



WEMBLEY NATIONAL STADIUM TRUST Annual Review 2020/21





From the Chair of trustees

Dinah Cox OBE – Chair of trustees,
Wembley National Stadium Trust

I wrote the foreword to last year's annual review as the Covid-19 pandemic raged, with no indication then of how the future might play out. We are, undoubtedly, still far from being out of the woods, and with current high levels of infections and hospitalisations, we may yet see a return to restrictions. I personally have some mixed feelings about the risk of infections from increased activities, alongside the pleasure people have gained from being able to participate in sporting activities again. It seems to have worked best where there are strict safeguards in place for participants and spectators alike.



The pandemic is showing us just how important exercise, being outdoors and social contact are for our physical and mental well-being – all things that sport can, of course, provide. Throughout the lockdown periods, we have been seeking to ensure that we keep groups up to speed with the latest rules and regulations. Ensuring continued compliance was never going to be straightforward. Whilst we were as keen as anyone to get services up and running again, we have appreciated that many potential participants will have been cautious about getting back out into society with the pandemic continuing. But we very much hope that if we are able to find ways to manage Covid-19 and put people's safety first we will find that many are supported to get back to their clubs. Later in this report you can read how several of our local organisations are coping with delivery during a pandemic and the lessons they have learned.

We were delighted that a break in lockdown regulations earlier in the year allowed the new Wembley Football League to take place. The competition is the first Brent young people's football competition in living memory and was received with great enthusiasm by players and coaches alike. We're grateful to the organisers of the League and to Middlesex FA and QPR in the Community for their support.

We were also pleased to support the London Community Response initiative, which facilitated the distribution of much-

needed emergency financial support from almost seventy trusts and foundations to groups working at the front line across London. Given that we had no new income, we were only able to make a very few awards ourselves (detailed elsewhere in this report), but our lack of activity meant that we were able to loan our CEO, Stewart Goshawk, to support this essential work. We know that the LCR has been able to help many of those most affected by Covid-19, especially people from Black and minoritised communities, LGBT support organisations, Deaf and disabled people's groups and those assisting women and girls. We are proud to have played our part and there are lessons to be learned by all grant-makers from this experience about the importance of equity and ensuring that funds really are available to those who need them most.

As ever, I am grateful to my fellow trustees for their contributions throughout this extremely difficult time, but the decisions we have made, has ensured WNST remains in place for the future. The FA also remain, of course, a valuable partner and we look forward to our future work with you. Thanks also go to our CEO and colleagues at City Bridge Trust who provide back office support – your flexibility has been invaluable.

Dinah Cox OBE
Chair of trustees, WNST

Life through the pandemic

We all know just how difficult it has been to get through the pandemic. The data shows us that Brent has been particularly hard hit, with very high numbers of infections, hospitalisations and deaths – and of course, we send our condolences to all those who have lost a loved one to Covid-19.

We have kept in contact with many of our local groups in Brent since March 2020 and what we have heard back demonstrates a very varied set of experiences. Below, our CEO Stewart Goshawk has been to talk to some of the community leaders in Brent to discuss how it has been for them and their organisations:

Phoenix Canoe Club and Outdoor Centre



Phil Atkinson,
Club Lead and Centre Development Director,
Phoenix Canoe Club and Outdoor Centre

www.phoenixcanoeclub.co.uk

How has your organisation been affected by the pandemic?

Obviously, we had to close all activities when lockdown was imposed. But since the rules have been relaxed, we have seen a real surge of interest in young people wanting to get out on the water. They were just desperate to get active again. We've never been so busy.

Of course, we've had to adapt how we run our services. We can't put people from different families in one boat, and we had to halt tutorial sessions, where the trainer would be in the boat with the pupil. But we're so pleased to be able to do as much as we can to meet the demand

How are you now financially?

We have weathered the past year relatively well. We furloughed staff and received Covid-19 emergency funding from a number of sources. And we cut back on outgoings where we could. Since we've been running activities, income from participants is strong. Our main issue has been the severe delay to the capital appeal for our new building – many funders have been focusing on the pandemic and we have had to re-assess our plans.

What have you learned?

The pandemic forced us to rethink our whole delivery strategy – how many people on site at any one time and staggering the start times of sessions; how we teach the practicalities of sailing and canoeing; how we arrange parental drop-offs and pick-ups. We will keep a lot of what we have changed as we go forward.



Joginder Khundi,
founder and chair of Brent Punjabi Association

www.brentpunjabi.org

How has BPA respond to the pandemic?

Most of our members are elderly and have various health conditions. So, we had no option but to shut BPA as soon as the pandemic struck. This meant that there would be no access to the exercise, food and companionship that the club offers. But we know that their visit to BPA is the highlight of the week for many of those who attend. We therefore had to formulate a plan quickly to maintain as much support as we could.

We started by making regular phone calls to members, reassuring them as much as we could about what was happening. Most live with their extended family, so had immediate support but losing contact with friends was a real issue.

So how did you get through such a long period?

After a while, like most organisations, we moved onto Zoom, which proved to be really popular. Most of our ladies had family to help them with the technology and we had around a dozen people on each weekly call. Just being able to see each other and have a chat was so therapeutic. Through these online sessions, we were also able to make sure that members kept healthy and encouraged them to take up hobbies such as knitting and other crafts, to help keep mentally active.

And what does the future hold?

We are now back meeting in person again, which is wonderful, although a couple of members are still isolating at home. But vaccine take-up in our community is very high, which is excellent. We have re-started our dance and exercise classes and seeing the same level of enthusiasm as before. Financially, we were able to greatly reduce our expenditure, so we're in a good place for the future.

What happened to schools football during the pandemic?

The whole Covid-19 pandemic had a huge affect on us. All district and inter-schools football stopped straight away. There was a point where even when it was possible to play, quite understandably, schools could not let visitors onto their premises, so we could not arrange matches or training. District teams could not access school minibuses to travel and, of course, Brent teams consist of players from schools across the whole borough, making things impossible. Parents, grandparents or carers who would usually bring the players to training and games were affected as some are vulnerable and were themselves isolating.

So, how did you adapt?

Financially the impact was not too significant. With little activity, our outlay was greatly reduced. We did not have to pay for pitch hire, officials and equipment.

Whenever restrictions permitted and there was an opportunity to play we restarted. We followed all the FA guidance on Covid-19 risk assessments, taking temperatures, using hand gel and not sharing equipment. To manage this extra level of admin, we reached out to parents. The response has been fantastic. One parent with C-19 risk assessment training helped us to update our policies and procedures. Others volunteered to check temperatures, administer hand gel and ensure that parents follow distancing rules. This has all worked very well.

Chris Ampofo,
chair of Brent Schools Football Association

www.brentschoolsfa.org.uk

And what is the effect going forward?

We are still affected by Covid-19. A team we were due to play recently postponed the game due to positive tests in their squad. Every week, we have different players isolating and this is a real a challenge in a team sport.

The impact on boys teams has been the most significant and they have struggled to bounce back. However, our U14 boys won at the London Youth Games – a huge achievement for coach Darius and everyone involved.

In contrast, Girls football in Brent is booming. We now have five age group teams and have delivered really successful FA Wildcats and Girls Unite programmes. Recently, in partnership with Middlesex FA, we hosted two coaching events. One to help develop Wildcats coaches and the other to encourage more mums and female carers to get involved. We'd love to do more.



Wembley Football League

We reported last year how Brent has never had a youth football league of its own, despite being the “home borough” for Wembley Stadium – the home of football. A couple of years ago now, we funded the pilot Wembley Super League, involving teams from several local clubs in a short league-based competition. The enthusiastic response to that venture led the organisers to believe there was merit in developing a broader league structure for Brent – to complement what is available in other neighbouring boroughs.

And so, the Wembley Football League was born. In its inaugural season, teams at U10s and U13s were invited to compete – and the demand was greater than could have been hoped, with teams from across the borough keen to take part. Keeping things to just two age groups in year one, allowed for learning to be accumulated, for future implementation. All matches were played at the excellent Ark Elvin Academy facilities in Wembley, which are accessible from across the borough. The league is registered with Middlesex FA, which provided the match officials and supported by QPR in the Community. And the whole initiative was given a great boost with a “good luck” video message from local hero and #boyfromBrent, Raheem Sterling.

Finals day proved to be a tense affair with several games being decided by the dreaded penalty shootout. The eventual winners were Queen’s Park Sharks in the U10s and Northwood FC in the U13s. But congratulations go to all the teams, their players, coaches, volunteers and parents not only for fulfilling every fixture throughout the tournament but for showing an outstanding sporting attitude throughout and being a credit to the borough.



Disability football during the pandemic

The best description for the past year of our Every Player Counts disability football programme, run in partnership with the EFL Trust is definitely “stop-start”, with more “stop” than “start”. We can only feel sorry for the EFL Club Community Organisations up and down the country trying to run successful programmes, where constant rule changes and lockdowns affected how it was permissible to operate. We all also understand completely that disabled people have been affected disproportionately by the pandemic and many were rightly very concerned to break their isolation to attend community projects.

For much of the past year, most projects have been unable to deliver any in-person sessions. But clubs have devised a host of ingenious on-line solutions to keep in touch with scheme participants and help them to keep physically and mentally fit and active at home, whether through skills training videos, games, quizzes and other interactive projects. These have been a lifeline for many disabled people who might otherwise have become very isolated at home, having little if any other social contact with their peers.



**Every Player Counts
extended for another year
to compensate for
pandemic delays.**



What are we achieving?

Nevertheless, the programme statistics for Every Player Counts remain impressive:

- 2,026 participants, of whom 1,474 were new to EPC
- 44,000 total contact hours
- 15% of participants are female
- Players of all ages from pre-school to pensioners

And our existing data tells us that:

- more disabled people are playing football more often....
-and they want to play even more and are motivated to do other activities
- they feel healthier, happier and more confident
- coaches better understand the barriers to participation
- there are more pathways for players and volunteers to progress through the game



What does the future hold?

With a year to go, we are keen to know how the clubs are looking to keep disability participation going in the future. There are already a range of ideas being developed, including:

- workforce development – more diverse and better-trained coaches
- promoting inclusion - family sessions including siblings and parents
- increasing visibility - parallel sessions alongside other football projects
- advancing awareness – greater involvement of health care professionals

Our EFL Trust partners are looking at how to showcase and replicate these developments to deliver a legacy for disability football in partnership with other bodies across the sport.

London Community Response

The Covid-19 pandemic has turned the world upside-down. From the very start of the first lockdown, the trusts and foundations movement knew they had to provide a meaningful and co-ordinated response to help support voluntary organisations working to adapt their services to meet the needs of their communities. In the capital, the London Community Response initiative, co-ordinated by London Funders, brought together 67 funders, WNST included, to provide a “one-stop-shop” for organisations seeking financial support.

Across five rounds of funding in 2020-21, **LCR was responsible for the distribution of £54.5m across almost 3,400 grants**, an extraordinary outcome.

It is also important to note LCR's focus on equity issues and its support for those communities hardest hit by the pandemic. We know just how important this was to neighbourhoods in Brent.

Because of our loss of income, WNST was only able to make a very modest contribution to the grants made. These were either in LB Brent or to help the London-based sports organisations to support their local communities (our awards are all listed towards the end of this review). But due to the same downturn, we were able to support the

loan of our CEO to help with the distribution of LCR funds.

Even though we made only a few grants, we know that they were very well received and had a real impact in helping to support local communities. Details of some of the awards we made are on the following pages.



Charlton Athletic Community Trust

£5,000 towards the costs of emergency food and other supplies.

CACT has long been active within its local community in the Royal Borough of Greenwich and, like many of the charitable arms of professional sports clubs, rose admirably to the challenge of providing additional support to those most in need in their neighbourhood. Because of its track record, CACT was asked to co-ordinate the local Hub, distributing emergency food aid, collecting prescriptions etc.

Getting our funding to them quickly enabled CACT to re-deploy staff from across the organisation to work on crisis prevention, even roping in members of the playing squad to lend a hand. The work prevented those who were housebound, shielding or otherwise unable to leave home from ending up in a dire situation. The grant was used alongside others for the costs of new IT kit enabling staff to work from home and to purchase food and other essential supplies.



Sport at the Heart



£7,850 to provide on-line and emergency support to young people in Brent and their families.

SatH has become a respected provider of holiday-time and afterschool provision for young people, with strong connections across its Brent community base. However, when the first lockdown struck SatH had to close all of its usual activities and quickly became aware of the high levels of emergency need amongst the families they knew. Using WNST and other funds, SatH reconfigured its services to deliver essential supplies to households in the local area.

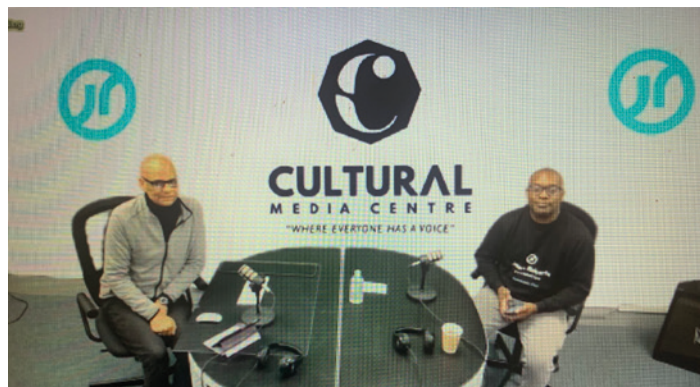
They also used these calls to check on the well-being of family members and to distribute activity packs to the young people, to ensure they stayed fit and active. In total, 122 families were helped through the provision of more than 5,000 meals, over 100 activity packs and 150 items of sports equipment. These distributions were supported by a series of on-line sessions providing fitness sessions, quiz nights and children's project work. There was even time for a zoom call with Prince Harry! An amazing all-round effort.

Jason Roberts Foundation

£5,000 towards the costs of providing on-line services for young disabled people and their families.

JRF is a local sports provider working in the Stonebridge Park and Harlesden areas of Brent – communities that have been hit extraordinarily hard by Covid-19. At the start of the pandemic, JRF quickly recognised its important place in the lives of so many local people and that, with the right support, it could help maintain community cohesion, as well as people's physical and mental well-being through carefully targeted communications. The WNST grant was used to buy high-quality equipment, turning one room at the Pavilion in Stonebridge Park into a broadcasting suite. Regular internet programmes provided residents with health advice, activities and fitness sessions, interviews with sports celebrities and role models, all offering a way of keeping in touch with friends and neighbours.

The media centre has gone from strength to strength and is now engaging with local young people, providing them with training both in front of and behind the camera, with some interesting partnerships being developed with national broadcasters and media outlets. On the back of this progress, TalkSport visited on the day of the England v Scotland Euro2020 fixture, broadcasting its lunchtime show live from the Pavilion.



London Community Response grants programme

In 2020/21, we made **8 grants worth £53,815**, as part of the London Community Response initiative

Organisation	Purpose of grant
Ashford Place	£4,140 for emergency support work and supplies for people in housing need in Brent
Charlton Athletic Community Trust	£5,000 towards the costs of emergency food and other supplies.
Elders Voice	£6,250 towards the costs of the purchase of new IT kit to support older Brent residents.
Hilltop Circle	£9,700 to provide on-line fitness training and personal support to club members in Brent.
Jason Roberts Foundation	£5,000 towards the costs of providing on-line services for young disabled people and their families in Brent.
Millwall Community Trust	£5,000 towards the provision of emergency food and supplies to vulnerable people.
Saracens Sport Foundation	£10,875 towards the costs of delivering services on-line for older and disabled people.
Sport at the Heart	£7,850 to provide on-line and emergency support to young people in Brent and their families.

Future plans

Like most charitable foundations, we know that we cannot resume “business as usual”. The on-going pandemic has changed the working and social environment so much that we must review how we operate. We have therefore been using the past months to think about the future and the measures we need to put in place:

- We have been re-drafting our vision and mission statement
- We are considering our “ten years time” targets
- We have reviewed our governance and are appointing two new young trustees to improve the diversity of our board.
- We will continue to search out further new board members, to ensure our governance reflects our audiences.
- We are considering how future fund distributions can have the greatest impact, especially knowing the pandemic has made the stadium’s income less predictable.
- We have signed the “Commitment on Climate Change” and will remain mindful of our environmental impact and that of our grant recipients.



Financial summary 2020/21

Key financial information from the WNST Trustees Annual Report and Accounts 2020/21

	2021 £	2020 £
Income		
Turnover grant from WNSL	5,616	827,146
Other income	1,320	1,055
Total income	6,936	828,201
Expenditure		
Charitable activities	110,792	975,169
Total expenditure	110,792	975,160
Reserves		
Balance of general funds	246,289	350,145
Total funds	246,289	350,145

The table above is not the statutory accounts but a summary of information extracted from the 2020/21 Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet. The full accounts from which this summary has been taken was subject to an independent examination by Price Bailey LLP and approved by the Wembley National Stadium Trust board of trustees on 17th November 2021.

A copy of the full Trustees Annual Report and Accounts can be obtained, on request, by emailing info@wnst.org.uk or by post from WNST, PO Box 270, Guildhall, London EC2P 2EJ.

Dinah Cox OBE, Chair of trustees

Trustees

Dinah Cox OBE
Chair of trustees

Lynsey Edwards
Vice Chair of trustees

Pete Ackerley
Treasurer

Gordon Haines MBE

Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson DBE

Andrew Douglass

Khilna Shah (from July 2020)

Sir Rodney Walker - vice chair of trustees
(resigned August 2020)

Ann John OBE (retired November 2020)

Staff

Stewart Goshawk
Chief Executive Officer

Administration team 2020/21

Matt Robinson
Hikmot Ademosu
Veronica Pearce
Lydia Parr

Admin credit

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P1: Zaffar Van Kalwala

P7: Wigan Athletic Community Trust

P8: Sport at the Heart

Back cover: Zaffar Van Kalwala



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