

Swindon Town FC Community Foundation
2020 YEAR IN REVIEW



Swindon Town FC
Community Foundation

Swindon Town FC Community Foundation Review of Projects 2020

Presented by:

Jon Holloway
Head of Foundation

Tuesday 19th January 2021

The officer's report is presented in line with the Swindon Town FC Community Foundation Strategic & Business Plan for 2019-2021. The report is a reflection on the delivery undertaken by the Foundation for us to gauge, monitor and assess that we are attaining our target requirements set out within the Community Foundation Business Plan.

The project reports are points for discussion, check and challenge within the structure of the Trustee's meeting, enabling the Trustees and the Head of Foundation in relation to assessing the aims, targets and objectives within the official Foundation Strategic & Business Plan.

For a more in depth look at the Foundation's activities directly relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, please see the STFC Foundation's COVID Response Document.

A Review of 2020

2020 is a year that will go down in history, although for the STFC Community Foundation it's historic nature was secured on January 2nd, with the opening of Foundation Park.

We had taken up residence in the facility in December 2019, but on January 2nd the building was officially opened to the public by Nicky Alberry and John Trollope, who had both broken the ground at the site in January 2019. They, along with 150 invited guests congregated in the Nigel Eady Suite, for speeches from Kirsteen Fraser, Jon Holloway, and a blessing from Club Chaplain Simon Stevenette.

We then gathered outside of the facility, on the slightly gloomy and windy afternoon, where Nicky and John cut the ribbon, and officially opened our fantastic new home.

From then, until the end of March, it was amazing to see our participants coming through our doors and using the facilities that we were now able to provide for our community. Sadly, global events meant that we have had to close the doors to Foundation Park for the time being, but as this report shows, we haven't faltered in our commitment to serving our community, and delivering first-class community sports programming.

We hope that this review of our projects over 2020 gives some insight into all that we were able to achieve during this difficult time.

We look forward to a time when we can open our doors and welcome our community back to Foundation Park once again.

Jon Holloway

Head of Foundation

STFC Community Foundation Trustee Report



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EDUCATION

01



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C6

On the pitch, this was the most successful year since the commencement of the Football Education Programme, with our four squads winning a total of four trophies. This included League titles for the first team, third team and the ladies – who also completed the double, by winning the CEFA national cup at St George’s Park. Such was the strength of our programme that our first team also achieved the title of CEFA national cup runners up and reached the last 16 of the ESFA Cup, winning a total of 13 games to get to those latter rounds. The second team also reached the ESFA B-cup semi-final and were heartbroken when they conceded a last-minute goal in extra time to lose 2-1. These achievements ensured that STFC C6 became the most successful Football Education Programme throughout all of the CEFA leagues, which is an impressive feat considering there are over 70 clubs involved.



Our strong relationship with The Commonweal School has grown over the years, and academically all of our students have achieved their preferred outcomes, taking their next steps into apprenticeships and university placements. Lani Dickinson and Ben Paul were the latest two players to head off to the US on a football scholarship, joining former STFC C6 players such as Sophie Roberts, Mia Mugford, Chantelle Scott, Mark Whyte, and Callum Rochester.

Despite the lockdown, the league successfully started again this season in September 2020, with all four teams remaining unbeaten in their respective league programme. The aim of all the teams is to win all four divisions this year and despite some early exits in the cup for the third team and the ladies team, we are still on course for another amazing season.

Because of the success on and off the field we have been able to attract a high calibre of players, interested in joining the programme for the 2021 – 2022 season. In December 2020 we were delighted to interview over 50 students to get a head start on all of the other sports education providers. It has to be said that the players we interviewed were undoubtedly the highest standard academic profiles that we have seen within our Education Programme. With further interviews and trials in January, we have every confidence that 2021 could be our best year yet.

Finally, we could not complete a review of 2020 without mentioning Hannah Peachey. Hannah started on our Foundation Development Centre programme at the age of 5, and progressed through the age bands and then into our Girls Centre of Excellence. After deciding to join C6 Hannah

also took up a coaching and reception position within our Community Foundation. Throughout her years with the Centre of Excellence, Hannah has travelled to Barcelona, Sweden and the USA but saved her very best moment for the CEFA Cup final. With the score tied at 2-2 against Sheffield United, Hannah struck a last-minute wonder strike from 35 yards to win the game and bring the trophy back to Swindon, in a moment that will live long in the memory of everyone who was at St. George's Park that day.



Premier League Primary Stars

The year started with practical PE delivery taking place in five of our partner-schools, supporting ten teachers, and engaging with over 295 pupils. Out of the ten-week block of delivery, nine lessons were completed before delivery was halted by the first national lockdown.

Alongside the PE lessons, targeted interventions in the core subjects of Maths and English were delivered at Wanborough and Mountford Manor Primary Schools. These focused on small group work with pupils who were underachieving academically, in order to offer them additional support outside of the classroom environment.

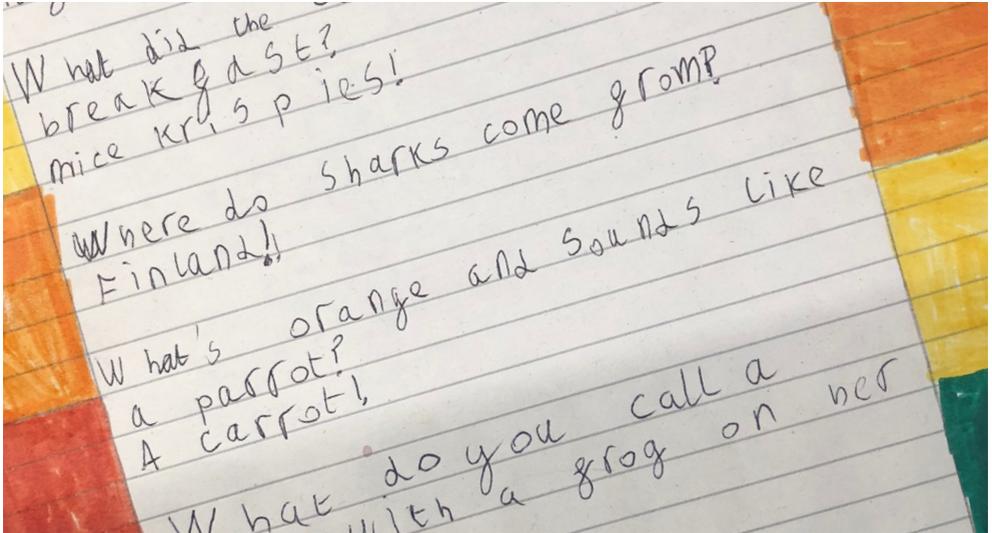
In February, the Foundation delivered a Teacher CPD workshop on 'Arrival Activities' and 'Differentiation in PE' which was supported by Ben Merry from the FA PE Unit. A total of twelve teachers attended the event which was designed to support them in delivering high quality PE.

When the first lockdown occurred, there was a need for us to react creatively to the situation, so delivery was quickly adapted to a digital format with educational content being shared both on social media and directly to schools to engage primary school children in activity. As well as sharing resources from the Primary Stars website, the Community Foundation also developed original content such as the Maths code-breakers.

In April, the Foundation launched a social action project titled 'Spreading a Little Happiness'. Primary school children were asked to send in pictures and messages to promote the importance of remaining positive. These messages were distributed to vulnerable people in the community who were shielding from the virus, when we were supporting the council with food deliveries.

As the lockdown restrictions were eased in June, we were able to return to delivery at Orchid Vale and Wanborough

Primary School, delivering PE lessons to Year 1, Year 6 and the children of key-workers. This was important to ensure children were remaining active and getting some PE, and also allowed us to support our partner schools in a different way.



Across 2020 as a whole, flexibility has been required within the delivery plan, and although we were able to adapt the programme to the extent of our abilities, some events were not able to go ahead as planned. For example, we had organised three competitions to take place in November, but due to the restrictions these unfortunately had to be cancelled.

However, we are constantly amending and adjusting as we plan for the next year, to ensure that none of our partners miss out on any part of the programme.

After School Clubs

From January to March our After School Clubs were all up and running as normal, with 26 schools having clubs running on a variety of different days of the week. Our top After School Clubs were Croft, Orchid Vale, Haydonleigh, Lawn and Wanborough Primary Schools with over 20 participants on each course, which was a huge success.

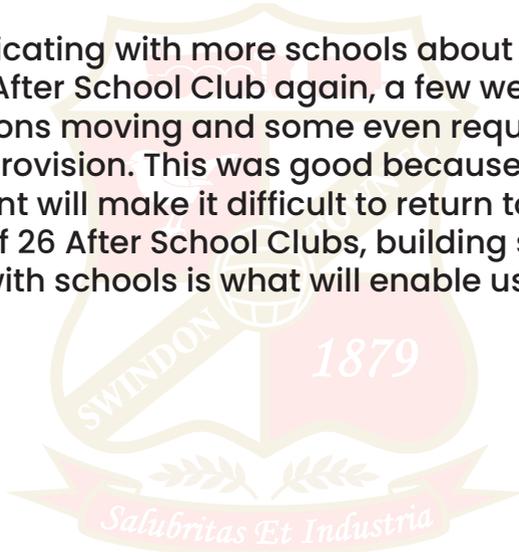
Once the first lockdown was put into place, because of the school closures our After School Clubs had to stop until further notice. Then, by the time we were permitted to begin our Safe Return to play, the school year had ended, so we weren't able to restart any of the After School clubs until the new school year had started.

To maintain our engagement with After School Club participants, we redirected them to Foundation Park to join one of our Development Centres. It was fantastic to see some familiar faces from our School Clubs at Foundation Park, as it had been over 3 months since we had last seen them.

It was so important to have sessions open to our participants because with even a short time away from football, their ability and fitness levels decrease rapidly, so after three months this was having a real impact. But that aside, it was vitally important that the children were able to have some structured football sessions to help maintain their mental and social fitness. It was plain to see the effect on the children, as they were able to get active, see old friends, and make new ones at the Development Centre.

In the new school year our partnerships with schools needed to be rebuilt, and we were delighted that Longleaze, Wanborough and Seven Fields all got in early contact with us about starting the After School Club again, albeit with new COVID safe protocols in place.

After communicating with more schools about the idea of restarting the After School Club again, a few were happy to get discussions moving and some even requested additional PE provision. This was good because although the environment will make it difficult to return to our full complement of 26 After School Clubs, building stronger relationships with schools is what will enable us to achieve this.



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Football Fans in Training

I don't think anyone could have predicted what was to come in 2020, but despite the challenges that we all faced, we were still able to deliver our successful Football Fans in Training Courses for men and ladies.

The year started promisingly, and it was amazing to be able to deliver our first course at Foundation Park for the very first time. With us previously delivering the course at the County Ground, from a practical point of view, this gave us the ability to set up prior to the sessions, making the delivery of the sessions so much easier, but it also allowed us to feel even more that this was our project, and something we are incredibly proud of.

As on our previous courses, STFC legend John Trollope made a guest appearance at our first course at Foundation Park, something which is always well received by the FFIT participants. John Trollope's inspirational talks always contain motivational messages about his journey as a footballer and the commitment, sacrifice and focus that he showed through his life and career, which are all key elements for success on the FFIT programme.

Lockdown came and the challenge initially was to stay connected, and transitioning from face-to-face delivery at the end of January to running the courses virtually in just a few months, was certainly an educational experience - not just for the participants, but also our delivery staff. Our delivery staff remained ever present, every week to ensure that both the ladies and men's group stayed focused. From

group fitness challenges to healthy eating recipes from around the world, the sessions were fun, positive and most importantly gave everyone a focal point each week.



In September we were delighted to be given the go ahead by Public Health Swindon to welcome two new cohorts for another course of Football Fans in Training. This was the thirteenth group for men and the sixth for ladies, which saw us restricting numbers to 18 per course, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This course also ended up having four weeks worth of virtual delivery, due to the November lockdown, and we were delighted to receive support from the STFC Supporters Club to purchase a higher level subscription of Zoom, to enable us to deliver more effectively. This ensured that there was not a detrimental effect to the delivery of the course, and numbers were maintained in preparation for the return to socially

distanced in person delivery in December.



We are very grateful to all of the volunteers who supported FFIT over 2020. Keith, Phil, Rich, Sally and Tracy were ever present either face-to-face or virtually, for both the ladies' and the men's programmes. All of these volunteers are former participants of the FFIT Programme, and have since become an integral part of our delivery team. These volunteers can really relate to the participants as they have personally completed the course and have continued to lead a healthy lifestyle, and we are very fortunate to have these ambassadors, or 'legends', to inspire future participants.

Extra Time

Despite the way 2020 has gone, this year's Extra Time has been extremely enjoyable, and has been a year where we

have been able to assist in many of our participants going outside of their comfort zones and learning many new skills, in a comfortable and safe environment.

During the year, the Extra Timers have learnt to use Zoom, have tried new activities they haven't played before and supported each-other by hosting quizzes and virtual activities during the months of lockdown. This has really displayed what a great atmosphere there is within the group, and shows that all members care about each-others health and well-being, which is key to what this group is about.



Our highlight of the year would have to be the first set of meetings during the Summer months following the lockdown, where we set off in groups of 5/6 people around the local area. This was the first time the groups had seen each other (or anyone) in a very long time and enabled

them to socialise and keep active safely.

Following the government guidance relating to meeting in public spaces, we took the decision to host all Extra Time sessions from Foundation Park. This also enabled us to have complete control over safety and COVID prevention measures. Because of the age of the participants, we did not take the risk lightly. Making the change has seen us able to introduce a range of new activities, and provide an opportunity for physical activity and social interaction to a group that needs it the most.

Walking Football League

In May of this year, we received funding from Sport England to launch the first Walking Football League in Wiltshire, based in Central Swindon. At this stage we were in the middle of the first lockdown, but this exciting news gave us and many other people within Swindon a vision of what we would be doing once the lockdown was over.

On the 20th and 27th August 2020, we held our first two Walking Football taster sessions, which saw over 20 players come and enjoy the sport for the first time. It was a great couple of sessions, and built the foundations for new teams to join the league, as well as allowed us to reflect on how we could improve the sessions.

We officially started weekly fixtures on Thursday 10th September, with teams from Highworth, Cirencester and Swindon taking part in the fixtures. Over the first few weeks we saw the league grow with more teams joining and

showing an interest about getting involved. This put us in a good place leading up to the November lockdown, which halted play for just over a month.



Due to circumstances beyond our control, the early phase of the league saw a shifting lineup as some teams were forced to drop out, but they were soon replaced as new teams joined. By December, we had reached our target of eight teams, with over 60 players under the lights here at Foundation Park. This full complement allows us to run four matches concurrently, utilising the entire pitch.

We finished the year with the first Foundation Park Walking Football Christmas Competition, which took place over two weeks with a qualifying week, and a finals week. This tournament was won by Croft FC and FFIT 12, and all teams are looking forward to when competitive fixtures can begin in the new year.

SPORTS PARTICIPATION

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Foundation Centres

2020 has provided many challenges for our weekly Foundation Centres, but has also provided us with many opportunities to exercise our creativity.

The year started with us delivering many Foundation Centre fixtures alongside the regular weekly sessions. These fixtures are something we have been doing for just over a year now and provides many players with a unique opportunity to experience competitive football that they would not get elsewhere.



We also delivered our first Friendship Through Football tournament, an initiative to help encourage new participants along to Foundation Park. The day saw over 100 participants aged 5-11 years attend and proved a great success.

STFC Community Foundation **Trustee Report**

SPORTS PARTICIPATION

After the global pandemic hit in March, Foundation Centres all had to temporarily cease, however we stayed in contact with our participants through social media, making challenge videos and holding competitions.

After the lockdown ended, and as soon as we were able to, Foundation Centres re-commenced in a small-group carousel format, which enabled us to work on players' individual technical attributes, as well as allowing them to see their friends for the first time in a few months. This format proved a great success and continued for just over a month, when the announcement came that team sports were once again able to re-commence.



Since September, numbers have continued to grow, despite other COVID related interruptions, and we truly feel that this is down to the reaction and work produced during the pandemic. The fact we remained in contact regularly with

parents and participants and offered online learning for players has clearly gone a long way with our customers.

Elite and Advanced

Although the COVID pandemic was a significant factor in how we were able to deliver the Elite and Advanced programmes this year, they were of great success. The year began with the invite-only holiday course and competitive fixtures away at Ipswich for both of our squads. The much longer trip away from home saw an opportunity to compete against another professional club, but also gave our aspiring players an understanding of the 'hard yards' around the game. The players turned up, in their numbers, determined to impress and I can safely say they were a real credit to their parents and the Foundation. 1879



During the pandemic, our coaches posted daily videos

on our social media platforms. This was of paramount importance, ensuring some form of challenge/physical activity was provided to our participants. In addition, the engagement was essential for our young players' mental health and well-being. With on-pitch delivery being prevented for a large part of the year, the opportunity provided a real learning experience for all our staff, broadening their existing skills set.



As we entered our 'Safe Return to Play' period, our Elite and Advanced participants were invited back to Foundation Park, under strict new safety protocols to ensure social distancing was maintained. Despite the new restrictions, the players were naturally excited to be back, ready to show their skills and socialise in some capacity. The coaches planned and delivered socially-distanced sessions, and our participants were able to continue attending from June all the way through to the end of the year, going some way to make up

for lost time.

Holiday Courses

With the stop-start year that we've had, the Holiday Courses have been a real highlight, with all of the courses that we were able to run selling out.

In February we were able to run a very successful course, with participants having the opportunity to have fun and enjoy themselves throughout the three days. This was, of course, the last course we were able to run with any sense of normality. The lockdown meant that we were forced to skip our Easter and Whitsun courses, but as the lockdown ended and Summer began, we were able to implement our new 'Safe Return to Play' protocols, and host our Summer courses in a safe and healthy environment, albeit with reduced numbers.



Our planning and preparation before the Summer courses allowed every participant to feel safe at Foundation Park. We used our social media to demonstrate that we had the correct protocols in place, giving parents confidence to book their children on to our courses, knowing they were in a controlled and safe facility for the duration of the course.

With the courses at half capacity, we were in the uncomfortable position of having to allocate bookings on a first come, first served basis. All of the five weeks were sold out with a week to go, and we implemented a waiting list in the event of any cancellations.



Throughout the summer our coaches showed fantastic professionalism on what was a tiring and hot six weeks. This could have taken its toll on our coaches, but everyone in the team pulled together and made sure every participant was comfortable and happy, whether they were on week one

or week five. The courses in the summer used the carousel model, which had worked well in the early stages of our 'Safe Return to Play'. Each group were challenged with different sessions throughout the day, that developed their skills in passing, dribbling, control, competitiveness and agility. This enabled them to enjoy different elements of the game throughout the week.

In October we ran a successful 2-day Elite Camp and a 3-day Development Course in what was, in contrast to the summer, beset with wet and windy weather. Again, the professionalism of the coaches was exceptional, and we were able to provide a fun and exciting week for all the participants.



During December we ran a different kind of Holiday Course, targeted towards children from deprived areas of Swindon, helping them to stay active and healthy, as well build their

confidence during the Christmas break.

Girls Development

During the February half term, our Girls Centre of Excellence teams played in their first set of fixtures at Foundation Park, with some of our teams hosting Cambridge United and Arsenal, whilst the rest of our age groups travelled to Peterborough. Just before the country entered into the first national lockdown, we were also able to host the Utilita Girls Cup Regional finals at Foundation Park. This was a fantastic opportunity to welcome teams from Plymouth Argyle, Cheltenham Town, Leyton Orient and Wycombe Wanderers.



Throughout April and May whilst the country was in national lockdown and our players were unable to train, we held zoom meetings with all of our Girls Centre of Excellence teams. These allowed us to remain in contact and keep our

players engaged with their teammates and consisted of quizzes for the players to get to know each other better.



From Monday 15th June we began our 'Safe Return to Play' for our Girls Centre of Excellence players, welcoming back each team and working in small groups of four or five players. These socially distanced sessions concentrated on ball control, agility, passing and shooting, allowing coaches to be able to focus on individual techniques. Whilst these sessions continued for our Centre of Excellence players in July, we were also able to welcome back some of our Foundation Centre participants to also take part in socially distanced sessions. It was great to be able to open two girls only groups and fill them with players who had previously attended our sessions as well as some new participants.

For the first time, we continued our Girls Centre of Excellence sessions throughout August, giving them a chance to catch

up on the time they had missed. During this time, we also invited new players to trial for our teams. As we were unable to hold open trials in July this year, it was important to take the opportunity to progress players from our programmes within our pathway. This led to ten players joining from our Girls Only foundation centres and holiday courses.



We finished the year with fixtures against Northampton Town during October half term and our Boys Advanced teams before Christmas. Both sets of fixtures were highly competitive and gave our players the opportunity to put their hard work in training to the test.

Team Club

Between January and March, Swindon had seven Saturday home fixtures where our Saturday Team Club project was delivered. Across this time a total of 526 children and parents attended the project, from a total of 20 grassroots

football clubs. The highlight of this period was the Exeter game which saw three clubs attend Swindon's biggest home attendance of the season for a top of the table clash.



At the beginning of March the project had to be suspended due to the lockdown restrictions and fans not being able to attend the County Ground. At the time of this announcement, we had a further 360 participants booked on to attend a matchday. These groups were contacted with some requesting a refund on the moneys they had already paid, with some choosing to hold the money for a future game.

With the current restrictions in place the Team Club project sadly still hasn't been able to restart and it is looking unlikely that grassroots clubs will be able to attend the Matchday experience this season. Plans are starting to be made looking ahead to the 2021/2022 season where we hope the project can return with Swindon in League One.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

04



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Super Robins

In a year that has provided challenges for many, people suffering with mental health have needed that extra support to help each other through the pandemic. With regular Zoom Calls and active communication via Whatsapp, the group held together and supported each-other through this difficult time.



In June 2020, it was the Super Robins that acted as our 'guinea pigs' for our safe return to play, being the first group to return to activity. The sessions were organised in a carousel format and focused on their technical skills and abilities, such as dribbling, shooting and various skills. When we were permitted to loosen the restrictions, and allow play to return to normal, the participants were able to play matches again for the first time in a number of months.

A big change for the team this year, came in their rebranding as the Super Robins. For a long time they had been known as the 'Swindon Mental Health Football Team' and it was long overdue that they had their own identity. They were given the opportunity to give themselves a name, and once the Super Robins was decided on, a brand-new badge was designed for them that they can wear and be proud of.

October 10th was World Mental Health Day, which saw us host a question-and-answer session with Anthony Grant, Joel Grant and Noel Hunt. The three professionals spoke about how Mental Health affects them in the game and how they cope with it daily, which was extremely beneficial for the group, and the event received coverage from Sky Sports. The group also received their new team track-tops on this day, which further gives the team a sense of identity, and brings them together.



Pan Disability

We started the year with 15 participants signed up to the weekly course at St. Joseph's Catholic College. These sessions were in the format of multi-sports sessions with an emphasis on fun and being connected. These sessions were able to run between January and March until the first COVID lockdown was introduced on 16th March, meaning all sessions had to stop. During February half-term, we were able to hold a multi-sports holiday course, which 20 participants attended.



During the lockdown, we remained connected with participants from our Pan Disability sessions by delivering them a Swindon Community Foundation branded snood. This was a great way to catch up and check on their wellbeing.

In September, we were able to successfully restart our Pan Disability sessions, ensuring strict COVID protocols were in place to maintain the safety of this vulnerable group. These COVID procedures also led to adaptations with how the multi-sports holiday course was delivered, to allow for additional cleaning, with 2 courses being run each week – one in the morning and one in the afternoon.

The year ended with twelve participants back to attending the weekly multi-sports session, and the aim moving forwards will be to try and expand the group by encouraging new participants to attend.

Onside

During the summer holidays we ran our third iteration of Onside, our education programme for younger teenagers. Participants are referred to the project by social services and family services. It was highly beneficial to the participants that we were able to provide them with an outlet, whilst there weren't many other opportunities due to the pandemic. We had ten boys and girls attending twice a week over the holidays and they thoroughly enjoyed it, making new friends, getting some exercise, and completing educational tasks and modules.

A testament to the programme is that we have had previous participants of Onside going on to join our Foundation Centres.

Before the second Lockdown we were one week into the fourth Onside, which was a positive as it gave our new

participants an insight to the programme and what they can expect from the course when we get back up and running with it.

We were also able to make a few of our participants Christmases, as we received a number of gift boxes that were donated by Nationwide staff. These were distributed as Christmas presents, in the week leading up to the day itself. It was amazing to see the faces of our participants and how excited they were when we delivered the presents to them.

DS Active

DS Active

Our DS Active participants have been some of the worst indirectly affected by the pandemic. As soon as the lockdown was announced, the participants had little choice but to self-isolate in order to shield from the virus, as the vast majority had underlying health issues.

It was also less straight forward to remain in contact with the participants than it might be for some of the other groups, as it can be difficult to hold the participant's focus and attention over a phone or a computer. That being said, since the first lockdown we have maintained regular Zoom contact for those who want it, but we have also run challenges and exercises for them to try on their own. The team created their own skills video, and one of the participants even made a warm-up instruction video for us to share with our participants across all programmes.

Because of the health concerns, when the lockdown eased

we were still unable to start up the regular sessions. We were however, delighted to see a few members that felt comfortable doing so, come along to our multi-sports holiday courses.



Before Christmas, we also gave all of the participants a goodie-bag with a football, water bottle, boot bag, and more, in order to reaffirm our commitment to them. Once a programme of vaccinations is widely rolled out, we hope to be able to resume these sessions.

Tackling Loneliness Together

The Tackling Loneliness Together project has been somewhat of a flagship programme for the Foundation in these uncertain times. Focussing on the elder generation, it reaffirms our position in the community at a time when we have been prevented from delivering our usual activities.

Initially a short-term programme funded by a grant of £12,000 which we received from the Department of Media, Culture, and Sport via the EFL. The aim of the project has been to contact people who are at high risk of loneliness and isolation caused by the lockdown and continuing COVID prevention measures. We began by writing to 600 season ticket holders aged 70 and above, explaining what we are endeavouring to do, and sending them a STFC Community Foundation face-cover and a brochure.

After this was delivered, we followed up with a telephone call to check if they were ok and gently find out if they needed support or would like to be contacted again via phone, Zoom or a with an in-person garden gate visit. The Zoom chats started in October, and have taken place regularly with a number of special guests including Noel Hunt, Paul Caddis, Mathieu Baudry, and Anthony Grant.



The next phase of this programme was to go out to some of these season ticket holder's homes for a socially distanced 'garden gate visit' and a chat in person. For the first of these, we took along the League Two trophy, giving the participants a chance to get their hands on the silverware. We have also been out to deliver an STFC Foundation activity book and pen, and most recently to deliver 100 Christmas Hampers and gift packages.



The hampers were made up from donations of food and gifts, including Christmas essentials such as mince pies and Christmas pudding, as well as decorations, water bottles, books, calendars, hats, socks, and more. The parcels were all very well received, and it was great to be able to brighten up some of our older fans Christmases.

This was a brilliant team effort as we worked in collaboration with the STFC Official Supporters Club, Intel, Imagine Cruising,

Swindon Scrapestore, Swindon Food Collective and Tesco's.

We're very pleased to be able to say that although the EFL's funding is coming to an end, we are very close to securing the funding to continue the programme far beyond its initial remit, in the form of weekly coffee mornings at Foundation Park.

Premier League Kicks

The year started in a positive manner, with a select number of participants attending a regional tournament with other EFL clubs, all of which delivered PL Kicks. The participants representing Swindon Town FC were selected after showing regular engagement with the Kicks programme, and also identified as not already participating within grassroots football, providing additional playing opportunities in a competitive format. Additional to this, the event also included a workshop surrounding the theme of gang violence.

The Foundation also hosted an event along the same themes at Foundation Park, with guest speaker, Paul Hannaford. Paul was invited as a guest speaker due to the issues and experiences that he faced, being prevalent factors within the local community. More specifically, Paul spoke about the problem of 'County Lines', a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in trafficking drugs around the country, and the gang violence that accompanies this. 54 of our Premier League Kicks participants were in attendance, but in order to participate in the tournament, workshop attendance was required.

The event was an eye-opening experience, and we hope it educated participants on issues they may come across in their local community.



The summer lockdown period was a significant moment for the Kicks programme. Due to many of the participants coming from areas of high deprivation, or otherwise being classified as vulnerable, it was essential to maintain engagement with participants. Stay at home challenges were distributed to participants, giving them a focus, and providing accessible challenges to be completed within their own home. FIFA virtual tournaments were organised to ensure participants could stay connected with their friends in a competitive way. As the restrictions were eased, eleven participants completed phases of their social action projects by delivering face coverings to members of the local community.

Special Olympics

For the first two months of the year, the Special Olympics sessions took place at Play Football and came under the umbrella of the Swindon Borough Council. Around 24 participants with learning difficulties attended this session, split into two groups: a more able group who play in the Ability Counts League, and a less able group.

The national lockdown in March saw these sessions suspended, and with the participants being considered a vulnerable group, it was not possible to restart delivery as quickly as some other projects. Discussions were held with Swindon Borough Council over the summer period regarding the running of the project, and the decision was made for the project to be taken over by the Foundation, with funding provided by the Council.



As part of this arrangement the sessions were reintroduced starting in September, using Foundation Park as the new outdoor venue where strict COVID-19 protocols could be followed. Thus far, only the more able group have been able to return due to the less able group still being more at risk from the virus. The plan for the near future is to reintroduce both groups, and to increase the number of participants with learning difficulties who play weekly football.



Swindon Town FC Community Foundation

FOUNDATION PARK

05



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Community Foundation

Cost Savings

Over the course of the year, we have looked at several contracts and taken a number of them to tender to see if we can reduce expenditure to help offset loss of income due to the lockdowns. We managed to save costs in various areas including Fire Extinguishers and our disabled lift. We also joined with Lyreco to provide facility cleaning equipment which also came with COSHH guidance and next day delivery to ensure we had the tools to keep Foundation Park running and safe.



COVID-19 Safety

As part of our “Safe Return To Play” campaign, it was imperative that we read and understand all the requirements set out by the Government and our governing bodies, to ensure the safety of not only our participants

but our spectators and staff alike. We set out two-meter markers along all walkways, as well as using dots and hoops in gathering areas, to ensure social distancing.

Hand sanitising stations were set up at all entrances and exits, and a number of choke-points, and all players and spectators are required to sanitise their hands before and after their sessions. Players and spectators also have their own separate entrances to prevent cross-over.



To comply with Government and FA advice, it was imperative that we take all players' names and telephone numbers for the NHS Test and Trace programme. All players had completed a COVID-19 self-assessment which they also had to declare they came back negative with. As of the 24th September, we had to take this one step further by signing up for a QR code to allow visitors to log their movements with the NHS Test and Trace App. As per the government advice,

all player data including names and telephone numbers are locked away securely, and destroyed after 21 days.

For all coaches heading into schools or to various other sites, they were provided with a kit which includes gloves, face coverings, cloths, aprons, personal hand sanitiser, a bottle of hand sanitiser for participants to use as well as a bottle of anti-bacterial spray so they can carry out their sessions in a safe manner. All staff were also given handheld bottles of hand sanitiser to keep on their person. Later in the year we also installed touch-free hand sanitising units to allow staff and visitors to sanitise their hands at various points around the building.

Pitch Booking

The year started strong with a number of regular bookings as well as a handful of regular casual bookers, that meant that the pitch was in near-constant use, providing us with a steady income stream. The bad weather at the beginning of the year meant that the STFC first team became one of our most reliable casual bookers, as their previous training facility in Calne was in such poor condition.

The lockdown meant that we were unable to offer our pitch out for public use, but once restrictions were lifted, we saw the pitch in high demand once again.



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Community Foundation

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