

# **Joint scheme set to bring investment to football clubs across Scotland**

**Football clubs at all levels across Scotland are set to see their facilities benefit through a new funding scheme between the Scottish Football Partnership Trust (SFPT) and Shared Access, the wireless infrastructure operator that works alongside major Mobile Networks Operators (MNOs).**

Following on from the success of this initiative in England, Ireland and Wales and depending on interest from MNOs alongside the speed in which 5G is rolled out, Shared Access and the Scottish Football Partnership Trust believe the total level of investment could reach £5m over the next 5 years.

Individual clubs – from grassroots to professional – will be able to upgrade on-site facilities such as floodlighting, pitches, changing rooms or equipment. In return for the investment, Shared Access would install their technology onto the club's existing structures such as floodlights, stands or pavilions.



The new scheme with the SFPT highlights the growing involvement of Shared Access in Scotland, with connectivity infrastructure work already completed on sites based in the Shetland Islands and mainland Scotland to date.

The SFPT were keen to set up the partnership due to the track record of Shared Access with the Football Association of Ireland (FAI), the FA in England and the Welsh FA.

James Clydesdale, chair of SFPT, said: "We saw this as unique and innovative funding model to support Scottish clubs at all levels through Shared Access technology. Shared Access offer a long-term relationship which can be especially attractive to clubs for their development. There's also the bonus for a club's neighbouring communities with enhanced mobile and broadband connectivity."

Clubs that have benefited from new floodlights through the Shared Access scheme range from Doncaster Rovers in England to Aisling Annacotty FC in Ireland and Llangefni Town in Wales. Shared Access are also responsible for mobile infrastructure at the Aviva Stadium in Dublin and at the new Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.

James Clydesdale, chair of SFPT, added: "We are always looking at new ways to support the game, such as our recent funding with philanthropist James Anderson for Scottish Women's Football.

"The Shared Access scheme is a win-win all round. Clubs can choose what sort of an investment they need such as floodlights or an astro turf pitch, Shared Access can expand their service in Scotland and, with 5G imminent, local communities can look forward to better broadband and mobile connectivity, especially in rural areas."

The scheme with the SFPT marks a sustained focus by Shared Access across the UK and Ireland to invest in grassroots football and adds scale to the geographical coverage of mobile and broadband.

Chris Jackman, Chief Executive Officer of Shared Access, said: "Investing in grassroots sports is critical right now. In parallel, connecting more of Scotland to better mobile and

broadband is an absolute priority, as demand continues to grow ahead of supply. Shared Access has already proven how this model can work in England, Ireland and Wales. Now, Scotland can benefit from considerable grassroots investment – all with the aim of futureproofing both sporting talent and geographic connectivity.”

Clubs or organisations who are interested in this new funding scheme should visit <https://thescottishfootballpartnership.com/shared-access/> to register their interest and site location.