

Press Release

31st May 2013

AFC Lightning get help to achieve their goal

AFC Lightning has been awarded funding as part of The FA's Youth Football goalposts initiative, which was launched in 2012 in partnership with the Football Foundation, the country's largest sports charity.

The grant will mean that children at AFC Lightning will now be able to play matches with goalposts that are relative to their age and size.

The Football Foundation works with The FA to provide funding towards the installation of goalposts that supports the implementation of The FA's Youth Development Review. The new 9v9, 7v7 and 5v5 formats – played on smaller pitches with smaller goals – aim to develop more technically-gifted English players. These formats will be mandatory from next season. Extensive research has shown that the game is more enjoyable for youngsters as they receive more touches of the ball and the game is less likely to be dominated by larger, more physical players.

The move to small-sided matches requires goals smaller than the full-size goals used at present in Under 11 football. With a pair of goals costing on average £900, a ring-fenced funding pot of £1m was made available by the Foundation in association with The FA to support clubs and leagues taking up the new nine-a-side and smaller formats of the game – a key part of The FA's new approach to youth football.

The first window, which closed in September, saw more than 600 clubs benefit from a total of £444,000 funding. The new window, which is open for applications now, sees the remaining £556,000 of £1m funding up for grabs.

Sir Trevor Brooking, Director of Football Development at The FA, said:

“The first funding window for 9v9 goalposts was extremely successful, with junior football clubs across the country making the most of the 50% grants available to them.

“The small-sided format of the game helps youngsters to develop their touch and technique as they have more touches of the ball in a match. Young goalkeepers also benefit as they do not have to protect the same sized goal as a Premier League goalkeeper has to week in, week out”

For more information contact:

- Harriet Drudge on 0845 345 4555 ext 4274 or harriet.drudge@footballfoundation.org.uk

