

FAW Trust Vision to Improve Grassroots Facilities in Wrexham



FAW Trust Wrexham Partnership Project



- ❖ **Innovative solutions - turning challenges into opportunity** and delivering transformation of the local landscape
- ❖ **A football-led approach – the greatest need** – also providing exemplars and solutions for other sports
- ❖ **The football end game** - stronger clubs ... women and girls' hubs ... growth through better facilities ...
- ❖ **The community end game** – wellbeing of future generations... more activity and engagement, better health... stronger communities with better amenities

The Case for Action...

❖ Significant challenges threaten the long-term sustainability of grassroots football:

- ❖ Because of its scale, as well as ambitious growth targets - football exerts considerable pressure on providers of natural grass and artificial turf pitches.
- ❖ However, football facilities across Wales have suffered from a significant lack of investment over the past ten years - the quality of public parks and school pitches is particularly poor.
- ❖ Increasingly poor weather, overuse as well as a lack of investment in proper pitch construction, drainage and maintenance is also a major threat.



Poor facilities – pitches made worse by poor weather conditions - is the number 1 issue affecting people playing the game



The position in Wales is mirrored in England where the FA's evidence highlights that only 1 in 3 pitches at grassroots level are of adequate quality

The Case for Action...



What many grass roots football clubs look like now...

- ❖ Clubs unable to grow and in some cases struggling to survive- threatened
- ❖ Nomadic/small clubs
- ❖ Separate junior/senior clubs
- ❖ No or limited women and girls' teams
- ❖ No club business or development plans- limited finances/financial management /fund raising
- ❖ Small volunteer workforce
- ❖ Poor facility arrangements: nomadic, uncertain access to suitable pitches
- ❖ Poor quality grass pitches – reducing maintenance, drainage, weather, overuse, vandalism etc.
- ❖ Poor or deteriorating pavilions
- ❖ Limited or no access to schools with poor facilities



What we want grass roots football to be like ...

- ❖ Thriving, stronger, larger, successful clubs;
 - ❖ Juniors minis- youth – seniors; women and girls
 - ❖ Effective management boards, volunteer and succession plans
 - ❖ Business and development plans
 - ❖ Robust finances and financial management
 - ❖ Own home facilities – pitches and club house with access to 3G
- ❖ Better standard and sustainable facilities
 - ❖ Better maintained/quality grass
 - ❖ Upgraded pavilions providing changing for all; a club base; a social centre
 - ❖ Healthy school partnerships
 - ❖ Maximised 3G
 - ❖ Access with user agreements or shared management models - football led business plans
 - ❖ Impact on grass reviewed and maximised
- ❖ More funding – more income and better access to grants and sponsorship

Our Vision for the Future ...

'More than a Game'

❖ The FA Wales aspirational 2024 growth targets:

- ❖ 50% of young people playing football at least once a week
- ❖ 20% of young people playing twice a week as registered club members
- ❖ 20,000 registered female players
- ❖ 4% of registered players from a Black and Minority Ethnic background
- ❖ 1,500 registered players with a disability



❖ To achieve these ambitious goals, we need a vision for better grassroots facilities :

- ❖ Providing a better quality experience – more attractive, supporting more activity – essential to achieve our growth targets as well as better health and wellbeing
- ❖ Enabling more and better training – leading to higher skill levels and improved retention
- ❖ Developing stronger.. bigger.. more self-sufficient community clubs – through successful facility management models, where they don't currently exist



❖ Our grass roots facilities vision is to support Football Club Hubs:

- ❖ A focal point for the local community
- ❖ With modern fit for purpose inspirational facilities
- ❖ Providing 'Football for All'
- ❖ Delivering a quality customer experience
- ❖ Strong sustainable business plans

Our Future Facilities Vision ...

❖ Transformation

- ❖ Local football management models (with Local Authority & FAW Trust support) enabling more club ownership, management and maintenance of pitches and pavilions - developing a home ground for growth and stronger clubs
- ❖ Maximising school sites - securing better quality playing pitches – providing an improved environment to grow both female and young people's participation - currently less than 50% of school pitches are available for club use
- ❖ Inspirational 3G community football hubs, on all education sites, in the right locations where there is a viable business case. Developed alongside better grass pitches. A priority to deliver our growth ambitions, thriving clubs together with women's and girls' hubs.



❖ Outcomes

- ❖ Stronger bigger junior/senior clubs achieving Accreditation and Licencing standards as appropriate
- ❖ Women's and Girls' hubs – offering both participation and player pathways
- ❖ School/community club partnerships providing:
 - ❖ Better more inspirational facilities for young people;
 - ❖ Young peoples' learning, skills and engagement;
 - ❖ Out of school hours community sport use of facilities.
- ❖ Better quality grass pitches and pavilions, as well as 3G pitch club hubs, with new sport led operating models for Council owned pitches and pavilions delivering public sector cost efficiencies.

Way Forward ... Club Hub Facilities



❖ Hub cluster facilities:

- ❖ 1-2+ Grass pitches with a pavilion and new club management to help clubs develop a successful home ground – particularly benefitting juniors and girls as well as helping develop stronger clubs
- ❖ School partnership schemes including a vision for a 3G pitch with supporting changing rooms and floodlights. A football/education operating model that secures community usage outside of the school day led by a strong consortium of local clubs

❖ Club hubs to deliver better quality and more sustainable football facilities:

- ❖ Better maintained/quality grass – improved with drainage where needed
- ❖ Better changing pavilions, developed in the future, to provide club house/community facilities - changing rooms extended to include kitchen/meeting social area etc.
- ❖ 3G artificial turf pitches – with club user agreements or shared management models
- ❖ Healthy school partnerships – relationships with regards to maintenance, management and use of facilities; positive student benefit programmes – learning; skills; playing; coaching; management



Club Hubs ...

- ❖ **A community football hub will support growing, thriving and sustainable football clubs - their club profile will include:**
 - ❖ A full age range of participants, inclusive of equal opportunities for women and girls along with disability football (where demand exists)
 - ❖ An effective management board, volunteer and succession plans
 - ❖ Business and development plans
 - ❖ Robust finances and financial management
- ❖ **A community hub will have potential to attract more capital investment** – through stronger income streams and better access to grants and sponsorship due to voluntary sector and club partnership approaches
- ❖ **Hub Partners must include:**
 - ❖ 2-3 Football clubs that offer senior and junior team provision either as a complete pathway or currently separate
 - ❖ 1-2 feeder secondary schools
- ❖ **Additional Hub partners could include:**
 - ❖ Other community clubs i.e. youth/boys and girls; other pitch sports
 - ❖ Town/community councils
 - ❖ Primary schools



Club Hubs...



❖ Capacity to grow whilst taking responsibility for facility management is key

❖ A hub must have:

- ❖ Junior clubs which are significant in size and meet the minimum requirements of the FAW Club Accreditation programme
- ❖ Clubs and activities with potential to grow the women's and girls' game
- ❖ A committed workforce with capability and capacity

❖ A hub should have:

- ❖ Senior clubs that require better quality facilities for FAW pyramid regulations - Pyramid Levels 2-4 or aspiring to, with potential for promotion
- ❖ Existing women's or girls' teams or provision
- ❖ Clubs that offer a complete player pathway from mini to senior football

❖ Hub Partner Commitment is also key

❖ Hub partners must be prepared to work in a new manner/approach with:

- ❖ A commitment and resilience to work in partnership with other clubs and bodies;
- ❖ An openness to, and understanding of cluster club partnership working;
- ❖ A commitment to embrace and develop the female game;
- ❖ A commitment to work towards a complete and seamless pathway for participation (mini to adult participation for male and female players) whilst committing to FAW and FAW Trust good practice guidance and required accreditation/licencing standards;
- ❖ An open and inclusive approach to provision, promoting equality and a commitment to BME and disability participants (where demand exists).

Ways Forward/Next Steps ...

❖ **Establish a transformation and business support service to:**

- ❖ Support the delivery of the exemplar hubs
- ❖ Work with clubs on basic financial modelling as well as a plan to improve day to day management of pavilions and pitches
- ❖ Develop an initial business plan for each cluster club and hub area
- ❖ Identify initial funding priorities and sponsorship/grant funding opportunities working with clubs to upskill and build knowledge
- ❖ Work with identified schools to develop new partnership models embracing club access arrangements and mutually beneficial relationships

❖ **Hold a locality stakeholder meeting of all clubs/potential hub partners to agree a locality vision and action plan for the area:**

- ❖ A plan for grass playing pitches and ancillary facilities - changing and future meeting room/small kitchen/social area – future club house; equipment and store
- ❖ A future 3G pitch plan with a school partner
- ❖ To agree targets
- ❖ To agree actions / next steps

❖ **Establish a Cluster Hub Steering/Management Group**

❖ **Commence Hub Action Plans – a phased approach informing future actions**



❖ **Work with 'Education Leaders' and Head Teachers to secure support for the future vision and proposed models**

❖ **Review future planning policies i.e.**

- ❖ Development agreements to deliver improved facility provision - grass and 3G pitch plans
- ❖ Future Local Development Plan and Open Space Strategies taking account of new look management models, quality assessments and strategic development of 3G pitches
- ❖ 3G plans should be supplemented with a full review of grass pitches

Summary Messages...

❖ 10 year plan for

- ❖ New 3G pitches
- ❖ Changing pavilion and club house projects
- ❖ Improved grass pitch projects



❖ Outcomes

- ❖ Growth targets
- ❖ Stronger Clubs
- ❖ Better quality facilities – more positive experience better skills levels greater retention
- ❖ Impact on wider range of groups: people with disabilities, BME, older people, women and girls
- ❖ **A more fit for future generations landscape**

❖ *Football contributing to the Wellbeing of Future Generations' goals :*

- ❖ *Promoting health and well being*
- ❖ *Helping develop skills & future leaders*
- ❖ *Leading the way promoting diversity and equality*
- ❖ *Supporting cohesive communities clubs at the heart of many communities*
- ❖ *Inspiring future players – supporting high profile local teams*

Football's scale, impact and latent demand... along with the need to act on the general poor state of grassroots facilities, all set against budget challenges of local government... makes a compelling case for action.