



# Trusted to Support

## SPFL Trust Annual Report 2020-2021



# Welcome from our CEO



I am delighted to introduce you to our 2020-2021 Annual Report - a period in which we've reflected, adapted and grown against an ever evolving landscape. In turn we've continued to deliver our groundbreaking programmes, and supported SPFL associated trusts and clubs (ATCs).

It's not possible to reflect on this time without acknowledging the challenges. We have all faced immense changes to the way we live our lives, and for Scottish football this had a huge impact. We've seen stands with no fans, games cancelled, community projects paused and a lot of work needed to reopen doors.

Placed at the very centre of their communities, ATCs have risen to the challenge, and we have been heartened to be able to support these important organisations, making a range of funds available.

**Nicky Reid**  
CEO

ATCs have more than earned their Trusted to Support badge, responding to meet the needs of their communities, and offering many an escape from unprecedented times.

We've also been grateful to see the return of face-to-face delivery meaning programmes like Football Fans in Training (FFIT), our flagship health and wellbeing programme has returned at full force.

Read on to learn more about what we've done to build capacity within Scottish football, and the people whose lives we have touched.



**Nicky Reid**  
CEO

## Suicide prevention

Our CEO Nicky Reid is a proud member of the National Suicide Prevention Leadership Group, to support delivery of Scottish Government's suicide prevention action plan. Part of this work includes leading on strategic communications for the group.

This includes co-sponsoring action two (training) and action three, which aims to increase public awareness. We remain committed to breaking the stigma on suicide, looking for opportunities across our programme of work to come together with ATCs to talk openly about mental health.

## Financial update

### Year ending May 2021

**Income:** £5,597,231

**Expenditure:** £3,621,978

### Year ending May 2020

**Income:** £550,459

**Expenditure:** £623,817

Income increased significantly in the year ending May 2021, due to generous donations from three funders, including Scottish philanthropist James Anderson. Read on to learn more about the impact of this funding.

# Introducing the SPFL Trust



At the SPFL Trust we work with ATCs across the country, helping them to deliver change that improves people's lives.

We do this by working together to deliver groundbreaking programmes, and we help Scottish football to thrive by offering a range of funds to help meet local need.

## Five areas of focus

Our work is focussed around five key areas:

### Health

We don't differentiate between physical and mental health because we know they are intrinsically linked.

That's why we offer free mental health awareness training to anyone involved in Scottish football, and deliver FFIT - Europe's leading weight management programme to help people to feel fitter, healthier and happier.

### Inclusion

Football has a unique capacity to reach groups who may otherwise face isolation.

For example our simple but effective Festive Friends project allows us to work with ATCs to reach older people at risk of social isolation at Christmas - providing food and friendship at what can be a tough time for many.

### Attainment

Every young person deserves a fair start in life, and for that reason we're committed to creating opportunities which help narrow the gap, using football as a tool to encourage young learners.

Our Move and Learn project aims to inspire children to get physically active and enjoy movement by teaching them a variety of non-competitive games. During the six weeks in schools, children learn about the importance of physical activity, healthy eating and hydration.

### Promotion

At the SPFL Trust we know that ATCs are Trusted to Support which is why we will always shout about the amazing work that they do.

We work with clubs to provide them with the tools to promote their work. We also act as a supporting voice in public, with the media, and when engaging with civic and elected stakeholders.

### Capacity building

There are now 34 charities associated with SPFL clubs. We work with clubs who are looking to become registered charities, build in best practice governance, develop organisational structure, and help to create fundraising strategies.

In 2020-21 we were able to support ATCs with a range of funding opportunities.



# SPFL Trust Programmes in 2020-21

The 2020-21 season was not without challenges, with restrictions in place for months at a time, often putting ATCs at a standstill.

However, Covid-19 couldn't stop programme delivery, and we worked closely with ATCs and partners to find solutions to continue to reach communities.

## Creating CashBack off the Bench



Football can be a powerful tool when it comes to reaching young people, and making room for conversations about difficult topics such as racism, homophobia and offending behaviour.

In 2020 we worked in partnership with participating ATCs to develop a new employability programme for

young people, who need support to put their best foot forward.

The programme is funded by CashBack for Communities, a Scottish Government programme which uses the funds recovered from crime.



## Joy of moving in 2020-21

The Joy of moving Move and Learn project is a national school based project to encourage learning through a variety of non competitive games.

School closures meant the delivery of Move and Learn had to adapt to fit around restrictions.

Despite these challenges:

- Rangers FC Charity Foundation supported 1811 young people through digital activities
- Celtic FC Foundation reached 508 young people
- Summer Festivals were able to run, reaching over 1400 children



Fitter



Healthier



Happier



## Football Fans in Training

Our flagship health programme Football Fans in Training (FFIT) has now been running for over a decade, with thousands benefiting from the initiative. Participants come away feeling ready to make positive changes, and the results are proven to last.

Despite restrictions we were able to run two FFIT cohorts; one in August 2020, and another in May 2021.



## FFIT in numbers:

### Men

Starters:	322
Completers:	243
Retention:	75.47%
Total weight lost:	1379kg
Average weight lost:	6kg
Average age:	47.82
Physical activity increased:	47%
Wellbeing increased:	13%

### Women

Starters:	190
Completers:	108
Retention:	57%
Total weight lost:	395kg
Average weight lost:	4kg
Average age:	47
Physical activity increased:	42%
Wellbeing increased:	15%

## Festive Friends 2020

For older people who were already socially isolated, the existence of Covid-19 only made Christmas more difficult. Of course, these circumstances meant we needed to change our annual Festive Friends programme, too.

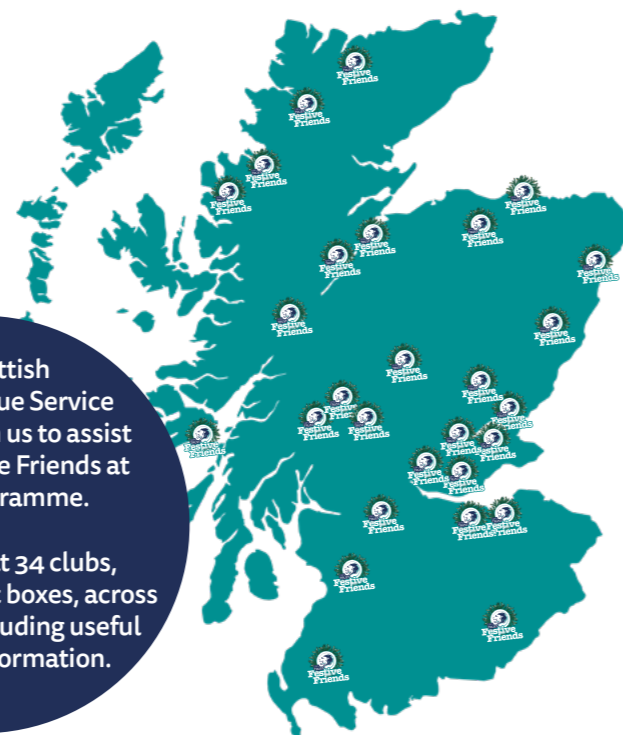


### Learn more about Festive Friends At Home



Despite the necessity for change, we're pleased to report that the magic of Christmas was alive and sparkling, through our new-look programme, Festive Friends At Home!

Supported by a fund of **£87,700**, we worked with 37 ATCs to bring food, games and joy to the doors of many who may have otherwise faced Christmas alone.



The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service partnered with us to assist with the Festive Friends at Home programme.

They helped at 34 clubs, delivering 321 gift boxes, across the country including useful fire safety information.



"I would like to thank you all sincerely for your lovely gift of the festive box which I received today. We are living in a terrible year but the best in people comes to the fore when the chips are down. Rest assured that your kindness is much appreciated at this time."



**Elspeith**  
78, St Johnstone fan



## Mental Health Awareness course 2020-21

In 2021 our Mental Health Awareness Course hit its five year anniversary.

To continue delivery throughout lockdowns, we switched to online delivery and were able to reach a significant milestone; all 42 SPFL clubs have now taken part in the course, with an average of five staff from each club receiving this training.



"I heard about the Mental Health Awareness course from a colleague who said it was the most empowering and interesting course she had ever been on. I thought it was a great way to increase my knowledge of mental health."

"There were people on the course from every part of Scottish football. I don't think it matters whether you work in a ticket office, whether you're a physio, or a footballer, the stuff you learn on the course can be used across all aspects of life."



**Moira**  
Dundee United  
December 2020 course

## Mental Health Awareness course 2020-21 in numbers

Courses were delivered between November 2020 and May 2021:



We've delivered **14** mental health courses



**13** of these have taken place online



One took place face to face at Dundee United FC

### Who?



**157** participants took part



They represented **104** organisations including: local authorities, football clubs, their associated community trusts and other third sector organisations connected to the football world



Participants came from a broad range of backgrounds including: players themselves, coaches, chaplains, club secretaries, physiotherapists, ticketing managers volunteers, and other operational staff from clubs

# Supporting Scottish Football

## Examples of how the fund was used

### Donations in 2020-21

In June 2020, we were delighted to be able to announce the single biggest personal donation made to support Scottish football communities in our history.



Philanthropist James Anderson gifted us

**£3,125,000** inclusive of gift aid.

As well as funding provided through programmes such as Festive Friends and FFIT, ATCs were invited to apply for a number of additional funds to support their vital work amidst the pandemic. To ensure that the projects these funds supported could best meet the needs of communities, all grants were made under the terms of clear, and legally binding Conditions of Grant.

### Covid-19 Club Emergency Fund

Every SPFL club was invited to apply for a £50,000 grant to support the club and community during the pandemic. All 42 clubs applied and were successful in a full award.

£2.15 million was paid out in £50,000 grants to all 42 SPFL clubs (including Brechin City who were later relegated).

The allocated grants have been spent by clubs, with several using their funding to leverage additional support on expenditure during the pandemic, and as such report 'overspending' (which doesn't mean they were given additional income).

How clubs spent their money varied significantly, but we are satisfied that all have used the income in accordance with the terms set out.

Themes included testing, installation of broadcast facilities (used for closed door games), health and safety equipment, signage, making facilities 'biosecure' to enable the restart of professional and community activity, and (non-football) staffing.

**3** clubs donated the full value to their community trust (Aberdeen FC, Celtic FC and Kilmarnock FC).



### Making space

Placed at the heart of their community, Montrose FC and Montrose Community Trust worked together to support individuals and families most impacted by the pandemic, as part of their Covid-19 Community Assist Scheme.

The grant allowed them to create a range of spaces for the development and delivery of an extensive range of essential services and programmes, each of which were designed to assist those facing food insecurity, mental health issues and loneliness.

For example they were able to create a sheltered outdoor space to launch a 'Walk and Talk' programme for people in need of companionship, conversation and emotional support during challenging times. The grant also allowed them to create a hub for the preparation and delivery of food parcels.

Over this period the club and community trust were able to reach more than 1000 people in need of support.



### Keeping doors open

In 2020-21 many clubs faced challenges when it came to bringing both players and fans back into their grounds.

Forfar Athletic were able to use this grant for essential sanitation and safety equipment so their team could return to training, this also meant that Forfar Farmington Ladies FC could get back to the ground.

Part of the grant was also used for video streaming equipment, to keep fans engaged before they could reopen their doors.



# Covid-19 Community Trust Emergency Fund

Every SPFL club with an associated charity, registered to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) was invited to apply for a £10,000 grant to support activity directly relating to the charity. All 30 eligible charities applied and were successful in a full award.

## General overview

**£300,000** was paid out in £10,000 grants to all (then) 30 community trusts

**£290,000** has been spent. One community trust (Station Park Community Trust) has yet to report on their expenditure

How community trusts spent their money varied significantly, but we are satisfied that all have used the income in accordance with the terms set out

Themes included staff costs, equipment purchasing, covering core operational costs, investing in facilities, or delivering Covid-19 specific projects.

*Note that since this fund closed, the number of community trusts now sits at 34, with other clubs in the process of setting up registered charities.*

# Examples of how the fund was used



## Wellbeing workout

The pandemic was tough for us all, so the Pars Foundation used their grant to run accessible programmes with a focus on wellbeing for groups who were most impacted by the restrictions.

This included:

- Free football camps for primary school children - to ensure that cost wasn't a barrier to any family
- A young 'Dribblers' programme - for children 18 months- 3 years, who after months of lockdown really benefited from this interaction
- 'Keep Kicking' - a programme for 16-25 year olds to play football and open up about their mental health
- 'Walks and Talks' - For older people in the community to make new connections whilst improving their fitness levels

All of these programmes have allowed participants to develop new friendships, and stay engaged in their communities.



## Welcome to the team

Brechin Community Football Trust were able to use their grant to support the employment of their first trust employee, a new development officer to support much needed trust activities.

This allowed them to kick off new projects in their local community supporting children under 5 and older people.



BRECHIN COMMUNITY FOOTBALL TRUST

# Thanks to our funders

A number of funders supported our work in 2020-21:



## Covid-19 Direct Response Grant

This competitive funding stream was open to ATCs to either retroactively fund work that directly responded to the pandemic or to fund planned work.

These grants were categorised into two 'streams' with ATCs able to choose one to apply for.

Stream A featured activity which supported online/digital transformation, social interaction and volunteering. Stream A could seek funding for all of these activities, or a selection of them.

Stream B was an innovation fund allowing ATCs to secure funds to demonstrate 'significant impact' through a new idea.

23 grants, totalling £80,400 were paid out, across these categories.

All income has been spent and reported on.



## Popping Up

Young people have faced disruption to their education, social lives and dealt with a great deal of change. East Fife Community Trust used this fund to bring some normality and fun to local school children by offering 'pop-up football' to young people as an alternative to after school clubs that were unable to take place.

They made use of outdoor community spaces, using funds to purchase necessary kit and sanitation equipment and cover additional staff costs to keep groups small.



## Supporting low income households

As part of their Covid-19 response, Celtic FC Foundation (CFCF) used their Direct Response grant to deliver a pilot project supporting local schools to reach families in need.

During lockdown schools had to step up to meet the needs of their communities. Working closely with school staff CFCF identified where support was most needed, and used the funds to purchase food vouchers for local accessible stores

This contribution helped  
**151**  
people to access essential supplies.





## Social Impact Report fund

In 2021, we established a major piece of work to develop a clear picture of the social impact that the SPFL Trust and ATCs have.

This deep dive into the data has provided each ATC with a comprehensive set of data to help inform and shape approaches to community engagement, project proposals and funding applications.

The full national report will be published in summer 2022.

ATCs received funds from a pot of

**£267,000**

Project costs

**£78,300**

Social  
**Impact**  
Reporting

## SPFL Trust Trophy fund

The sponsorship of the Scottish Challenge Cup - now know as The SPFL Trust Trophy - was undertaken as an opportunity to highlight, on a national level, the vital work of ATCs and important issues, such as suicide prevention.

The competition couldn't go ahead in season 20/21 due to the pandemic, so we made the money that would have paid for the sponsorship available in the way of grants to clubs who would have otherwise been eligible to play in the competition.

Funds were used as follows (all are inclusive of VAT where relevant for the purpose of this report):

**£108,000**

fee for sponsorship of the SPFL Trust Trophy (one season)

**£50,000**

fees and activation costs deferred into season 21/22

**£6,000**

legal and administrative costs

**£252,000**

in grant funding available to each Championship, League 1 and League 2 club and their associated community trust or SPFL club community department (ATC). Distributed in 2020-21 to ensure funding was delivered regardless of the tournament not taking place that season

The terms of this grant were effectively an extension to the original emergency funds for clubs and community trusts

From the £252,000 funds the following can be reported:

**19 out of 20**

Community Trusts applied and were approved

**Nine out of ten**

club community departments (no associated charity) applied and were approved

**All 30**

Scottish Championship, Scottish League 1 and Scottish League 2 (in season 2020-21) clubs applied and were approved



SPFL TRUST  
TROPHY





## Scottish Professional Football League Trust

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