



OUR COMMUNITIES, OUR PEOPLE AND THEIR STORIES



**STRONGER,
HEALTHIER,
MORE ACTIVE
COMMUNITIES**

The EFL Trust is the charitable arm of the English Football League. We represent a national network of charities associated with EFL professional football clubs. Together we reach over 850,000 people each year – this book tells the stories of just some of those people.



“
The project saved my life – I would not have got through the summer without it.
”

“
I lost 22 years of my life to drug and alcohol abuse. I’ve been there and know what the people on this course are feeling. I want to show them that there is a way out.
”



“
It’s given me a safe place to go, I can trust the people around me and talk to them about how I’m feeling as well as getting an education.
”

“
I had begun to think I was a lost cause and that nothing I did would help me get better. Luckily, I was wrong! I pushed through exam season and I did it! I went on programme (NCS) and it was the best thing I ever did.
”

“
I’ve lost 6 stone in 2 years with Stevenage FC Foundation and it’s physically and mentally changed my life.
”



“
Corbin would never wear shorts, he was afraid for people to see his splints and that he had a disability. Since he started playing football we can’t get him out of shorts.
”

“
Extra Time Hubs has given me reason to get out of the house, otherwise I would just sit in front of the TV all day.
”



HEALTH AND WELLBEING

We use the power of football to improve the health and wellbeing of our local communities.

We aim to support people to adopt healthy lifestyles, to access the support they need, enhance the quality of life for people living with long term conditions, and help people to recover.



BERNIE'S STORY



Extra Time Hubs helped fill a hole in Bernie's life after losing her husband.

Funded by the National Lottery and Sport England, EFL Trust Extra Time Hubs are a national movement aimed at making a positive difference to the lives of retired and semi-retired people across the country.

For lifelong Latics fan Bernie the opportunity to engage in a range of activities at the stadium she has been attending for 40 years was one she couldn't turn down.

The Hub has enabled her to be around people in a similar position – somewhere that feels like home. She says the Hub allows her to try new things and do something different to what she would normally do.

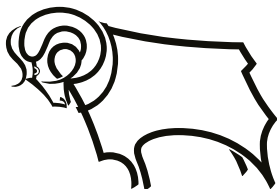


“
I felt like this was home in a way, because I've been coming to this stadium for so many years and had such fabulous times here.

”

“
Just because you're getting older doesn't mean you can't learn something new or do something different.”

MIREIA'S STORY



How football helped Mireia to recover after years of substance misuse.

Mireia struggled with substance misuse for many years after a detrimental marriage which led her to regularly use heroin and crack cocaine.

She realised her life was in a bad place and sought out help. She was referred to Derby County Community Trust and their Active Choices programme.

Six months later, Mireia's confidence has improved tremendously and she was selected to represent England in the 2019 Homeless World Cup.



“Being selected for the Homeless World Cup made me feel so proud. I have never felt as proud of anything in my life.”

“I used to wake up to a nightmare, needing money for drugs. Now I wake up and know something good is going to happen thanks Derby County Community Trust.”

ZAYAN'S STORY



Zayan lost interest in physical activity due to his visual impairment but Cardiff City gave him back his passion for sport.

Zayan is a passionate football fan but began to lose interest in sport and physical activity due to his visual impairment. That changed when he joined Cardiff City FC Community Foundation's Bluebirds Ability sessions.

Through specialist coaching the Foundation is able to ensure Zayan has a positive experience in sport, leading to a healthier and happier lifestyle.

As a reward for his progress during his 11-month attendance, Zayan was selected as a mascot for Cardiff City vs. Liverpool in April 2019, leading the players onto the hallowed turf at Cardiff City Stadium in front of over 32,000 Bluebirds supporters.



The Bluebirds Ability sessions use sport as a tool for children and young people with a disability to improve their confidence, physical and mental wellbeing and improve their social interaction.

“My love for football brought me to the sessions and it's why I keep coming back.”

MICK'S STORY



Extra Time Hubs has helped Mick feel like a kid again.

Mick Brown, who has been a Crawley Town supporter for over 55 years, credits EFL Trust's Extra Time Hubs for making him feel like a kid again. He says getting to go behind the scenes at the stadium has given him a new lease of life.

Funded by the National Lottery and Sport England, EFL Trust Extra Time Hubs are a national movement aimed at making a positive difference to the lives of retired and semi-retired people across the country.

Before joining the Hub, Mick was mildly isolated and suffered from mental health issues. He believes the Hub has really helped him boost his mood and find structure in his life each week, as well as having a circle of friends he can openly talk to about issues.



“It feels like you're a kid in a toy shop, have the opportunity to go behind the scenes at the Stadium and see where the players go.”

“Extra Time Hubs has given me reason to get out of the house. Otherwise I would just sit in front of the TV all day.”

CORBIN'S STORY



Shrewsbury Town **IN THE COMMUNITY**

How being able to play sport has given a young boy self confidence.

Corbin was born with Cerebral Palsy. His opportunities to get involved with sport were limited until he started Shrewsbury Town's Every Player Counts Programme, which is funded by Wembley National Stadium Trust.

His dad Darren says the sessions with Shrewsbury Town were a turning point for Corbin. "Corbin would never wear shorts, he was afraid for people to see his splints and that he had a disability. However, since he started playing football we can't get him out of shorts. Everything is now football. It has given him self-confidence and improved his whole outlook on life."



“Corbin would never wear shorts, he was afraid for people to see his splints and that he had a disability. Since he started playing football we can't get him out of his shorts.”

“It has given him self-confidence and improved his whole outlook on life.”

CHLOE'S STORY



How Exeter City Community Trust has turned Chloe's life around.

When Chloe left college she became homeless and unemployed. She says, "My mental health went downhill really quickly and I was left sofa surfing with no routine after college."

Chloe was introduced to Exeter City Community Trust. She started volunteering which helped rekindle her love for football and coaching and gave her a positive outlook for the future.

"Football and coaching enables me to channel my emotions in a positive way. At the Trust I'm around people now who don't give up on me. I started to actually believe in myself and build a routine back."



“
Football and coaching enables me to channel my emotions in a positive way.”

“
The support from Exeter City has been key to helping me overcome mental health problems.”

MICK'S STORY



Football provides the common ground for those attending regardless of their dementia.

Mansfield Town Football in the Community's 'Active Minds: Chat' sessions aim to promote inclusion and tackle isolation through the power of football and the emotional attachment to Mansfield Town. The sessions are designed predominantly for people living with dementia.

Mick Walker, who is a boyhood Mansfield Town supporter, has been coming to 'Active Mind: Chat' sessions since they first launched. He believes the sessions are vital at his age for keeping him active and getting him out of the house.



“
You can come to the session and have the same passionate interest in football, and talk about it for hours. You're no longer just sat in the house and feeling shut down.”

“
I really enjoy the company, it's so nice to have somebody different to talk to and I've made some really good friends.”

TREVOR'S STORY



From not wanting to leave the house to Sky Diving.

Two years ago, Trevor Prowse was overweight and suffered from severe anxiety. He struggled with everyday activities like playing with his grandchild or talking to a stranger on the phone. It wasn't until he was referred to Stevenage FC Foundation by his GP that his life changed.

Stevenage FC Foundation's Introduction to Exercises classes are designed for people with long-term medical conditions (both physical and mental). The sessions also incorporate exercise activities like Soccercise, Pilates and Boxercise and have a strong element of social support with the group regularly opening up and sharing their experiences and struggles with their health.

In the two years that Trevor has been involved, he has lost a remarkable 6 stone and his blood pressure has dropped, to the point where he no longer has to take medication. Moreover his confidence is now so strong that he takes on extreme challenges like sky diving.

“When I first met Trevor he told me this was the first time he had left his house in a week due to his anxiety being that severe.”



“I've lost 6 stone in 2 years with Stevenage FC Foundation and it's physically and mentally changed my life. I'm now doing things I never dreamed of - last weekend I even went sky diving!”

PETER'S STORY



Peter's health has significantly improved through FIT FANS after his heart attack.

In 2013, Peter was diagnosed with unstable angina after a severe angina attack whilst watching a Wycombe Wanderers match.

Despite making token changes, the problem was never fixed and he suffered a heart attack three and a half years later on a long walk.

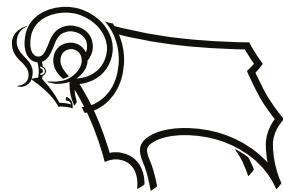
He then made the decision to join Fit Fans and has since lost over two stone and has run two 10K races - something he says he would never have considered before the heart attack.



“Since being a part of FIT CHAIRBOYS, I have now run the 6.8 mile walk that led to my heart attack, twice.”

“As a lifelong Chairboys fan, being in a friendly and familiar environment that I treat as my second home seemed appealing.”

TONY'S STORY



Extra Time Hubs helped Tony find new lease of life after going through a divorce.

Tony, who is retired, found himself very lonely after going through a divorce later in life. He credits Derby County Community Trust and EFL Trust's Extra Time Hubs for helping turn his life around.

After a period of what he describes as 'lonely depression', Tony joined the Rams' Hub as a volunteer. The Hub helped him make many new friends. He now finds life more fulfilling and has something to look forward to every week.

"My life is now full of activity and I now have more friends than ever before."



“
The camaraderie with the friends I have met through the Hubs has been vitally important in giving me back my confidence.”

“
The Hubs bring people together and help people to improve their health and well being.”

CHARLTON UPBEATS



Over 170 young people with Downs Syndrome are registered with the Upbeats.

The Charlton Upbeats is a project for young people and adults with Down's syndrome. The Upbeats train weekly, have competed in a number of tournaments in the UK and abroad and are nine-times DS Active National Champions.

The project is focused not just on the football, but is also about raising aspirations and improving relationships and social skills.

One member William Cottrell, a lifelong Charlton supporter, has been involved since the Upbeats first started in 2008. William's sporting career has gone from strength to strength...and not just on the football field, thanks to the confidence he has developed. In 2009, William represented Great Britain in the Special Olympics Winter Games in Idaho, where he won a bronze medal in the slalom. A decade later he is still competing in sport at the highest level, taking part in the golf competition in the 2019 Special Olympics in Abu Dhabi.



100% of parents would recommend the Charlton Upbeats to any family with children with Down's syndrome.

“
I do not know what I would do without the Charlton Upbeats. They are excellent and my son loves coming to football! Parents and coaches are so friendly. It's like an extended family.”

EMILY'S STORY



How Newport County provided a lifeline for Emily.

A traumatic experience at the age of 12 saw Emily's life spiral out of control and led her to going off the rails.

Joining Newport County Under 14's, Football helped shift her mind from the experience and her playing career went from strength to strength. Her dreams of representing her country where about to come true. However, a career ending injury took it all away from her and the negative demons came back.

"At the age of 19 I was 9 stone and fit as a fiddle, but when I left the hospital three years later, I was so unfit and had put on over 6 stone from comfort eating, medication and lack of exercise."

A call Emily's Mum received shortly after from a friend about County in the Community's mental health football session 'We Wear The Same Shirt' (WWTSS) may have been the most important call of Emily's life.

The programme, designed for adults with a mental health condition, provided a lifeline for Emily in not only improving her wellbeing but gaining employment as a Football Coach and giving her a new purpose in life.

“

After the incident, I went off the rails for a few years and I didn't go to school much. I got nine convictions and I was kicked out of everywhere I went. ”



“

I can't put into words how County in the Community's mental health football sessions have helped me. Without them I don't know where be.

”

DAVE'S STORY



How FIT FANS made sure it wasn't too late for Dave.

Dave, who was obese with a BMI of 33.9, was offered a lifeline through Burton Albion's FIT FANS after the programme's initial health check discovered he had dangerously high blood pressure.

After this forbidding finding, he was immediately prescribed blood pressure medication and was advised to make instant lifestyle changes by his GP. With the help of FIT FANS and 12 weeks of learning about portion control, calories and how to exercise safely, he lost 7kg in weight and significantly lowered his blood pressure.

Since then, he has not looked back and is now exercising regularly with a more positive attitude towards physical activity and diet.



“

I now feel fitter, have more stamina and my blood pressure is under control. I have gained knowledge, motivation and friendships whilst having a lot of fun. ”

“

If I had not gone to FIT FANS my high blood pressure may not have been found until it was too late who knows? ”

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYABILITY

We work with people, young and old, to develop both academic qualifications and skills for life. Our network provides various ways of breaking down the barriers and enabling people to find employment.



ANDREW'S STORY

How Millwall helped Andrew become a successful businessman.

'Get started with Millwall' supports young people and adults that want to start their own business. The programme provides support with training, funding and mentoring. The community trust staff acts as mentors covering everything including business planning, marketing, sales, budgeting and tax as well as providing ongoing planning, developing once the business starts trading.

Andrew Burnett is one budding business man that has benefited from the programme. Andrew, was helped to start a Fit 4 Life gym in Millwall's Lions Centre. Andrew said of the opportunity "Without Millwall's support in providing the daily advice, guidance and support that I get from my assigned mentor John there is no way that I would be able to manage a gym like I can today. My dream is for the gym to be part of the local community and particularly for young people, to keep them off the streets and into positive activities."

John, Andrew's mentor said "The improvements Andrew has made week on week have been fantastic which is all due to his hard work and commitment to the young people and community we collectively serve."

“This has been an unbelievable opportunity for me and something I have always wanted to get into but never had the resources, support or business experience to make it a reality.”



“There is a lot of work to do but my mentor John and the Trust give me the confidence to keep on developing and help me recognise every positive step, however small, that I make.”

CLARICE'S STORY



When my father was murdered, the support from Bristol City helped me keep going."

Bristol City Robins Foundation's Education department is not just an exam factory, they develop students personally, socially and academically. They use sport, the stadium and the club badge to build relationships with young people. Rather than exclude and give up on students as many other providers do, they work to understand and solve the issues that they face.

Clarice's story shows how this approach works. Clarice has been brought up by her grandparents, with her Mum and Dad in and out of her life since she was very young. When her father was tragically murdered, Bristol City provided a refuge for her. Despite such a traumatic event she kept turning up everyday.

Clarice said: "I just would not have lasted anywhere else. This is not like school, where learning never interested me and I didn't like going to lessons. Here I have the support around me."

"It helped being here - I have the support around me. I just would not have lasted anywhere else. "

75% of City's students are from areas of deprivation, 20% have special educational needs and 60% did not achieve the prerequisites to attend their courses.

Support and personalised learning from lecturers, who also double up as youth workers, councillors and positive role models give these young people a chance.



MICKEY'S STORY



Mickey uses his troubled past to inspire others to a brighter future.

Mickey McCloskey, Plymouth Argyle's Community Trust Health and Disability Officer, admits he 'lost 22 years of his life to drug and alcohol abuse'. However, he is now using his troubled past to inspire unemployed adults with substance misuse issues to find work through Argyle's Changing Room programme.

The 12 week adult education programme is run at Football Clubs around the country and looks after the body and mind by of developing employability skills as well as improving health and wellbeing.

Mickey comments, "I've been there and know what those on the course are feeling. I know what it's like to get to that point where you don't think you're worth anything and there's no way out."

"I've been clean now for 15 years, I've got a good job and a little boy. This didn't seem possible when I was sitting where they are now, but I want them to know that it is possible. "



"I lost 22 years of my life to drug and alcohol abuse. I've been there and know what the people on this course are feeling. I want to show them that there is a way out. "

NATALIE'S STORY



With a criminal record, Nat struggled to find employment but the Match Fit programme landed her a full-time role

The Match Fit programme offers support for people over the age of 25 that are struggling to find work. The programme helps people overcome a range of barriers to employment, such as mental health, being a single parent, social isolation, lack of confidence and physical disabilities

After moving to Blackpool five years ago from Scotland with her son, Natalie struggled to find employment due to her criminal record.

After completing the Match Fit programme and passing her Maths and English exams, Natalie landed a full-time role as a cleaner.

Three months later, she is excelling in her role and credits the programme for the many benefits it has given her, including helping her to develop her self-confidence.



“
The Match Fit Traineeship at Blackpool FC Community Trust was the best thing I ever did. I now have a full-time role and can actually go on holidays with my son!
”

“
Before the Traineeship, my confidence was really low but the course helped me build my confidence and find the courage to push myself.”

JOE'S STORY



Joe is now teaching the USW degree he completed with Wigan Athletic.

Joe Pym, a 26-year-old Education Officer at Wigan Athletic Community Trust, has embarked on an educational pathway with Wigan Athletic and the University of South Wales.

Working in conjunction with University of South Wales, The Foundation Degree in Community Football Coaching and Development develops the skills and qualities that are required to work within professional football clubs, community departments or national governing bodies in areas of growth such as social inclusion, community coaching and football development.

He is sure the blended learning aspect of the course and his involvement on both courses has led him to achieve his dreams and ambitions of working for his boyhood Club.



“
I wasn't the most academic person at school. I was never particularly motivated by sitting in a classroom. The flexibility of the blended learning is what really helped me achieve my ambitions and gain the qualifications I needed.
”

In 2018/19 students on Foundation Degree course achieved a 95% pass rate, with 8 of those achieving First Class Honours.

HEAVENLY'S STORY



How a traineeship with Cardiff City gave Heavenly hope for the future.

Heavenly moved to Cardiff to be reunited with her mother, who had relocated to the Welsh capital from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Her move meant getting to grips with a new country, new people and a new culture. Heavenly wanted to go on to study at university, but couldn't speak English at the time, which held her back from achieving her full potential.

Heavenly enrolled on Cardiff City's traineeship summer project within the Foundation's Future Pathways programme. This supported the development of her confidence and language skills.

Heavenly successfully completed the six-week programme and is now a full-time student with Future Pathways. She is on course to complete her BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Sport and is looking to progress to study Physiotherapy at university, furthering her love of sport and her passion for learning.



“

Coming to Cardiff City has made me realise that I still have a future and that I can make the most of my education. I thought I would only be here to develop my English, but I am with people who want to help me grow in my new home. ”

“

Everyone was so welcoming and supportive, they really helped me with my language. I used to fear others judging me when I spoke English. ”

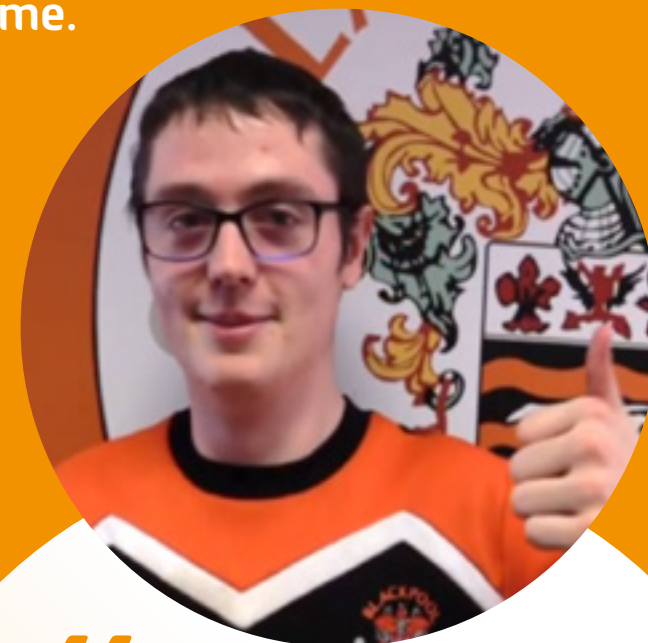
DOM'S STORY



20 years old and lacking confidence: How Dom found work for the first time.

Before Dominic Thickets attended the 12 week traineeship programme with Blackpool FC Community Trust, he was unemployed and always at home feeling isolated. His tutor at Blackpool comments, "When we first met him, Dom was withdrawn, lacked confidence and had very low self-esteem."

As part of the traineeship he successfully passed Maths, English and First Aid qualifications and undertook a work placement at Tesco. So with his confidence increased, a belief that he had skills that could benefit local employer and prepared with his CV and interview skills he had learned whilst attending the traineeship Dom successfully gained full time employment with Blackpool Pleasure Beach.



“

They've helped me with more aspects of my life than I could have actually hoped for, and I want to make them proud with what I'm going to accomplish. ”

“

I've never been employed before. I'm 20 so was a really big step. ”

CHAYTEN'S STORY



How Sunderland's Education programme gave Chayten a shot at a scholarship in America.

Chayten joined Sunderland's football education programme and has completed a Level 3 Cambridge Technical Extended Diploma in Sport and Physical Activity.

The Foundation of Light's award-winning education programme supports over 100 16 to 18-year-olds to complete Level 2 or Level 3 qualification in sport combining their love of football with structured learning, and giving them a unique pathway into sport or into further education.

As a result of the course, Chayten has been offered conditional offers at universities in England, however Chayten is hoping to join a football scholarship programme in America.

Calum Maddison, Chayten's Tutor said, "Chayten has been one of our star students over the last two years achieving Distinctions consistently in sport and physical activity subjects.

“I have improved in confidence, leadership, and work ethic.”



100% of learners completed the Level 2 diploma.

100% of Level 3 Foundation Diploma learners progressed to second year and enrolled on the Extended Diploma.

EMILY'S STORY



Unemployed, frustrated and unable to get a break. How a 12 week traineeship changed it all for Emily.

Emily struggled at school. She left aged 17 with an A* in PE but a D & E in English and Maths.

This meant she didn't meet the entry requirements for the PE qualification she wanted to study. Instead, she enrolled on a Health and Beauty course, a few months passed and she realised the course just wasn't for her. A frustrating 12 months of unemployment followed where she just could not get a break.

A 12 week traineeship with Wigan Athletic Community Trust kick started everything for Emily. The traineeship gave her work experience and practical skills to improve her employability. This meant when the opportunity for an apprenticeship at the Trust became available she sailed through the interview. She's now looking at taking a degree course with Wigan Athletic and has a bright future.

“If it wasn't for the traineeship I'd probably still be trying to find my way into the sports industry.”



“The traineeship is one of the best things I've ever done. It helped me to improve my confidence. Being able to work with children from different backgrounds, allowed me to pick up new skills and learn ways to adapt to different sessions.”

PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We use the power of football to build stronger, more cohesive communities.

We work to create engaged, connected and more resilient communities; encourage participation in civic society and ensure activity is inclusive for all.



MAREK'S STORY

**From a life of crime and drugs,
to helping others.**

Marek endured a turbulent past through substance addiction and life in and out of prison.

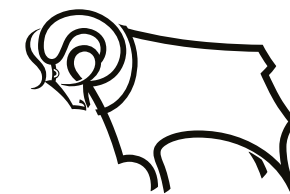
In 2016, he realised something had to change and joined Derby County Community Trust's Active Choices Programme which focuses on healthy lifestyle and behavioural change.

"I knew I had to seize an opportunity to make a change. I got in touch with Derby County Community Trust through my rehab programme and once I was involved with them they helped me fill my days with football, activities and positive things. It gave me something to look forward to and really helped sustain my recovery."

Marek has since turned his life around. With the help and support of the club, he found full-time employment and completed a Sports Leadership qualification. Marek is now working within the team delivering the Active Choices Programme helping those who were in a similar position to him.

“

I was in prison and in a way I was relieved to be there because my life outside of prison was so bad - that's when I realised something needed to change. ”



“

Life's a lot better now. Where I've come from to where I am now - it's a dramatic change. I now have a stable life and am helping other people. My life's turned around thanks to Derby County Community Trust. ”

BEN'S STORY



Britain's only full-time deaf football coach is inspiring the next generation.

Ben, who won a gold medal with Team GB Deaf Football at the 2005 Deaf Olympics, has been working for the Bees' Trust for nine years, overseeing their Deaf Coaching programme.

When it first launched, only four deaf children were involved in the programme. However, since taking up the role, Ben's has inspired over 180 deaf children and adults to take part.

"It is important to me as there are not enough deaf football coaches. I want to encourage others to get involved and learn from my experiences and knowledge."

"Ben has been responsible for fostering the integration between deaf and hearing children through the Trust's NCS programme."

"I got involved at the Trust so that I could break down the barriers I faced as a child – and ensure sport can be enjoyed by all deaf people."

YONAS'S STORY



After escaping persecution in his home country, Yonas arrived in Middlesbrough with nothing – no family, no friends, just the clothes he wore...

Club Together is a programme with Middlesbrough FC Foundation aimed at supporting refugees and asylum seekers. The group comprises of men who have sought asylum in Middlesbrough due to severe risks to their safety in their home countries.

One member, Yonas, is a 28 year old refugee from Eritrea, East Africa. In his home country, Yonas was a P.E teacher but one evening was forced to work for the army, supporting the government. Yonas fought against this because it didn't align with his beliefs, and for this, he was tortured which resulted in him fleeing the country. He arrived in Middlesbrough in 2016 with nothing – no family, no friends, just the clothes he wore. Three days later he joined Club Together.

Over the course of the last two years, Yonas has become a key member of the group, due to his popularity, passion and love for football. He has since become a volunteer for MFC Foundation, is due to complete his FA Level one and has started a degree at Teesside University in Sports Therapy. Yonas has also taken on a mentoring role with new participants who join the programme to support their first steps and to assist Foundation staff by providing interpreting skills.

"Football has no language and this allows people from very different backgrounds to get to know and mix with each other. It has helped me to become part of the community and make friends and made it easier to settle in to a new town and way of life."

AVA'S STORY



Ava Welsh, 17, from Wigan was selected to be a 'Safe Teen' Ambassador helping young people at The Liberty Centre, a local domestic abuse charity.

Ava volunteered to support The Liberty Centre during her time on NCS (National Citizen Service) with Wigan Athletic Community Trust.

The Liberty Centre is a local charity in Ormskirk that provide a wealth of services for all victims of domestic violence and abuse. During NCS, Ava and her group met with the manager of The Liberty Centre and got an understanding of how the group could support charity. It started with the rejuvenation of their garden so that children could enjoy this area and bring colour to what was a run down space. After raising money to fund their project the team got to work by painting the fences, building a vegetable patch, and tidying up the space for the children to enjoy.

Inspired by the work of the charity, Ava wanted to continue volunteering at the charity after doing NCS and was offered the role as a 'Safe Teen' Ambassador.



“Without NCS I wouldn't have been able to become Safe Teen ambassador, so it's helped me to help others. My new role has allowed me to give confidence to young people but in return it has given me a lot of confidence.”

“She is an inspirational young person and has really helped us shape the programmes ensuring the views and opinions of young people are captured within delivery of the project.”

Stacey Hives, The Liberty Centre

BOLTON'S LGBT YOUTH CLUB



Award winning LGBTQ+ Youth Club tackling hate crime.

Bolton Wanderers Community Trust's (BWCT's) award winning LGBTQ+ Youth Club has been hugely successful in making a difference in the areas of hate crime, equality, diversity and inclusion since its launch.

The young people in the LGBTQ+ Youth Club have also worked together to create a Hate Crime Awareness training programme with Bolton Pride, which will be delivered to young people across Bolton in order to increase knowledge of what hate crime is and how to report it.

Jaeden, a member of the LGBTQ+ Youth Club said: "The LGBTQ+ Youth Club has created a comfortable and safe environment, free of judgement, for me to flourish and develop as a person. It's become a staple in my life and I look forward to it every week."



“Young people are the future and the leaders of tomorrow. It's so important that they feel accepted to be who they are.”

“The difference we have made to the people who attend is amazing. Every single person has said they have made new friends.”

JAY'S STORY



Former offender Jay Adam now mentors young people helping them stay away from crime.

Jay Adam was involved in county lines drug dealing. He initially got involved because there was nothing else to do. During a spell in prison he reflected on how he had negatively affected so many lives. It was during his time in prison he got involved with Reading FC Community Trust who helped him start to change his life.

Back in London, he became a mentor for Charlton Athletic Community Trust's (CACT'S) Crime Reduction Programme. The project aims to improve the emotional well being of young people, provide higher aspirations and reduce anti-social and criminal behaviour in the area.

Jay's experience gives him an understanding of what the young people are going through. In return they recognise Jay as someone who understands their world.

With Jay's help the programme has significantly impacted over 2,000 young people. Many of those engaged in the programme have moved onto education, employment, training or volunteering. There has also been a reduction in criminal behaviour.



“It's not about telling them what to do. It's about making them understand the choices they have. It's so rewarding when you see the light bulb go on in their head and they realise about the right choices they can make.”

“It always helps if you can find that level footing with a young person and say 'I've been there, I know what it's like to be in your shoes'.”

CONNOR'S STORY



Connor, 17, from Doncaster is an EFL Trust NCS Graduate who took part in NCS with Club Doncaster Foundation. He has since been selected as a National #iwill Ambassador because of his passion for making a positive difference.

Since NCS, Connor joined the regional youth board in Yorkshire and Humber where he is a voice for young people in that region. Outside of NCS Connor is making a huge difference in the community through Doncaster's Youth Council, as well as being awarded the Princess Diana Award for his work on anti-bullying in schools.

His impact has been recognised nationally, as after an impressive application Connor was selected to take his place amongst fifty inspirational youth ambassadors who will lead on a high profile national #iwill campaign, aimed at encouraging young people to take an active part in their community.

“NCS opened my eyes and gave me a better understanding of the community I live in.”



“The role of an #iwill Ambassador is something I am hugely passionate about. Raising both the profile of young people's potential and also challenging the perception that people have of young adults my age is vital.”

A MUM'S STORY



Turn2Us combats food poverty by providing hot meals to all ages during the school holidays.

The holidays should be something to look forward to, but sadly for some families that isn't always the case. Some children just aren't able to eat well.

Mum 'M' has two children aged 3 & 5. Her husband had just started a new job doing very long hours. When Mum M and her children first arrived at the Turn2Us session they appeared a very happy family. However, she opened up to the staff at Sky Blues in the Community and explained that she has had growing feelings of loneliness and isolation; which after a long, hard Easter in 2018 came to a head and she had a complete breakdown and left the family home.

Mum 'M' had been dreading the summer holidays. However the Turn2Us session provided the support that she needed and helped her cope, she said "The children loved the healthy food. It really helped with finances which are always stretched with just one working parent. The children were entertained and stimulated throughout the day. The staff were amazing with us and made us feel like part of the community."

“The project saved my life – I would not have got through the summer without it.”



“The children loved the healthy food. It really helped with finances which are always stretched with just one working parent.

The staff were amazing with us and made us feel like part of the community.”

LOUIE'S STORY



“NCS made me who I am today”

“They were the worst two years of my life. I was shy, nervous and wouldn't talk to people,” says Louie Salmon.

However fast forward two years after completing NCS (National Citizen Service) with Peterborough United Louie is a very different person. He now has the confidence to stand in front of peers and tell his story whilst also securing a job with United. NCS is a three week programme that challenges young and helps their transition into adulthood.

Months before Louie was due to depart for NCS he had reservations about going because of time away from home and was nervous about meeting new people. On a bad day Louie would email Peterborough to explain that he wasn't feeling up to it. However, after completing the NCS programme he was a different person and has gone onto get himself a role on NCS with Peterborough United sharing his experience with others that were in his shoes.

“He came on the programme quite quiet and shy and left a confident and positive young man. His increased confidence made him an excellent project leader.”



“I had begun to think I was a lost cause and that nothing I did would help me get better. Luckily, I was wrong! I pushed through exam season and I did it! I went on programme (NCS) and it was the best thing I ever did.”

SAJ & AIDEN'S STORY



How NCS made two teenagers from different backgrounds best friends.

Aiden from Barnsley and Saj from Grimsby have been inseparable after completing NCS. The pair, who live 80 miles apart and live completely different lives, met after an NCS event called Kickstart.

On meeting for the first time Aiden said, "Right from the start Saj was making jokes with everyone. He was down to earth and brilliant at making everyone feel included." Since meeting, they have met up a number of times both socially and through NCS opportunities and will know each other even more going forward as they will be living with each other whilst at University!



“NCS has helped me a lot since going on programme. It's allowed me to be involved in some of the most incredible opportunities and of course, led me to meet Aiden and other people, which I am so grateful for.”

“Even though we live around 80 miles apart from each other, it doesn't stop us from seeing each other as much as possible.”

JACK'S STORY



Jack, 18 is a young wheelchair user who by his own admission used to struggle in social settings, however thanks to NCS he has a new found confidence.

His mum Bernie Jones from Middlesbrough has thanked MFC Foundation (Middlesbrough Football Club) and NCS (National Citizen Service) for giving her son, Jack, 'a new sense of purpose' and believes he has come on 'leaps and bounds as a young man' since doing NCS in 2019.

During Jack's experience on NCS, he and his team supported a number of charities such as raising money for the local care home Hillcare, revamping the Teesside Nautical Studies centre and raising money for a local disability society which Jack is involved with. Jack is now a key member of MFC Foundation's Youth boards where he continues making a positive impact in his local community.

“The change that I have witnessed as a parent has been astounding. NCS essentially has given Jack a new sense of purpose and as a young man he has come on leaps and bounds.”

Bernie, Jack's Mum



“I've definitely got better at working in a team and I love the opportunity to be involved in discussions. But, most of all, NCS allowed me to develop my self-confidence and make new friends. I realised that I could do just as much as other people if not more, and I'm so pleased that the NCS team at MFC Foundation helped me to achieve this.”



NATIONAL DELIVERY, LOCAL IMPACT

We would like to thank our
programme partners and funders.
We look forward to continuing our
work together.

EFL Trust and our network are supported by:



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