



Responding to **COVID - 19**



Glasgow Community Activation Pilot

Live community activation pilot

Case studies

Pollok United, Nethercraigs Sports Complex

Case study

In March 2020, our country was put into a national lockdown where life for the following eight months was very different for everyone. Local communities were affected like no-one could have imagined and areas such as Cardonald saw a rise in youth suicide and anti-social behaviour rates.

As a result of communities going through such difficult times, the work that Pollok Utd carried out during this time was nothing short of remarkable. They delivered over 150 hot meals each week to local residents who could not get out and about which were freshly made at their Cokerhill Hub. Through strong relationships with local councillors, Glasgow Life and Pollok United put an emergency response in place to tackle local issues.

Exceptionally hard work behind the scenes saw the launch of a Friday night initiative which aimed to get young people off the street and taking part in physical activity within their local community. Glasgow Club Nethercraigs has hosted in excess of 100 young people every week where coaches from

Glasgow Life Communities, TURF Youth Project and Pollok Utd have provided a fun and safe environment for local youngsters to come together and get involved in various activities – with a key focus on exercise and sport, including football.

Following the huge success of the roll out of this initiative, through strong relationships with local councillors, Glasgow Life and Pollok United put an emergency response in place to tackle local issues. The club – along with Glasgow Life and Glasgow Sport Football Development – came up with a new operating model to allow people to start playing football on a regular basis again.

The Community Activation Pilot at Nethercraigs has given the community of Cokerhill and Cardonald the empowerment to further provide opportunities for people to play football in a fun and safe environment. The pilot has not only enabled the members of Pollok Utd to return but, with the club's close links to other local users, has allowed other grassroots sports clubs to find a facility to restart their sporting activities.

There are currently in the region of 700 people now using Nethercraigs as part of this pilot on a weekly basis with the majority of these being footballers. However, through local partnerships, the pilot has seen the arrival of various athletics clubs who regularly use the track along with other fitness-based organisations in which all the activities cover range of ages, abilities and genders.

With the ownership of Dennis Donnelly Park and the lease agreement at Cokerhill HUB, Pollok Utd has extensive experience of managing and running facilities. The pilot has proven to be a huge success and shows how a voluntary based third sector organisation has achieved some of their ambitions by engaging with the local community. It has been a challenging project

for the club who have worked tirelessly to make it a success from undertaking a brand-new booking app for users of various activities to working out a plan of action to maintain both the grass and synthetic pitches. There is no doubt that what the club has taken on is way beyond what they thought was possible but working so closely with Glasgow Life and their own board of trustees, has enabled them to provide so many opportunities for local people to take part in physical activity.

The partnership between Pollok Utd and Glasgow Life has grown from strength to strength and has provided numerous opportunities to discuss the long-term development of the facility, club and local community. The knowledge of both Glasgow Life and Pollok Utd for maintaining various sport surfaces along with operational know-how of running a facility has proven to be an extremely powerful balance in making the pilot such a success.

Andy Elliott, Football Development Manager at Pollok Utd:

"With the recent rise in mental health issues in the south west of the city, we've been working closely with Glasgow Life as part of a multi-agency approach to support young people and their wellbeing. As a team, our main focus is engagement with locals, and we're looking forward to continuing to build on this and strengthen the grassroots football community at a time when it's needed most."



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Case studies

Springburn Park Synthetic Pitch Case study

The innovative Community Activation Pilot provided a chance for a local organisation, Partick Thistle Community Trust, and Glasgow Life to work together to develop a plan which would reopen Springburn Park Synthetic Pitch and serve the footballing community in the north of the city.

Partick Thistle is an organisation which has a major impact in the local community. Throughout lockdown it offered invaluable support to those who needed it most by delivering numerous food parcels across the north of the city.

The Community Activation Pilot was welcomed by local teams which regularly used Springburn as they were desperate and for a lot of teams, were on the edge of folding as a club. This has allowed boys, girls, men and women a chance to play and socialise with friends again. Something this valuable cannot be measured and football at times can be the vehicle to change people's state of mind.

To demonstrate the huge demand there was for football, particularly in this part of the city, out of a potential 75 hours of football playing time available there were only two hours available after four weeks of the pilot starting.



Paul Kelly, Manager of Partick Thistle Charitable Trust, said:

"Our contribution to meeting the challenges of this pandemic are well-documented throughout our communities.

"We live in extraordinary times, but hopefully we can demonstrate, once again, that good partnership working, built on trust and respect can provide solutions for the most impossible looking situations".



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Stepford Football Centre Case study

Football at Stepford was on the rise and the hundreds of players of all ages were desperate for a game, to kick a ball with their friends, to simply be in a fun, safe environment doing something they love – something that can never be measured objectively.

Following the reopening of facilities after the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, FARE - a local community organisation which has a major impact in the east end of Glasgow and beyond - offered their support to manage the facility in partnership with Easterhouse FA, a club which was growing very quickly and offering young people in the community the chance to play football. These two fantastic organisations offered great support in working with Glasgow Life to re-open Stepford and allow over 400 people to play once again when the community was in desperate need for it.

FARE is an organisation which has extensive experience in managing a facility and was key to the pilot starting as it understood the potential pitfalls which may arise and have found solutions quickly. Easterhouse FA has the football community's backing and has managed the pitch effectively to ensure all local football clubs are included.

The pilot so far has proven to be a huge success as it has allowed the footballing community of the east end a chance to play the game they love again. No matter what age, kicking a ball for some people can take away all their worries, all their stresses, all their concerns and just let them forget for that one hour they play football.



Danny Cameron, Director of Football at Easterhouse FA, said:

"This decision now gives us a place for the kids to grow and develop their love for football again. Easterhouse FA could not have asked for a better partner in the opening of Stepford, than FARE! A superb well run organisation that is trusted and respected in Easterhouse and beyond for all the community work they do. All the football clubs in Easterhouse and the surrounding area now have a home for football again thanks to Glasgow Life and local politicians."

Jimmy Wilson, CEO at FARE Scotland, said:

"The new development puts Stepford in the hands of the community by giving people the chance to have a say on key decisions. This is a very exciting opportunity and the organisation is delighted to be working alongside Easterhouse FA. Danny and his team of coaches have years of experience working with grassroots football and we are delighted to be working so closely with them."