

Case Study – Cumnock Juniors

Cumnock Juniors Community Enterprise are one of a new breed of clubs who are keen to play a wider role by re-connecting with their community. The benefits very often can lead to improved facilities for both club and community - a win win.



“Our club could have been successful in upgrading its facility but still just been about football. Now we are playing a key role in our community, an area which has considerable challenges”

Eric Bennett the key driver behind the development of the club has embraced membership of the Sport SEN. His exposure to the social enterprise model has taken the club in a different direction with its role in the community now front and centre.

With a new focus, their community coaches are developing a range of new programmes including; “Nock Tots” for pre-schoolers who in time will also have their own dedicated fenced off play area using the same turf as the main pitch; Multi foot sports funded by Coalfields Regeneration Trust including foot golf, foot tennis and foot cricket for primary age kids; Disability sport is expanding from archery and their sensory room to include all ability cycles and adapted traditional sports. They are also engaged in sports development, connecting with the local Rugby and Gymnastics clubs, all the while encouraging them to play a wider community role.

The club have come to realise what they can actually do for their community - *“In this area of multiple deprivation what we’re doing is really making a difference - we are proud of our community work and the relationships we’ve built locally.”*

A key influence has been his attendance at Sport SEN meetings with Eric connecting with other social enterprises further along in their journeys. On one instance he was astonished that others were not fazed by unsuccessful funding applications - he'd previously had sleepless nights. On another he received a valuable recommendation re VAT structures when embarking on a large scale capital project and most recently

“Connecting with the network and the coordinator have been the biggest help we’ve had”

Eric Bennett

Most recently he attended a study visit to Broxburn United Sports Club to learn from their experiences however this is a journey which has a ripple effect. Cumnock Juniors themselves have been approached by a number of clubs keen to hear about their journey including Newton Park Association/ Bo’ness United a club who recently received support via the Legacy Sustainable Sport for Communities fund.

Most pleasing is working with problem kids, adults and young people with disabilities and additions like our sensory room