**Press Release**

**6th June 2013**

**Funding helps Bedford Ladies and Girls Football Club**

**Grow the Game**

Grassroots football in Bedfordhas been given a helping hand following a £5,000 Grow the Game grant, from the Football Foundation, the country’s largest sports charity.

The grant will allow **Bedford Ladies and Girls Football Club** to start two new girls teams over the next two years, we will train coaches and referees from our senior players to build on our success.

Grow the Game funding increases participation in our national game by helping clubs to provide opportunities for new players, or training volunteers to support new players and teams. The programme is delivered in partnership with all of the 46 County FAs and funded by The FA.

So far Grow the Game has awarded 874 separate grants worth around £4.2m to grassroots football clubs. Analysis of the monitoring and evaluation so far predicts that this will result in the creation of 3,791 brand new football teams competing in FA-affiliated leagues, 72,872 new players participating each week and 10,959 new qualifications or courses being completed.

The key strength of Grow the Game is that its participation increases are sustainable rather than transient. Its grants create a solid infrastructure of teams and newly-trained coaches in which new people can start playing the sport, rather than simply providing temporary activity sessions, which are then vulnerable to drops in participation once the programme ends.

**Jill Upton** Club Treasurer said: “This is a great opportunity for us from the Football Foundation to invest in longest established all Girls Football Club in the area, our local MP Alistair Burt has even written to congratulate us.”

Paul Thorogood, Chief Executive of the Football Foundation, said: **“Grow the Game has become one of the Foundation’s most popular schemes. This additional funding provided by The FA is excellent news for grassroots clubs seeking to start new teams and get their volunteer coaches qualified with FA coaching badges.**

**“This most recent funding window has seen £2.1m invested into 420 clubs right across the country.**

**“Congratulations to Bedford Ladies and Girls Football Club for working with Kevin England and Julia Ladbroke at Bedfordshire Football Association to secure their £5,000 Grow the Game grant which will increase participation in the region as well as support football development in the area.”**

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For more information about the work the Football Foundation is doing all over the country visit [www.footballfoundation.org.uk](http://www.footballfoundation.org.uk) or follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/FootballFoundtn>.

