

RETAIN — THE — GAME

Press Release

August 23rd 2018

Simpson backs new FA funding scheme

England Under-19s Head Coach, Paul Simpson, believes funding from The FA's Retain the Game scheme could help to secure the long-term future of AFC Rushden & Diamonds.

The grant, which has been awarded to help aid the retention of adult male teams within grassroots football, will enable AFC Rushden & Diamonds to sustain their Under 18 Academy and Strive squads over the coming years.

Retain the Game is a programme funded by The FA and delivered by the Football Foundation. It awards grants of £750 to existing grassroots football clubs to boost their financial sustainability and allow them to continue offering playing opportunities in organised football.

Funding has been targeted at clubs that operate with two or more male teams aged under-17 and above, and either currently hold The FA's Adult Charter Standard Award or commit to attaining the award within the next footballing season.

The strategy aims to encourage more clubs to strive for Adult Charter Standard, with research from The FA demonstrating increased levels of sustainability and player recruitment for teams with this award.

Paul Simpson, England Under-19s Head Coach, said: **"It's great to see The FA and the Football Foundation supporting participation in the adult male game at the community level.**

"Affordability has often been identified as a key barrier, so this grant will ease the financial burden placed on clubs and allow them to concentrate on providing access to competitive football.

"It is very pleasing to see AFC Rushden & Diamonds taking advantage of this pilot scheme and ensuring that they look forward to a bright future, providing regular opportunities for local people to enjoy the benefits of playing our national game."

Money invested as part of Retain the Game will go towards covering core costs - including matchday and training facility hire - first aid training and new Nike kit and equipment through a bespoke voucher.

The new scheme has further bolstered The FA's efforts to increase participation in grassroots football. Earlier this year, they also awarded grants of £1,500 as part of their Grow the Game programme, with particular emphasis placed on boosting the number of female and disabled grassroots football teams.

Club Vice-Chairman, Jon Ward, said "We are really pleased to receive this Retain the Game grant from the Football Foundation. Our main cost is that of hiring training facilities and this grant will enable us to secure training and playing facilities for our new Academy under 18 squad and the new Strive squad."

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Notes to editors

About Retain the Game

Retain the Game is delivered by the Football Foundation, the nation's largest sports charity. Retain the Game is inclusive of players from different ethnic backgrounds, faiths and sexual orientations.

The push to reverse the decline in adult male league football follows the recent Grow the Game funding window for 2018, which made £1.5 million available for grassroots clubs looking to create new women and girls or disability football teams. Last year the scheme supported:

- 2,047 new teams
- 10,016 female footballers
- 18,941 male footballers
- 7,407 new coaching qualifications

The FA

The Football Association [The FA] is the not-for-profit governing body of football in England. It is responsible for promoting and developing the game at all levels; from grassroots through to the professional game, FA Competitions; including the Emirates FA Cup and SSE Women's FA Cup, the England International teams, and has two core assets: Wembley Stadium connected by EE and St George's Park.

About the Football Foundation

As well as delivering Grow the Game, the Football Foundation delivers the Premier League & The FA Facilities Fund on behalf of the Premier League, The FA and the Government, through Sport England. Since 2000, the Foundation has supported over 17,000 grassroots projects worth more than £1.4bn.



— ■ FUNDING PARTNERS ■ —

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