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Introduction

Ameobi brothers open Activity Dome

Shola and Sammy return to Walker to open refurbished community sports centre

Shola and Sammy Ameobi returned to the streets where they honed their football skills as youngsters to open a newly-refurbished community sports centre which could inspire a new generation of local Premier League stars.



Newcastle United stars Shola and Sammy Ameobi returned to the streets where they honed their football skills as youngsters to open a newly-refurbished community sports centre recently.

The brothers, who both played for Walker Boys Club and went to school nearby, were on hand to launch the revamped Walker Activity Dome sports centre. The centre has undergone a second phase of redevelopment thanks to a £338,819 grant from the **Premier League** Community Facility Fund (PLCFF).

Shola and Sammy were joined by local children and special guests from Newcastle United, the **Newcastle United Foundation**, Newcastle City Council and the Premier League, with Rt Hon Nick Brown MP performing a formal plaque unveiling.

Shola, who has made more than 300 first team appearances for his hometown club, said: "The new facilities are absolutely brilliant. I think back to when I was a kid growing up around here and we didn't have anything like this. It's a fantastic scheme for communities like Walker.

"This is a city which lives for football and the foundations are now there for a new generation of players to come along, enjoy themselves and to learn skills which will not only benefit them on the pitch, but also off it in their everyday lives."

The PLCFF grant will also help to fund a football development programme in partnership with Newcastle United Foundation – helping to increase sports participation in the Walker area and maybe even unearth the Premier League stars of tomorrow.

Richard Scudamore, Premier League Chief Executive, said: "Newcastle City Council and Newcastle United are successfully working to a common goal of increasing sports participation in the city that is mad for football. With the likes of Shola and Sammy Ameobi, the community of East Newcastle has never had far to look for inspiration. I'm sure Newcastle United would like to find more like them, but it's also important to build on the legacy created by London 2012 and that's what the Walker Activity Dome will do."

News Stories

FA launches National Facilities Strategy

Major grassroots plan unveiled at Foundation site

Our Chief Executive, Paul Thorogood, joined Sir Trevor Brooking to launch The

FA's first-ever National Facilities Strategy for 2013-2015 at Football Foundation-funded facility, Salford Sports Village.



The FA launched its first ever National Facilities Strategy for 2013-2015 at a Football Foundation-funded facility in Salford, Manchester, on Tuesday (26 February).

It has been created to expand upon and support the National Game Strategy 2011-2015, which set out four targets: growth and retention, raising standards, developing better players and running the game more effectively.

Since the establishment of the Football Foundation, the **Premier League**, The FA and the **Government** (through **Sport England**) have overseen the investment over £780million into facilities across the country. However, football is a game heavily reliant on public resources and at a time when the public sector is contracting, there will inevitably be pressures on the game, especially regarding facilities. The FA's vision is to continue 'building, protecting and enhancing sustainable football facilities to improve the experience of the nation's favourite game.'

The FA's facility priorities, set out in the National Facilities Strategy, are:

- Leading the development of technical standards
- Facility planning and protecting playing fields
- Supporting club and league volunteers
- Targeted facility improvement schemes
- Capital investment into facilities

The strategy was launched by former England and West Ham United player, Sir Trevor Brooking CBE, from the **Salford Sports Village** community facility, which was built with the help of a Foundation grant and officially opened in 2006 by Manchester United Manager, Sir Alex Ferguson.

Football Foundation Chief Executive, Paul Thorogood, commented: "Whether you are looking to develop the next generation of footballing talent, or are one of the millions who play purely for the love of the game at the grassroots each week, facilities are the platform on which all of that takes place.

"With 84% of people citing 'poor facilities' as their most pressing issue, the grassroots game has made it abundantly clear where it thinks the priority for investment should be."

Targets within the **Facilities Strategy** include improving 3,000 natural pitches across England, building 150 artificial pitches and developing 100 all weather surfaces, whilst refurbishing changing rooms and toilets on a range of selected sites.

To find out more about the National Facilities Strategy [click here](#).

Graeme signs up as Ambassador

Ex England and Chelsea star becomes Foundation Ambassador

Former England and Premier League defender, Graeme le Saux, is the latest name to support the millions that are involved in the grassroots game each week, by becoming one of the Football Foundation's Ambassadors.



Former England and Chelsea defender, Graeme le Saux, has become the Football Foundation's latest signing. Graeme has agreed to become one of the Foundation's Ambassadors to support the development of better community sports facilities with money provided by the Premier League, The FA and Government (via Sport England).

Le Saux made a combined total of 485 appearances for Chelsea, Blackburn Rovers and Southampton during his career, scoring 24 goals. He made his England debut in 1994 and represented the Three Lions 36 times over six years. He scored a memorable goal for England against Brazil at Wembley in 1995 with a stunning strike from outside the penalty area.

Graeme said: "Millions of people play our national game up and down the country each week purely for the enjoyment. It is only right that they and the volunteers that give up their time for free to make it happen have proper sports facilities.

"The Football Foundation does an excellent job in developing better facilities by investing funding from the Premier League, The FA, the Government - through Sport England - where it is most needed. I am delighted to support its cause!"

Graeme joins other figures from the game that help promote the Foundation and its work at the grassroots, including: Gary Neville, Gareth Southgate, Graham Taylor OBE, Dion Dublin, John Scales, Robbie Earle MBE, Peter Beardsley MBE, Faye White MBE, Georgie Bingham and Dan Walker.

Alsager Town FC rise from the ashes

Club officially opens new pavilion 18 months after fire

Alsager Town FC were staring at a chasm when its facilities were ravaged by fire two years ago. Now the club looks forward to a brighter future with an excellent new clubhouse in place.



In July 2011, the changing facilities at **Alsager Town Football Club** were destroyed by a fire, leaving the club struggling to stay alive.

However, club Chairman, Terry Greer, and many of the club's dedicated volunteers, refused to let that major setback prove fatal. Following their hard work, Alsager Town FC's brand new clubhouse has just been officially opened by local MP, Fiona Bruce.

The development of the new clubhouse was made possible with a £85,000 grant from the Football Foundation, with the full support and backing of **Cheshire FA**.

Simon Gerrard, Cheshire FA Chief Executive, who was present at the ribbon cutting, said: "It is great to see such a fantastic facility in place after the awful events of 18 months ago, which nearly destroyed the club.

"The Chairman of Alsager Town and I sat down and formulated a plan to try and get the club back on a sure footing and with the help of the funding by the Football Foundation the club is now moving in the right direction.

"The new facilities ensure an exciting future for the club, it's a tremendous achievement by all involved, especially all the volunteers who have given their own time to make this project come alive."

In a surprise for Terry, it was announced at the opening that the new clubhouse will be named after him in recognition of his and his family's hardwork. It will now be known as The Greer Lounge.

Side Articles

ONLINE 31

Read our latest magazine



The new issue of the Football Foundation's magazine **ONSIDE** is out now!

Click the above image to read the online version, which features:

- Manchester United manager Sir Alex Ferguson with Premier League Chief Executive Richard Scudamore
- England legend and 1966 World Cup winner Jack Charlton
- Newcastle United stars Papiss Cissé and Cheick Tioté
- Foundation Ambassador and talkSPORT presenter Georgie Bingham
- And an exclusive interview with Football Focus host - and new Foundation Ambassador - Dan Walker.

Before and After

Worn-out clubhouse substituted for brand new pavilion

Times changing for East Yorkshire-based club

The future for Heslerton Juniors FC is as bright as their brand new multi-use facility.



Heslerton Juniors FC is an ambitious football club, which was being held back by its outdated clubhouse and changing facilities.

With the help of a £153,626 grant from the Football Foundation, after working with the **East Riding FA**, the club's future is a whole lot brighter with a fantastic new pavilion, incorporating four team changing

rooms and kitchen. As well as the football club the new pavilion is home to Heselton bowling and cricket clubs.

Click the right arrow to view the transformation in our gallery of images below.

Published by The Football Foundation

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Registered Charity Number 1079309



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