



**Volunteering**



**LESSONS OF STREETGAMES**

**YOUNG VOLUNTEERS**

[www.streetgames.org](http://www.streetgames.org)



# WELCOME

...to the *Lessons of StreetGames Young Volunteers*, in which we share over 12 years of learning about 'what works' when encouraging disadvantaged young people to volunteer and take social action. This document draws upon the experiences of some 20,000 young people, each from a disadvantaged area, whose volunteering efforts have made their neighbourhoods safer, healthier, and more successful.

***Young people tell us they are keen to join in when volunteering opportunities are 'FABS!'***

**FABS!** Is all about providing volunteer opportunities that are:

- Fun
- Altruistic
- provide a sense of Belonging
- and offer Self-Development (FABS!).



# BACKGROUND TO STREETGAMES

StreetGames is the nation's largest sport for development charity, harnessing the power of sport to improve the lives of young people living in disadvantaged communities throughout the UK. Our work helps young people and their communities to become healthier, safer and more successful, and to break down the inequalities of access that prevent disadvantaged young people from reaping the benefits of sport. In short, StreetGames' work:

- changes sport
- changes communities, and
- changes lives.



## HEALTHIER



Tackle inactivity

Close the activity gender gap

Address mental health issues

Combat food poverty

## SAFER



Boost community safety

Increase community integration and cohesion

Build financial awareness and education

## MORE SUCCESSFUL



Equip StreetGames clubs to better support their communities

Upskill the sporting workforce through training and CPD

Provide opportunities for volunteering and social action

The skills, experiences and connections that volunteers gain help to make them more successful, increase their employment prospects, and improve their overall 'life chances'.



## LOCALLY TRUSTED ORGANISATIONS

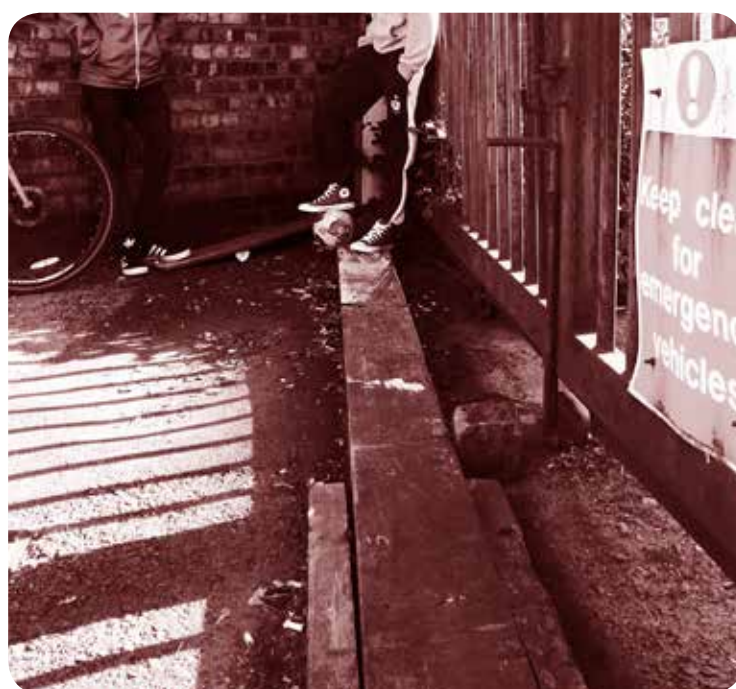
We work in partnership with over 1,000 Locally Trusted Organisations (LTOs). Together, these organisations make up the StreetGames network. Each LTO is self-determining, independently managed and independently funded. Most are charities, legally-constituted community groups or Community Interest Companies. LTOs have multiple primary purposes and very few exist solely to promote sport: they are youth clubs, community safety projects, housing associations, local authorities, and community centres.

Each LTO enjoys an enviable reach into its neighbourhood, with many acting as the 'lifblood' of their community. They have 'earned their spurs', won the right to make a difference and are able to reach both groups and individuals that others find 'hard to reach'. They understand what works and what's still needed to create further change on their patch. Together with these LTOs, StreetGames works to establish effective practice and replicate these successes, both at scale and at pace.

The collective power and credibility of the network enables unparalleled access to young people in over 4,000 communities. Each organisation in the network upholds industry standards for safeguarding, insurance, health and safety, as well as equalities and diversity.

StreetGames utilises an approach known as 'Doorstep Sport', a largely non-competitive take on physical activity that prioritises fun, as opposed to a more 'skills and drills'-based approach often typical at mainstream sports clubs.

About 70% of Doorstep Sport participants are not involved in organised sport or physical activity outside of school or FE College.



# STREETGAMES YOUNG VOLUNTEERS

Many Doorstep Sport participants choose to 'step up' to become young volunteers, with nearly 20,000 individuals having done so since the programme began, contributing an incredible 400,000 collective hours so far. Some volunteers opt to pop along now and again, while others choose to volunteer week in and week out. Typically, these volunteers may not be 'super sporty', their motivations are less about sport and more FABS!-based.

**FABS!** Is all about providing volunteer opportunities that are

- **F**un
- **A**ltruistic
- provide a sense of **B**elonging
- and offer **S**elf-Development (FABS!).

These efforts demonstrate how given the right opportunity, disadvantaged young people can grow to become highly skilled within a number of different areas, including assisting with the administration of their LTO; promoting the group via social media; planning and executing personal mini-projects; and performing sports leadership work.

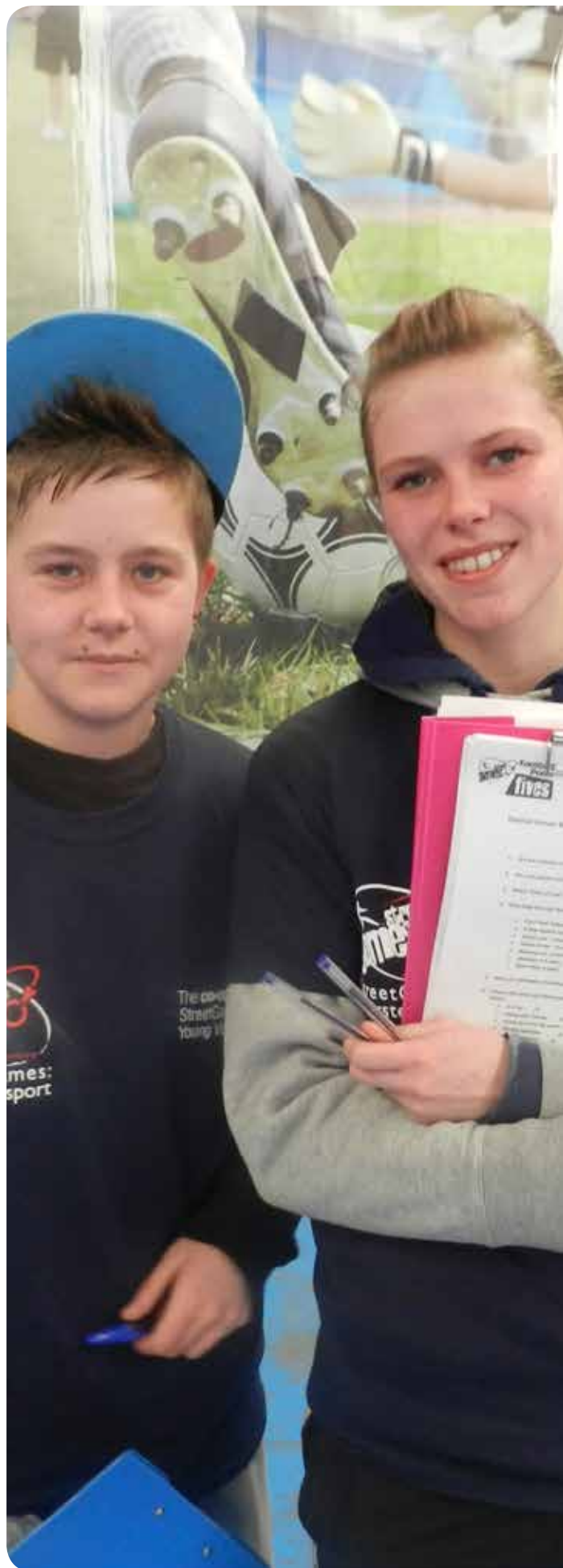
Volunteers effectively co-produce the Doorstep Sport clubs that make their communities happier, healthier, and more cohesive places to live. Critically, these volunteers also make it their business to generate a tolerant, egalitarian atmosphere within their clubs: ensuring that all participants have a good time by discouraging cliques and emphasising cooperative, non-aggressive behaviour.

Both StreetGames, and the LTO leaders responsible for hosting these opportunities take great pride in seeing their volunteers grow, sharpen their skills and improve their self-confidence. It is enormously rewarding to witness them becoming more experienced and approach new training offers with enthusiasm. The skills, experiences and connections that volunteers gain help to make them more successful, increase their employment prospects, and improve their overall life skills.

Continued investment in these sorts of young volunteering opportunities is key to the future of StreetGames and to the health, safety and success of the young people themselves, as well as the communities in which they live.

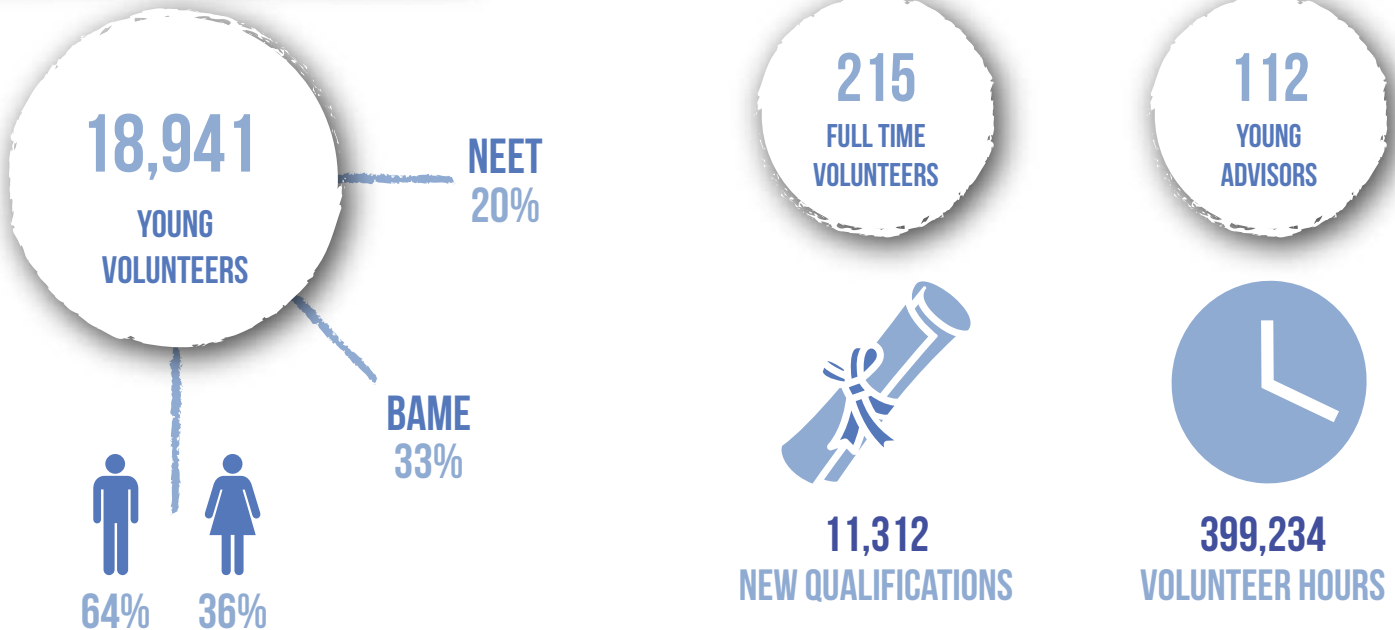
Over the last 12 years, StreetGames' FABS! programme has benefited from partnerships with many generous funders and creative partnerships. The Cooperative Group, BT, Sport England, Sport Wales and the Cabinet Office have all been exceptionally generous. Appendix 1 details this development.

About 70% of Doorstep Sport participants are not involved in any other organised sport or physical activity outside of school or FE College.



# STREETGAMES YOUNG VOLUNTEERS

## KEY FACTS & FIGURES



**1,135**

YOUNG VOLUNTEERS HAVE ATTENDED SYV LEADERSHIP RESIDENTIALS

**778**

YOUNG VOLUNTEERS HAVE ATTENDED SYV CONFERENCES & AWARD EVENTS

**875**

YOUNG VOLUNTEERS HAVE ATTENDED SUMMER CAMPS



**YOUNG PEOPLE DEVELOP PERSONALLY**

INCREASED CONFIDENCE

RAISED ASPIRATIONS

IMPROVED COMMUNICATION SKILLS



**YOUNG PEOPLE IMPROVE THEIR HEALTH & WELL-BEING**

FEELING HAPPY

INCREASED FRIENDSHIPS  
IMPROVED WELL-BEING

BEING MORE ACTIVE AND CONNECTED



**YOUNG PEOPLE GAIN SKILLS & EXPERIENCES**

GAINING TRANSFERRABLE SKILLS SUCH AS TEAM WORK, PROBLEM SOLVING AND LEADERSHIP

GAINING NEW QUALIFICATIONS AND ATTENDING TRAINING

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PAID WORK



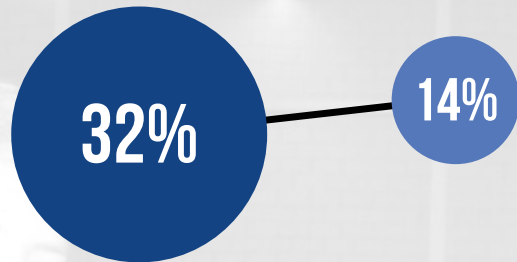
**YOUNG VOLUNTEERS HELP TO DEVELOP THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

BUILDING LOCAL CAPACITY AND RESOURCES

HELPING TO REDUCE COMMUNITY SAFETY ISSUES

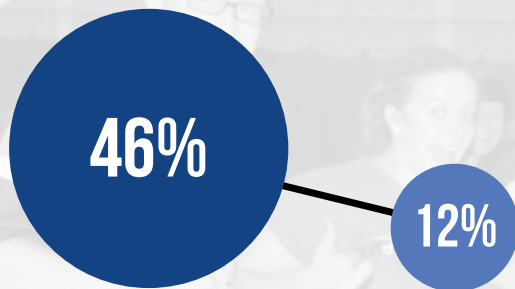
# WHO VOLUNTEERS?

National Surveys show time and time again, that people from lower socio-economic groups are under-represented in the world of volunteering. This is true of both genders, however amongst sports volunteers the situation is even more pronounced amongst women from lower socio-economic groups.



of affluent young people (aged 9-16 years) have volunteered in some capacity

but just 14% of young people growing up in low-income families volunteer.



of adults from the highest socio-economic groups (NS-SEC 1-2) had volunteered

only 12% of those from lower socio-economic groups (NS-SEC 6-8) had done so



59%

of all sports volunteers are male



41%

of all sports volunteers are female



In this feature, sport bucks the trend. Across all sectors, females are more likely to volunteer than men but this trend is reversed when it comes to sport. Females are less likely than males to take part in sport, and are less likely to volunteer in sport.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF VOLUNTEERING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING IN DISADVANTAGED AREAS

As the lives of disadvantaged young people get tougher, the benefits of volunteering become ever more important. Volunteering can, and does improve life chances, so harvesting these benefits is crucial.

Currently, almost a third of all UK children live in poverty, and this figure is expected to rise over the next few years<sup>1</sup>. The effects of this poverty on a young person's growth, wellbeing and levels of attainment can be debilitating. For instance, sixteen year olds from poorer backgrounds are a third less likely to achieve good GCSE results than their wealthier peers.

Rates of social mobility in the UK have also declined over the last decade<sup>2</sup>. Recent research suggests that investment in adult skills may not be the most efficient way to combat this issue. The more successful solution remains a focus on improving young people's educational attainment during their time in full-time education<sup>3</sup>.

Through qualifications, training and life experience, volunteering provides participants with plenty of CV-enhancing material; whilst also influencing them to return to education. Critically, volunteering also provides volunteers with the skills, confidence and know-how to strike-out on their own and take new opportunities.



<sup>1</sup>UK Poverty 2018: Report by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation Analysis Unit. Accessed from <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/uk-poverty-2018>

<sup>2</sup>Wilkinson R. and Pickett K. (2010) *The Spirit Level: Why Equality is Better for Everyone* London: Penguin Books

<sup>3</sup>Crawford C., Johnson P., Machin S. and Vignoles A. (2011) *Social Mobility: a literature Review*: Department for Business, Innovation and Skills





# THE STREETGAMES YOUNG VOLUNTEERS MODEL

The SYV offer provides young people from lower socioeconomic groups (LSEGs), living in areas of high deprivation, with new and exciting opportunities to volunteer at their local sports projects, as well as at exciting national and international events, such as the London 2012 Olympics, 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, and assorted Great Run events.

## The Participant to Volunteer Transition

StreetGames' Young Volunteers are typically drawn from existing groups of participants in LTOs. The LTO coach or session leader may begin this process by asking a young person to 'help out' with a variety of small tasks - perhaps by helping to set up, or to put away session equipment. Then, depending on the young person's interests and motivations, organisers will casually support these individuals to embark upon a 'volunteer journey'. This means that:

- Young volunteers can help out in a variety of ways, assisting with or even leading group sessions, by mentoring others, providing administrative support, or by helping to promote these sessions and activities to their peers (either face-to-face or via social media).
- The extent to which a young person gets involved in volunteering/ social action is also flexible – some young people may want to help out for a number of hours each week, or whenever they can. Others will only be interested in doing so at larger, one-off events, tournaments and competitions.



For those young people who do want to progress in the role, there are many opportunities to do so. These may take the form of attending a training workshop, earning a new qualification, taking up a holiday-time volunteer placement, a full-time placement for NEETs and/or volunteering within other settings/ roles to gain experience.

## Making Volunteering FABs!

The FABs! model was identified by Sandy Craig from Leisure Futures, in his evaluation of Cooperative StreetGames Young Volunteer Programme. This was the very first iteration of StreetGames' young volunteer programme, with the resulting FABs! model continuing to underpin the approach used by more than 300 LTOs.

In the Lessons of Doorstep Sport, StreetGames outlines the '5 rights of Doorstep Sport' as the foundation upon which good, locally-based sport and physical activity provisions are developed. FABs! represents the volunteering equivalent of these 5 Rights.

## What is FABs!?

At its core, FABs! is all about providing volunteer opportunities that are: Fun, Altruistic, provide a sense of Belonging, and offer the opportunity for Self-Development (FABs!).





## KEY CHARACTERISTICS THAT MOTIVATE YOUNG PEOPLE TO VOLUNTEER

### Fun

This is all about enjoyment – smiles, laughter, and feeling good in your own skin, while challenging yourself and mirroring other people’s enjoyment (feeling good in doing good!).

### Altruism

Giving back to the community, doing good and feeling valued by the community.

### Belonging

Being a member of a group, team, club or family (of your own volition, not through any external compulsion or peer pressure); being affiliated with, allied to, associated with this team; increasing friendship networks; feeling valued by the community, having a place in that community, having people around you that you can trust and who will support you when times get tough (helping and being helped).

### Self-Development

Maturing and developing through life as an individual, increasing your stock of ‘life-skills’ i.e. confidence; resilience; communication; empathy; growth in aspirations and ambitions; self-improvement; and so on. This may include extending and challenging yourself; increasing ‘technical’ skills e.g. sports, leadership, work experience and qualifications etc., boosting personal contentment and opening up new career options.

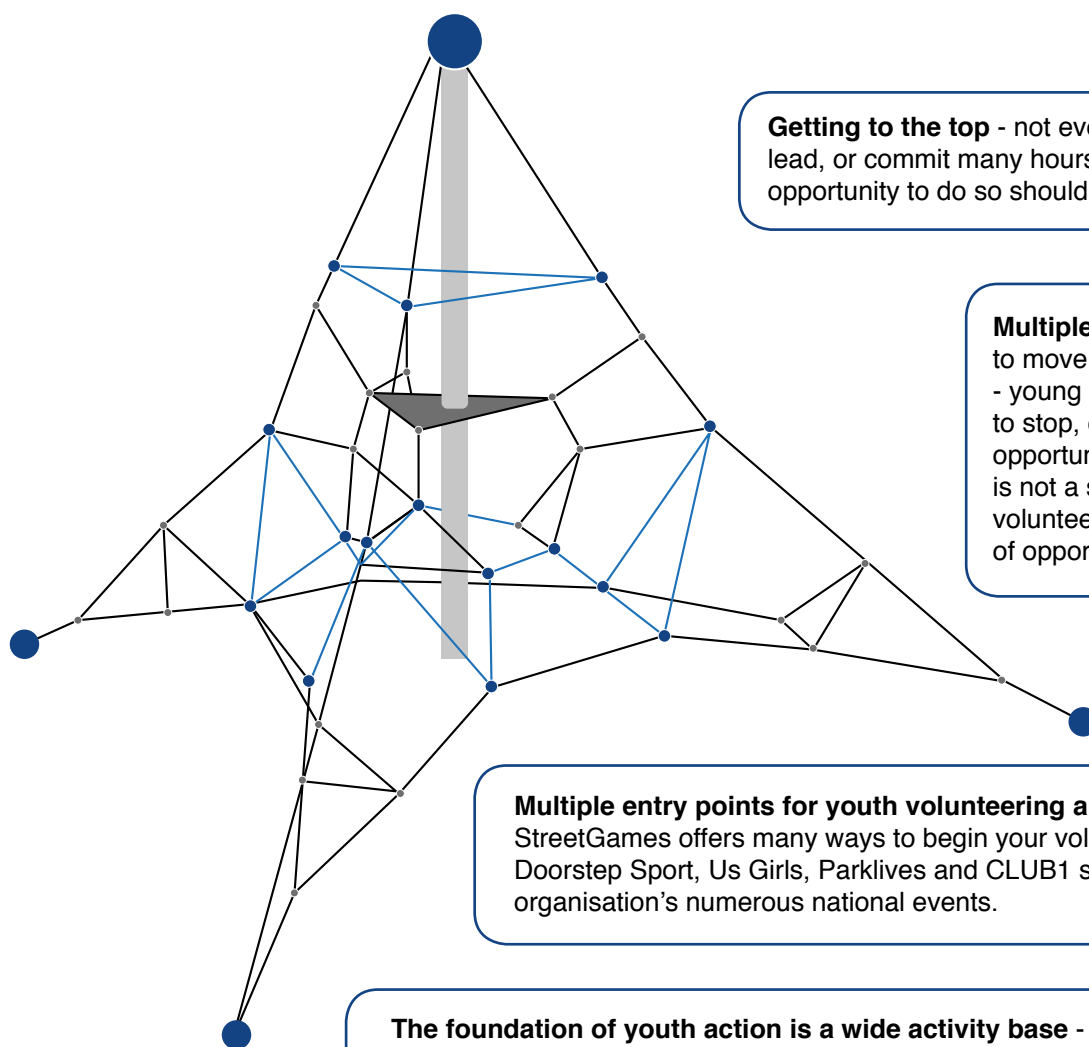
Source: SYV Evaluation 2008, undertaken by Sandy Craig – Leisure Futures



# DESIGNING A SUCCESSFUL YOUTH VOLUNTEERING INITIATIVE

Through the StreetGames' approach of testing, evaluating and replicating our work, we have refined our youth volunteering programme into a flexible and successful model - one that can now be applied across a number of different initiatives, to meet the needs of different groups of young people.

Using a children's climbing frame as an aid to understanding, the following diagram helps to illustrate our unique approach. Abandoning the traditional rigid or 'structured pathway', the SYV Offer instead allows for movement across styles and directions. This inherent flexibility both allows for and encourages individuals to gain new experiences and skill sets: we know that one size does not fill all.



**Getting to the top** - not every young person wants to lead, or commit many hours to volunteering, but the opportunity to do so should be made available.

**Multiple routes and opportunities** to move up and around the frame - young people need the space to stop, change and try out new opportunities. Personal development is not a straight line, successful volunteering schemes offer a range of opportunities.

**Multiple entry points for youth volunteering and social action** - StreetGames offers many ways to begin your volunteering journey - at Doorstep Sport, Us Girls, Parklives and CLUB1 sessions, or at one of the organisation's numerous national events.

**The foundation of youth action is a wide activity base** - generating a vibrant and varied volunteering offer. This is the start of the transition from a participant to a young volunteer - finding the right place to get on board and give it a go!

This model or approach is built upon 2 key foundations:

## The 'participant to volunteer' transition

As every young person's 'volunteering journey' is unique, our approach involves plenty of flexibility.

Just as we know that young people are attracted to FABS! volunteering opportunities, our evaluations also tell us how best to set up and manage a successful youth volunteering scheme. Evaluators employed a wide variety of research methods in order to squeeze out every last drop of useful information from this work, including 'on the ground' feedback; analysis of volunteer and participant monitoring data; surveys; interviews; project visits; and the 'Youth Outcomes Star' tool; along with in-depth 'life grid' interviews with young volunteers.

We have taken all of the learning gained from this evaluation and research, and packaged it into the following seven areas for management action:

1. Flexibility and choice
2. Varied volunteer roles
3. National support for locally-owned volunteering
4. Volunteer opportunities outside the neighbourhood
5. Youth-led social action
6. Engaging females
7. The value of networking & collaboration

## The 'FABS!' Model

The diagram on the next page summarises the critical ingredients in each of these seven areas.

In the 'Lessons of Doorstep Sport' report, we outlined many of the lessons learned over the previous 12 years of StreetGames' youth volunteering work, as well as how this linked in to the delivery of local sport interventions for young people. To read the Lessons of Doorstep Sport, please visit here:



Scan QR code or type the following in your web browser:

<https://network.streetgames.org/insight-into-action>



# StreetGames Youth Volunteering Critical Ingredients



## Flexibility and choice

New opportunities and the chance to try new things are both appealing to young people, encouraging involvement through flexibility of choice

One size doesn't fit all and a structured pathway isn't preferred

## Youth-led social action

Enables young people to take the lead in shaping their local offer, which may involve a mini-project that offers a new activity or tackles a local issue

It helps to motivate and encourage others to be more active

## Networking and collaboration

Offer roles that develop a range of skills and qualities

Link these offers to the interests and motivations of young people

Young people often see what needs to be done and come up with suitable roles themselves

# FABS!

## PARTICIPANT TO VOLUNTEER

## Engaging females

A different approach is needed to encourage females to take on a leadership/volunteer role

Women and girls often prefer roles where they can volunteer on a more casual/ informal basis

## Variety of roles

Offer roles that develop a range of skills and qualities

Link these offers to the interests and motivations of young people

Young people often see what needs to be done and come up with suitable roles themselves

## National support for locally-owned volunteering

Local organisations value the support of a national programme through training, learning and resources

Local young volunteers are mentored by the appropriate mentor

The national programme supports these mentors

## Wider Opportunities

Providing opportunities for young volunteers outside their local neighbourhood is really important in terms of supporting personal growth and enjoyment.

Opportunities may include: event volunteering, residentials, training or placements outside their local area





## CASE STUDIES

### Young Advisor - Joe

Joe - 21 from the Wirral on Merseyside volunteered with his local project over a number of years. He initially became involved in volunteering through his interest in sport; he loved taking part and wanted to carry on his involvement.

Joe's volunteering role at his local project involves: helping to set up the equipment for sessions, leading activities and motivating others to take part.

Through his involvement in volunteering Joe has undertaken a range of qualifications, including: FA Level 1 Coaching Award, Level 2 Doorstep Sport Coaching Award, First Aid, Safeguarding, Activator workshops in rounders and tennis and also a drug and alcohol awareness peer educator course.

Through his volunteering experience and qualifications, Joe has been able to secure paid sessional work as a coach at a number of after school sports sessions.

Joe previously acted as a Young Advisor at the StreetGames Volunteer Residential at Brathay, which inspired and gave him the confidence to apply for a Young Advisor post at Camp Glasgow. He undertook a wide range of duties whilst on camp, including helping to set up and take down tents, leading activities in the evenings and at the Pop Up Games arena and general duties.

For Joe:

- The key things he gets from volunteering are: **"Experience and fun"**
- The three words which describe volunteering best are: **"Amazing, Experience and Friends"**
- He feels rewarded for his volunteering from **"opportunities to lead and qualifications"**
- Challenges when volunteering have included **"Speaking in large groups and on a microphone... but it's good to get outside your comfort zone"**
- The best thing about Camp Glasgow was: **"Last night, we did Glasgow's Got Talent and everyone was involved with that"**
- The key things he's learnt at Camp which he will use elsewhere: **"loads of activities and loads of ice-breakers"**
- The three words which describe camp are: **"Amazing, Fund and Awesome"**
- Dream for the future: **"Get back into judo again"**



## Young Advisor - Chloe

Chloe - 21 years old and from Leeds got involved in volunteering as she was keen to gain some experience of working with young people with Special Educational Needs whilst studying Sports Coaching at college.

Through her volunteering, Chloe has supported six different groups that meet weekly to take part in different sports activities including: volleyball, boccia and curling. She really enjoys her role saying: **'... you feel good about yourself, because it's off my own back – it gives you a buzz... making someone's day... helping someone learn something new... It's rewarding'**.

Chloe decided she'd like to become a Young Advisor after attending a StreetGames Leadership Residential the previous year – saying: **'I saw the Young Advisors last year and saw the effect they had, my project got an email and asked if I wanted to do it'**.

Whilst at the Residential Chloe has supported the StreetGames team to plan the event, set up activities and help with presentations. Through her Young Advisor role Chloe feels that she has definitely learnt things: **"Knowing that I can do things I thought I couldn't do – for example talking on a microphone to over 100 people... that you can push yourself further than you think you can"**.

For Chloe, the best thing about being a Young Advisor is: **'Working as a team – everyone pulls together, you never feel alone – there's always someone there'**.

She also reflected on her personal growth: **'When I first started I was shy with new people, as the weeks have gone by, I've come out of my shell... it's more natural now... I've gained more in confidence... I feel like through this – I've really gained in confidence and being able to talk to and meet new people without being nervous... How to start a conversation...'**



## Young Advisor - Michelle

Michelle grew up in Kenton in the North End of Newcastle, growing up she was always a shy child and didn't socialise much with other children in her area. Sport would go on to have a huge impact on Michelle's life.

Michelle had previously been a participant at Hat-Trick sessions before going on to do some casual volunteering. When the opportunity to do a full time volunteering placement came up she saw it as a great chance to gain some valuable experience in sports coaching in which she was becoming increasingly passionate about.

Being quite a shy person, making the step up to become a full time volunteer wasn't easy, but through the support of the staff at Hat-Trick, Michelle has seen a huge turnaround in her self-confidence, going on to lead a 10 week programme of multi-sport sessions for girls. The main focus was the development of basic football skills to a group of girls who didn't really play football before.

This was a huge step up for Michelle who now takes great pride in developing those young people in whom she saw a bit of her former self, shy and not confident to take part. Michelle has gone on to become a great leader and role model to the young people in her community – volunteering played a pivotal role in Michelle's life and she now relishes the opportunity to have a similar impact on the young people who attend her own sessions, inspiring them to go on and make changes in their own lives.





## Young Advisor - Ellie

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Ellie, who is 23 and from Stratford East London, initially started volunteering at the age of 11.

Over the past 12 years she has undertaken a wide range of volunteer roles at her school, Essex FA, the Youth Sport Trust and StreetGames.

At Essex County FA, Ellie was the only female volunteer, where she undertook roles including: Chair of the Youth Council, young mentor and head coach. Through volunteering Ellie has gained a wealth of valuable experience and new skills which she used to take on the role of StreetGames Young Advisor. Ellie together with three other Young Advisors helped to organise the 2018 StreetGames Youth Conference in London that was attended by over 90 young volunteers from across London.

The Young Advisors were instrumental in the planning and delivery of the event – choosing the overarching theme for the event: 'hear me out', the workshops and playlist and taking a lead on the day in the opening plenary and supporting activities throughout the day.

Through their work to plan and deliver the Youth Conference the Young Advisors reflected that they had learnt a huge amount about event planning, public speaking and being creative and that it had helped to: build personal confidence, teamwork and communication skills.

In describing her time as a Young Advisor, Ellie said found it: ***"Inspirational because I feel the team all have a way of inspiring others. Belonging because I feel together we are a unit and I'm proud to be in this unit. Progressive and encouraging because in our last meeting we decided a lot of things and looked more at how we can make a huge encouraging impact on others. Interesting to work with a young group and giving each other's perspective"***

In 2018 Ellie took up an Apprenticeship in Community Sport and has since gone on to join the Police force.

# APPENDIX 01: STREETGAMES YOUNG VOLUNTEERS TIMELINE

2007

The StreetGames Young Volunteer initiative is launched, with The Co-operative as its lead sponsor.

2008

The first Young Volunteer residential takes place in Wales.

The first full-time volunteer placement takes place in the North East

2009

The StreetGames Young Volunteer Offer receives further funding from V-Inspired.

The first national winner of the Young Volunteer Award is announced.

2010

The first annual Young Volunteer conference is held in Walsall.

StreetGames launches its Young Advisors initiative.

2013

Further funding is received from the Cabinet Office for StreetGames Young Volunteers.

Young Advisors take part in the first European Youth Exchange programme in Belgium, as part of the 'Sport me up'-funded project.

2014

StreetGames Young Volunteers reaches 10,000 young people total.

StreetGames runs the 'Camp Glasgow' residential - linked to the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

StreetGames' young volunteers travel to Brazil with Lions Row for the FIFA World Cup.

2011

Funding is received from the Cabinet Office to develop the Young Volunteer Offer - linked to the London 2012 Olympics.

The 'VTwentyFour:24' initiative further increases the growth of this full-time Volunteering work

Five part-time Regional Doorstep Sport Advisors are put in place to support the growth of StreetGames Young Volunteer work

2012

StreetGames' work with young volunteers expands with links to the London 2012 Olympics. The organisation launches the event volunteering project, with 75 StreetGames volunteers running with the Olympic torch and a further 45 young volunteers working with Coca-Cola GB at the Olympics.

StreetGames' Young Volunteer Offer receives the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Award for volunteering.

BT sponsors the growth of the full-time Young Volunteers in Scotland and Wales.

2015

Cabinet Office funding is received for the third time, enabling the continued growth of StreetGames Young Volunteers

The first London and South East residential Young Volunteer Offers are funded by the Berkley Foundation.

2016

StreetGames Young Volunteers reaches 15,000 young people total.

StreetGames runs its first ever international youth leadership residential, working with young people from six different countries.

2017

The total number of young volunteers involved in Doorstep Sport club programmes reaches 3,300.

StreetGames delivers its first Youth Health Champions training residential.

2018

StreetGames delivers the European Youth Health Champions residential with four European partner countries.

StreetGames receives Sport England investment to deliver a Volunteer Action Research Project.



 SYVprogramme

 @SGVolunteering #new2me

 StreetGamesUK

 [www.streetgames.org](http://www.streetgames.org)



StreetGames would like to thank the many current and previous organisations that have provided funding to support the StreetGames Young Volunteer offer including:

