



Foundation



I M P A C T R E P O R T 2 0 2 1

Our Vision

Inspire confidence, inspire hope

Our Mission

By using the power and influence of Middlesbrough Football Club, we will deliver bespoke programmes providing opportunities to raise aspirations and improve the life chances of people across our local communities

Our Values

Quality of service, continuous improvement, communication, teamwork and inclusion

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John Baker Chair of Trustees

Welcome to MFC Foundation's Impact Report for 2021 which I hope you will find informative and illustrative of the progress being made in the many activities we are involved in.

In the following pages you will read how the Foundation has played its part during the past year in helping to raise aspirations for individuals and organisations in our area. None of this would be possible without the fantastic financial support, encouragement and collaboration we enjoy from many sources. These include organisations such as the Premier League Charitable Fund, the English Football League Trust, the business community, the local Councils and the growing number of Friends of the Foundation. This support is vital to us and together with the commitment and loyalty of the MFCF team I feel we have a winning formula for even greater success in the future.

I would like to place on record my thanks to everyone who supported the Foundation in 2021. We are a financially independent charity that benefits enormously from Middlesbrough Football Club and the power of the club badge, but we will always need your help to ensure we remain true to our vision, mission and values.

In return for that generous support our commitment is to improve our performance wherever possible by using our resources effectively, identifying areas where we can make a real difference for those in need, and importantly measuring the impact of our work.

At the beginning of 2021 we had hoped for a return to some kind of normality but as we all know that proved not to be the case and we again had to adjust to the circumstances presented by the persistence of the Covid-19 epidemic. Like the rest of the country the Foundation faced significant challenges and restrictions, a situation which continued all year. Congratulations and sincere thanks are due to the whole of the Foundation team who found ways of adjusting and coping in order to keep activities going in response to the needs in the local communities.

I have had the privilege of being connected with the Foundation for many years and in April I was flattered and honoured to be asked to take the position of Chair of Trustees. Along with all of our trustees I am extremely proud of the strong reputation the Foundation enjoys and we commit ourselves to playing our part in raising aspirations and improving life chances.

I would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to my predecessor Ray Mallon for his leadership, energy and commitment in driving the Foundation forward during his five years as Chair.

On an unhappy note I must also record our sadness following the passing away of Stewart Smith in April. Stewart was a great supporter of MFC and the local communities and was also a trustee of the Foundation between 2013 and 2019 during which he also served as Chair for four years. Our best wishes remain with his wife Susan and family.

In closing, I would like to offer a personal thank you to our Head of Foundation, Helena Bowman who has led the organisation with great vigour and distinction over many years. Her considerable contribution is reflected in the highly-respected organisation we all enjoy being part of today. Congratulations to Helena who has accepted a new challenge and takes up her appointment with Middlesbrough Football Club – we are extremely grateful to her and wish her continued success.

I trust that the Foundation will continue to build on its success in the coming year and thank you again.
Best wishes.

John.

Given A Chance

WE were one of just 16 “trusted” organisations across the country asked to facilitate a programme called CHANCES.

Targeting those who are from low socio-economic backgrounds, have an offending record and/or low school attendance, financial investment will create new opportunities to empower young people to get active and re-engage with education and skills provision.



NCS Participants Help Change Communities For The Better

91.4%
National
Citizen Service
graduation

CLOSE on 160 participants across 16 venues helped make our communities a better place under the National Citizen Scheme.

A programme that brings together young people of an age where they could be deemed as reaching the first major crossroads in their lives, helps build confidence, give valuable life lessons, learn about teamwork and respect for each other and those around us through social action projects.



Kitchen Therapy Provides The Recipe

MFC Foundation, alongside Chef Matei Baran, a one-time quarter-finalist in MasterChef the Professionals, aims to help achieve better mental health and emotional wellbeing through work in the kitchen.

Many participants have lost their way in life, often through no fault of their own. Confidence is low, self-esteem almost non-existent. They come together on a 12-week programme towards one end of the scale, often emerging much closer to the other end.



Twinning Project A Big Success

THE first Twinning Project delivery from MFC Foundation at HMP Kirklevington Grange was deemed a big success.

With almost 70% of those in custody unemployed at time of imprisonment, we aim to use the power of football to inspire individuals to find positive pathways into employment and improved life chances upon release.



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Recite Me Toolbar Makes Website Accessible

THE creators of an online accessibility toolbar are on a mission and we're with them.

It opens-up a website to hundreds, potentially thousands of users who might otherwise have difficulty reading or understanding the text.



Foundation Bus Transforms Into A Mobile Vaccination Centre

IT was brought into service with the Foundation as a dual-purpose vehicle. A single decker Arriva bus decommissioned from passenger service and turned into a vehicle for health and learning.

At various times it was a health bus, offering diabetes checks, basic health checks and referrals, and at other times an educational facility and in East Cleveland in particular it was a community lifeline.

In an area that is in places sparsely populated and widespread, the Foundation bus was a link.

Never more so than when the Covid-19 pandemic struck and there was, in places, at best a difficulty getting to NHS facilities, often a reluctance.

A bus which was due to be replaced by a newer model had in itself a new lease of life. From Loftus and Skelton through Eston and Middlesbrough and onto Hartlepool, the Foundation bus became a mobile vaccination centre. A pop-up facility where Covid-19 vaccinations were administered, helping not just the recipients, but a severely-stretched NHS. One wet day in Redcar a new national record for the number of people attending a pop-up vaccination centre was set.

More than 300 people used the Foundation's health bus that day as first and second vaccinations against Covid-19 were administered.

Numbers weren't always that high of course, but they were significant across the region as we responded to calls from the NHS to help, often at short notice, to meet demands. Car parks, town centres and colleges were all utilised, the bus needed to be as accessible as possible.

It started with vaccinations, moving on a few months later to booster vaccinations as we helped protect the very heart of our communities and society at large.





Switching It Makes It Better

WE were proud of the impact made by a new targeted transition offer set up in conjunction with Middlesbrough Borough Council as we delivered over 8,000 participant hours.

Bringing established practice and combined knowledge together, the programme has provided support for children and young people at key transition points where there is a significant change in their lives. This could be the transition from moving schools, as well as the transition from school to next steps in education, training or employment.

Middlesbrough Youth Service supports Middlesbrough Children's Service's vision of 'Middlesbrough Children Matter', through delivering an inclusive service that is accessible to all young people residing in Middlesbrough aged 11-18-years-old (up to 25 years old for those with additional needs).

Working collaboratively with fellow providers The Linx Youth Project and The Junction Foundation, this multi-agency approach ensures every child and young person in the Middlesbrough Local Authority area has equal access to high quality services enabling them to fulfil their potential and promote general quality of life.

1,841
education sessions delivered

16
hours average contact time per PL Inspires participant

Traineeships Give Young People A Head Start



GROUP support and 1-2-1 tuition from our expert employment coaches helped develop functional skills and access to an extensive network of contacts.



The programme helped develop the key teamwork, leadership, planning and communication skills that employers in our region are looking for.

We worked with local companies to create a wide variety of opportunities across many sectors, including administration, construction, health and social care, hospitality, security, sport and many others.

Primary Stars

OVER 2,000 young people a week are engaged in primary schools across Teesside as our tutors aim to inspire a love of sport, maths, English and social action using football-themed activities as the motivator on Premier League Primary Stars programmes.

384
PE lessons supported through PL Primary Stars

51,477
participant hours



Careers And Enterprise Programme

OUR Careers and Enterprise Programme, funded by the Tees Valley Combined Authority as part of the TeesValleyCareers.com Primary Careers Pilot, was newly introduced in 2021.

The programme is aimed at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 students across all five boroughs of the Tees Valley (Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland and Stockton).

It provides students with a core programme of learning, focusing on careers and enterprise topics. Connecting students with enriching real-life learning opportunities such as workplace visits and meaningful encounters with a local business, it aims to enhance the life, career and employment chances of every child in the Tees Valley.

Each school term involves a theme:

- Employability and life skills
- Money matters
- The world of work
- Local labour market
- Work preparation

In addition, 'extend and challenge' opportunities were available for students and parents/carers to access during half-terms.

We were able to give rewarding and meaningful careers advice and experiences to almost 750 pupils right across the region, both virtually and face-to-face.



Tees Valley Mayor Ben Houchen was full of praise for the work of the Foundation, saying: "MFC Foundation played an important role in our primary careers pilot, helping to inspire and raise aspirations.

"MFC Foundation is uniquely placed to be able to use the pride and passion children have for the team to make sure they are engaged and entertained while discovering the opportunities in our area, so they can stay local but go far in a rewarding career."

Fit For Purpose

THE world is a smaller place thanks to the impact of a free inspirational fitness programme.



Over four quarters of the year, 12-week courses help mind and body alike get into a healthy shape.

FIT BORO predominantly takes place within the concourses of the Riverside Stadium, itself an attraction and a setting like no gym. Participants aged between 35 and 65 mix physical exercise with informal lessons in diet and healthy eating.

It's non-judgemental, there's no pressure from anyone, except the participants themselves who want to make a difference. It's a mix that works as a combined weight loss of 201kg from 78 participants proves.



Think With Your Feet

A PROGRAMME designed to help individuals with mental health problems couldn't have a better name.

A group who meet each Friday for a game of football at the Foundation's Herlingshaw Centre may have mixed abilities with a ball at their feet, but they have one thing in common, life derailed them to a greater or lesser extent at some stage.

This isn't just a kickaround, this is a full-blooded highly-competitive game. There is a point to prove. In fact, there are two points to prove. One with the ball, one without.

The one with is easy to define, score more than the opposition. Basic. The other less so, but arguably

more important as this is where proof they are helping each other is demonstrated.

Stories and experiences are exchanged, there's a realisation they are not the only person who is living with, or has come through, an often-debilitating problem. The fact that help is at hand from someone who truly understands transcends what happens on the pitch.

Most of the time anyway...





Move And Learn The Joy Of Moving

MFC Foundation in partnership with the EFL Trust and Ferrero UK delivered the Joy of Moving programme for the seventh successive year in 2021.

Often seen under the banner of Move and Learn, these programmes are designed to inspire children to move through play and in doing so, build up physical fitness, motor coordination, cognitive functions, creativity and life skills as well as develop positive habits for adulthood.

According to a poll of PE teachers and school leaders by the Youth Sport Trust, 73% of children returned to school after lockdown with lower fitness levels; a statistic that the Foundation helped to address, through this programme, in our region.

Approaching 6,000 schoolchildren felt the benefit of our delivery of this programme in 2021.





Jordan's Story

JORDAN Winward was identified as a young person at 'very high risk' of child criminal exploitation (CCE) and was referred to our Premier League Kicks Targeted programme.

He attended regular mentoring sessions with us, engaging in boxing and football sessions which vastly improved his self-esteem and confidence. A trusted relationship between the young man and his MFCF Youth Worker also ensured he had a chance to finish school Year 11 and to realise his potential.

For two hours per day, Monday to Wednesday, he began attending the Riverside Stadium to study Maths and English Functional Skills. He continued to attend his football and boxing sessions – now weekly with former IBF World Champion, Stuart Hall – on Thursday and Friday, respectively, which provided him with something to look forward to at the end of the week and remain motivated.

Jordan displayed an exceptional attitude to everything asked of him, achieving an attendance rate of 100% and passing his Functional Skills Level 2 in Maths and Level 1 in English - a pre-requisite for his dream job of joining the Army - when it was expected that he would leave Year 11 with nothing to show for his years in education. Over the Summer he also took part in the Foundation's NCS programme and completed First Aid and FA coaching qualifications.

Today he is a confident young man with much improved self-esteem who walks with his head held high. He engages with all the support we and other professionals offer him and is hopeful for the future.

Following his engagement with MFCF, during 2021 he was removed from the CCE risk register and is no longer the subject of child protection.

The final word, though, goes to Jordan's mother, for it is she who recognises the impact MFC Foundation made on her son.

"Working with the Foundation most likely saved his life due to the 'path' he was on."





Stephen's Story

STEPHEN McNeil has been a Boro fan since his dad took him to his first game at Ayresome Park in 1967.

No-one was to know that a young boy hooked by the sounds, sights and smells of a football match would desperately need that connection 50 years later.

He's remained a Boro fan all his life and it was the connection with the club through MFC Foundation that helped drag him back from the abyss.

Stephen was on his own, life had spiralled in the wrong direction; he had a complete mental breakdown. "I'd gone, I couldn't speak, couldn't walk, nothing made sense." he openly admits.

"I think I was put in a padded cell and visited by people trying to figure out what to do, how to help.

I had no contact with friends or family, I was on my own and in a dark place. I had no-one to talk to, no sense of perspective, I didn't know what to do anymore."

The tipping point came, Stephen recalls, when he saw a poster advertising a free trip to Ayresome

Park, Boro's home for over a hundred years. "There was something about the badge, the Boro red that ignited something. It helped me remember there was something in life that I wanted to do. I had shown that there was still something inside me and was then allowed to leave."



Stephen, right, with Chef Matei Baran and MFC Foundation's Gary Walton

Stephen had two dogs, but not much more by way of company. That was until he saw the Boro badge again, this time on an MFC Foundation

poster advertising a Team Talk mental health session, then again on a Walk and Talk programme and then, again, Walking Football.

"I got involved in all three. The power of the badge, the colour, that distinctive red and the work of the Foundation. All this has helped me massively."

This is the start of a new journey for Stephen. One of hope and of inspiration.





5
New PL Kicks venues added to increase to 26 locations used

Kicks Expansion Brings New Opportunities

OUR Kicks provision has always been popular but 2021 saw that popularity hit new heights.

Throughout the year provision spread to five days of the week and to 17 different venues stretching from Seaton Carew in the north to Lingdale in the south, Norton in the west and Loftus in the east.

Borobility grew. Provision for those less physically or mentally able to participate in mainstream sport proving popular and expanding the understanding of everyone involved.

It wasn't just football on offer, though the staple diet of the Kicks programme remained the dominant offering. Boxercise, dance classes, golf, and table tennis all proved popular additions to the portfolio.

Hubsite tournaments brought everyone together, a chance to meet and mix with people from differing communities and backgrounds, and not just from within our region.

It was a vehicle to build trust. Trust in authority and trust in young people. As a result of our PL Kicks provision

our participants now have a greater understanding of the Police and the Fire Brigade, who in turn have enjoyed engaging positively with young people who now mix freely with them.



Pan Disabilities

TUESDAY was a day to look forward to for our pan disabilities group. That was the day where they got to mix and play football at the Herlingshaw, often with a group from Bridge Hill Day Services in Middlesbrough.

Though maybe less visible, that group too have challenges to overcome. They must make their way from the town centre which involves Travel Training and money-management skills. Our group is one of mixed abilities who are given the freedom to enjoy what they are doing. Smiles of achievement are a most rewarding result.

It is a fulfilling morning for all concerned.



371
participant attendances at Every Player Counts sessions

Dementia Dances Bring Smiles And Laughter

IN a world where it can be argued there isn't enough of either, smiles and laughter is the currency of dementia tea dances which were created towards the end of the year.

They proved immensely popular, with attendances growing month on month as family, friends and carers joined in with those living with dementia. It was an initiative that was one of the most popular of the year and touched the hearts of many across the communities of Teesside, where the recorded prevalence of dementia is around 1-in-20 of those aged 65+.

Working with Dementia Friendly Middlesbrough, the impact the dances made was telling. New faces would mix with those who had become regulars as old moves were displayed on the dance floor. Talents, perhaps unused for too long, allowed to flourish once more.

Set up as a tea dance, the balance very quickly was weighed in favour of the shapeshifters as the specialist DJ hit all the right notes.



1,340
Meals
delivered with
Age Concern
UK



FOOTBALL WELCOMES

IT is sometimes difficult to measure the impact of a programme when you're not dealing with finite figures. That is until you hear stories like that of Shaygan Banisaeid. Then you get an idea.

16
Football
Welcomes
sessions

At first, Shaygan's story has a sadly familiar tone. A young man fleeing oppression, split from his friends and family, escaping from a punishing regime.

I learned new skills and professionalism, the growth and learning opportunities that came my way at Middlesbrough Football Club Foundation were invaluable and something I will always remember."

His is a story without an end, but one full of hope as skills and confidence built with us have led to work with Arsenal, Fulham and Tottenham Hotspur.

Football Welcomes works closely with MAP (Methodist Asylum Programme) and Amnesty International and has a reach well beyond football, helping to create new communities and integrate into welcoming existing ones.



The first of his chances came with our Football Welcomes programme which last year helped males and females from 23 different countries.

"MFC Foundation definitely was a big impact on me," says Shaygan. "I have always said that if I was not given the first opportunity I might not be where I am now.





It would be impossible for us to do everything we do without the help of generous donations.

Fundraising is a hugely important part of keeping any charity operating at a sustainable and effective level and throughout the year we ask local businesses and individuals to support what we do. Support that helps us continue to serve our communities.

Barclays UK were so impressed with our reach and the sustained level of community service that in February 2021 they announced we were to be one of their UK charity partners, chosen “for the meaningful work they are doing with Tees Valley Community”.

The donation was £100,000, money which was used throughout the rest of the year to fund the continuation of our work of distributing food parcels to those who need it most and help us work closely with local community hubs and AGE UK, backing up the work we undertook with our Tackling Loneliness Together programme, where sometimes just a simple phone call to an elderly person made their day.

Working with the Food Poverty Partnership, we ensured funds were used to enhance sustainable food options in Tees Valley for the foreseeable future, ensuring there will be accessible and affordable options available for local people.

Our annual dinner and our annual golf day again proved popular. Jackpot tickets became as much a part of a match day as a pie and a pint for thousands of Boro fans. They bought into the concept that they could win a minimum top prize of £750 and, if they didn't, then at least they had contributed to supporting the Foundation make an impact in their region.

The generosity of the Kindred Group, who donated their space on the Boro shirts for a game, enabled 32Red to be replaced by MFC Foundation across the white band and be able to auction the signed match shirts. Historic ones, signed by stars of the past, also proved equally popular in regular raffles.

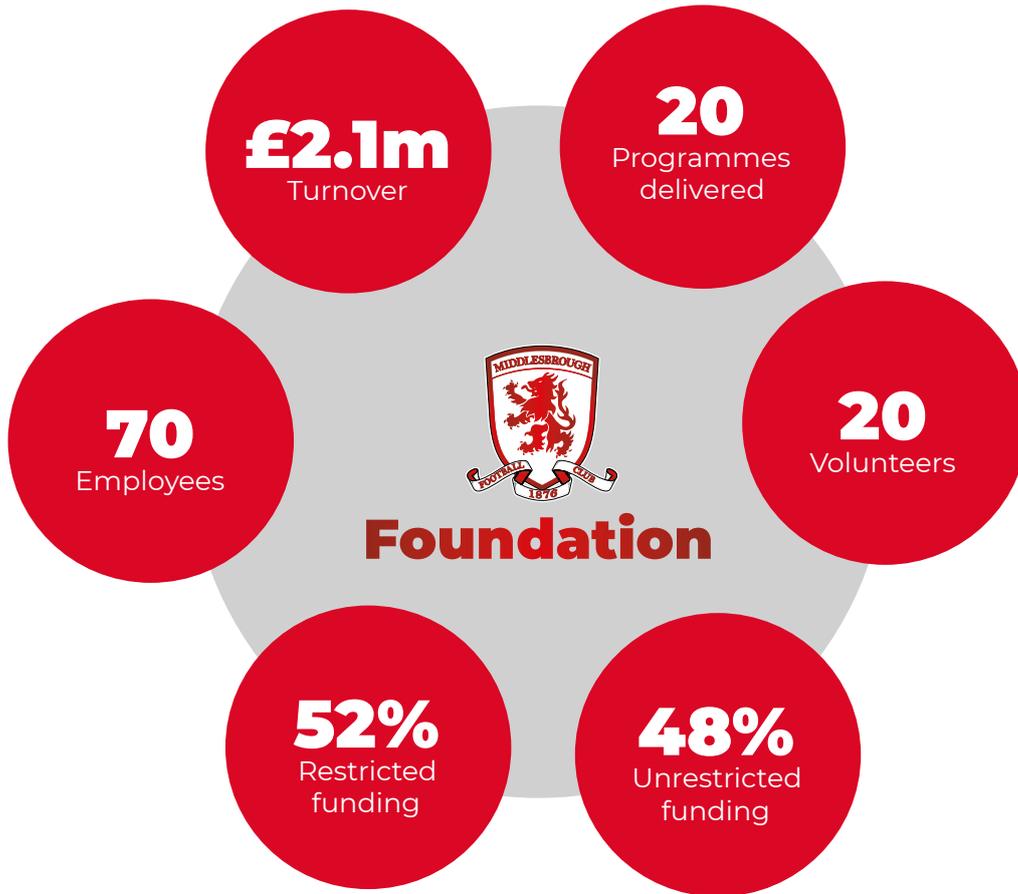
Ferberest helped fans keep (or get) fit in a novel way as they were asked to climb stairs an equivalent number of times that equated to the height of a chosen mountain.

They were sponsored for doing so, again raising valuable funds for the Foundation.

Becoming a Friend of the Foundation, either as a business or individual, will help to ensure the continued impact of MFCF in the community. Scan the code QR code on this page, or head to our website www.mfcfoundation.co.uk for full details.



Summary



Partners





Inspire
Confidence
Inspire
Hope



Foundation

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