

IRISH FA FOUNDATION ANNUAL REPORT



2019



Foundation

Objectives and activities

The charity's objectives are:



1

To advance amateur football, youth football, schools' football and futsal in accordance with the remit of the Irish Football Association, for the benefit of the general public in any part of Northern Ireland.



2

To advance the health and wellbeing of the people of Northern Ireland by leading on the development of a Northern Ireland-wide football and positive mental health campaign for men and women.



3

To advance education by providing work experience and support to educational establishments and extra-curricular educational groups (targeting young people including those not in education or employment [NEETs] and areas of social need).



4

To adopt an inclusive approach so that all members of the community have access to our initiatives, regardless of background, gender, religion, politics, race or sexual orientation, in support of the wider charitable objectives of the Irish Football Association.

Success indicators used to assess performance are dictated by the key objectives and targets set out in the Irish Football Association Let Them Play youth football strategy which covers the charitable objectives of the foundation.

Target one – Participation and Football For All

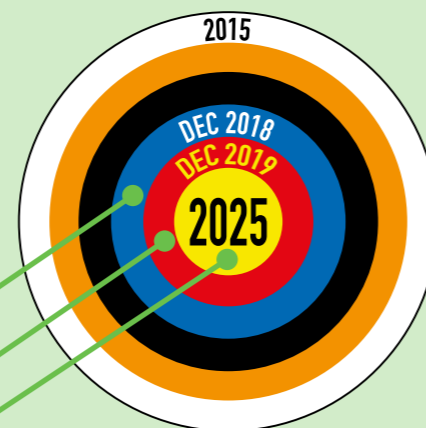
Increase youth football participation rates by 100% by 2025, from 50,000 in 2015 to 100,000 by 2020.

2015: **50,000** participants

December 2018: **72,000**

December 2019: **77,300**

2025 target: **100,000**



Target two – Schools and Colleges

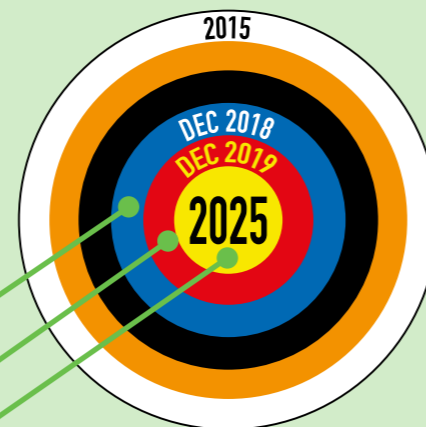
Revamp schools' and colleges' football by increasing the percentage of schools where football is played from 45% in 2015 to 90% by 2020 and increase the amount of young people playing in schools and colleges across Northern Ireland from 25,000 in 2015 to 40,000 by 2020.

2015: **25,000** young people playing in schools

December 2018: **29,230**

December 2019: **36,191**

2025 target: **60,000**



Target three – Club and Volunteer Development

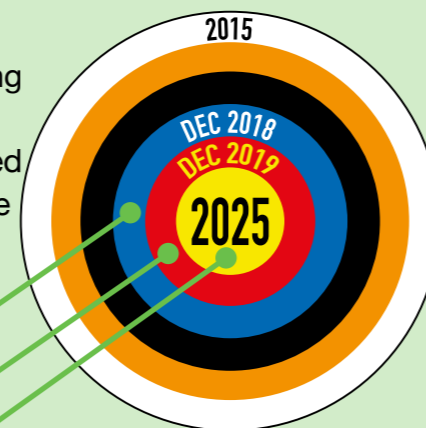
To embed a culture of club and volunteer development at grassroots level by 2020 that creates a fun, safe and inclusive environment throughout youth football. Supporting the development of youth football clubs that are run and managed by qualified, committed and Access NI authorised volunteers who encourage parents and young people to be attracted to and remain in the sport.

2015: **41** Accredited clubs / **50** volunteers

December 2018: **134 / 194**

December 2019: **141 / 280**

2025 target: **300 / 500**



Public Benefit

The foundation has complied with its duty under the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

The trustees are fully aware of the requirements of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and are operating entirely within the legislation.

It is the opinion of the trustees that this report demonstrates how the foundation provides public benefit.

Achievements and performance

The variety and breadth of our community football programme empowered many clubs, volunteers and key stakeholders to deliver life-changing and life-enhancing programmes for tens of thousands of people, from four years old to pensioner and across the social and economic spectrum in Northern Ireland.

2019 was the fifth active year implementing the Irish FA's 10-year Let Them Play youth strategy. Most targets were met and in some areas exceeded. The achievements reflected the Irish FA's core values and its vision to promote, foster and develop football for all in Northern Ireland.



Progress made against charitable objectives of the Irish FA Foundation

1 The advancement of amateur football, youth football, schools' football and futsal in accordance with the remit of the Irish Football Association:

Overview

The Irish FA Foundation is on track to deliver on targets set in Let Them Play with youth football participation rates currently at approximately 77,000. The Irish FA Foundation is also delivering on the Irish FA Disability Football Plan and Game Changer Futsal Plan with over 2,500 new players involved in futsal and 5,000 people with a disability playing football in our programmes by end of 2019. Furthermore, the Irish FA Foundation delivers Irish FA Club Marks and School Quality Marks all over the country, building the capacity of amateur, youth and schools' football with approximately 35,000 young people benefiting on a regular basis. The Irish FA Foundation staff manage more than 50 venues across the country, delivering our Small-Sided Games Development Centres with more than 14,000 children between the ages of four and 13 playing on a weekly basis.

Amateur Game

The Irish FA Foundation secured support from the UEFA Grow Team to develop an Irish FA Amateur Game Development Plan for Northern Ireland in 2019 and to recruit a new Amateur Football Game Developer. This new plan – the first of its kind – is now ready to be rolled out in 2020 with support from a new Amateur Game Sub-Group set up by the Irish FA Football Committee to guide progress.

Youth Football

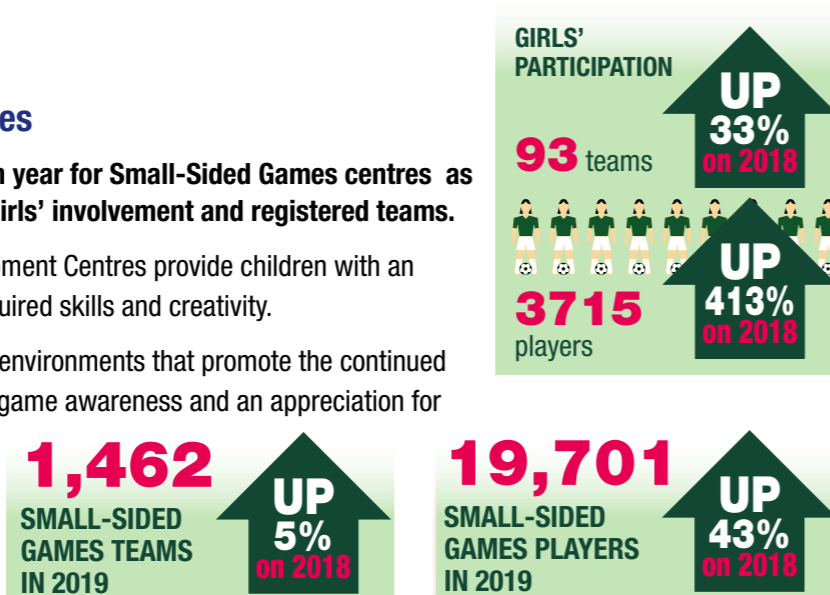
McDonald's Small-Sided Games

2019 was another record participation year for Small-Sided Games centres as numbers reached new highs both in girls' involvement and registered teams.

McDonald's Small-Sided Games Development Centres provide children with an opportunity to showcase their newly acquired skills and creativity.

The aim is to provide training and game environments that promote the continued improvement of ball skills, an increased game awareness and an appreciation for taking calculated risks in attack.

Together with indoor winter futsal centres the number of children taking part in 2019 exceeded **19,000**.



McDonald's Fun Football

2019 saw the continuation of our highly successful partnership with McDonald's Football UK.



The year began with the launch of the McDonald's Fun Football programme and the delivery of Fun Football coaching sessions in 12 venues across Northern Ireland. Senior men's international manager Michael O'Neill launched the new programme at Olympia Leisure Centre in Belfast.

Every child who attends Fun Football receives a free football and a fun activity book. Fun Football sessions are designed to attract children aged 4-8 who are not with clubs or who are trying football for the first time.

In 2019 we delivered sessions across 23 venues and introduced almost 500 children to football.

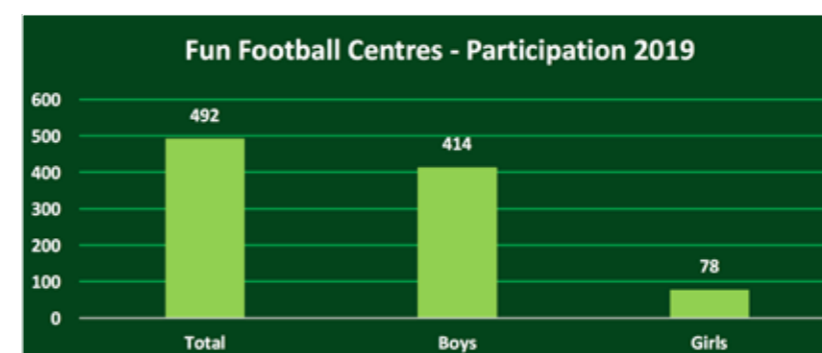
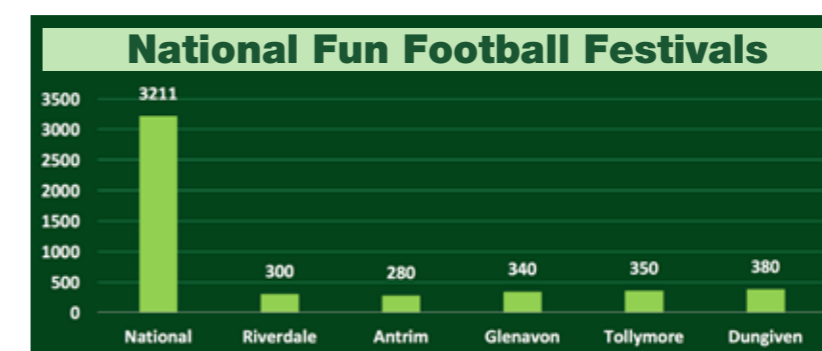
The National Football Stadium at Windsor Park hosted two high profile events at which our long standing partnership with McDonald's was promoted.



The first was a Royal visit in February by the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, who talked with participating children and joined in with the games.

Then, in May, the stadium hosted our showpiece National Fun Football Festival. The day was a huge success and will again be a feature in 2020.

Six regional Fun Football Festivals took place across Northern Ireland. Almost 5000 children along with mums, dads and families tried our inflatable football challenges and took part in fun football coaching sessions.



Football Camps

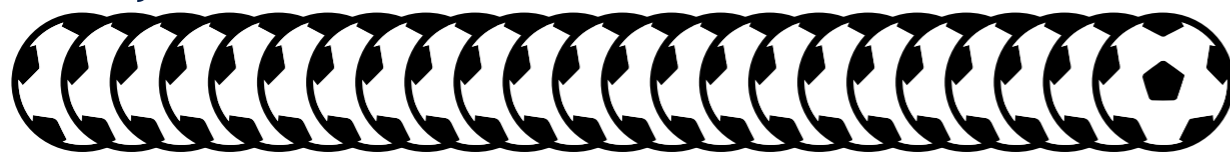
2019 saw a **RECORD NUMBER OF CHILDREN** taking part in our Irish FA Football Camps.



154 Nutty Krust Irish FA Football Camps took place over Easter, summer and Halloween with the total number of participants up nearly 10% on the previous record of 7,693, set in 2016 when Northern Ireland qualified for the European Championship finals in France.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN IRISH FA FOOTBALL CAMPS 2019

Total **8,447**



Boys **7,411**



Girls **1,036**



Easter 2019

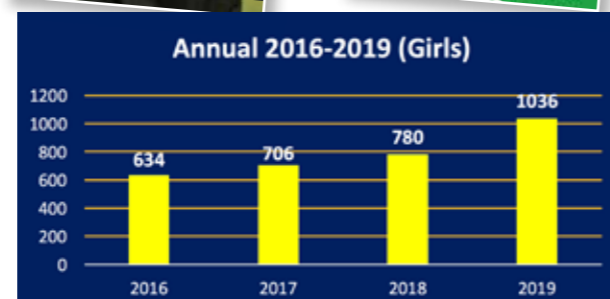
33 FOOTBALL CAMPS
1953 BOYS **296** GIRLS

Summer 2019

90 FOOTBALL CAMPS
4103 BOYS **534** GIRLS

Halloween 2019

31 FOOTBALL CAMPS
1355 BOYS **206** GIRLS



Club and Volunteer Development

People & Clubs

The Irish FA Foundation launched a new programme for clubs and volunteers across Northern Ireland in 2019.

The People & Clubs programme was created following a large and wide-ranging research project that consulted with clubs and volunteers, volunteer organisations, universities, other football associations, councils and more.



The innovative initiative for clubs by clubs includes a new club portal for clubs to complete their club accreditation, downloadable resources, case studies, workshops, club education and a new national youth leaders programme.



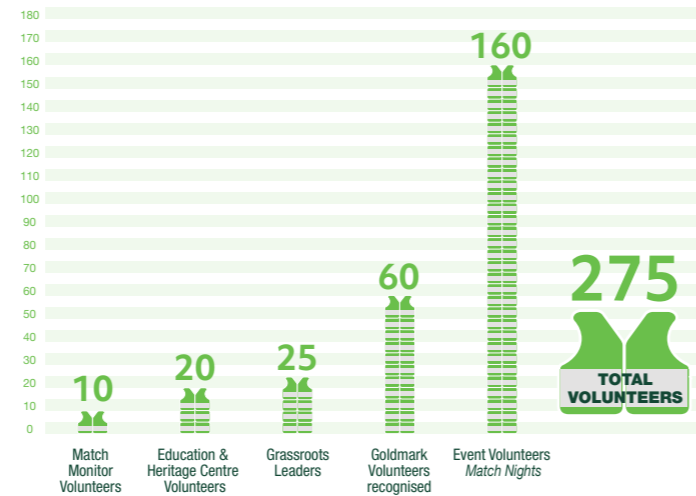
Focusing on club development, club operations and people development, it is aimed at supporting the circa 700 clubs and more than 7000 volunteers who contribute daily to football in Northern Ireland. And the plan and its implementation are designed to support clubs to provide the best possible experience for players and volunteers alike.

The Irish FA Foundation recruited a team of Grassroots Leaders to assist clubs nationwide and help with the accreditation process. They also provide support via workshops and club mentoring. The Grassroots Leaders also receive specific training and personal development to assist them with their own development.

Volunteer Development

The Grassroots Volunteer Programme aims to develop volunteers in Football Community Hubs.

The 12 Football Community Hubs currently being introduced across Northern Ireland aim to provide councils and communities with a more integrated approach to developing football on a local basis. Volunteer Development Programme Officers will train the volunteers and provide support, enabling them to deliver bespoke training to club volunteers and allow clubs opportunities to engage in Irish FA workshops. The volunteers recruited will be pivotal in improving the links with schools, communities and clubs in each council area. Currently there are 18 volunteers recruited across the hubs and the process is continuing.



DfC Sport – A Home for Lifelong Volunteering

It was another productive year within the Department for Communities programme Sport – A Home for Lifelong Volunteering as record number of clubs and volunteers were involved in conjunction with Ulster GAA & Ulster Rugby.

The Goldmark Awards ceremony was extremely successful as the Irish FA recognised **50 volunteers** aged 16-24 for their volunteering contribution. The Irish FA, Ulster GAA and Ulster Rugby welcomed Pat McGibbon, former Manchester United, Wigan Athletic and Northern Ireland star, Niall Grimley, Armagh GAA ace and Ireland International Rules player, and Stuart McCloskey, current Ulster & Ireland international rugby player, to present certificates.



Sport - A Home For Lifelong Volunteering

- 275** Governing body placements
- 15** Clubs supported to achieve Clubmark accreditation
- 208** Club volunteers engaged in training
- 47** Young People mentored in Millennium Volunteers Goldmark Award

Joint 'Inclusion Charter' agreed & delivered across programme partners

Peace IV

Year two of Sport Uniting Communities was hugely successful with over 5,200 participants engaged across various programmes including:

- Game of 3 Halves
- Club Development Sport for Peace Days
- Volunteer Development Programme
- Getting to Know the Irish FA stadium tours

Sport Uniting Communities

Peace Northern Ireland - Ireland

In November the PEACE IV Sport Uniting Communities project held its annual Goldmark Event to celebrate young volunteers in sport at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Belfast with over 100 attendees.

The Goldmark certificates were presented by Jane Gribbin from Volunteer Now to all the volunteers from the 45 clubs that engaged in the Volunteer Development Programme in 2019.

We hope to continue in 2020 to bring people together using the unifying power of sport.

OVER 5,200 PARTICIPANTS

45 CLUBS ENGAGED

Futsal Development

Primary Schools Futsal

The Irish FA Foundation this year organised 13 regional futsal tournaments across Northern Ireland. Ninety-five schools and over 1,500 pupils participated with two schools from the Belfast area crowned this year's Northern Ireland futsal champions.

St Bernard's Primary School from the east of the city and Dunmurry-based Christ The Redeemer won the boys' and girls' national futsal finals respectively at Antrim Forum.

Thirteen girls' teams from schools across Northern Ireland converged on Antrim as regional winners with a chance of being crowned national champions.

Following a series of group games Lurgan's King's Park PS, Christ The Redeemer, last year's winners St Patrick's Saul (Downpatrick) and Carniny PS from Ballymena advanced to the semi-finals stage.

King's Park defeated St Patrick's 2-0 in the first semi-final while the second went to penalties after the teams were deadlocked at the final whistle and it was Christ The Redeemer who advanced to the final.



The final was another close encounter and the teams could not be separated in regulation time, so Christ The Redeemer had to successfully navigate penalties once more to be crowned champions. St Bernard's were victorious in the boys' national finals competition after playing some exciting futsal and remaining undefeated on the day at Antrim Forum. Their biggest challenge came at the semi-final stage against King's Park Primary. It was an end to end game and St Bernard's eventually won it 5-3. Braniel PS overcame St Columba's PS (Kilrea) in the other semi-final. The final was a close affair. Braniel just fell short in the end against their near neighbours and St Bernard's ran out worthy champions.

OVER
5,200
PARTICIPANTS

195
SCHOOLS

13
REGIONAL
TOURNAMENTS

Post-primary Futsal

The Irish FA Futsal Finals were held for post-primary boys and girls at Antrim Forum on 20 and 21 November. Post-primary futsal competitions had over 2,000 participants and 200 teams being introduced to futsal with the winners of 12 regional tournaments competing at the national finals.

The girls' competition saw Tandragee JHS defeat Abbey Community College on penalties in the year nine section and Ballyclare Secondary School defeat St Cecilia's in the year 11 competition. The boys' competition was very competitive with previous winners Boys' Model retaining the year 11 trophy after defeating St Columba's College, Derry-Londonderry and Bangor Academy defeating Boys' Model in the year nine final.



Domestic Futsal

The men's Northern Ireland Futsal League concluded for the first time ever with a play-off in the 2018/19 season. Sparta Belfast and Belfast United could not be separated over the league season and the league was decided in a winner-takes-all final game. Sparta Belfast proved too strong for a resilient Belfast United side who were aiming for their third title in three seasons. Sparta Belfast also won the domestic cup and represented Northern Ireland in the UEFA Futsal Champions League in Austria, playing against league champions from Greece, Germany and Austria.



The women's league continued to grow in 2019 with 24 clubs competing in the senior competition. Crusaders were crowned deserved champions but the league showed great signs of improvement. It is envisaged that the programme will continue to grow in 2020 with more players challenging for international places in the future.

International Futsal



In 2019 the Northern Ireland male futsal squad participated in eight matches, recording victories against Malta, Scotland and Gibraltar. In early January the squad hosted Malta in Newry for two games which acted as preparation for the squad's first ever participation in FIFA Futsal World Cup qualifiers in Moldova, where they faced Finland, Wales and Moldova. The squad concluded the year with the Home Nations Championships at St George's Park in England. Victory on the final day against Scotland saw Northern Ireland finish in their highest ever position and scoring 12 goals over the three games.

The female international futsal squad played in a number of friendly games against club opposition from England, Wales and Scotland. The team then travelled to Gibraltar at the end of the year to participate in their first ever friendly international games. Northern Ireland recorded two victories and will look to build on this improvement when they compete in UEFA Euro qualifiers in May 2020.



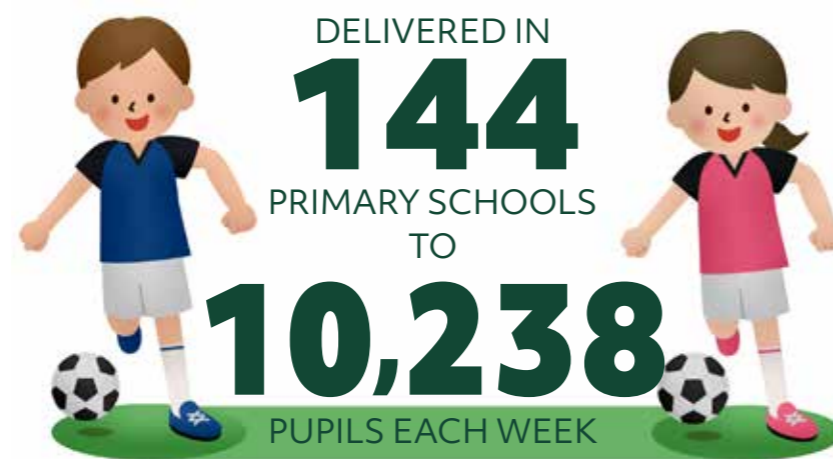
Schools' Football

School teams provide a plethora of opportunities for primary and post-primary children each year in participation and competition-based programmes. The programmes assist in the development of school children and provide much needed opportunities to develop social skills.

The DENI funded sports programme was delivered in 144 primary schools.

Approximately 431 sessions were delivered to 10,238 children each week. Coaches engaged with more than 430 teachers to ensure sessions were linked to other curricular areas throughout the academic year.

In partnership with the Education Authority coaches also delivered a new shared education programme alongside Ulster GAA: Shared Future and Shared Goals. Coaches worked with 24 teachers and schools, and with 623 participants each week. They helped children build an awareness of the importance of a healthy diet and active lifestyle as well as develop resilience and mental toughness through practical games and classroom-based activities.



Northern Ireland Schools' FA Competitions

The Northern Ireland Schools' Cup competitions provided some excellent entertainment in 2019 with schools across Northern Ireland competing at U12, U14, U16 and U18 level as well as in U13 and U15 small schools' tournaments. The winners of the competitions can be seen below:



Minor U12 Cup	St Columb's College	3 v 0	Lagan College
Minor U12 Plate	Edmund Rice College	7 v 0	Fivemiletown College
U13 Invitational Cup	CBGS (Omagh)	4 v 3	OL & St Patrick's
Small Schools U13 Cup	St Colm's (Draperstown)	4 v 3	Dunluce
Intermediate U14 Cup	St Columb's College	6 v 0	Holy Cross (Strabane)
Intermediate U14 Plate	Integrated College Dungannon	2 v 1	St Killian's College
Small Schools U15 Cup	St Colman's (Ballynahinch)	2 v 0	Newry High School
NISFA U16 Cup	Edmund Rice College	1 v 0	Model
NISFA U16 Plate	Regent House Regent won 4-2 on penalties	2 v 2	St Mary's (Magherafelt)
Danske Bank U18 Cup	St Malachy's College	3 v 1	De La Salle College
NISFA U18 Plate	Regent House	2 v 0	RBAI

Post-primary Schools

At post-primary level there were various opportunities to participate in both boys' and girls' competitions such as NISFA schools' competitions at regional and national level, Irish FA Junior and Senior Cup, 11-a-side, nine-a-side and Translink Schools' Cup. This year's girls' competition saw 45 schools and 68 teams entering with 1,300 participants, while 5,634 participants from 372 teams and 102 schools entered boys' competitions.

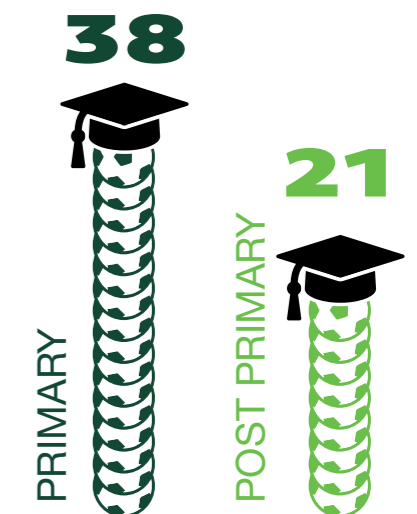


Mixed nine-a-side competition

In 2019 the Irish FA schools team hosted the annual mixed nine-a-side competition at Mallusk Playing Fields on Friday 22 November. A unique year nine competition saw single sex schools, such as last year's winners Boys' and Girls' Model, De La Salle and St Genevieve's and Bangor Grammar and St Louise's, combining to play together.

The competition saw over 360 pupils playing in 24 teams with the winners of each group advancing to the semi finals stage. The final between De La Salle & St Genevieve's and Banbridge High proved too close to call. Neither team scored in normal time so it was down to penalties with De La Salle missing their first two and Banbridge converting to win the trophy.

School Quality Mark



Accredited Schools 2018

The School Quality Mark accreditation is part of the Irish FA's Let Them Play strategy which strives to improve schools' football in Northern Ireland. The role of the School Quality Mark is to revamp schools' football, create and improve structures and further build capacity for football in schools. Some of the key areas that are set out in the accreditation are school governance and management, further games development, duty of care and female participation.

In 2019 a total of 38 primary schools and 21 post-primary schools completed the accreditation. The schools team are in the process of delivering another 46 accreditations in 2020 to achieve Let them Play targets.

By 2025 we aim to have 100,000 young people involved in Irish FA Foundation supported activities. By end of 2019 we had more than 77,000 young people involved.

2 To advance the health and wellbeing of the people of Northern Ireland:

Overview

In 2019 the Irish FA Foundation Back in the Game programme gave more than 460 people over the age of 45 a pathway back to playing or volunteering in the local game. Ahead of the Game promoted positive mental health to 98 clubs. Stay Onside continues to expand, working in all prisons as well as with community partners throughout Northern Ireland, helping to reduce offending and guiding young people to new positive pathways within football.

Disability Programmes

We operate a variety of programmes for disabled players. The programmes, detailed in the table below, run from participation to representation opportunities.

Program	Frequency	Details	Participation Numbers
Schools Coaching (special education) PSC, Schools Officers	Weekly 1 hr sessions per school (minimum 6 sessions)	18 Schools	570
Schools Competitions	Annual	Primary x 2 Secondary Moderate x 3 Secondary Severe x 1	730
Clubs	Weekly	50 clubs in Northern Ireland catering for various disabilities	1150
Clubs 5-a-side League	Monthly	National Leagues 24 teams	216
Special Olympics 7-a-side League	Monthly	8 clubs	129
George Best Community Cup	Annual	72 teams	576
Jordan's Wish Junior Cup	Annual	Club Cup Competition. Ages 7-14	90
Under 19 Learning Disability	Fortnightly	National Squad	18
Cerebral Palsy	Fortnightly	National Squads Junior & Senior	40
Visual Impairment	Weekly	2 clubs: Lisburn & Londonderry Junior & Senior Sections	32
Powerchair Football Clubs	Weekly	4 clubs: Belfast, Lisburn, Enniskillen and Dungannon	37
Powerchair Football International	Fortnightly	Belfast	12
Frame Football	Weekly	2 clubs – Belfast & Coleraine	20
Amputee Football	Fortnightly	Belfast	10
Coach Education		6 x Irish FA Level 1 Coaching Disabled Footballers Award	144
		Coach Education with USEL	9
Walking Football	Weekly	14 groups across NI	250
Walking Football ABI	Monthly	4 groups in NI	40
		Total	4073

Stadium Community Benefits Initiative

The Irish Football Association, Ulster GAA, Belfast City Council and the Department for Communities are working together to deliver the Stadium Community Benefits Initiative (SCBI).

The initiative will continue for 10 years (2016-2026) and will benefit from £150,000 per year investment. The overarching objective of the initiative is to improve the quality of life for local residents now and for future generations.

Themes which will guide the implementation of the initiative's action plan include:

- Supporting new and existing football clubs to increase their capacity to deliver, creating more participation opportunities for the people of South Belfast
- Encouraging wellbeing and healthy lifestyle choices
- Improving community engagement through schools, clubs and youth organisations

Activities in 2019 at the stadium have included:

- Coach education for local clubs
- Stadium tours and fun days for local schools
- Senior citizens tea dance
- Walking Football National Festival & health checks
- Football camps for local residents
- Shooting Stars programme for local girls aged 4-11



Duchess of Cambridge with local schoolchildren from Fane Street, St Paul's & Donegall Road Primary

Back in the Game



Six club-based Back in the Game festivals took place across Northern Ireland along with a Walking Football festival at the Ballymena Back in the Game hub.

Forty-eight teams took part in the 45+ and 55+ age groups with more than 460 players taking part.

In addition the first women's Back in the Game tournament took place over six weeks at Colin Park, Belfast. Former Northern Ireland Women's League players joined recreational players in this successful project which will resume in February 2020.

Each festival is supported by a £200 bursary towards running costs.

460
PLAYERS
48
TEAMS



Ahead of the Game

Ahead of the Game is the Irish FA Foundation's mental health programme for football clubs.

The course aims to support clubs and volunteers when dealing with mental health issues, challenging the stigma around mental health, promoting positive mental health and preventative measures.

The programme is sponsored by City Auctions and is part of the UEFA Hat Trick funding for football and social responsibility. It was developed in partnership with TAMHI (Tackling Awareness Of Mental Health Issues), Inspire and Train 2B Smart Soccer. As part of the programme the Irish FA Foundation and Sports Chaplaincy UK are working in partnership to support mental health throughout Northern Ireland.



In 2019 the Irish FA delivered 24 Ahead of the Game workshops across the country with 98 clubs attending.

In February 2019 the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge visited the National Football Stadium at Windsor Park and got to hear from clubs and volunteers who have been through the programme.



Start the conversation

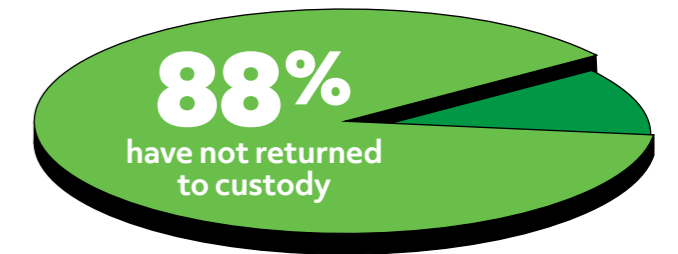
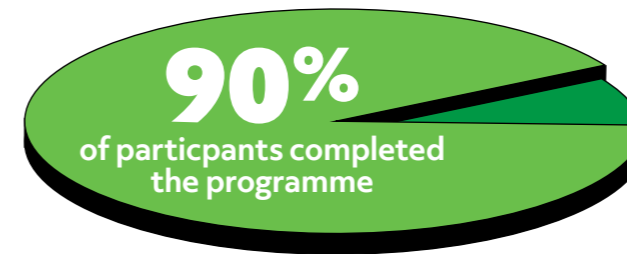
Stay Onside

The aims and objectives of the Stay Onside programme are to engage, rehabilitate and develop people with criminal convictions or at the risk of offending, offering them pathways through football to lead them away from criminality.

The programme operates in all four custodial establishments in Northern Ireland as well as in a number of community settings. We aim to upskill participants with accredited qualifications, life skills and insights into mental health and wellbeing so they can progress into different strands in football and continue their rehabilitation leading them away from offending.

Only 12% of participants completing the programme have returned to custody within six months of completing the prison programme

The prison has a 90% completion rate with 115 people completing qualifications in 2019.



Eight of the participants since 2018 have found employment. The majority of these participants used Stay Onside in their application and credited the programme with giving them the skills to find employment.

A further 32 continued in education and training following the course.

Engaging people in football is a strength of the programme. Eight ambassadors volunteered for the programme with a number of others referred to clubs.

The programme has reached a number of non-engaging hard to reach prisoners and continues to develop into 2020. Objectives for the forthcoming year are to ensure more through the gate engagement capturing prisoners 48 hours after release, more flexible and wide ranging qualifications and a mentoring scheme for potential coaches.



By 2025 we aim to have 100 clubs, schools and community groups benefiting from free Ahead of the Game workshops. We aim to have expanded our Stay Onside programme to be delivered in every prison.

3 To advance education by providing work experience, employability programmes and support to educational establishments and extra-curricular educational groups:

Overview

The Irish FA Foundation's work experience programme has gone from strength to strength. In 2019 a total of 95 students completed work experience with placements ranging from one week to one year. The education officers delivered their Education & Employability programme in 18 post-primary schools in 2019, with Ashfield Boys' High becoming the Foundation's first Development School, where Education Officers delivered modules of the Level 3 BTEC in Sport in addition to the existing Education & Employability programme.

Work Experience

Since 2016 as part of the Let Them Play strategy our placement programme has provided excellent opportunities for young people in Northern Ireland.

Students are given the opportunity to shadow Regional Grassroots Development Officers and Primary School Coaches and assist in the work of the Football Development team as well as marketing, communications and elite development. Types of placements include:

Shadowing: Secondary students can shadow Irish FA Foundation staff for up to two weeks to gain an insight into the day to day tasks involved in delivering football.

Short projects: College and Masters students work with Irish FA Foundation staff over a few months which marry college learning and Irish FA strategy to deliver small projects.

Year-long projects: We offer a variety of year-long placement opportunities for third-level students completing their placement year as part of their degree course.

Education and Employability Programme

The Education and Employability programme entered its second year in 2019. Since the beginning of the programme there has been significant growth in the number of schools, colleges and pupils involved.



In addition to this we were delighted to announce Ashfield Boys' High School as the Foundation's first development school, with discussions taking place to create additional development schools in 2020.

In 2019 we delivered our Education and Employability programme which consists of workshops, coach education and industry experience.

The programme was delivered in 19 secondary schools, 63 female and 288 male students were upskilled through the programme.

The students went out and gained industry experience by coaching in 32 primary schools throughout the country.

In total there were 1770 male and 1455 female students involved in the programme.

20 teachers were also upskilled as part of the programme doing various coaching qualifications including their Level 1.

The Development school at Ashfield sees the Foundations Education Officers deliver their Education and Employability course and part delivery of a Level 3 Double Award sport BTEC.

Note - These are the courses that we deliver. These were put under the Goals section last year but there was no Goals programme delivered in 2019.

- Futsal Introductory Award
- Grassroots Introductory Award
- Football Fundamentals
- Level 1 Coaching Award
- Futsal Referee Award
- Futsal Level 1
- Full Referee Award
- Mental Health Workshop
- OCN Level 2 in Football Business
- Irish FA Roles: Volunteers and Staff
- Show Racism the Red Card
- Coaching Disabled Footballers
- Event Management
- Stadium Tour
- Introduction to Refereeing



By **2025** we aim to provide structured work experience to **100** students per year. In **2019** we provided structured work experience to **95** students. By **2025** we aim to have **four** Development schools and deliver our Education & Employability programme to **20** post-primary schools and colleges.

4 To adopt an inclusive approach so that all members of the community have access to our initiatives, regardless of background, gender, religion, politics, race or sexual orientation, in support of the wider charitable objectives of the Irish Football Association.

Overview

We are committed to the promotion of football for all, creating a fun, safe and inclusive culture throughout all our programmes. In 2019 the promotion of the girls' and women's game was a top priority for the Irish FA Foundation. In 2019 we launched our new strategy for the female game 'Growing the Game, Maximising Impact' and invested in a further Girls' Participation Officer to ensure we reached right across the country. The Shooting Stars programme now operates in every council area, while new Games Development Centres and youth leagues were launched to provide a pathway for girls in the game. In 2019 new safeguarding plans were developed after an in-depth consultation process. The Foundation also invested in a Community Relations Officer and new plans will be developed and rolled out in 2020.

Girls' and Women's Football

Shooting Stars

The Electric Ireland Shooting Stars Programme has continued to grow. With an additional age group we now provide opportunities for girls aged 4-11 to play in one of our 17 nationwide centres.

We piloted the programme with four centres and 60 participants in late 2018 and over 2019. We finished with 15 centres and had 616 girls go through the programme.

To promote the centres we linked with local schools and hosted Shooting Stars Festivals for 4190 girls from P1 to P7. As we move in to 2020 we have added two centres and hope to grow the numbers even further.



Mentor Programme

The Club Mentoring programme is in its third year and has had a positive impact on the female game, growing from the involvement of eight teams in the first year to now having 47% of our clubs involved in the programme.

We have 35 teams currently benefiting from the hands-on approach of our mentors on the ground working alongside club coaches to develop players on and off the pitch to reach their full potential.

Senior Leagues and Youth Leagues



More teams are competing in the Northern Ireland Women's FA leagues and Northern Ireland Football League. We have had huge growth within our youth leagues with 82 teams playing in 2019/20 season.

**82 TEAMS
IN YOUTH LEAGUES**

The youth leagues for U13s, U15s and U17s show that the structures within the girls' and women's clubs are going from strength to strength. We also have within the Causeway, Coast and Glens area regular blitz days for U13s with an additional 8-10 teams playing in this.

McDonald's Small-Sided Games Development Centres

In 2019 we increased the number of girls only small-sided games centres:

Belfast has 12 U9 teams and 14 U11 teams. Lisburn & Castlereagh has four U9 teams and seven U11 teams. February 2020 will see centres launched in Antrim & Newtownabbey and in Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon.



Female Football Leadership Programme

The Female Football Leadership Programme had 10 new graduates in 2019, taking the total to over 80 graduates across the seven years of the programme.

The aims of the course are to develop and extend the skills, knowledge and network of women in leadership and decision-making roles within football. This programme has been effective in doing this with many moving into committees that impact on girls' and women's football.

Safeguarding

2019 saw the introduction of a number of mandatory requirements to ensure clubs and football organisations have appropriate safeguarding measures in place. All clubs and organisations affiliated to NIBFA agreed to adhere to Irish FA Safeguarding Policies and Procedures in their entirety. To support clubs/organisations we provided a bite-size club version of the policy which focuses clubs' attention on the:

- Importance and relevance of safeguarding in football
- Club and volunteer responsibility in safeguarding
- Role and responsibility of the Club Welfare Officer
- Complaints process
- Training and vetting requirements
- Provision of consistent codes of conduct



Training figures indicated around 1,100 coaches and volunteers attended safeguarding sessions with just over 200 welfare officers participating in newly developed safeguarding sessions to support them in meeting the mandatory requirements outlined in the Rules and Regulations.

The Irish FA actively supported national campaigns through Parents in Sport Week and Anti-Bullying Week. Examples of these campaigns can still be viewed across social media.

Parents in Sport Week is an attempt to applaud those parents who have a positive impact on their children's participation and enjoyment as well as educating parents on what they should expect from their clubs. This campaign complements the training and education that we provide for coaches and volunteers as we try to ensure all those participating in youth football have a positive experience.

The theme of Anti-Bullying Week 2019 was 'Change Starts with Us' and encouraged as many clubs as possible to support the campaign. Clubs were provided with education materials to raise awareness that by making small, simple changes in their club they could start to create a safer environment that will break the cycle and impact of bullying behaviour.

2019 also saw further consolidation of our relationship with our safeguarding counterparts across the UK as well as UEFA and FIFA. We continued to share good practice with the Home Nations and facilitated our annual face-to-face meeting and conference call with safeguarding leads. This is a vital part of our work as we seek to ensure we are proactive in promoting and delivering work in this area.

By 2025 we will have well established strategic plans and programmes for Disability Football, the Girls' and Women's game, Safeguarding and Community Relations. Underpinning these plans will be our guiding principles of making the game more fun, safe and inclusive for all.



Future developments

In 2020 the Irish FA Foundation will use the UEFA Social Return on Investment findings to grow its new Ahead of the Game mental health and Stay Onside crime prevention programmes. We aim to deliver 40 free Ahead of the Game workshops to clubs across Northern Ireland that will benefit hundreds of people. We'll develop our crime prevention work in the community while growing our rehabilitation work in prisons with more than 100 prisoners on an annual basis. In 2020 we shall also work in partnership with Ashfield Boys' High School, Boys' Model and Laurehill Community College to set up new development partnerships which see football-specific BTecs being delivered, providing work experience for students in the football industry. In 2020 we will establish the Irish FA Foundation as a trusted delivery partner for Government departments and agencies to promote physical activity, mental health, crime prevention, social cohesion and employability.

In 2020 we shall further work with councils to develop Football Community Hubs to serve the community across Northern Ireland promoting football for all. Priority themes in 2020 will be mental health, girls' participation, crime prevention, education and people & clubs development. We shall develop new partnership opportunities with groups like the Community Foundation Northern Ireland that allow us to support inclusive clubs more strategically. Our participation target for 2025 is to have 100,000 young people playing football on a regular basis. To achieve this ambitious target we need to strategically continue to grow the girls' game as a top priority delivering the Irish FA's Girls' and Women's Plan across Northern Ireland.

The Irish FA Foundation will continue to promote football for all adopting an inclusive approach so that all members of the community have access to our initiatives, regardless of background, gender, religion, politics, race or sexual orientation. To further cement our commitment to creating a fun, safe and inclusive culture throughout the game we shall work on developing a new safeguarding plan for the game of football across Northern Ireland.

Financial review

For the year ended 31 December 2018 the foundation had total income of £2,537,923 (2017: 13 month period: £3,538,841) and total reserves at the end of the year of £727,988 (2017: 13 month period: £980,233).

In 2018 the foundation recorded a deficit of £252,245 because the level of expenditure incurred in fulfilling its objectives was greater than the financial income generated by the charity. The future financial strategy of the foundation is to achieve an annual break-even result by more closely aligning its outgoing and incoming financial resources in order to maintain its current level of reserves.

The charity holds no funds (2017: none) as custodian trustee on behalf of others.

Reserves policy review:

A financial target of the foundation is to hold reserves of between £1,000,000 - £1,250,000 being the anticipated operating expenditure for a normal six-month period.

Although not yet achieved it is the objective of the foundation to build towards the level of this reserves policy by sustaining an annual break-even result followed by seeking new income growth to boost reserves to the desired level.

Principal funding sources

For the year ended 31 December 2018 the principal sources of funding for the foundation were as follows:

- Sponsorship from partner organisations in the private sector, including Hughes Insurance, Electric Ireland, Onecom and McDonald's;
- Income from education and coaching activities;
- Grant funding from partner organisations in the sporting sector including UEFA and FIFA;
- Grant funding from partners in the public sector, including the European Union, Sport NI, Department for Communities and Department for Education; and
- Grant funding from partners in the philanthropic and charitable sectors.

Investment policy and objectives

The foundation takes a risk averse view on investment of cash reserves and as such maintains a regular current account with a major high street bank in which all funds are held.

Risk management

The Trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the foundation is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

The Trustees are aware of potential internal and external risks faced by the foundation and assess those risks on a regular basis. Additionally, they undertake a formal risk management exercise annually.

The key risks at the present time relate to the health and safety of participants in the foundation's activities and the safeguarding of children and young people that are involved in the foundation's activities. The foundation has appropriate policies in place to manage these identified risks and all staff receive training to embed these policies in the day to day activities.

Other risks and emerging risks are monitored by the foundation and relevant controls implemented to manage these risks in line with the foundation's risk appetite set by the Board.

Structure, governance and management

The foundation was formed under a Memorandum of Association which established the objectives and powers of the company and is governed by its Articles of Association dated 7 December 2016.

The Irish FA Foundation Limited (company no. NI642595) is a private company limited by guarantee without share capital and it is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (charity no.106229).

The trustees of the charity who were in office during the year and up to the date of signing the financial statements are shown on page 36.