



## **Hello everyone and welcome to the official MFC Foundation Newsletter for Autumn 2020.**

Back in March we were named Community Club of the Year for the North East and Yorkshire. Little did we know that within weeks of the award we would be called upon to support our communities like never before.

The world changed, our objectives didn't.

### **FIRST AND FOREMOST - FOOD**

**It quickly became clear there would be a monumental struggle for many families as wage-earners were furloughed, or lost their jobs, losing what for many had been taken for granted, the ability to put food on the table. In some areas attendees at food banks quadrupled.**

Through contributions from organisations, members of the public and purchases, we were able to put together food parcels and deliver them throughout the region – in excess of 25,000 of them by the time we had reached the end of September.

This was done with a smile, encouragement to everyone, including ourselves, that we would get through this. We haven't yet of course, but there's light at the end of the tunnel.

Super hero figures soon became popular figures in communities, doctor's surgeries, hospitals and schools throughout East Cleveland, while the cloak of invincibility elsewhere was often the badge of the club or the logo of the Foundation.

Big companies came on board and during the six weeks of the summer holidays Applebridge Construction funded a monumental project at a cost of around £40,000. In the region of 30,000 meals were distributed to those in need, for some this was the only proper meal of the day, sometimes the week.

The meals were made in the kitchens at the Riverside by chefs giving their own time. Preparation and delivery, this is where we stepped in. It wasn't uncommon for some of our staff to be working seven days a week. You don't stop to think about the time or the day when there is a realisation that what others are thinking about is how to put their next meal on the table.

It was a project replicated if not in scale, certainly in kind in the final week of October, spurred on by Boro's Ashley Fletcher, a friend and former team mate of Marcus Rashford whose summer initiative had captured the nation's imagination and forced the hand of Government.

Donations reached around the £25,000 mark as we again swung into action to deliver food across the region from Darlington to Loftus and beyond.

It may be a similar story at Christmas.



## KEVIN: A STORY OF THANKS HOPE AND INSPIRATION

**We have seen and needed to prepare for challenges the like of which we never expected to encounter in our lifetime. Fitness and wellbeing, both physical and mental, has been at the forefront of our delivery throughout.**

If not in person at the Riverside, Whale Hill, and various locations in the region, then online via Zoom direct into a front room, or garden, FIT BORO has more than kept people going.

Kevin Robinson had his personal challenges to face before Covid-19 reshaped the world as we knew it. Friendships made on the FIT BORO programme have helped him realise the light at the end of the tunnel is not that of an onrushing train.

Shortly after enrolling on what was to be a 12-week programme aimed

at increasing physical and mental wellbeing, Kevin's wife underwent major surgery and her father passed away.

"I thought this could be the end of this course for me. However, I was blown away by your concerns and support during this time," said Kevin in a letter written to MFC Foundation.

"This relit the fire in my belly and I quickly joined back in through your encouragement. What I had not expected was the friendships struck up with others on the course. All attending a Boro game together, walking around the Riverside area chatting with like-minded people.

"A huge thank you. You have truly helped me beyond my expectations."



## STEPPING UP



**It has been a busy few weeks for our transition team with the Stepping Up programme in full swing since the schools returned.**

Transitioning from primary to secondary school can be a scary experience for young children and parents alike; the gap is simply too big for some.

"This year in particular has been especially challenging," says Steven Bell, referring to the impact made by Covid-19. "The importance of having a ready-made mentor for the children has been even more beneficial."

"Staff have created a menu of support for young people to access, to aid them with their transition to secondary school. This support can be tailored to the individual or used as a whole by schools."

## MFC AND MFC FOUNDATION RECOGNISED FOR WORK IN MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

**MFC and MFC Foundation have been presented with the Bronze Standard in Mental Health and Wellbeing, awarded by Plan4Sport.**

Originally chosen as one of only four pilot organisations from across the UK, MFC and MFC Foundation were approached to pilot the standard which is new for sporting organisations. The long-term hope being that the standard gets rolled out across all sporting organisations who have a responsibility for supporting mental health in their staff and participants.

To achieve the award the two organisations have worked together to put in place a mental health action plan, various training for staff on the topic of mental health, an organisation-wide mental health risk assessment in addition to mental health being added to all risk assessments across the organisation, a Health and Wellbeing policy and reviewed various HR policies.

On the award to MFC and MFC Foundation, Plan4Sport were fulsome in their praise.

The organisation is to be congratulated; this is an excellent submission which clearly demonstrates honest and constructive self-assessment; commitment to achieve Bronze Level and vision to strive for best practice around employee mental health and wellbeing.

There is clear commitment to employee mental health and wellbeing.



Inspire Confidence Inspire Hope

# During the lockdown we have...

**40**  
online lessons delivered

**2400**  
home cooked meals  
delivered to the vulnerable and elderly

**6**  
virtual tournaments ran for young people

**55**  
new partnerships developed with other charities

**230** treat packages delivered to care workers

**25000** food parcels delivered to Teesside communities

**130** PPE deliveries made

**250** fitness sessions delivered online

**60** educational resources developed for our Virtual Classroom

**4000** phone calls made to elderly and vulnerable season ticket holders

**400** social media posts uploaded

**1700** miles driven to deliver to those in need



## STREET ART BRINGS COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

**We supported a competition in association with Youth Focus North East where communities were challenged with chalking their street.**

The results, on and off the pavement, were spectacular.

Commenting on the project, one lady who simply wanted to be known as Michelle said: "It was amazing just to have the opportunity to take part. There is not one person on our estate who isn't thankful for you organising the event.

"It's brought everyone together and talking to each other.

*"To say everyone was behind closed doors, lonely and scared, everyone came out on the streets and spoke to their neighbours. There was so much laughter and enjoyment."*

The Chalk Your Street campaign was supported by MFC Foundation, Youth Focus: North East, ICL Boulby and Beyond Housing UK. It helped to temporarily transform streets – and in the case of the winners a full estate – but the longer terms benefits will be even more rewarding as this brought people together.

- 1st Balmoral Road, Lingdale
- 2nd Coral Street, Saltburn
- 3rd Skelton Primary School
- 4th Lingdale Primary School
- 5th Britannia Terrace, Brotton
- 6th Hirds Drive, Loftus



## SAM DUFFIELD: A STORY OF ADVERSITY AND TRIUMPH

**Sam Duffield is a remarkable young man who has overcome odds that often seem unfairly stacked against him.**

With a little help from us here at MFC Foundation, Sam continues to fight and he's still smiling.

There have been several FIFA tournaments hosted by us during lockdown, all for the participants who have been missing out on their social interaction and physical activity they normally get from our PL Kicks programme. There has also been a joint inclusive FIFA tournament with Hull City, a FIFA tournament only for registered PL Kicks disability participants from both clubs.

Sam won both the Foundation U16 tournament and the joint one. Here he explains what it meant during to him during what is a difficult time for everyone.

*"During COVID-19, having the tournament to play has kept me socially communicated with other people and has helped me with my frustrations I endure with my medical interventions," he says.*

"My disabilities, illness and medical interventions have always affected my ability to play for a team. I had a tumour at the base of my spine at 13 months old which left me fighting for my life and resulted in me having sepsis which led to me ending up with a neuropathic bowel and bladder and impaired mobility.

"Only this year I found out in January that I have Type 1 diabetes which I have had to get to grips with and learn how to give insulin to myself.

"This tournament has helped me so much and achieving being an online player now makes me feel proud of myself and has meant a lot to me."

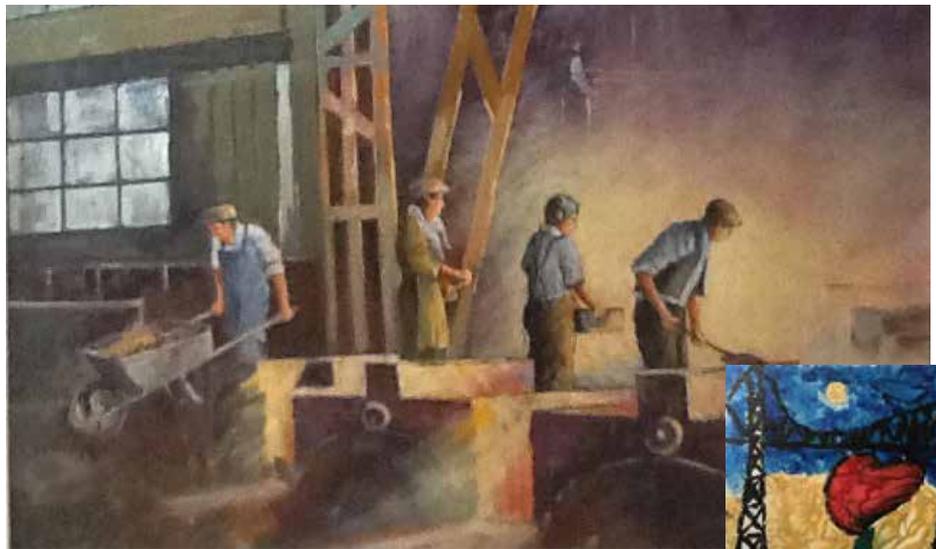
## MACKENZIE THORPE INSPIRED LOVE OF TEESSIDE COMPETITION

An internationally-acclaimed artist joined forces with us when we launched a competition to celebrate all that is good about Teesside.

Mackenzie Thorpe was born in Middlesbrough; his work has been shown and hung all around the world. But he has never forgotten his roots.

In a hugely popular competition launched in the summer, Mackenzie encouraged everyone, young and old, to follow in his footsteps and create a piece of art that showed the best of our region.

"I want you to show the world how proud you are of Middlesbrough, of Teesside, the surrounding areas," he said.



"Look inside your heart, be proud of where you come from, let's show the world how good a place Middlesbrough really is."

The public responded. There were over 300 entries of all shapes and sizes. Canvases, computer-aided graphics, line drawings, models, oils, photographs and water colours.

The winners were;

### OVER-18s

Kevin Palmer's depiction of Cochrane's Foundry

### UNDER-18s

Barney Rhys Grant and his portrayal of the Transporter and love of Teesside



## CAPTAIN TOM AT THE HEART AS A PRIMARY SCHOOL MURAL TAKES PRIDE OF PLACE IN THE RIVERSIDE

Captain Sir Thomas Moore entered the Guinness Book of Records after raising an estimated £33m for the NHS days before his 100th birthday.

He was also made an honorary colonel early in a summer no-one will ever forget.

When fans are allowed back into the Riverside, those in the GRFZ will be met with an outstanding piece of work made by pupils from Skelton Primary School with Captain Tom at the heart of it.

Walk from pitchside up the tunnel in the North East Corner and you can't fail to see the fruits of the labours of schoolchildren who were asked to make a collage with tiles, on which would be images of what they remembered from what has proved to be the early days of Covid-19.



The concept was the brainchild of MFC Foundation Boro Bus coordinator Lee Harding who said: "The pupils and teachers worked with great enthusiasm and this will be a lasting tribute to the NHS, and Captain Tom of course, and a reminder of how everyone pulled together to help each other.

## A GRAND ACHIEVEMENT



**We were left well over one thousand pounds better off thanks to the efforts of five walkers and the generosity of their sponsors.**

Having seen first-hand the work we do here at the Foundation and the difference we can make to the lives of so many, photographer Tom Banks wanted to help.

Tom has photographed many Boro games at first and Academy level and he came up with the idea of a sponsored walk linking Boro's two main centres of operation, Rockliffe and the Riverside.

After several weeks in the planning, Tom, long with our own Paul South, together with Kevin Leavesley, Karen Ross and Leigh Fisher, completed the close-on 19-mile (30km) walk in just over five-and-a-half hours, with the group raising a total which approached £1,200 when they touched the Ayresome Park gates.

A fantastic effort from all involved and thank you so much to everyone who sponsored them.



## FOUNDATION AND BORO HELP DELIVER A POWERFUL MESSAGE THROUGHOUT BLACK HISTORY MONTH

**Throughout October we worked with schools in the region as they focused project work on Black History Month.**

Led by captain Britt Assombalonga, Boro players interacted each week via Zoom calls as students learned about racism, the cause and effect and what can be done about it.

Britt spoke with Green Lane Primary school in Middlesbrough and explained to the young children that it doesn't matter what colour skin you have, people should be treated for who they are.

The questions from all the schools were varied, giving a glimpse into the mind of a young person and how they think about the poison that is racism.

Simple questions like, "When did racism start?", gave food for thought.

Britt explained that no-one is born a racist, it is just what people are taught.

Marcus Tavernier was the next one to step up, speaking with Freeborough Academy in Brotton.

He explained how he grew up in a mixed-race family, his mother is Hungarian and his father from the Caribbean, and how he didn't

understand some of the things that were being said to him and his older brother James, who has gone on to captain Glasgow Rangers, when they were growing up in a predominantly white neighbourhood in Leeds.

Abbey Hill at North Shore in Stockton were grateful for the time spent on a Zoom call with Ashley Fletcher. Ashley told the students there was no place for racism, or discrimination of any kind and encouraged them not to turn a blind eye or deaf ear if they witnessed racism first hand.

The final player to speak was Marc Bola, to St. Peter's Catholic College in South Bank.

He revealed that growing up in Greenwich he was part of a multi-cultural society that accepted each other and that was the way it should be. He did, however, say he felt there was a small minority who were systemically racist. He said he did feel that a person of his skin colour was sometimes treated with suspicion if driving what looked to be an expensive car.



## NCS IN FULL SWING

**It has been a difficult few months for everyone and there is no protective bubble around our NCS programme.**

Despite that they have continued to run programmes which have delighted young and old alike, bringing real change to young people and tangible benefits to local communities. In that, they achieved their aim.



Programmes were run in North Yorkshire and Teesside, where friendships were made, challenges confronted and new (personal) boundaries discovered.

Different venues, one shared aim, as all groups set about meeting new people, learning about teamwork and setting new goals.

The National Citizen Service (NCS) is a flagship government programme for young people aged between 15-17. It gives them a chance to find their identity, maybe take control of their lives and channel energy into making a real difference to their local community.



Everyone learned a lot, it could be argued mostly about themselves.



# TOURETTES

Tourettes syndrome is a neurological condition that causes a person to make involuntary sounds and movements called tics.

### FEELING CORNER

- THESE TICS OFTEN ATTRACT UNWANTED NEGATIVE ATTENTION WHETHER IT BE STARES, WHISPERED COMMENTS OR RIDICULE.
- PEOPLE WITH TOURETTES SHOULDN'T BE TREATED ANY DIFFERENTLY THAN ANYONE ELSE
- PEOPLE'S MISUNDERSTANDING OF THE CONDITION CAN LEAD TO THE PERSON WITH TOURETTES FEELING ISOLATED FROM OTHERS

### FACT CORNER

- EVERYBODY HAS A DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE AND NO TWO PEOPLE WITH TOURETTES ARE THE SAME
- BOYS ARE MORE COMMONLY AFFECTED THAN GIRLS
- TICS TEND TO INCREASE THROUGHOUT PERIODS OF FATIGUE AND EMOTIONAL EXCITEMENT
- TICS ARE SUDDEN TWITCHES, MOVEMENTS, OR SOUNDS THAT PEOPLE MAKE REPEATEDLY

**AS A PERSON WHO HAS SUFFERED WITH TOURETTES FOR 16 YEARS, I'VE STRUGGLED WITH OTHER'S PERCEPTIONS OF MYSELF. FOR YEARS, I SUPPRESSED MY TICS IN PUBLIC OUT OF FEAR BUT NOW I'VE FOUND THAT I CAN JUST BE MYSELF WITHOUT WORRY. SOMETHING I RECOMMEND IS ALWAYS ASK THE PERSON WITH TOURETTES HOW YOU CAN HELP. FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN I TIC, I PREFER PEOPLE TO LAUGH IF IT'S FUNNY, AS THIS CREATES A LESS TENSE SITUATION, BUT IT'S DIFFERENT FOR EVERYONE SO ALWAYS ASK FIRST.**

### SUPPRESSION IS...

PREVENTING TICS FROM MANIFESTING CAN LEAD TO NOSEBLEEDS, HEADACHES, EXTREME FATIGUE, WORSE TICS AND TIC-FITS. IT IS WORSE TO SUPPRESS THAN TO TIC

### OVER 300,000 YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS ARE LIVING WITH TOURETTES IN THE UK



## ANNIVERSARY SHIRT LAUNCHED WITH FOUNDATION LOGO

Participants of some of the programmes run by MFC Foundation proudly modelled a special commemorative shirt launched in recognition of the Riverside celebrating its 25th birthday.

The name of MFC Foundation will be on Boro's third shirt every time it is worn this season. It was seen for the first time at Cardiff City late in October.

Kevin lost 28 pounds during a course of male FIT BORO sessions, Nusrat's physical and mental well-being improved during the female FIT BORO sessions. Hazel represents Football Welcomes, a programme that brings together multiple nationalities, Abdullah's journey through that same programme has moved on through volunteering and is now in a Traineeship programme, while Nick has been with us as long as the stadium itself, we thank him for 25 years sterling service as a volunteer.

"It is an honour for the Foundation to be on a very special shirt," says Helena Bowman, head of the Foundation. "This is an historic season for the club and the Riverside and for us to be part of that history is humbling.

"We must thank the Kindred Group for donating their sponsorship space to us and

allowing the Foundation logo, a badge of honour for us, to be on a unique shirt and help raise our profile. This means so much to us."

Helena continues: "To think it is already 25 years since the club moved into a new home. They have faced many challenges in that time. We too face challenges like we have never faced before.

*"We are living in difficult and demanding times, but we are doing all we can to reach out to those in need, to provide help, to inspire confidence in communities and provide hope for individuals."*

"Our mission is simple, by harnessing the passion and power of the club brand, we work to raise aspirations and improve the life chances of young people and adults across Teesside.

"We work in some of the most disadvantaged areas of Teesside. We engage with those who need our support through the delivery of inspiring sport, education, health and inclusion projects.

"We're very proud of what we do as a Foundation and we hope Teesside is proud of us."



## A VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

We were determined that no child should lose out on part of their education when the first lockdown period kept almost everyone away from school.

So, we created a virtual classroom, an online resource through our website which could be used not just through the days, weeks and months of uncertainty, but as an ongoing legacy.



Split into four categories, Primary, Secondary, Transition and Project, among 47 options, we covered topics such as squad number maths, controlling your emotions, goal setting, confidence, physical and mental challenges.

The activities covered literacy to numeracy, from community and personal development, with a liberal dash of physical work thrown in for good measure