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**Jo De Tute**  
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**Leeds Football Forum**

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## 1. WHAT THE PLAN IS ABOUT

### 1.1 Introduction

The Football Development Plan for Leeds (hereafter referred to as 'the Plan') is one of a series of Sport Development Plans that have been developed for the benefit of sports participants across the city of Leeds. The Plans are a direct outcome of the 2006 - 2012 'Taking the Lead' Strategy for Sport and Active Recreation, which is overseen by Sport Leeds, The Community Sports Network (CSN), although the Plans are not owned by any one individual and will not be delivered by one single agency. The Plans are the responsibility of the sporting communities across Leeds with support from regional and national partners, and their delivery relies on a partnership approach. The targets that are set will be achieved through the collective effort and work of a range of sports organisations, and the achievements, challenges and successes should be shared by everyone involved in sport.

For information about the Sport Leeds Strategy you can go the website [www.sportleeds.com](http://www.sportleeds.com) where you can download a copy of either the full strategy or a copy of the summary document.

## **2. FOOTBALL - WHERE ARE WE NOW IN LEEDS?**

### **Places**

- 2.1.1 The city of Leeds offers a vast and extensive range of places to participate or spectate in most forms of sport. Places range from internationally renowned sports complexes to community grass-roots centres that provide access to events of an international, national and local flavour. Facilities include the international test cricket venue of Headingley and nationally recognised stadiums such as Elland Road, home of Leeds United FC. Other performance level facilities include the South Leeds Stadium, Carnegie Regional Gymnastics Centre and the Aquatics Centre at John Charles Centre for Sport.
- 2.1.2 The range of places to play also includes over 800 outdoor sports playing pitches provided by the local authority, education, private and voluntary organisations. Local authority sport and leisure centres, university campuses, colleges and schools also provide facilities such as outdoor courts and indoor sports halls to accommodate activities, while specialist places such as the Leeds Sailing and Activity Centre at Yeadon Tarn cater for more diverse interests.
- 2.1.3 For football in particular, there are 572 outdoor playing pitches. Out of this total, 320 are owned by Leeds City Council, 166 by Education, and 86 being regarded as private or some other form of provision/ownership. The city also has 28 multi-use games areas and a number of specialist 5 a side facilities.

### **Clubs and Schools**

- 2.1.4 There are over 1000 known sports clubs across the Leeds area covering at least 60 recognised sports, ranging from mainstream activities such as rugby, tennis, cricket, athletics and football to specialist sports clubs like rowing, martial arts and triathlon.
- 2.1.5 The range of provision varies between clubs. For example, there is a difference between the standards and ownership of facilities. Some clubs are better organised with a formal constitution and affiliation to their governing body. Similarly, some clubs are able to offer participation and coaching programmes for many age groups and at various levels, while others can only cater for one team.
- 2.1.6 The schools network includes 230 primary schools (8 infant, 7 junior and 215 primary), 41 secondary schools and 6 Special Inclusive Learning Centres, making a total of 277 across Leeds. Schools provide a major opportunity for young people to get involved in a club, either by being part of a school team or through after-school clubs.

- 2.1.7 Not surprisingly, football is a thriving sport amongst communities across Leeds. At present there are 234 adult clubs in Leeds (men's open age), 58 junior clubs, 8 women's teams and 7 junior girls' teams. The city also has a disability football club supported by Leeds City Council and Leeds United F.C
- 2.1.8 The Football Association has placed much emphasis on promoting and supporting the quality assurance standard amongst it's clubs. There are 22 Leeds based clubs out of the 75 clubs within the West Riding County F.A that have gained the FA's Charter Standard. This includes 7 Women / Girls clubs.
- 2.1.9 There are a total of 15 girls and women's clubs in Leeds along with 608 'scratch teams'. These include those players participating in formal and informal five a side leagues. This gives us a total of approximately 915 teams playing football within Leeds.

## **People**

- 2.1.10 Sport depends heavily on the commitment of volunteers. The 'Sports Coaching in the UK Report' (2004) states that there are currently around 1.2 million individuals involved in the provision of coaching across the nation, be it as an informal volunteer or an elite coach. Regionally, the Yorkshire Plan for Sport estimates this resource at around 585,000 active coaches and volunteers, but stresses that this needs to increase with an emphasis on training key professionals working in sport.
- 2.1.11 The Sports College and School Sport Partnerships network provides an invaluable resource of Partnership Development Managers and School Sport Co-ordinators. The co-ordination and delivery of opportunities through schools relies heavily on partnerships between teachers (specialist and non-specialist), National Governing Body Development Officers, paid coaches and club volunteers. Education have appointed 2 competition managers for schools sports this will increase to 3 by July 08.
- 2.1.12 Leeds City Council also plays a key role with it's contribution of paid professionals sports development staff. Its Sports Development Unit is one of the largest in the United Kingdom with 35 full time officers and coaches. This includes a Community Sports team with 5 officers each covering a different geographic area of the city, and managed by a Senior Community Sport Officer. There are also 8 Sports-Specific Development Officers, a Sport & Young People Development Officer, and a Disability Sport Development Officer that support and develop after-school activities, coach education opportunities, club development and sports events across the city.

2.1.13 Leeds United plays a key role in developing the game across and beyond the city of Leeds through its "Football in the Community" programme.

It has a proven track record of effectively encouraging all sectors of the community in football, either as a participant and/or volunteer coach or supporter. The club recognises the benefits associated with a lifelong involvement in football and the positive contribution that it can make to the lives of people and communities.

The Football in the Community scheme delivers a wide range of sessions, course and programme within a broad based portfolio, designed to engage whole communities in the culture of the game.

2.1.14 Like most sports, football relies heavily upon a strong volunteer network. Each club has on average at least 10 volunteers who will cover a range of tasks from being a committee member to a coach.

2.1.15 There are 220 qualified football coaches registered within Leeds through the County Football Association coaches association. There are also 163 referees registered within the Leeds area.

2.1.16 Sitting under the County F.A are the Leeds and District Football Association, who have a committee of volunteers looking at fixtures, discipline and registrations. In addition, clubs will have a committee that would comprise of at least a treasurer, a chairperson and a secretary.

2.1.17 Leeds also has 5 full time Development Officers in place for football comprising of a County Development Manager and 3 football development officers, all of whom are employed by West Riding County FA. There is also a Football Development Officer employed by Leeds City Council.

## **Competition**

2.4.1 There is a vast range of opportunities for all ages and abilities to participate and compete in sport across Leeds. Local sports associations, governing bodies, development officers and voluntary groups work together to organise activities that can include seasonal leagues, one-off events, knock-out competitions and club competitions.

2.4.2 Similarly in schools, the network of development officers, school sport co-ordinators and teachers provide a calendar of activities that includes sports festivals, area heats, inter-

school competitions, come-and-try sessions, structured coaching programmes and school-club links.

2.1.18 Competition for schools is strong with the English Schools Football Association organising regular playing opportunities. An annual competition for girls under 11 (small sided) is organised by St Bartholomew's school. The Garforth Junior League, Leeds Junior league and the Charles Rice Junior League also operate in the Leeds area. Girls are catered for within the West Riding Girls League from under 10 to open age. There is also the Four Counties Girls League, which picks up clubs from the area.

### **3. DEVELOPING THE PLAN FOR FOOTBALL – SWOT ANALYSIS**

#### **3.1 Developing the Plan – SWOT Analysis**

The first step in developing the Plan was to look at football in Leeds through a ‘SWOT’ analysis. This enabled the Swimming Development Forum to recognise the current **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats** for swimming, and to appreciate what is (or is not) taking place or being done effectively. The main issues identified for swimming through this process are set out in Tables 1 to 4.

#### **3.2 From SWOT Analysis to Actions**

3.2.1 The challenge for the Forum was to interpret the issues identified in the SWOT analysis and prioritise the key areas that needed challenging or changing in order to improve and develop the sport. In other words, ‘what do we want to achieve?’.

3.2.2 The Plan has therefore set out a series of actions to address the key areas. In doing so, the Plan has attempted to build on its strengths, address weaknesses, act on opportunities and recognise threats. However, there is not a corresponding action for each bullet point as some aspects of the SWOT analysis are not within the remit of the local forum and the football community. For example, the SWOT analysis could recognise the threat and distraction of other leisure pursuits, such as computer games, but it could not address this with an action to ban games consoles.

3.2.3 The key issues that can be influenced have been set out over a timescale of five years (see Section 4). The table outlines ‘Work Areas’ which are the issues or potential weakness for football in Leeds that are being addressed, and the ‘Actions’ propose some key milestones that will enable the Plan to improve that area of concern, all of which are given a timescale for when they will be carried out.

3.2.4 The actions will be monitored on a regular basis to see what has or has not been done. In addition, more detailed objectives will be set out in an annual Action Plan following the approval and launch of the Development Plan.

**Table 1: Football SWOT Analysis – Places**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standard of existing facilities</li> <li>• Equipment and resources</li> <li>• Spread of facilities across the city</li> <li>• Indoor facilities at new build schools / sports centres</li> <li>• Quality of council pitches (generally) and service.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflict of interest</li> <li>• A lack of new, high quality facilities</li> <li>• Lack of structured programme for the use of MUGA's</li> <li>• Lettings policy in schools, poor communication from lettings re: closure/exams/holiday school facilities close in school holidays,</li> <li>• school pitches not accessed by local clubs every school should have a club!!</li> <li>• Cost of facilities</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>• Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facility strategy</li> <li>• Develop vets football small sided</li> <li>• Better use of MUGA's for organised structured play, local leagues/Futsal, look at other cities or towns to establish models of good practice regarding use of community sites (midnight leagues?)</li> <li>• Under ECM/LAA/Pooling accessing funding to target projects at specific areas of the city.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>• Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflict of interest</li> <li>• Financial streams dry up or are re-directed elsewhere</li> <li>• Indoor training facilities high costs</li> <li>• Unavailability of facilities for junior clubs away from school sites</li> </ul>

**Table 2: Football SWOT Analysis – Schools and Clubs**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>• Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High profile community programme</li> <li>• Clubs and league structures</li> <li>• Links with professional clubs</li> <li>• High profile professional community programme</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>• Weakness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflict of interest</li> <li>• One team clubs</li> <li>• Lack of exit routes into clubs</li> <li>• Links between informal sessions and local clubs</li> <li>• Link between Striker Coaching and local clubs for exit routes.</li> <li>• Lack of link with professional club</li> <li>• Lack of co ordination</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>• Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop lasting open age clubs</li> <li>• Link to junior clubs</li> <li>• Develop adult small sided clubs</li> <li>• Form networks</li> <li>• Link strong established junior clubs to voluntary organisations in target area's of the city</li> <li>• Access to funding to support above work . Individual support funding for young people from target groups</li> <li>• Development of partnership with professional club</li> <li>• Development of one delivery agent</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>• Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflict of interest</li> <li>• Co-ordination is not sustained</li> <li>• Lack of indoor facilities for junior clubs</li> <li>• Lack of co ordination</li> </ul>

**Table 3: Football SWOT Analysis – People**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strengths</b></li> <li>• Support from pro bodies</li> <li>• Experience, knowledge, commitment and enthusiasm of professionals and volunteers.</li> <li>• Existing partnership structures</li> <li>• Could be a very strong</li> <li>• Tool into engage disaffected youngsters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Weaknesses</b></li> <li>• Lack of co-ordination</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Lack of P.E. advisor</li> <li>• Volunteers</li> <li>• Accessible role model</li> <li>• Grass roots community coach delivery outside of school in target areas</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Opportunities</b></li> <li>• Health agenda</li> <li>• Community Coaches deployed in key areas meet strategy objectives for the city and broader</li> <li>• Better communication</li> <li>• Form networks</li> <li>• Better communication</li> <li>• The development of one professional coaching delivery agent</li> <li>• Partnership with professional club</li> <li>• Improve the co ordination and quality of delivery and management of coaches.</li> <li>• Personalities</li> <li>• Lack of commitment from potential partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Threats</b></li> <li>• Lack of quality coaches</li> <li>• Other sports becoming more organised and publicised</li> <li>• Drop out of players at 14/15 years. Lack of teams in these age groups.</li> </ul>

**Table 4: Football SWOT Analysis – Competition**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strengths</b></li> <li>• Structure for girls and women</li> <li>• Structure for disabled</li> <li>• Co-ordination</li> <li>• 2 competition managers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Weaknesses</b></li> <li>• Tradition</li> <li>• Fragmented approach</li> <li>• Lack of finance</li> <li>• Duplication</li> <li>• Personalities</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Opportunities</b></li> <li>• Streamline fixtures and competitions</li> <li>• Improve communication with partners</li> <li>• Leeds to host a city summer Tournament inviting the best teams in Leeds and other cities. Link to twin towns 2012 build up to.</li> <li>• Streamline fixtures</li> <li>• Co ordination of activity(calendar)</li> <li>• Use Festivals to provide club link opportunities.</li> <li>• Partnership approach</li> <li>• Development of a one delivery agent approach</li> <li>• International professional club tournament.</li> <li>• Lack of co ordination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Threats</b></li> <li>• Too much football</li> <li>• Too many opportunities.</li> <li>• Quality of league organisation at post 14 years football.</li> </ul>

**4. WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE ?**

Places								
Work Areas	Actions	Lead + Partners	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Sources of funding / Resources
To improve the quality and provision of playing fields.	Upgrade and maintain existing pitches. Increase the number of small side pitches according to the needs identified in the facilities plan.	LCC WRCFA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Football Foundation Green Leeds Area Committee
To assist/support organisations/clubs to develop quality funding applications	Meet with individual clubs/organisations. Encourage them to attend training days at WRCFA (CEP/GRAG) Provide a tool kit for the CSOs along with in service training.	WRCFA LCC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	WRCFA LCC
Increase the number of quality sites for football	Develop new facilities through the facilities plan including those at educational institutes.	LCC LMU	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	PFI BSF

THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR FOOTBALL IN LEEDS 2008 - 2012

Clubs and Schools								
Work Areas	Actions	Lead + Partners	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Sources of funding / Resources
Raise the standard of existing football clubs.	Provide clubs with information starter pack and follow up visit where requested. Encourage and support clubs to attain the Charter Standard. Encourage clubs to develop volunteers within all aspects of club development. Support clubs to achieve charter standard through workshops/in-service training held at c/s community or c/s development clubs. Assist clubs to forge links with existing disabled clubs. Increase the number of footballers with disabilities within existing clubs.	LCC WRCFA CLUBS LUFC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	LCC WRCFA FA
Improve knowledge and profile of existing clubs	To develop clubs forum to be held at WRCFA	WRCFA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Strategically increase the number of clubs with girls sections.	Use the school/club link initiative to assist this process by targeting areas where there is no provision. Use the Charter mark scheme to encourage clubs to establish girls' teams at under 10.	LCC WRCFA CLUBS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	WRCFA LCC
Increase the playing opportunities in schools.	Establish after school clubs at primary and secondary school. Establish links to existing clubs. Create strong school/club links within the partnerships by identifying appropriate schools to participate in the school/club link scheme.	PDM LCC CLUBS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	WYS WRCFA LCC
Improve the structure and opportunities for disabled players.	Support the Ability Counts Club and forge link to regional performance centre.	LCC LUFC EFDS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	LCC

THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR FOOTBALL IN LEEDS 2008 - 2012

Clubs and Schools								
Work Areas	Actions	Lead + Partners	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Sources of funding / Resources
Improving opportunities for disabled players.	Define the player pathway for footballers with disabilities. Continue to support the Ability Counts club by increasing the number of places available. Establish a college disability league	COLLEGES						
Raise the standard of football being provided within schools.	Raise standards in PE by supporting schools to become FA Charter standard. Develop and implement a football strategy within each school sport partnership. Improve school club link. Develop a programme of teacher training to assist in roll out of Out of School Hours learning scheme. Increase the participation and co ordinate football within special schools.	LCC LEA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	PDM WRCFA LCC
Establish the Futsal Initiative	Support Futsal Leeds in establishing coaching and leadership programme	FUTSAL LEEDS WRCFA LCC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	FF SGS

THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR FOOTBALL IN LEEDS 2008 - 2012

People								
Work Areas	Actions	Lead + Partners	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Sources of funding / Resources
Increase the number and quality of coaches working within football.	Increase the number of young people involved by using the Step Into Sport programme at identified clubs. Assist the County F.A to deliver coach education at strategically identified sites across the city to support the school/club link programme. Co ordinate the delivery of coach education with key partners such as the university	LCC Forum LMU	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	WRCFA LCC
Increase the number of female coaches.	Support females through existing mentoring scheme. Encourage teachers to attend football courses.	WRCFA SCUK	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	WRCFA
Increase the number of volunteers within football.	Offer schools the Junior Football Organisers Course. Support the county volunteer strategy by encouraging people to attend the volunteer workshops at the WRCFA. Improve link between volunteers available through university and clubs.	LCC LEA SSCO LMU	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	PDM WRCFA
Increase the number of competitive opportunities for women	Establish a five a side league for 16 – 25yrs	TD	✓					COLLEGES
Improve the knowledge and support of volunteers.	Provide training opportunities for all levels of volunteers through training such as the Effective Football Club Administration courses.	WRCFA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	WRCFA FF A4A
Improve the structure and training for volunteers	Employ a Workforce Development Officer	WRCFA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	FF WYS LSC
Increase participation from BME groups	Appoint Inclusion Football Development Officer	WRCFA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	FF

THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR FOOTBALL IN LEEDS 2008 - 2012

Competition								
Work Areas	Actions	Lead + Partners	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Sources of funding / Resources
Co ordinate the number of competitive opportunities	Produce a calendar of football activities each year for coach education, girls, schools etc	Forum	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	WRCFA FF A4A
Attract high profile football events to the city.	Maximise forthcoming events. Lobby for future events. Organise and run EON National FA Cup Schools day	Forum WRCFA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	LCC PDM
Improve the quality of leagues.	Encourage all leagues to gain the Charter Standard Award. Meet with identified leagues to produce a league development programme. Support high quality and well-administered football leagues.	WRCFA Forum	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	WRCFA FF A4A
Increase the number of competitive opportunities for girls.	Establish regular playing opportunities for girls within the school sports partnerships. Develop West Riding U17/U18 league	PDMS/ LCC SSCOS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	LCC PDM
Increase the number of opportunities for girls from BME communities	Develop the programme for leadership and participation	WRCFA LCC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	FF

THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR FOOTBALL IN LEEDS 2008 - 2012

Support Services								
Work Areas	Actions	Lead + Partners	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Sources of funding / Resources
Increasing opportunities available through IT.	Update coaches' database. Establish database of candidates attending level one.	LCC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	WRCFA FF A4A
Publicity materials	Improve the standard of promotional material. Increase the use of existing outlets for publicity such as Bulletin Board and Internet.	Forum	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	LCC PDM
Improve the communication between all partners involved in football.	Increase the number of people attending the Football Forum.	LCC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	WRCFA FF A4A

**Key:**

**LEA** Leeds Education Authority

**LUFC** Leeds United Football Club

**SCUK** Sports Coach UK

**FF** Football Foundation

**LSC** Learning Skills Council

**SSCO** School Sports Co ordinators

**LMU** Leeds Metropolitan University.

**LCC** Leeds City Council

**FDO** Football Development Officer

**TD** Thomas Danby

**EFDS** English Federation of Disability Sport

**WRCFA** County Football Association

**PDM** Partnership Development Manager

## **5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

- 5.1 The Leeds Football Development Forum will continue to oversee the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the Development Plan for Football in Leeds. The objectives and targets in the annual action plan will reflect those priorities outlined in the 5 year plan, and it is proposed that the Forum will review and discuss this at least twice a year.
- 5.2 An annual report outlining any action undertaken and completed during the year will be circulated to relevant colleagues and organisations to keep partners up to date. This will also help to identify priorities for the forthcoming year.
- 5.3 A summary of progress made through the development of this Plan will also be presented to the Sport Leeds Board on a regular basis to ensure awareness is raised at a strategic level.
- 5.4 Finally, it should be stressed that the Development Plan for Football in Leeds is not an end in itself, but is part of an ongoing process aimed at ensuring continuous improvement for the benefit of football participants and residents across the city.
- 5.5 For further information about the Development Plan for Football in Leeds, or to become involved with the Leeds Football Development Forum, please contact:

The Football Development Officer,  
John Charles Centre for Sport,  
Middleton Grove,  
Leeds LS11 5DJ

Tel: (0113) 3950001  
Fax: (0113)  
e-mail: [football@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:football@leeds.gov.uk)