ISSUE THREE

EFL IN THE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER



NEST TOGETHER

Building stronger, healthier and more active communities requires great facilities at their heart.

One such state-of-the-art facility from Norwich City Community Sports Foundation has become a hive of activity for the whole of the community to benefit from.

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A Second Chance

Damian is now a coach at Foundation 92, Salford City's charitable arm, but he was once on the other side of their provision as a participant.



Having been dealt a rough hand and being made homeless, Damian began to experience depression that spiralled out of control until an invitation to the 92 Shield programme gave him a lifeline.

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New report showcases significant community impact

The EFL and its charitable arm, the EFL Trust, launched a new report in Parliament earlier this year, highlighting the significant role that its 72 Clubs and Club Community Organisations (CCOs) play in supporting communities across England and Wales.



The 'Measuring the Impact of EFL Clubs in the Community' Report was unveiled at a roundtable event with representatives from the EFL, its Clubs and CCOs, members of the community and the Sports Minister, the Rt Hon Stuart Andrew MP.

This marked the beginning of the EFL's Week of Action, a week of showcasing the incredible work which takes place across the network (see pages 3 to 7).

Produced by research experts Substance, using data from 2019 to 2022, the report shows that EFL Clubs and their CCOs generated more than £865m of social value to towns and cities across the country through ground-breaking community programmes during the 2021/22 campaign.

The reach of community work delivered by EFL Clubs is vast, engaging with over 840,000 participants on community programmes last season, amounting to almost 580,000 hours of community sessions and events – an 11% increase on 2018/19.

The report also quantifies the significant impact that Clubs had in their communities during the pandemic period, with over 40,600 community members engaged in 8,752 COVID-19-related sessions and events, resulting in more than 42,000 hours of support.

This is the first time a social value has been attributed to the work of EFL Clubs as a collective.

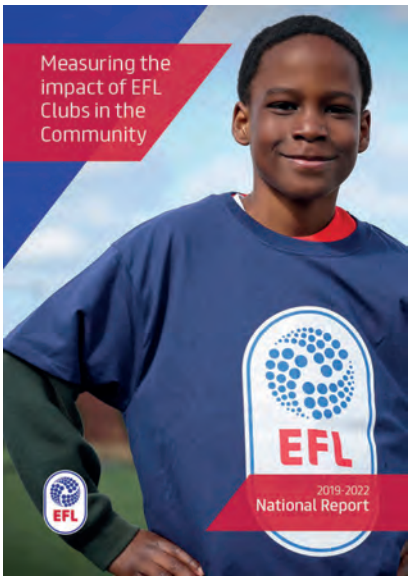
Rick Parry, Chair of the EFL, said: "This report provides substantial evidence that our Clubs continue to be at the heart of their communities, bringing life-changing opportunities that leave a lasting impact.

"The need for EFL Clubs to continue as catalysts for social change remains, with an increasing scale of Club community work delivered since 2019. Financial sustainability for EFL Clubs is key to enabling them to continue as a force for good in their communities."

Liam Scully, Chair of the EFL Trust, added: "We're immensely proud of the community support delivered by EFL Clubs and CCOs and are thrilled to now be able to put a social value on this good work."

Sports Minister, Stuart Andrew MP, said: "Football is a way of life across England and this research shows just how vital Clubs are in bringing people together and fostering a strong sense of pride. We are determined to protect these vital community assets, so Clubs are placed on a sustainable footing now and into the future and continue to play a central role for generations to come."

To download a full copy of the report, visit **www.efltrust.com/impactreport** or scan the QR code.



"Football is a way of life and this research shows just how vital Clubs are in bringing people together and fostering a strong sense of pride."

STUART ANDREW MP
Sports Minister

DURING THE 2021/22 SEASON...

£865m+
of social value generated

840k+
participants engaged on EFL Club community programmes

579k+
hours of community sessions and events

EFL Managers in the Community

More than 150 pieces of community activity took place across the EFL's annual Week of Action, with players and managers at the heart of it all.

Launched in 2017, the EFL Week of Action sees Clubs and Club Community Organisations from across the EFL's three divisions showcase some of the most impactful community projects, with stars on the pitch and in the dugout joining participants.

Here are the thoughts of some of the managers that played their part in the community activity.



"It's vitally important that the community work that's done at Football League Clubs is recognised and supported by everybody within the Club. A League Club in a town is huge for the benefit of everybody and that's why it's really important to have that connection. I'm seen as the guy in charge of the football side of it, so I always try and make myself available when I can and it gives me an opportunity to see fans close up."

MARK HUGHES
BRADFORD CITY MANAGER



"It's great to be able to help young people and hopefully give them a chance. The MFC Foundation does a terrific amount of work in the community, and we were keen for the two Foundations to partner up and work together where we can."

MICHAEL CARRICK
MIDDLESBROUGH MANAGER



"Football is about the community and it's about bringing everyone together. That's something that we as players and managers need to understand and we want to give back. Sometimes, there's a stigma that football is all about the players and results and the players don't give anything back, but they do and it's important we showcase that as a Football Club."

PAUL INCE
READING MANAGER



"I think that we're in a period where we're coming away from COVID and there's all these energy bills and things like that, and a lot of problems in people's lives. Anything that we can do as a Football Club – and anything that sport can do – is obviously fantastic."

RICHIE WELLENS
LEYTON ORIENT MANAGER



"It's great to see how tight we, as Norwich City Football Club, are with the community. It doesn't matter what your age is or where you come from, you can be part of this Football Club."

DAVID WAGNER
NORWICH CITY MANAGER



"Burnley is always very active in the community. I'm a big believer that Football Clubs have a big responsibility within the local communities and just in general as a positive influence on their followings. I'm proud of the Club; it has an exemplary attitude when it comes to community involvement."

VINCENT KOMPANY
BURNLEY MANAGER



Doncaster Rovers launch first pre and post-natal workshop

Earlier this year, Doncaster Rovers launched a pioneering post-natal fitness workshop, taking place at the ECO-Power Stadium.

A free six-week programme in partnership with Doncaster Council and Doncaster family hubs, the initiative takes on a different theme for baby sensory each week.

The first of its kind to be hosted by a Football Club, the six-week programme begins with introductions, a coffee morning and baby play, before progressing to physical activity and buggy HIIT workouts, nutrition and healthy-eating workshops, yoga classes, first aid courses and arts and crafts.

Participants are also regularly invited to attend a Doncaster Rovers match, as many have never attended a game before due to financial challenges.

As part of the EFL's Week of Action, Rovers vice-captain Tommy Rowe attended the workshop to meet the participants. The 34-year-old father of three went along to the first week of the six-week programme to share his experiences of parenthood, as well as join in the afternoon's fitness session.

"This is something close to my heart with having three kids and my wife has been through something similar, getting out of the house when the babies are growing up," he said. "It's something to help out because you see the people and the staff here that do a fantastic job.

"It's just interacting with different people and it's interesting to hear different views because I came in to today thinking that I was probably going to hear a lot about how they were forcing themselves to come just to get out, but it was quite the opposite. A lot of the mums I've spoken to are wanting to do it for fitness reasons.

"They get an hour of general play with the kids and meet other mums who are probably going through what they're going through in a different way, then having a coffee. I've seen a lot of smiles and a lot of good conversations."

Lauren Platts, Club Doncaster Foundation's Health and Wellbeing Coordinator, leads the course and helped to establish the programme following a successful pilot.

She said: "Doncaster is the second-most deprived district in South Yorkshire; there's nothing really free for mums and babies to attend where mums can do exercise. Anything in Doncaster is post-natal and you have to pay for personal trainers, so we thought we'd fit it into the Fit Rovers projects that we've ran for years anyway.

"It's a bit different for mums because it's at a football stadium," she continued. "It's just completely brand new. We've designed the course ourselves and that's why we ran two pilot courses to get the mums to design it with us, so they've picked the hoodies, the logos, the t-shirts and everything that went well or didn't go well.

"The first week is always the hardest because we don't know the mums, whereas the two groups we ran previously, we built a relationship with them, so by the time we'd finished the course, we knew them quite well.

"It's just getting over those barriers to exercise because they're all in a similar sort of position and it's not like you're joining a gym and going alone, and you get to exercise with your baby. We advertise it as physical activity with the programme, but we try to focus on the mental health side as well.

"We open up as a support network for other mums because you can be socially isolated after having a baby and you don't want to go anywhere."

Ipswich Town captain Sam Morsy supports local refugee initiative





After an increase in demand in the local area, Ipswich Town recently expanded its football training sessions for refugees who are staying in hotels locally.

Funded by Sport England and in partnership with Suffolk Refugee Support & Suffolk New College, the Club's new Refugee Football Initiative runs four sessions a week, with almost 100 adult and children attendees.

Those taking part are refugees and asylum seekers, coming from a range of countries that includes Eritrea, Syria, Sudan, Iraq and Afghanistan, many of whom have been placed in temporary accommodation, are not allowed to work and receive just £8 per week.

The programme aims to engage and provide a fun and safe environment for them to socialise, as well as play football. Selected participants also have the opportunity to obtain a coaching or refereeing qualification.

As someone whose father came to England as a refugee when he was just 21 years of age, Ipswich captain, Sam Morsy, regularly supports the initiative, attending sessions and speaking at events.

"The beauty of football is that it brings people together with all races, religions and everyone has their own challenges," he said.

"If we can help them come to football, come together and have at least one day together, then it can make a big difference."

Morsy's Muslim faith is a huge part of his life and his outlook reveals everything about his religion and why he wants to help refugees facing a huge crisis across the globe.

He explained: "My upbringing and religion means I want to help and my parents are the most charitable people I've come across, that's always stuck with me. My dad came here with nothing; he had a dream to make something of himself and now he wants to help others – so do I."

Morsy also sponsors a refugee family's season ticket at Portman Road, giving them the opportunity to attend games and enjoy watching football, something which financially they couldn't do without his support.

"The Week of Action is an amazing thing and until I started speaking to the Club about it, I had no idea about it, but they put so much time and energy into it and I'm really proud to be a part of it. I want to help and football gives you these amazing opportunities, so it's nice to spend time with people and see how happy football can make them."

One of the participants, Kamal, said: "We play here every Wednesday evening and it makes us all happy. For us to learn, it's important that we have a coach who also helps us work on our physique.

"When we finish playing football, you can see the effect on our mental health. We were grateful to see Sam for the first time face-to-face, too."





Vincent Kompany attends mental health workshop in Burnley

Burnley manager Vincent Kompany demonstrated his commitment to engaging in community activity by attending a mental health session at local school Shuttleworth College, as part of the EFL's Week of Action.

The 36-year-old, who has steered the Clarets to top spot in the Sky Bet Championship, took time out of his Monday morning to discuss stress and anxiety management with a group of Year 8 pupils.

"I'm part of a Club that has an exemplary attitude to community involvement," Kompany said. "You can say that football should stay on the pitch, but I think it's much more than that.

"Our impact within the community is huge and it needs to be respected and cherished. Today's event is just one of the things we do and it's an important project."

Thirteen-year-old Kian, a match-goer at Turf Moor, was one of the students to take part in the workshop.

He said: "It was very exciting and surreal. I watch him at Burnley games and now I've actually got to see him properly in person. He's really nice and down to earth. He's so famous, so I thought he might not take so much notice of us, but he asked us questions and gave us all a fair chance to speak to him.

"I asked him about whether he was anxious ahead of the Blackburn game, because it's a big rivalry. He said to just focus on controlling the things you can control and learn to let go of what you can't.

"It helps because it shows that even the top professional footballers go through similar feelings to us. He said he experiences his own worries at times and it's helpful to hear how he's dealt with it over the years and managed to be successful."



Burnley's mental wellbeing project is delivered to seven schools across the area as an early intervention programme, with workers on hand to support pupils with any anxieties and stresses.

"It's really important that we speak about mental health," Michael Colquhoun, Director of Community Projects at Burnley in the Community, explained.

"A problem shared among the group is a problem halved. I think the pupils are really open to talking about it and that's becoming more common. There were some amazing questions for Vincent, comparing anxiety on the pitch to anxiety in their own lives and asking how he deals with issues himself. Vincent was very open with his answers as well – the impact he's made today is phenomenal.

"The Club invests in what we're doing in the community, so we're really lucky here."



Cathy Abraham joins Derby County owner David Clowes in attending the Rams Family Support project during the EFL Week of Action

EFL Trust CEO visits Harrison's Hub

As part of the EFL's Week of Action, the EFL Trust's newly appointed CEO, Cathy Abraham, visited Derby County, who were showcasing Harrison's Hub, a new dedicated warm space for the community at Pride Park Stadium.


Cathy Abraham, EFL Trust Chief Executive, joined Rams players Conor Hourihane and Lewis Dobbin in serving meals to members of Derby's community



Cathy, who has been part of the EFL Trust senior team for five years and previously held the position of Director of Operations, has been appointed CEO for an interim period.

She joined Rams players Conor Hourihane and Lewis Dobbin in serving meals to members of Derby's community.

From Team Talk – the Club's men's mental health project – to Extra Time Hub – a fortnightly coffee morning for over 55s to decrease social isolation – there were plenty of activities on display.

The hub opened its doors in November 2022, with key activities being delivered as part of the Rams Family Support project, centred around the cost-of-living crisis and providing a warm and welcoming space, along with hot drinks and food to those in need.

"During the EFL's Week of Action, we launched our latest Impact Report, that shows that EFL Clubs generated social value of over £865million last season," said Cathy at the visit.

"With over 840,000 participants involved in community activities, we know how important our Clubs are to the communities they serve.

"This is a very exciting time for the EFL Trust, and we look forward to continuing to develop our organisation so that we can effectively support our incredible network and the amazing work it achieves in EFL communities."

Liam Scully, EFL Trust Chair, added: "We are delighted that Cathy will be taking on this role as we begin to develop the organisation's strategy for 2025 and beyond.

"Our network continues to grow from strength to strength and responds not only strategically, but also quickly and tactically to the needs of EFL communities."

Continued from page 1

NEST FOOT FORWARD

During the 2021/22 season, EFL Clubs and Club Community Organisations (CCOs) made available 1,686 facilities of various types to support their communities.

These include 300 cafés, meeting rooms and other community spaces, 608 classrooms and 754 football/other sports pitches, courts or indoor halls.

One such facility in Norfolk – a labour of love for Norwich City's Community Sports Foundation – has become a hive of activity for the whole community.









It all started with a vision to turn a derelict site into a community facility to serve all the county and, since The Nest's opening in various phases in 2018, it has become a modern community facility to be proud of.

Welcoming over 15,000 unique participants and visitors last year, The Nest has been utilised by CCOs, businesses, sports teams, school groups, private functions, children's birthday parties and much more, while also becoming the home of Norwich City's Women's team.

Many of the Foundation's programmes are also hosted at the 22-acre site, utilising the 3G and grass pitches and indoor spaces, such as the IT suite and multi-purpose 'Inspire' and 'Engage' rooms.

The site even boasts residential and catering facilities, which have been used by touring grassroots Clubs and representative teams from other CCOs.

"It's been quite the journey, but to see our vision come to life has been so rewarding," said Jackie Thornton, Head of Development at Norwich City Community Sports Foundation, who was instrumental in getting the facility off the ground.

"The Nest has already hosted so many of the Foundation's programmes, including those for people with disabilities, young people and those wishing to boost their mental health and general wellbeing.

"It's not just that the facilities are great, but it is such a lovely place to be and we hope that even more of our fellow CCOs will pay us a visit soon."

Supporting people with dementia

There are more than 900,000 people living with dementia in the UK – that's a lot of people in our communities.

Many of our EFL Clubs and CCOs facilitate support sessions or spaces for people living with dementia to enjoy, interact with others and share memories.

The Norwich City Community Sports Foundation is doing just that, by delivering a weekly support programme at The Nest.

Duncan's Club is a project that has been put in place and named in memory of former Club captain Duncan Forbes, who sadly passed away from dementia in 2019.

"Over 12,000 people in Norfolk are living with dementia and there is a lack of regular support, with most groups only able to meet every two or three weeks," Jo Woolnough, Community & Wellbeing Project Manager from the Community Sports Foundation, revealed.

"We are the only session in the area that meets on a weekly basis and, to my knowledge, we are one of the only dementia support groups that incorporates the physical element.

"So, it's lovely to see an 87-year-old man playing table tennis in there, something he wouldn't normally do."

As part of the EFL Week of Action, Norwich City head coach David Wagner popped along to a session and had a tour of the facilities at The Nest to finish his visit.

Talking about Duncan's Club, he said: "I enjoyed hearing about their memories of the Club, and the knowledge



they have of the last 40 to 50 years is incredible. It's great what they have here – a lot of Football Clubs would be proud of the facilities at The Nest.

"But it's not just about that. The people I have met today give this facility real life; you can see the staff here work for the Foundation with passion and with their heart."

Stay and Play at The Nest

The Nest's residential and sporting facilities have been used by so many people, groups and organisations during tours, weekend fixtures and tournaments since its opening.

The five innovative residential 'bunk boxes' on site can house up to 70 people in total and catering is provided by The Nest team, while the facility even hosts a state-of-the-art play area.

A great example of The Nest's use beyond Norfolk is the Canary Cup, which will take place over the summer for development centres and CCOs with disability representative teams.



HEADSTART IS MAKING HEADWAY



Fleetwood Town players Shaun Rooney and Josh Vela visited Larkholme Primary School to see a Headstart session taking place and carry out a Q&A session with pupils.

Hundreds of Year 6 pupils in the North West are benefitting from an EFL Trust programme that is set to grow further in 2023.

The EFL's charitable arm, alongside EFL Club Community Organisations (CCOs) is aiming to support children and their mental health through a new project, Headstart, funded by Lancashire Teaching Hospitals Charity.

Currently being piloted across Lancashire and South Cumbria to support the mental health of Year 6 children who are transitioning into secondary school, the Trust is expanding the delivery of the programme from four CCOs to seven in the region.

Fleetwood Town Community Trust, Preston North End Community Trust, Morecambe Community Sports Trust and Accrington Stanley Community Trust have been rolling the programme out since 2022, aiming to reduce strain on the NHS by targeting those children currently accessing or at risk of needing to access children's mental health services.

In 2020, one in six (16%) children aged five to 16 years were identified as having a probable mental disorder, increasing from one in nine (10.8%) three years earlier.

Headstart has engaged with a total of 22 schools and 836 pupils so far, via a dedicated Mental Health Transformation Officer, based in each CCO. Numbers are set to grow as Blackpool FC Community Trust, Blackburn Rovers Community Trust and Burnley FC In The Community have now come on board to deliver the programme in schools.



Q&A

Meet Fleetwood Town Community Trust's **Rachel Walker**, one of the first mental health transformation officers in post, making a big difference already in her patch...

How did you hear about this new role?

I saw this role advertised online while I was completing my Masters degree in Child and Adolescent Mental Health and Wellbeing. As I was already working with this age group at a local youth club, I felt it was the perfect role for me to apply for to support with their transition to secondary school.

What type of sessions do you deliver in schools?

There are a variety of sessions included to ensure the children are learning different methods to support their wellbeing. So far, I have delivered sessions such as mindfulness, creativity, physical activity (yoga) and player visits. I also then deliver one-to-one sessions with specific children, which aims to offer a safe space with interventions involving anxiety, anger and coping strategies.

Why are they important for young people?

These sessions are important for young people because it allows them to see that mental health is normal. The majority of the children are Fleetwood Town FC fans, so for me to be wearing the Club's badge, discussing mental health and ways to enhance wellbeing, is really important for them.

How are the young people and schools responding to your sessions?

The children are always excited to have me back as we learn about different mental health topics and coping strategies. The schools have received some great feedback about the benefit of these sessions, especially in how I will follow these Year 6 children to Year 7. In turn, this offers a familiar face from their primary school, who they know can continue this support while they settle in and transition to secondary school. The young people and the schools are reporting back that the children are acknowledging ways to cope with their feelings and often say 'we have done this with Rachel'.

FIT FANS changing lives

The EFL Trust's FIT FANS initiative is delivered by over 40 EFL Clubs, offering a free 12-week course for those aged 35-65 and taking place within the football stadium.

FIT FANS has helped thousands of people – not just football fans – to achieve long-term improvements in weight loss, physical activity, diet and general wellbeing.

The sessions focus on sustainable lifestyle changes, meaning participants – who on average lose over 5% of their body weight during the programme – are able to maintain their weight loss and live better lives.

Here's a few of the thousands of people who have benefitted from the initiative...

KATE'S STORY
LUTON TOWN



"This 12-week programme is just the beginning for me."

Kate Walsh, a lifelong Luton Town fan who also plays for the Ladies team, attended FIT HATTERS after seeing it as an opportunity to build and improve her physical health again.

Previously, she had to take an extended break from playing the game due to ill health, which had knock-on consequences on her mental health and self-esteem.

She said: "I have been overweight for many years but due to being active, it hadn't bothered me as much – now, I felt fat and useless."

As a season ticket holder at Luton, Kate was no stranger to the FIT HATTER advertisement but never considered it because of her own football career. That was until she knew something needed to change and felt that this was the perfect opportunity for her.

Kate has Type 2 diabetes which has recently deteriorated, and she was advised to begin medication, but she is determined to improve her own blood glucose levels with the methods she has learned on the FIT HATTERS programme.

FIT HATTERS has also helped Kate's anxiety by giving her a positive focus each week, even when her life gets stressful.

She added: "The team at Luton Town running FIT HATTERS have been amazing and because it's my Club, I feel very attached to the programme and feel very well supported."

LEE'S STORY
SUNDERLAND AFC



"I honestly don't know where I'd be without FIT FANS."

After losing his parents, Lee spiralled into a depression that affected his confidence and self-motivation.

For six years, he retreated into himself, did very little activity and his mental health was declining, to the point he sought professional help.

Daily takeaways and a craving for sugary drinks, coupled with the lack of activity, meant Lee was unfit, unhappy and overweight.

Now, after undergoing Sunderland AFC's FIT BLACK CATS programme, Lee is a lighter, healthier, happier man. In fact, two years on from losing 6kg of weight during the initial 12-week programme, he has lost a further 6kg and is doing things he never thought possible.

Lee explained: "The programme has made me have a much more positive outlook and I feel more in control of my life.

"I'd really urge anyone who feels like they are in a bad place to give it a go because it really can change your life."

SAJ'S STORY
OXFORD UNITED



Saj Rana has been busy shifting the pounds and making new connections with FIT U'S – and has a very personal reason for doing so.

"I have two beautiful grandchildren and I want to see them grow up and spend as much time with them as possible," he revealed.

"It does cross my mind occasionally, 'how many years do I have left', and 'how can I improve my lifestyle to ensure I live for as long as possible'?"

Oxford United's FIT FANS programme aims to tackle cardiovascular disease (CVD) rates locally, with figures revealing that CVD causes a quarter of all deaths in the UK and is the leading cause of premature deaths in people experiencing homelessness, mental health issues and those living in deprived areas.

Saj added: "Eating the right foods and drinking responsibly while being active by getting the body moving is the best solution, and FIT U'S has given me the motivation needed to make those changes. I feel much healthier for joining FIT U'S.

"I found it very reassuring that every person can set their own individual goal and there is no pressure or expectations at our sessions. Turning up is an achievement in itself and the social benefits are equally important.

"I'd encourage anyone considering making simple but effective changes to their lifestyle to sign-up now and get involved – you've got nothing to lose."

Together Supporting Communities

Following the launch of the EFL's 'Together – Supporting Communities' campaign to help communities during the cost-of-living-crisis, Clubs have continued to support fans and those hit hardest with a number of initiatives to ensure they are able to survive in these challenging economic times.



LIONS FOOD HUB

As the soaring costs of living continue to make life hard for so many, Millwall's stadium, The Den in Bermondsey, has become home to The Lions Food Hub, run by Kelly Webster, a former player for Millwall's women's team.

Having hung up her boots, Kelly now manages the hub which provides food for over 50 local families, serving people aged anywhere from their early 20s through to late 70s each week. A complete variety of food comes in, or is bought through the cash donations made, and is then distributed to those in need.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the Club has been running weekly coffee mornings at the stadium, offering free coffee, tea and biscuits to anyone, not just Millwall fans. These coffee morning sessions began when government lockdowns were lifted, giving older fans the chance to come somewhere safe and to encourage them to boost their confidence in getting back out into society.

Originally, this project was aimed at combating loneliness and feelings of isolation for those people hit by the pandemic but now, with the UK gripped by a cost-of-living crisis, it has transformed into something much more than that and remains a vital outreach programme for the local community.

PROJECT 35

Earlier this season, Plymouth Argyle launched Project 35, a landmark social outreach campaign aimed at reducing poverty through a comprehensive campaign of fundraising, awareness raising, social outreach, food donations, education and charity support.

The project number '35' represents the percentage of children in Plymouth reported to be living in poverty, according to recent data.

Project 35 isn't just about raising awareness; it's about taking real action. A wide range of food poverty initiatives includes dedicated food appeals at Argyle matches alongside permanent food donation points at Home Park. Additional support is also being provided to families most affected by poverty through education and pastoral care. As part of the project, Argyle recently launched the 'Green Box' – a set lunch box package for children made available on every home matchday at Home Park to those who need it most.

The project is a multi-year commitment; year one focuses primarily on food poverty, starting with a pledge from Ginsters to deliver 100,000 free lunches to children in 2022/23 via the Argyle Community Trust, as well as donation of staff time at both Ginsters and Argyle over the course of the Project.

EVERY MILLER MATTERS

The message from Rotherham United as they play their part in helping fans cope with rising bills is that 'Every Miller Matters'. As part of the initiative, a space has been made available at the AESSEAL New York Stadium as somewhere warm for fans to be so they can turn the heating off at home.

Providing tea and coffee, a friendly atmosphere and activities such as table tennis and dance, there is also a donation station in operation ahead of matchdays, where shoes, coats, warm clothes, sports kit, tinned food and toiletries can be donated to go to those in need.



Community Programme Manager, Jonny Allan, said: "As a Club, we felt like we had to take some action to try and help out, and the Every Miller Matters campaign encapsulates all the ways in which we thought we could alleviate some of the pressure of the cost-of-living crisis.

"It's been really eye-opening to speak to people and understand just how hard certain individuals and families have been hit. There is absolutely no judgement, this is a safe space for a coffee and a chat."

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The 'Food for Thought' campaign, launched by Swansea City in conjunction with Swansea City AFC Foundation and The Wave, collected more than 800 meals in the lead up to Christmas for a Trussell Trust foodbank located at St Thomas Church in order to help those in need. The Jack Army donated 341.5kg of food and products across a single week, which in total equated to 813 meals.

Staff delivered the items to the Swansea Foodbank at St Thomas Church and the food provided a very welcome boost, with foodbanks all across the country having a depleting level of stock available throughout the challenging winter months.

Paul France, Head of Swansea City AFC Foundation, said: "Thank you to the Jack Army for their incredible response to our foodbank collection appeal. This is our first foodbank collection, and we are amazed by the excellent response from the community to support this important cause."

Continued from page 1

How Salford City's Foundation 92 gave Damian a new life

Damian was almost at his lowest ebb when he came across Salford City's Foundation 92.

Now a Community Sports Coach within the setup, something as simple as kicking a ball around on a Tuesday afternoon turned his life around.

"It changed me from depressed, stuck in my head, hopeless and not adding up to anything to gaining friends, family, experiences and qualifications that I wouldn't have known about," he explained. "It practically gave me a new life.

"I wasn't really doing anything with my life – just trying to survive – and Foundation 92 invited us down to a football session.

"I wanted to change from living inside my head. For a good two hours, I didn't live in my head. As much as I've tried in the past and not had the motivation to do it, this is the happiest I've felt in about three years."

Two-and-a-half years ago, Tom Hutton, Head of Foundation 92, first came across Damian on his lunch break and it was a chance meeting that turned into so much more for both individuals.

"I remember it well; it was summertime and some of his friends took part in a programme called the 92 Shield," he said. "Damian came down with some of his friends and started playing football and the pitch was right outside my office at the time.

"I got to know Damian and noticed that he loved his football, and he was really supportive of the other players. Over the following weeks, Damian started to ask some questions like, 'What do Foundation 92 do? What type of support do we offer?'"

After speaking to Damian about some of the services that Foundation 92 offers, from internships to apprenticeships which allow participants to access qualifications, it became clear there was a pathway for him.

Tom explained: "He said, 'I'd love to be a coach and I love what you said, and I love Foundation 92. As you know, I did used to be homeless but I'm in supported accommodation now, but I really want to try and improve and better my life.'

"For me, I thought that was a very brave thing to ask. He was happy to talk a little bit about his past but what he was very focused on was his future."

Damian reached his lowest point when he made the decision to end his life prior to joining Foundation 92.

He recalled: "One morning, I said, 'I'm done.' I thought about it a couple of times, about ending everything. I went down and said, 'Bye, mum. I love you.' That was hard but easy at the same time. I went to jump in front of a train.

"I just lost belief and hope and it went from living to surviving day-by-day and hour-by-hour – I didn't know if that was the last hour I'd reached before the next.



"That was probably the darkest moment but a moment I relive in thankfulness that it didn't happen."

Now holding down a full-time position at Foundation 92, Damian was able to turn one of his greatest passions into a career but, more than that, he received the support he'd never had before.

"Football Clubs are families, and this was the same attraction – family and hope," he added. "I tried escaping and didn't think it would work but I wanted to give it a go, so I'd run out of options and possible avenues to take."

And he's putting his experiences to good use in his role.

"We do a lot of outreach sessions and you get a lot of young people who have nobody to turn to, which was me at their age," he continued. "I speak to them and listen to them.

"From my own experience, a lot of kids are living it so I can really tell them it's not the right path and guide them and give them options. Most people just want a pair of ears to listen to them and my ears are very good at listening."

For Damian, football broke down those barriers and Tom hopes it will do so for other participants in the future.

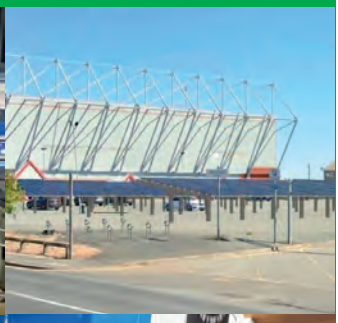
He said: "Football provides both hope and aspiration. Through kicking the ball around on a Tuesday afternoon at one of Foundation 92's community sites, Damian was able to build a relationship, build his confidence, and improve his health and wellbeing.

"It's about showcasing that anything is possible."













Green Football Weekend

Green goals were scored across the EFL network during Green Football Weekend.

The campaign centred on a weekend of 'Greener Game' football matches and competitive activities to encourage fans and Clubs to help protect the environment.

A number of EFL Clubs and Club Community Organisations struck green with initiatives and fan engagement events.

The campaign runs alongside the EFL Green Club scheme, which was launched in October 2021 and helps provide a framework for EFL Clubs to improve their environmental practices.

Through a partnership with Green Code, EFL Clubs can achieve Green Club accreditation and guidance on their environmental performance.

Here's a selection of just some of the activity across the network...

- Northampton Town ran a 'green game' with Fanzone activities, supporting sustainable fan travel and the introduction of recycling hot cup bins at the stadium.
- Luton Town Community Trust joined local students in an organised litter pick.
- Stoke City Community Trust organised a player visit for eco-lesson pupils at St Paul's CofE Primary School with Emre Tezgel and Club captain Lewis Baker.
- Stevenage FC urged fans to walk, cycle or get public transport to The Lamex, if possible, for their Green Football Weekend fixture.
- Staff from Lincoln City Foundation joined in with the Sincil Bank Litter Pick organised by residents.
- Crewe Alexandra revealed plans to install more than 3,000 solar panels above parking spaces on the existing car park at Gresty Road, which has the potential to make the Club carbon-negative.



NEW ECO FAMILY ZONE OPENS

FAMILIES AND STAFF CELEBRATED THE OPENING OF BURTON ALBION COMMUNITY TRUST'S FIRST ECO FAMILY ZONE EARLIER THIS SEASON.

Taking place before home games, the new area at the Pirelli Stadium is awash with green endeavours as the Trust host family-fun activities with an environmental focus.

"As we all know, now more than ever, we have to look after the environment," said Katie Johnson, School Sport Manager at Burton Albion Community Trust.

"We hope our Eco Family Zone is the start of something big. Doing something, no matter how big or small, will go some way to help to save our environment."

Children discover the Joy of moving

This year marks the ninth year of the EFL Trust delivering Ferrero UK's corporate social responsibility programme, **Joy of moving**, in England and Wales.

EFL Club Community Organisations continue to support and inspire thousands of children to lead an active and balanced lifestyle.

More than 475,000 kids have been engaged with **Joy of moving** over the past eight years, with a further 75,000 primary school children set to benefit from the programme this year.

The **Joy of moving** programme, which is unbranded in the UK, is designed to teach children how to enjoy moving and getting active through the medium of play, as well as encouraging them to lead active lifestyles in the future.

In February, Ruth Jones MP visited a Newport school to see a Move and Learn session in action, delivered by County in the Community.

"It was clear that the programme was a real highlight of the children's week, and it was lovely to see children getting active, developing positive habits and most importantly, having lots of fun," said the Newport West MP at St Woolas Primary School.

Charlie Cayton, Director of Corporate Affairs and Communications at Ferrero UK, concluded: "We remain committed to supporting our local communities across the UK by inspiring children and families to discover the **Joy of moving** through our fantastic programme."





Clinton Morrison with pupils at a Northampton Town Community Trust-run Lifebuoy event



Soaper Hero Clinton's hand hygiene mission

EFL Partner Lifebuoy have worked with the EFL, EFL Trust and Club Community Organisations to develop their children's hand hygiene campaign, Soaper Heroes for Football Clubs.

The EFL teamed up with Lifebuoy to develop the initiative, which primarily existed as a schools programme.

Since early 2022, the material has been adapted to enhance the programme, using experience from the EFL and the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) as well as advice from UK public health experts and schoolteachers.

Lifebuoy's cartoon mascots, Bish, Bash and Bosh, guide children through fun experiments and use catchy songs designed to embed good handwashing practices into their everyday lives.

Together, Lifebuoy and the EFL have developed warm-up and clean-up activities that can be incorporated into regular football sessions with the dual aim of being engaging but also educating about hygiene.

The EFL has further supported the programme by recruiting its own ambassadors, Clinton Morrison and Bela Shah.

Lifebuoy and Soaper Heroes ambassador Shah has made special appearances at Football Festivals throughout the year, while Morrison became a Soaper Hero more recently, helping to lead a training session at Woodford CE Primary School.

More activity is scheduled for the remainder of the 2022/23 season.

Together, Lifebuoy and the EFL have recruited 92,577 Soaper Heroes through their sport partnerships and are looking forward to seeing what the partnership will achieve for the remainder of the season.

Schools and Clubs can still sign up and become Soaper Heroes!

Visit: www.lifebuoy.co.uk/soaper-heroes-for-schools.html

Quickfire Questions with...

CAROL SHANAHAN OBE

CHAIRPERSON OF PORT VALE FC, EFL TRUST BOARD MEMBER & CHAIR OF ADVISORY GROUP

Q. How vital are Football Clubs and Club Community Organisations (CCOs) to their communities?

A. I think they're essential. If you think about where Football Clubs came from, in the majority of cases, they are from industrial areas. Football Clubs gave their communities a place of belonging outside of work.

Football is described as a faith-based system and I think in post-industrial areas, where a lot of that sense of belonging has gone because the industry has gone, football has remained and is that constant in many people's lives.

For CCOs to be able to offer the support that the community needs, using the power of the badge is essential and we see year-on-year the significance of the work CCOs are doing and how so many people's lives up and down the country feel the positive impact of their work.

Q. What interested you in getting involved with the EFL Trust?

A. My love of communities and the understanding of what football can provide to its communities.

My husband, Kevin, and I bought Port Vale because it was the best way that I could think of to help this area of Stoke-on-Trent.

I wanted to be able to learn from the other 71 Clubs but also to take this part of the football world and really promote it. As a Football Club owner, I am mindful that not every Football Club owner will feel the same as I do, but I felt by getting involved in the EFL Trust and building those connections, I could talk from a peer perspective.





Carol with the Advisory Group

Q. Tell us about the EFL Trust Advisory Group that you Chair?

A. The EFL Trust's reason for being is the 72 CCOs, and it is really important that each of their voices are heard, though it is hard to hear 72 at once. So, we have eight clusters of CCOs and a representative of each comes together as the Advisory Group.

I work very closely with those eight clusters and have a touchpoint with each CCO three or four times a year through the Advisory Group, so when I go into an EFL Trust Board meeting, I have heard something from each of the 72 CCOs.

Q. How do you manage your time with your many interests and businesses that you support?

A. Having incredibly good people working with me! Ben, my Executive Assistant, is phenomenal; he organises my diary, which is a formidable task.

It is a balance of priorities – people and priorities I say – and we prioritise my time to the areas that interest me most, none more so than my role on the EFL Trust Board and as Chair of the Advisory Group.

It is really important that we all take time for ourselves too; I love long walks – which I started doing during lockdown – walking my dogs Stellar and Eileen, two Cavalier King Charles Spaniels. I have just returned to knitting too! I find it really good because I am off my phone and having time by myself to switch off in my space.