



Press Release

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OSCA Foundation awarded funding to revamp football facilities

Sports Minister, Nigel Adams MP, was given a glimpse into the future of football in Halifax after being invited to scope out planned development works at the Ovenden Sports and Community Arena (OSCA Foundation).

Clubhouse facilities at Forest Cottage, Halifax, are set to be transformed over the next year, with plans to build and refurbish four new changing rooms, upgrade toilets and referee changing rooms and fund pitch maintenance equipment that will enhance access to quality grass pitches on the site.

The new facilities was made possible thanks to £545,922 investment from the Premier League, The FA and Government's Football Foundation.

OSCA Foundation is a voluntary charity, with the primary focus of running sports and youth activities in Calderdale. The site is home to Ovenden West Riding AFC, who play at Step 7 in the Yorkshire Amateur League, and will enable them to secure the club's long-term future, while also allowing them to grow their youth team base from nine to 17 teams, with a particularly positive impact expected for female football.

The Sports Minister's visit came part of an announcement that the Government would provide an additional £55,000 towards the project costs, as part of £10m Rugby World Cup 2021 legacy funding. The tournament will be held across in England from 23 October to 27 November 2021.

Sports Minister, Nigel Adams said: **“Sport has a unique power. It improves mental and physical health, helps people build new friendships and teaches important life skills such as resilience and teamwork.**

“I was delighted to announce the development works to take place at the OSCA Foundation in Halifax, which will benefit its football and rugby league activity.

“We want to get more people from all backgrounds embracing sport and physical activity, including women, disabled people, and people from BAME backgrounds.



Quality facilities and pitches are absolutely essential in encouraging physical activity, which is why the work of the Football Foundation is so important.”

Mr Steve Smith, OWRAFC Club secretary, said: **“Football makes a huge difference to the players, player families, coaches and community here. We see first-hand the impact on players’ confidence, physical health and mental focus. To receive this funding from the Premier League, The FA and the Government through the Football Foundation means a lot to us, as it will help us to improve grassroots sport in North Halifax and get even more people involved in the nation’s favourite game.”**

Paul Thorogood, Chief Executive of the Football Foundation, said: **“We’re dedicated to improving grassroots football facilities because we want to encourage more people to get involved in our nation’s favourite game, regardless of their background, age or ability or place. That’s why I’m delighted that this funding will support Ovenden West Riding AFC and OSCA Foundation in developing their first class changing and grass pitch facilities for the local community.**

“Made possible by investment from the Premier League, The FA and the Government, via Sport England, the Football Foundation is supporting the grassroots game by improving access to high-quality football facilities across the country. We believe in the power of pitches to transform lives and strengthen communities and so we’ll be investing £1bn across the country over the next 10 years.”

ENDS

Notes to editors:

The Premier League, The FA and Government’s Football Foundation is the largest sports charity in the UK. It champions and supports fair access to quality football facilities for everyone, regardless of postcode, gender, race, disability or place.

The Foundation receives money from the Premier League, The FA and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, through Sport England. This is matched with partnership funding and awarded as grants to create outstanding grassroots facilities that enable better games and attract more players, helping to transform communities.

The Football Foundation celebrates its 20th anniversary next year. Since 2000, it has awarded more than 17,300 grants to improve facilities worth more than £684m – including 829 artificial grass pitches, 3,175 natural grass pitches and 1,100 changing facilities. This has attracted an additional £870m of partnership funding – totalling over £1.5bn investment in grassroots football so far.

Through the Foundation, the Premier League, The FA, DCMS and Sport England have come together to create the National Football Facilities Strategy (NFFS) that will guide



work over the next 10 years to transform many more local facilities. Local Football Facility Plans (LFFP) are being created to identify priority projects where demand is greatest, and the impact will be strongest and help stimulate the action required to deliver them.

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