

Expansion for PremierLeague4Sport

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Ex-Premier League player, Graeme Le Saux talks at the event

Premier League 4 Sport held an event on Wednesday to celebrate the success of the project as well as its new plans for expansion and greater funding.

Held at St Mary Magdalene School (an Arsenal FC PL4S satellite location) the day saw a congregation of officials, sports stars, programme managers and participants celebrate the project's great work since it was launched in 2009.

PL4S is a joint venture between the Premier League, Sport England and the Youth Sport Trust which started on the back of a £3.8 million investment through the Premier League 'Creating Chances' programme. Now, an extra £2 million investment will see the project double its number of Olympic sports that it's involved in from four to eight.

Joining the highly successful table tennis, volleyball, judo and badminton programmes will now be basketball, handball, hockey and netball. There to celebrate this new move were sports stars past and present such as our own Joanna Parker and Kelly Sibley, as well as Gail Emms (badminton), Darren Campbell (athletics) and Graeme Le Saux (football).

Premier League Chief Executive, Richard Scudamore, who was also attending the event, said: "The dedication of the clubs and their staff to this project has ensured that PL4S has gone way past the targets first set in 2009. PL4S will provide tens of thousands of more competitive sporting opportunities and help develop a new generation of coaches." He added: "This is a real legacy."

The programme sees Premier League clubs acting as hubs to create links to community sports clubs and facilities, which in turn connect to local schools to create satellite sports centres. All of the Premier League clubs involved has a dedicated PL4S co-ordinator who work locally with the clubs and schools to maximise opportunities for young people.

Jeremy Hunt, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, said: "Football can be incredibly powerful in engaging young people. The PL4S scheme has already given a huge boost to grassroots sport. Using the power of football to attract young people, the aim is for PL4S to be providing a legacy long after the 2012 Olympic Games in London."

Mr Hunt's sentiments were echoed by Alison Oliver, who is the Director of Sport at the Youth Sport Trust. She said: "The relationships these clubs have with their local communities and schools are invaluable and through PL4S new partnerships with NGBs have led to an exciting network of satellite sports clubs on school sites."

She concluded: "We're delighted to be part of such an innovative programme which is playing a vital role at increasing young people's participation."



Attendees, including Jo Parker and Kelly Sibley, pose in front of the Premier League trophy

Achievements of PL4S since 2009 include:

- 61% of participants retained
- 30% of participants sustained
- over 100 national and regional competitions organised
- 80 new sports clubs created by the 20 Premier League clubs

- In excess of 850 sports leaders and sports coaching qualifications gained
- Exceeds national targets on hard to reach groups: 33% of participants are female (3x national average) and 14% are black or ethnic minority.



Richard Scudamore and Graeme Le Saux try their hands at table tennis

Participation figures:

	Engaged	Taster Sessions	Total
Badminton	6, 139	2, 894	9, 033
Judo	3, 799	5, 664	9, 463
Table tennis	5, 993	1, 755	7, 748
Volleyball	4, 648	8, 435	13, 083
	20, 579	18, 748	39, 327

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