

## **Football Foundation – Supplementary written evidence (NPS0136)**

Thank you for inviting me to give evidence to your Committee on a National Plan for Sport and Recreation. The Committee's inquiry is especially welcome at a time when getting the nation active is more important than it has ever been.

As I said during the hearing, as the Premier League, The FA and Government's Football Foundation we are committed to building the high quality sports facilities that our communities need. But we can only do this with the support of central and local government and through coordination with a huge range of local stakeholders.

That is why we have created a Local Football Facility Plan (LFFP) for every local authority area in the country. These are the culmination of two years of consultation with local authorities, County FAs and other community stakeholders. Collectively these Plans give us a national project pipeline of the key facilities every community needs right across the country as well as being an invaluable tool for engaging with people and organisations at a local level.

We also work effectively with central government. Our experience working with Sport England has been a very positive one. We find them to be a supportive partner in guiding our overall strategic approach and always ready to help at a local level when we're seeking to bring together a new application or rally support behind a project.

In short, the Football Foundation is a great example of elite sport working with government and communities to fund and deliver much needed services directly to communities at a local level.

Yet, despite this success and 20 years of investment, we still don't have enough local football facilities to meet demand. More work needs to be done and more investment is needed to ensure people have somewhere to take part in physical activity that is accessible for all. As the nation's favourite team sport football is uniquely placed to get people more active and brings a vast array of other benefits; playing football supports physical and mental health, the academic attainment of young people and brings communities together. There are also many popular versions of football specifically modified for people with disabilities.

As we seek to rebuild our communities and recover from the Covid-19 pandemic, sport and recreation must be at the heart of that effort and that is why we wholeheartedly support the Committee's inquiry.

Should you need any more information from the Foundation, please don't hesitate to ask.

I very much look forward to reading the Committee's final report and recommendations.

**Robert Sullivan**, Chief Executive, Football Foundation

*8 February 2021*