



Swindon Town FC  
**Community Foundation**



# ANNUAL REPORT 2019



# Swindon Town FC Community Foundation

## Annual Report 2019



Presented by:

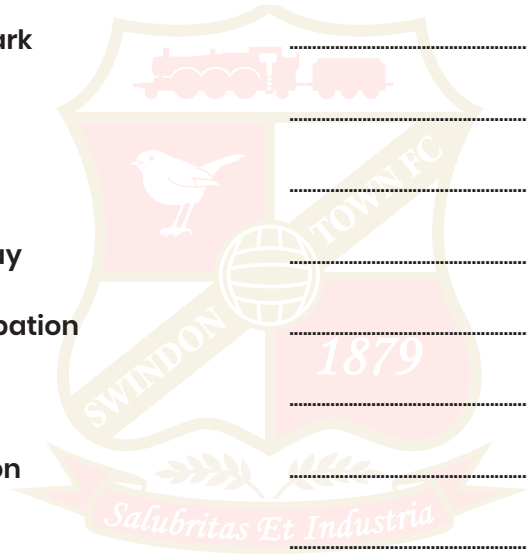
**Jon Holloway**  
**Head of Foundation**

Swindon Town FC  
**Community Foundation**

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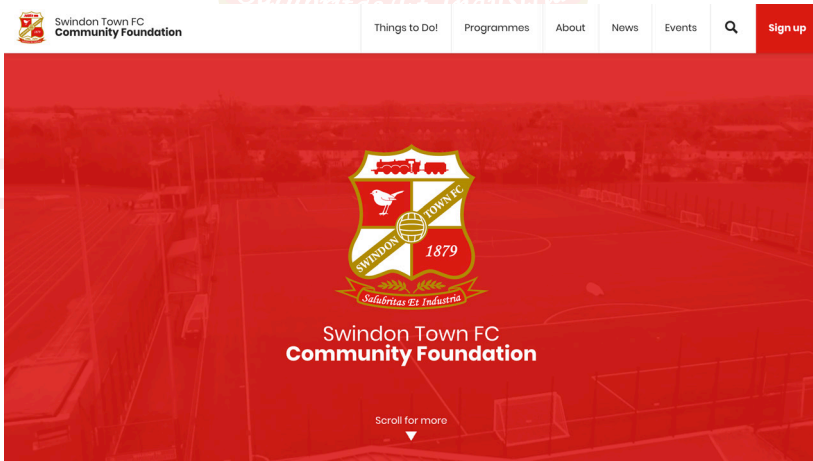
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### INTRODUCTION

2019 was a landmark year for us, and we're proud to present our first annual report as the 'STFC Community Foundation', after rebranding from the 'STFC Football in the Community Trust'.

This rebrand coincided with the most significant event of 2019 – our realisation of Foundation Park, which is now completed and ready for operation as of the beginning of January 2020. The rebrand was decided upon as we feel that moving into our new home is the perfect time to start a new chapter in our history. We are growing as an organisation, and becoming a Foundation not only reflects us in literal terms, but also in the sense of our aims to be a 'foundation' for the community.

Following the rebrand, we were also proud to launch [www.stfcfoundation.com](http://www.stfcfoundation.com), our new website, which replaces our old one which had definitely seen better days. The new website makes it a lot easier to find information on the services that we provide, and we hope it reflects our status as a relevant, modern organisation.



## FOUNDATION PARK

We really feel that our organisation is moving into the next stage of its development, but even as we continue to grow, we will endeavour to adhere to our core values, now and always.

- Delivering professional, quality, safe and affordable programmes.
- Listen to the views of children, young people, adults and our partners.
- Provide excellent communication and customer care.
- Offer opportunities for all participants to be empowered to achieve their goals.
- Invest in and support staff to develop.
- Make a difference.

### FOUNDATION PARK

Without question, the thing that has defined our 2019 is the construction of Foundation Park. Since the breaking of ground at the end of January, the whole team of staff were able to enjoy watching the pitch come to life and the building of the pavilion taking shape.



It was a momentous occasion for the Community Foundation on Monday 20th May when we were handed the keys to our new pitch. We celebrated by inviting 60 children from Drove School to join us as the first ever group to use the new pitch. All the children were presented with a Swindon shirt and certificate to commemorate the occasion. It has been fantastic to see all of our groups using the new facility, and we have also opened up bookings to the community, and there has been a huge demand for casual use by small groups and teams, both children and adults.



Whilst the building was still under construction, the experience for our participants, and in particular their friends and families, was greatly enhanced by the addition of two spectator stands. These were partially funded by the sale of sponsorship boards, which line the fence on the way into the pitch.

On December 11th we were handed the keys to the building and we were finally permitted to take up residency in our new home. Despite our elation, it's important to remember that with this new

facility comes a host of uncharted responsibilities, and the next twelve months is going to be a steep learning curve. We're eager to embrace these challenges, and we relish the opportunity to grow and learn as a Foundation.

### EDUCATION

It was a great year for the Community Foundation's education provision. In our C6 programme, the Boys' First and Second Teams secured their respective league titles in some style, in the South East Division 2, and the South West League respectively. The Girls' Team unfortunately lost out in their title-deciding game against Champions Norwich City, which meant they finished second in the EFL CEFA Women's' league.



We had fifteen students completing their FA Level One coaching qualifications, who received high praise for their fantastic attitude on the course, and we were also very grateful to have a number of C6 students supporting us in running our annual SEN and Disabilities festival.

Our Year 13s received their A-Levels in August, achieving some fantastic results, with many of our participants going on to continue their studies, both in the UK, and in the USA on Soccer Scholarships.

Our other main education delivery, the Premier League Primary Stars programme, has continued to adapt and develop to cater for both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Through dialogue with, we have been able to tailor the sessions more specifically to the needs of the programme.

Through the PLPS programme we have also seen CPD delivered, both to our participating teachers, and to our staff. Mentors from the FA came to Foundation Park to help coach our PLPS deliverers, and we have also delivered our own CPD to Primary Schools, sharing the learnings of the PLPS programme across teachers that may not be directly participating.

*EDUCATION CASE STUDY:*

*Primary Teachers Award*

*The Primary Teachers Award is a course we provide free charge for local Primary Teachers, in conjunction with the FA PE Unit and Premier League Primary Stars.*





*Hosted at Play Football, 15 teachers from various schools attended the workshop ran by Vinny Halsall and Ben Merry of the FA PE Unit. The day ran from 9:00 – 4:00 and involved practical aspects, as well as theory.*

*The day there took a big focus on the STEP (Space, Task Equipment, People) principle and how the teachers can differentiate very simple PE drills in their PE lessons. The STEP principle is well known by our coaching staff and is used effectively in our Premier League Primary Stars delivery.*

*Teachers completed feedback forms after the Primary Teachers' Award, using the 'Stars and Wishes' format. Below is some of the feedback that we received:*

<b>STARS: What Went Well</b>	<b>WISHES: Even Better if...</b>
Coaches talked us through progression and ways to adapt a range of activities. Pace was fantastic. Both Vinny and Ben really took the time to get to know us all and develop our CPD personally - very inspiring!	It was a fantastic day and could only be even better if we had more time for more activities!
Examples/ideas of good practice	Noise! A game of futsal disturbed the coaching
Experience of the activities and the pair, share opportunities to discuss development.	Terminology sheets to explain subject specific terms.
It was a fantastic day, it made me feel a lot more confident about how to progress a range of activities and games throughout both Key Stages as well as during the term itself. Both Vinny and Ben were very friendly and ensured my own personal developed was attended to - very inspiring!	It was a great day, with great pace and variety. It could only be improved by having more time to discuss more.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Good knowledge and demonstrations.</li> <li>2. Gave me some more useful games I can use.</li> <li>3. Refreshed my learning and made it clear on how we can engage and teach pupils with a variety of different games.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Could have done a little bit more on the soccer games at the end.</li> <li>2. Overall a very good course.</li> </ol>

## HEALTH

Our Football Fans in Training programme has gone from strength to strength with six cohorts completing the programme in 2019. Our first ladies group completed the programme just before the Christmas break in 2018, and we were glad to keep this running throughout the year with a further three groups. We also introduced 'Friends of Football Fans in Training', which opened up to members of the community who may previously not have had much engagement with the football club. This course was a success, but in order to prevent alienating potential participants, we made the decision to integrate the two courses, for a more inclusive 'Football Fans in Training' for everyone.

In May we held our annual Football Fans in Training tournament take place on the pitch of the County Ground. It was fantastic to see our former participants returning and displaying the same camaraderie that they had during their time on the course, sharing their personal successes and strategies following the FFIT programme. It was also the first year that we were able to welcome a ladies' team into the tournament! It was fantastic to see, and maybe we'll see them lifting the silverware in the tournament next year.



2019 saw our Extra Time group growing in size in response to promotional videos and online posts. Over the two groups we now have well over 40 participants and numbers continue to grow. We've been working hard to keep our sessions interesting, and on top of our usual activities such as tennis, bowls, petanque and water polo, we've been trying new activities such as indoor croquet, and pickleball.

## **PLAYER PATHWAY**

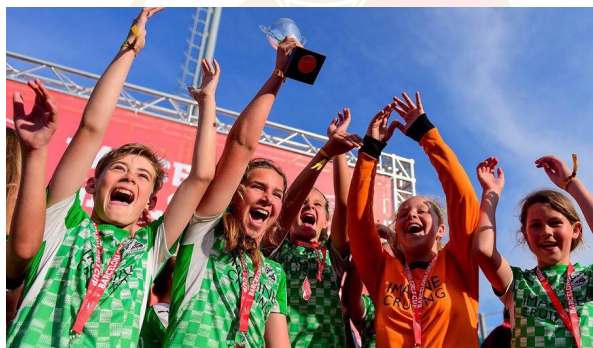
April saw a re-design of our Development Centre format with us arranging our sessions into Mini Foundation (2-4 years old), Junior Foundation (5-6 years old) and Youth Foundation (7-14 years old). This coincided with the adoption of a new booking system for our weekly sessions, allowing the children to book on for the full year, saving time for our staff and participants.



Our Elite teams have shown some great improvements this year, both in training and in their fixtures, and we have received lots of great feedback about the boys' attitudes and demeanours. In July a mixture of our Elite U11s and U12s had an experience of a lifetime competing in the Gothia Cup. The boys showed a lot of promise going in, and both teams got through to the last 16. It was a fantastic achievement from everyone involved and a week all the players will remember forever.

The Girls Centre for Football Excellence has continued to build in strength. Our target for the 2018–19 season was to grow each team to capacity which we have achieved through the hard work of our excellent coaches. April saw an amazing opportunity for our girls, when they were given the chance to be flag bearers at the England Lionesses' game against Spain. It's hard to describe how inspiring it was for our girls - not only to be able to watch the Lionesses win in their own town - but to be a part of it.

The highlight of the year for our girls' programme was our U12s and U15s travelling to Spain to represent STFC in the Barcelona Cup. The U15s unfortunately lost out in the B-Cup final, but one of our U12's teams battled through to their B-Cup final where they beat FC Santa Claus from Finland.



#### PLAYER PATHWAY CASE STUDY:

*Freddie Morlock*

*Before every trip abroad we have race nights to help raise funds for the trip. The funds raised will go towards, travel, pack lunches, activities that have been planned during the week and their kit that they wear whilst representing Swindon Town. We have one particular person who went up and beyond our expectations.*

## SPORTS PARTICIPATION

*This is Freddie Morlock, he not only sold all of the tickets that we ask each player to sell, Freddie actually went a step further and wrote letters to sponsors to help raise even more money for the trip. With Freddie's letter, he gained 2 sponsors for our races and received a signed Swindon Town shirt as a gesture of thanks for all of his hard work.*



## SPORTS PARTICIPATION

In 2019 we were proud to host over 2400 participants in Swindon, Chippenham, Ramsbury, Bradford-on-Avon, Marlborough and Corsham, and over the summer we gifted an STFC Community Foundation T-Shirt to each participant. Seeing a sea of red on the field for the five weeks was fantastic, and it was amazing to see all of the kids so happy and proud to wear the club badge. The Holiday Development Courses are a great opportunity for our participants to engage with the football club, and throughout the year our participants were joined by Steven Benda, Matthew Baudry, Zeki Fryers, and Danny Rose amongst others.

The end of the 18-19 season saw several big Saturday Team Club bookings and for the final game, we hosted 160 participants which took our final numbers for the season up to 922. For the 19-20

season we have worked with the Wiltshire FA to directly contact teams which has shown an increase in the amount of clubs booking on. With us able to utilise Foundation Park, this has meant that although we are unable to accommodate as many people, we've been able to greatly enhance the experience. Even with this restriction we have already hosted 342 participants in the first part of the 19-20 season, compared to 247 last year.



This year, we received word that the Premier League Girls programme wouldn't be continuing in the latter part of 2019. This programme had over 140 girls, providing football opportunities for those who may not otherwise have chance. To finish these sessions we invited all the schools taking part to play on the County Ground. It was a fantastic opportunity for these girls, who a year ago may never have played football, to be playing in the stadium of their home team.

#### SPORTS PARTICIPATION CASE STUDY:

*Zak Mazaheri has attended our course for many years as well as our development courses and he also a regular participant on our Croft ASC, and this October he proudly won the competition for his group. For someone who has been involved with us for numerous years it is fantastic to see them win trophies on our courses. Zak is also a character who had been known to misbehave when he*

*was younger, but he has come a long way in terms of his maturity. When Zak received his award he was very happy, and even though he is a Bristol Rovers fan, he enjoyed meeting the Swindon Town Players.*

**DISABILITY**

This year we partnered with a new main sponsor of our Social Inclusion and Disability programme: Holiday Inn Express Swindon City Centre and Holiday Inn's charity The Embassy of Man. We officially welcomed our new sponsors during the STFC home fixture against Newport, when our Mental Health team played Newport's 'We Wear the Same Shirt' team on the pitch at half-time.



Our Pan-Disability sessions continue with participants with disabilities from cerebral palsy to autism and ADHD. In the Easter and October school holidays, we also welcomed 25-30 local children with various Special Educational Needs to engage in multi-sports fun weeks. Our DS Active group now has fourteen on the register, ranging from 7 to 27 years. In June, a team representing the group travelled to Birmingham to take part in the national DS Active festival, finishing top of their group, but narrowly missing out in the final. This year also saw the continuation of our after-school club for the Robert Le Kyng SNUG (Special Needs

Unit Group). It's a fantastic opportunity for these children, all with severe motor disabilities, and we were lucky to be able to take Ellis Iandolo, Joe Romanski, Steven Benda, and Archie Matthews along on separate occasions. The kids loved it, and the players all commented on how well the sessions were run.



In Spring we held our annual Disability and SEN festival, where we invited the students of specialist schools in Wiltshire for a day of sport. The participants were able to engage in activities indoors and outdoors, playing football and other sports. We were assisted by a number of students from our C6 programme, and it was a good opportunity for them to see the Foundation's work within the community.

## **SOCIAL INCLUSION**

Our Mental Health Squad continues with steady numbers, and the participants often remarking on the importance of the sessions to them. The team finished their season second in the table, based only on some un-played fixtures, and they also competed in the annual Football Fans in Training tournament, where they were unlucky to be knocked out in the semi-finals by the eventual



winners. Our Deaf Team has sadly been disbanded, although the players that remained continue to play with the Mental Health squad.

April saw the launch of the Onside Project, with participants referred by Social Services and local Children's support groups. The project gives children a chance to play football, meet new friends and spend time in an independent environment. There are eight modules that will help them in their lives, and the subjects include awareness, control and respect. For the second cohort, we saw a far lower number of Social Services referrals, so we invited schools to refer children who have had social issues and other behavioural problems. As this group had a strong connection with football, the messages were delivered on themes such as teamwork, and relationships, with a heavy football bias.



In August, we launched our Premier League Kicks programme. This project offers opportunities for young people between the ages of 8-18 to thrive through sport, and we have seen over 200 participants so far. Alongside the weekly sessions we've been able to host a competitive fixture against a PL Kicks team from Plymouth, as well as community tournaments. We've made inroads to setting up a 'girls only' Kicks session, and we are currently exploring new avenues and opportunities to do so.

## SOCIAL INCLUSION CASE STUDY

*The group continues to offer support and a platform for all with Mental Health issues to come together and receive support. This comes in three forms:*

- *MIND send a support worker to every session to counsel and support.*
- *Steve Holmes coaches the session and works in the NHS Mental Health unit.*
- *Peers give advice and support in the participants Mental Health Recovery Journey.*

*George Luxton came to the group after an episode of poor health and in trouble with debt, housing, and issues with his Mental Health. He has found that the support he gets from being part of this group have given him pathways to help with benefits, housing and a support network of friends who have been through what he is going through. George loves his football and never misses a session.*

## **ZAMBIA**

On Wednesday 22nd May, Shane Hewlett, Jon Holloway, Kyle Holloway and Tom Hartley set off on the long journey to Livingstone in Zambia.

The aim of the visit was to support the Livingstone Coaching Association, providing further coach Education for senior coaches; initial coach education for new coaches; a tournament for the Livingstone Coaching Association's teams; and deliver kit and equipment for the Livingstone Youth Teams, including 150 footballs made in Zambia, funded by Holiday Inn Express City Centre and Embassy of Man.

Jon, Shane and Tom delivered the practical element whilst Kyle concentrated on media coverage throughout the week's programme delivery. The week was a huge success, and this was largely down to the enthusiasm and hard work of all of the staff on the trip. For Jon who started the Zambia Project with Clive it was a great opportunity to catch up with old friends that have benefited from this fantastic partnership in Zambia over many years.



As soon as we returned, we began the drive for more donations, and have already received a great many, ready to be boxed up and sent over next year. The kit and equipment that we are able to send over provides young players in Livingstone with the opportunity to play sports in appropriate and comfortable clothing and equipment, and makes a huge impact in these young players' lives. Since returning Tom has also set up a 'Hive' coaching platform that will continually develop the coaches in Zambia and allow them to see new coaching content on a monthly basis.

## **STAFFING**

The end of the football season saw the 'retirement' of our longest serving member of staff, Clive Maguire. who after nearly a quarter

## THE FUTURE

of a century decided it was time to try something different, and took a job as a Teaching Assistant in a Swindon primary school. It was sad to see Clive go, but he is thoroughly enjoying his new job, and the new challenges it brings, as well as the additional time to spend with his grandson.

## THE FUTURE

We can't predict what the next year will bring, but we are excited to begin settling in to Foundation Park and establishing it as a hub of the community, and the home of football in Swindon. We're ready to meet any challenges head on, and do all we can to continue to live up to our motto of "Where People Matter".





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[www.STFCfoundation.com](http://www.STFCfoundation.com)

The Energy Check County Ground, County Road,  
Swindon, Wiltshire, SN1 2ED

[Contact@STFCfoundation.com](mailto:Contact@STFCfoundation.com)

Tel: 01793 421303 | Mob: 07966 305320 / 07919 112982

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