



OUR FOOTBALL PHILOSOPHY & STRATEGY

*OUR PLANS TO DELIVER FUTURE
SUCCESS & THE PART YOU CAN PLAY*



AN INTRODUCTION

ABERDEEN FOOTBALL CLUB HAS A RICH AND PROUD HISTORY, ONE BUILT ON TRADITION, SPIRIT AND SOUL.

Through a refreshed football philosophy and strategy, we aim to engage and inspire our supporters with an exciting brand of football, with homegrown talent at its core.

These unprecedented times present a real threat to Scottish football and to the Club we all love. However, we must look to the future, confident that we have the resilience and creativity to get through this stronger, together.

This is why we've been working tirelessly to adapt our plans to be well-positioned for the new reality facing us all.

Part of this has been refining and articulating our overarching football philosophy and strategy, which we are now sharing with a view to reigniting your passion for the Club and exciting you about the future.

In the short-term, we are fighting for our survival and a sustainable future, but we have longer-term aspirations with every intention of seeing them through. These are competing and winning at the highest level possible, bringing silverware back to share with our supporters, our city and our region.

The loyalty and support we have received from our supporters during these uncertain times have been humbling; from the enthusiasm for our #StillStandingFree campaign and donations to Aberdeen FC Community Trust.

Then to season tickets, where 6,500+ supporters have already signed-up for 20-21, and AberDNA subscriptions. Several hundred supporters have signed-up for or renewed their AberDNA membership in recent weeks to directly support the Football Operation, taking us back above 6,100 members.

Since its introduction in 2018, AberDNA has made a contribution of over £2million to the football operation. That's money we simply would not have had, to add to the

football budget, without your membership of AberDNA.

That support has allowed further resources to be directed towards not only the first team, but to sustainably improve the infrastructure that sits behind what we see on the pitch at Pittodrie every other Saturday.

All the while, we have also been able to privately fund the Club's first ever purpose-built training, youth and community hub at Cormack Park which now provides a fantastic base from which all staff and players work and develop. A return on this investment will be seen on the pitch but the greater and more sustainable reward will be our Youth Academy prospects making their mark over the next few years.

Our football philosophy and strategy sets out how we will strive to produce exciting winning performances through 11 core values.

To embed this philosophy and deliver our strategy and build a brighter future for the Club, we're asking you to take a fresh look at AberDNA and if you can, in these financially difficult times, consider becoming a member.

The investment you make in AberDNA helps close the gap between us and teams which can draw upon a much larger fanbase and therefore revenues from season tickets, due to their location. It's a contribution towards levelling the playing field, to your Club and in its future.

We are #StillStandingFree. But, only together, will we be able to reach further, punch above our weight, stand taller and prouder.

Stand Free!

Dave Cormack
Chairman

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ARE **FIGHTING** FOR
OUR SURVIVAL AND A
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THEM THROUGH.

”

DAVE CORMACK





OUR AIM:
TO **INSPIRE** OUR
SUPPORTERS
BY **WINNING**
THROUGH AN
EXCITING BRAND
OF FOOTBALL,
WITH **INTENSITY**
AND **PACE** AND
HOMEGROWN
TALENT AT ITS CORE,
TO BECOME A UEFA
TOP 100 CLUB.



FOOTBALL STRATEGY

DIRECTOR OF FOOTBALL OPERATIONS

In revisiting and updating our football strategy to be ready for the opportunities and challenges of the developing football landscape, we have adopted many of the principles which have brought us successes over the years and in recent times - a recognisable football philosophy centred around homegrown talent. We are continually developing the performance environment and provide the Manager with the tools needed to deliver winning performances on the pitch. This is underpinned by a robust and reasoned strategic plan encompassing identifying, recruiting, training, developing, inspiring and rewarding the team on and off the pitch.

The style of play is built upon a unique coaching curriculum delivered across our full player development programme, allied with detailed individual player profiling that informs all of our decision making on recruitment and player development.

Succession planning allows us to predict our future squad, ensuring balance within the squad, with individual plans for player development and a sustainable rolling football budget projecting 3-years ahead. This is all underpinned by an energetic and ambitious team of staff across professional and academy programmes who provide a best-in-class coaching and performance environment.

Steven Gunn
Director of Football Operations

AFC PERSONALITY

Behind our football philosophy sits a robust strategy based on the **11 core principles** of the **AFC personality**, which every AFC team member lives their working life by, on and off the pitch.



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THERE IS A **CLEAR PLAN** THAT EVERYONE IN THE FOOTBALL OPERATION IS **WORKING TOWARDS**, FROM THE **YOUNGEST** ACADEMY PLAYER **RIGHT THROUGH** TO ALL OF THE SUPPORT STAFF AND, **ULTIMATELY**, TO THE TEAM THAT TAKES THE FIELD ON A SATURDAY.

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STEVEN GUNN

DIRECTOR OF FOOTBALL OPERATIONS





ABERDNA

SUPPORTING THE FOOTBALL OPERATION

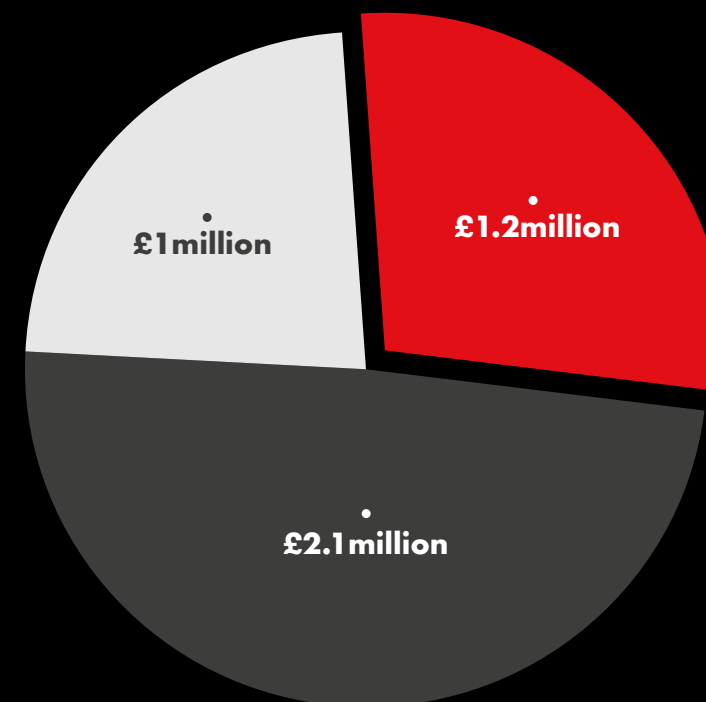
The core financing of the football infrastructure at the Club comes from several sources including revenue from pre-existing income streams, mainly season tickets and walk-up ticket sales.

Historically the funding available has fluctuated based on the success of the team and external factors, outwith our direct control, such as our cut of the central SPFL TV deal.

Since 2018, additional investment has been made in the football operation from the AFC Board along with a ring-fenced contribution from AberDNA, which has increased the core football budget. These funds are not reliant on results and performances on the field in the short term, but aimed at building long-term success.

Season tickets contributed just over £2 million to the football budget in the 2019/20 season, with walk-up ticket sales making up another £1 million and AberDNA contributing £1.2 million. That's with 6,100 active AberDNA members. A further 1,000 members would add £200,000 to the football operation with 5,000 additional members generating £1million more!

SUPPORTER CONTRIBUTION TO FOOTBALL OPERATION



MATCH TICKETS



ABERDNA



SEASON TICKETS



BUILDING FUTURE VALUE



WE ARE BUILDING FUTURE VALUE THROUGH ALL ELEMENTS OF THE FOOTBALL OPERATION. THIS MANIFESTS ITSELF IN SEVERAL WAYS:

- Creating a visible player pathway for the youngest of our 150 Youth Academy players, right through to the first team squad
- Building value in the first team squad itself, in terms of the squad structure, age profile, contract strategy and individual player profiles
- Broadening our recruitment horizons, to maximise our investment and unearth hidden talents
- Delivering on-field success, building the profile of the club internationally
- Strategic and deliberate approach to player development from the day they arrive at Cormack Park, across all age groups, guided by a strengthened coaching team

BY DELIVERING THIS STRATEGY TO BUILD FUTURE VALUE, WE WILL:

- Prioritise and live our strategy; every staff member, every coach and every player throughout the entire football operation
- Realise value from our recruitment approach in the short, medium and long-term
- Make our emerging talent stronger and faster through further investment in best-in-class medical and sports science infrastructure
- Retain our most valuable staff by providing a high-performance environment with shared successes
- Build resilience in our succession plan, sustaining the success of the club for many years to come

OUR FOOTBALL PHILOSOPHY

UNDERPINNING OUR AIM TO BE A UEFA TOP 100 CLUB, COMPETING AND WINNING REGULARLY

IN ALL COMPETITIONS, SITS OUR FOOTBALL PHILOSOPHY - PLAYING AN EXCITING BRAND OF

FOOTBALL BUILT AROUND A CORE OF HOMEGROWN TALENT.

The AFC philosophy encompasses 10 key principles:

AWARENESS

FOOTBALL MASTERY

RESPONSIBILITY

POSITIVITY

DESIRE

SPEED

DOMINATE 1V1

EXECUTES UNDER PRESSURE

NEVER BEATEN

BE HEARD



A CORE OF
HOMEGROWN
TALENT:

10 AT LEAST ONE

HOMEGROWN

PLAYER HAS
STARTED IN EVERY
COMPETITIVE AFC
MATCH SINCE

AUGUST 30TH, 1947

CREDIT: RICHARD HAY - HERE WE GO!



OUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE



Expand our reach into new markets for recruitment



Giving our coaches further tools to develop players



Test our young players against the best players on the continent



Both domestically and on the European stage through all levels of the Football Operation



Expansion of Medical, Sports Science and Performance Analysis teams

OUR FOOTBALL OPERATION

1

TEAM

2

STARS

3

ACADEMY TOURNAMENT WINNERS TROPHIES DURING 19-20

4

PRO LICENCE COACHES.

5

PRE-ACADEMY DEVELOPMENT CENTRES.

6

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE WINNING CLUBS FACED AT YOUTH TOURNAMENTS DURING 19-20

7

UEFA A LICENCE COACHES

8

HOMEGROWN PLAYERS PLAYED IN THE FIRST TEAM IN 19/20

9

FULL-TIME PERFORMANCE TEAM (3 MEDICAL; 3 SPORTS SCIENCE; 3 PERFORMANCE ANALYSTS)

10

SQUADS

11

AFC PERSONALITY VALUES

16

IN-HOUSE COACH EDUCATION EVENTS

20

SCOUTS

26

CURRENT INTERNATIONAL PLAYERS ACROSS ALL SQUADS

400

MATCHES EACH SEASON

1,900

COACHING SESSIONS

7,000

GYM HOURS AT CORMACK PARK SO FAR

19,003

OVERSEAS TOURNAMENT TEAM MILES TRAVELLED DURING 19-20

20/21 SEASON TICKETS

HOW YOU CAN PLAY YOUR PART

**JOIN THE 6,500+ DONS SUPPORTERS WHO
HAVE ALREADY SIGNED-UP BY BECOMING
A SEASON TICKET HOLDER FOR 20/21
SIGN-UP ONLINE AT [AFC.CO.UK/ETICKETS](https://afc.co.uk/etickets)**



ABERDNA
IT'S WHAT WE ARE MADE OF

Sign-up to support the Football Operation directly and help us level
the playing field by becoming an **AberDNA** member

Sign-up at afc.co.uk/AberDNA