******LONDON COUNTY SATURDAY YOUTH FOOTBALL LEAGUE**

**Est.: 1956**

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**LCSYFL Hon. League Secretary: - Joshua Lino-da Costa:**

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With the winter break fast approaching, I wanted to thank everybody involved in the league for their work and commitment to ensuring football is played every week- from the club secretaries, coaches and volunteers to the players, pitch providers and officers. We rely on your passion to ensure that opportunities for everyone to play are available.

The season started very well with the London FA awarding us the Grassroots League of the Year thanks to the focus on community and accessibility that we have installed over the past 12 months. This remains a big focus with us and we will continue to work with the London FA and other partners to help bring the new strategy into grassroots football, promote opportunities for everyone to participate in any way possible and, most importantly, ensure football is played every week.

We are also pleased to announce our partnership with ‘Her Game Too’ who will be working to promote female participation and remove sexism from the sport. We are really happy to notice a growth in the number of female coaches, players and referees in the league and further support is available to all member clubs, should it be needed.

We have been amazed by the work that the clubs have been doing in the community and wanted to highlight some of the projects we have supported. There have been a number of projects that have focused on social value in focus areas in Wandsworth and Lambeth, food banks in Wandsworth/Richmond, projects concentrating on mental health and others removing financial barriers to grass roots football. I have also spoken a number of clubs looking to introduce similar projects around boot swaps and improving facilities. We looking forward to receiving more applications and supporting the great work you are doing.

Unfortunately a lack of communication from one of our partners has delayed our referee programme that we announced at the beginning of the season but we are still determined to further build on our recruitment and provide this opportunity for those who are interested.

I have also received two applications for the Feel Good Stories this season which is meant to highlight team’s or individuals dedication to fair play and sportsmanship. If anybody has a feel good story from this season, please send it through. The winning story will win an award at the end of the season.

I would like to remind all teams that Ramadan is earlier than normal this year and to help clubs who may be affected by this, we ask all clubs to see if they are able to play in any of the closed weeks. If both clubs agree, please let us know and we can arrange this.

A reminder that we will be looking at moving the non competitive teams around Christmas and will update all clubs once this is done. If anybody wishes to enter a new non competitive team, please let me know, ideally by December 20th. You will need to ensure that the team is affiliated with county and all registrations are completed by 11th January.

I hope that everyone can enjoy the festive season, and we look forward to next year.