLD – Primary, 8 - 10 & 11+ MLD – Primary, 8 - 10 & 11+ Deaf – Primary & Secondary VI – Primary & Secondary Wheelchair Users Ambulant Physical Disabilities March/April	PSC RGDO FFASO	DENI Disability Football Clubs Special Olympics Ulster Mencap Disability Sport Northern Ireland (DSNI) Royal National Institute Blind (RNIB) Action on Hearing Loss (AOHL) Impairment Specific Organisations eg Autism NI



Clubs

Target	Delivery Partner Internal	Delivery Partner External
Inclusive Clubs Develop existing Football Clubs to introduce a Disability Section (20 inclusive clubs across NI by 2020)	Club Development Officer (CDO) RGDO NIBFA Coach Education	Clubs NIFL
Develop existing Disability Football Clubs 55 Clubs delivering weekly provision for those with a disability by 2020	CDO RGDO Volunteer Development Officer (VDO) Coach Education	Clubs Special Olympics Ulster Mencap DSNI
Introduce impairment specific clubs in areas of need across Northern Ireland 2 additional Powerchair Clubs by 2020 (Fermanagh & Derry) 1 additional VI Club by 2020 (Derry) 1 Amputee Club by 2020 (Belfast) Blind Section to Lisburn VI Club by 2020	CDO RGDO	Association of Irish Powerchair Football (AIPF) RNIB Musgrave Park Hospital Army FAI(Amputee)
Introduce Mental Health Programme/ Sections with NIFL Clubs 2 by 2017 4 by 2018 6 by 2019 8 by 2020	CDO RGDO VDO	NIFL Mental Health Organisations and Government Agencies
Walking Football / Danderball Assist the delivery and development of existing walking football programs. Assist the formation, delivery and development of additional programs in areas of need	Volunteers	Councils

By 2020

- 55 Clubs across Northern Ireland
- 13 Learning Disability (Special Olympics / Mencap)
- 25 Learning and/or ambulant physical disability
- 4 Powerchair
- 3 Visual Impairment (including 1 Blind Section)
- 1 Deaf
- 1 Amputee
- 8 Mental Health



Objective 2 - Competition

Create and develop competition structures that mirror the opportunities in the mainstream sector

Competition		Delivery Partner Internal	Delivery Partner External
Schools	National 5-a-side SLD Indoor Cup(3) Primary YRS 8 – 10 Yrs 11 + November/December	PSC NISFA FFASO VDO	DENI
Schools	National MLD Futsal Cup(3) Primary YRS 8 – 10 Yrs 11 + November/December	PSC NISFA FFASO VDO Futsal	DENI
Schools	Let Them Play FA Cup - Outdoor SLD Schools Yrs 8 – 10 Yrs 11 + May	PSC NISFA FFASO VDO	DENI
Schools	MLD National 7-a-side Games – Outdoor Primary Yrs 8 – 10 Yrs 11 + May	PSC NISFA FFASO VDO	DENI
Clubs	Regional Leagues(2) Belfast & Cookstown Ages 7 – 14(5-a-side) Ages 15+(5-a-side) Monthly each age group September to May	RGDO VDO	Clubs Special Olympics Mencap
Clubs	George Best Community Cup International Disability Football Club Cup Competition Ages 15+	Football Development	Mary Peters Trust Council University
Clubs	Let Them Play National Games – Outdoor Ages 7 - 14	Football Development	Clubs Special Olympics Mencap
Deaf	Futsal League Inclusion Belfast Deaf UTD/NI Deaf Futsal Ulster Deaf Ladies	FFASO Futsal	AOHL
Deaf	National Deaf Childrens Society(NDCS) Youth Cups Belfast Deaf United	Disability	AOHL
Deaf	Mainstream League Inclusion Belfast Deaf UTD	Disability	AOHL League

Competition		Delivery Partner Internal	Delivery Partner External
Deaf	British Deaf Cup Belfast Deaf UTD	Disability	AOHL British Deaf Sport
Visual Impairment	Futsal League Inclusion Lisburn VI Club	FFASO Futsal	RNIB
Visual Impairment	UK VI League & Cup	FFASO Futsal	RNIB
Powerchair	AIPF League Inclusion Trailblazers Lightning	FFASO	AIPF
Referees	Annual Training of 10 interested and/or recommended referees for adapted games Database of 50 Referees by 2020	Referee Development	IPF AOHL RNIB

By 2020 Every Club will play in Monthly Leagues for ages 7-14 and ages 15+

By 2020 Each Impairment Specific Club will play in a League and/or Cup that suits their ability, whether that be in Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland or The UK



Objective 3 – Coach Education

Improve the delivery of services to those with a disability involved in football activities

Course	Course Details	Annual Numbers	Course Development
IFA Level 1 Coaching Disabled Footballers Award (CDFA)	4 hours 3 hours theory 1 hour practical with players with a disability	96	Resources – presentation, media content, book, online pre-requisite theory
IFA Level 2 CDFA	15 hours tuition 5 hours theory 10 hours practical 10 hours recorded learning	24	Resources – presentation, media content, equipment
IFA C Certificate UEFA B License Part 1	2 Hour Module 1 hour theory 1 hour practical	100	Resources – presentation, media content, resource pack
Coach with a Disability Advancement Programme	Half-Price Course Fees for interested and recommended coaches with a disability	5	Talent ID Selection Process
Online Support	Information, videos and resources on IFA Website for coaches to access: Disability Awareness Sharing best practice Sessions		Content Awareness



Objective 4 – Representation

Create pathways for elite players with a disability to represent Northern Ireland on a platform to perform

By 2020 Every Northern Ireland Disability Squad will have access to:

International Kit, Teamwear & Equipment

Sports Science Support

Staff – Manager, Head Coach, Asst. Coach, GK Coach, Doctor and Physiotherapist

Recognition – Annual International Cap Presentation

Marketing & Communication Support

Impairment	Squad	Competition	Components
Learning Disability	U 19	Annual Home Nations Championships April	Trials – Sept/October Preparation – November – March
Cerebral Palsy	Senior	2016 World Championships Qualification - Denmark 2017 World Championships - Argentina 2018 European Championships 2019 World Cup	Fortnightly Coaching Monthly Regional League 2 Day Camps, twice per year
Cerebral Palsy	Junior	Annual Home Nations Championships Starting 2017	Fortnightly Coaching
Deaf Futsal	Senior	Annual Home Nations Championships Starting 2017 International competition from 2018	Weekly Coaching Futsal League
Powerchair	Senior	2016 – start Talent ID through invitational Games with the aim of developing a representative squad by 2020	Monthly Invitational Games starting September 2016

Objective 5 – The Spectator with a Disability

Improve the experience of the spectator with a disability

Area	Objective	Partners
Domestic	To work with Senior Clubs to improve facilities, increase awareness of staff and develop links with local SEN Schools, Clubs and Disability Organisations	Disability Sport NI NIFL
International	To work with the International Department and SDC in raising awareness of available facilities, increasing awareness of staff and increasing attendance by those with a disability across all levels of international football	Disability Sport NI Stadium Development Committee



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