

MIDDLESBROUGH FC
FOUNDATION

2019-24 Strategy Review

2023 Impact Report



Foundation



Foundation



Chair and Head of Foundation

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Welcome to the Middlesbrough FC Foundation Impact Report for 2023 as well as our Strategy Review for 2019-24. Across the report we hope you find it useful and it demonstrates the impact and progress the Foundation has made across Tees Valley since 2019 and in particular the last 12-months in 2023.

Our mission to raise aspirations and improve the life chances of communities across Tees Valley continues to be as relevant as ever, but with this report you can see how the Foundation has impacted towards this already.

The activity and impact we have delivered since 2019 has been possible thanks to support from a wide range of organisations and individuals, providing much appreciated financial support as well as time and efforts to help with delivery. Partner organisations such as English Football League Trust, Premier League Charitable Fund, Football Foundation, Friends of the Foundation and local Councils have provided vital funding to aid us to deliver our provision across Tees Valley.

This support is vital to us and together with the commitment and loyalty of the Foundation team as well as the invaluable support of Middlesbrough FC, has ensured

we can make the impact that you will see in this report. We would like to thank everyone who has supported the Foundation since 2019 to aid us to deliver this strategy.

Since 2019, there have been many challenges faced across society which in partnership with yourselves and participants we've faced together but highlights the ongoing role of the Foundation to ensure we remain on course for our vision, Inspire Confidence Inspire Hope, and our mission to raise aspirations and improve life chances.

In 2024 as a Foundation, we will look forward to refreshing our strategy to ensure we continue to support and positively impact the Tees Valley community whilst working with and representing the Club in the community. There are also exciting opportunities for us to cement our role in the community and impact beneficiaries with new capital developments and new provision across the area.

John Baker **Lynsey Edwards**
Chair Head of Foundation

Our Challenges

Challenge	Impact
Tees Valley had the second highest unemployment rate of all the Local Enterprise Partnership areas, with youth unemployment at 5.1% times higher than that of the UK average.	Working with British Land at Teesside Park we created Bright Lights , an employability programme to support young people into work in the retail industry. 55 people progressed into work in 2023.
In the UK, a person dies every three minutes as a result of cardiovascular disease with Teesside having some of the highest rates in the country.	450 participants engaged on FIT Boro over three years with a total weight loss of over 180 stone.
Educational attainment across Tees Valley is a major issue, with nearly half of the area's 16-year-olds failing to achieve 5 A*-C GCSEs.	Premier League Inspires supported 12 secondary schools since 2019 to improve behaviour and attendance at school.
1-in 4 children aged 4-5-years old were classified as overweight or obese in Tees Valley; the highest rate in England and 18% higher than the national average.	Over 1,500 children per year increased their activity levels and nutrition education on Move and Learn .
Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council has the highest rate of suicide per capita in England.	We have delivered over 140 Team Talk mental health sessions since 2020.
The 2018 National Crime Survey found that 44% of people living in the Tees Valley had witnessed anti-social behaviour in 2018.	During delivery of PL Kicks , anti-social behaviour is reduced by over 80%.
In 2018 Tees Valley was the 6th most deprived region in the country with significantly higher rates of smoking, alcohol abuse, obesity and mental health issues.	Our Active Through Football programmes in North Ormesby and Newport have delivered 361 free to access activity sessions with 3500 attendances.

A Snapshot of Our Delivery



Our Vision

Inspire Confidence,
Inspire Hope

Our Values

Quality of Service

The Foundation in partnership with Middlesbrough FC were named Community Business of the Year, Tees Business Awards 2023



Continuous Improvement

Participation figures have increased year on year with attendance at the Herlingshaw Centre increasing from 53,000 in 2021/22 to 117,000 in 2023/24.



 @MFCFoundation
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 @MFC.Foundation
  @MFCFoundation

Communication

We grew our social media to 58,000 Facebook and 11,500 Instagram visits in 2023

Team Work

Since 2019 we've grown our corporate Friends of the Foundation from 17 to 48 businesses



Inclusion

Across our programmes, 40% of participants are women and girls, 9% have a disability and 19% are ethnic minority



Our Mission

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



Participation levels in 2023 were **50% HIGHER** than 2019

Our Priorities

Our strategy had five key priorities

Organisational Development • building our capability

The Foundation is required to comply with Charity Commission and Premier League Charitable Fund (PLCF) Capability Code of Practice (CCOP); since inception in 2019, we have been rated Exceptional at CCOP.

Business development and stakeholder relations • growing our income and reach

Working with businesses across the Tees Valley, through our corporate Friends of the Foundation scheme, we have increased from 17 to 48 corporate partners. Many of these businesses play an active role in the delivery of our programmes.

Delivery • demonstrating service excellence and changing lives

Despite the pandemic and cost of living crisis we have grown our capacity significantly, with participation levels in 2023 50% higher than 2019.

Marketing and Promotion • taking a leadership role across Tees Valley

The Foundation has been recognised nationally by the EFL as North East and Yorkshire Community Club of the Year in 2020 and 2023 and Sport and Recreation Alliance Youth Development Winners 2023. And jointly with Middlesbrough FC, winning Tees Business Community Champions and Diversity Awards and EFL Diversity Project of the Year for our joint Dementia Project in 2023.

Monitoring and Impact • demonstrating value

Since 2019 we have engaged with over 38,000 participants including over 250,000 visits to the Herlingshaw Centre and 12,400 individual participants in 2023 alone. We engage with a wide range of participants across Tees Valley, the youngest person we have worked with was two-years old while the oldest has celebrated their 104th birthday.

COVID-19

Our Response

When the pandemic struck we called on our core values and responded in the best way we knew how, inspiring confidence and inspiring hope to help our communities through one of our toughest times.

- The Boro Health Bus travelled over **8,500 miles** helping schools and communities with health provision and social opportunities.
- **3,000 letters** were sent to elderly and vulnerable people across Tees Valley with the offer of help and support.
- Over **600 phone calls** provided contact to the outside world and companionship for some of the most isolated.
- A **virtual classroom** was provided to schools to support children and parents with home schooling.
- Interactions on **social media** through physical activity challenges reached **100,000**.
- **30,000 meals** were delivered across the Tees Valley, including over 200 direct to care and key workers.

We helped the community recover as lockdown eased with the Boro Health Bus becoming a pop-up medical centre, supporting local NHS services across Tees Valley including rural communities in East Cleveland as a nationwide vaccination process was rolled-out.

EFL Chair Rick Parry

“Middlesbrough is one of the top clubs in England with regards to supporting the community through the crisis.”



Sports Participation

Providing football and multi-sport physical activity opportunities for young people and adults through delivery in schools and community venues.

Programme of the Year 2023

A football development programme for children aged between two and six, **Roary's Academy** was named Programme of the Year at our annual Foundation dinner in November 2023.

Aimed at building self-esteem and confidence whilst developing fine and gross motor skills, the sessions involve a mix of football with physical literacy activities as well as social interaction with other children. Parents, grandparents and carers stay and support their children in the activity whilst also interacting themselves with other adults, giving everyone a fun, sociable morning.



Jackie, mum of Scarlett, enthused: "The confidence and support you have given to Scarlett and the other children that attend is something that money cannot buy. It's a rare gift to make a child feel special and the academy and its staff seem to have that ability.

It's not about making money or profiteering, what it is about is encouraging children to grow, supporting them and catering for all abilities and yet making all the children feel special even though they may not be the next Haaland! Lol.

Before attending the academy Scarlett would not have had that trust or confidence to stay and play without the support of me and Ian being present. Thank you."



Holiday Camps

Our Holiday Camps for young people aged 8-14-years old grew in popularity throughout 2023 with camps in South Bank and Brotton. The Camps provide a mix of football coaching alongside social, off-pitch activities. Our inclusive Camps are delivered every school holiday.

"My son, Matthew, has additional needs including ADHD. He is full of energy and really can't keep still for long. I am physically disabled and find it really hard to keep up with him. When Matthew attends holiday

football courses, he has a great time, uses his energy, makes friends and has fun.

He loves football and it is fantastic that he is included, developing skills, exercising and enjoying himself. In addition to training and playing football, Matthew has also been part of other activities such as quizzes, games and meeting Boro players. I feel that the courses are excellent value for money and offer worthwhile learning and great fun for football loving kids."

Where I want to go...

"I love doing all the Holiday Camps but especially the football ones. The best thing for me is playing matches because it is fun. The staff make me laugh and they show me new ball skills. They understand the game and are good at showing the rules without spoiling the fun. I can follow my passion for Boro. I know more about playing in a team. It isn't just being a keeper or a striker, the midfield players have to make long passes. I love going to Holiday Camps. I want to be a coach on the courses when I am older."

Matthew, Holiday Camp participant.

Let's Hear It For The Girls

The appetite for girls' football in Tees Valley is stronger than ever, reflected in the numbers attending our Girls Holiday Camps and across our programmes. **35% of Foundation participants in**

2023 were women and girls with all our programmes offering an inclusive offer whether that be open access Premier League Kicks or Women's FIT Boro.

The parents of, Ava, revealed the impact the Girls Holiday Camps have made on the whole family:

"We used to take her to Middlesbrough, 35-minutes travelling time each way for us. So, to set one up close to home (Brotton) was potentially great, but we wouldn't know until she went. She's never missed one session since she went to her first one. Her confidence levels have grown alongside her football skills. We see that each week when she plays for her grass roots team. She really enjoys going to the Foundation camps and has encouraged some of her schoolmates to go too."





Celebrating 2023



Sports Participation

301 Move and Learn sessions delivered	40% of participants were women & girls	117,000 Engagements at the Herlingshaw Centre	90 MINS Activity per birthday party	1560 Children involved in tournaments



Active Through Football

Family Fitness sessions in the target wards of Newport and North Ormesby have helped break down barriers and increase opportunity.

Both wards reside in the top 1% of most deprived areas of England and suffer well documented health inequalities. 75% of people taking part described themselves as having been physically inactive.

“Breaking down barriers within hard-to-reach groups has been brilliant. The ability to have an easier way to get everyone in one space to access these services (and vice versa) is a life saver.”
Cassie Williams, Safeguarding, Attendance & Family Support Lead North Ormesby Primary.

“The welfare of our local families is very important to us and having the Foundation come in to deliver has had a big impact. The families trust them, and it shows.”

Karla White, Extended Services Manager, Ayresome Primary.

346 people took part in 2023
40% were women and girls
361 sessions delivered in total over
3400 hours of participation



Premier League Kicks

The Premier League’s longest-running community programme offers diversionary and alternative activities to communities across the country. In Tees Valley, PL Kicks uses the power of football and the pull Middlesbrough FC to engage young people who may otherwise be difficult to reach in some of our most disadvantaged areas.

The aim is to build safer, stronger, more respectful communities, developing potential for the benefit of all. These communities, spread throughout Tees Valley, come together in football tournaments and educational workshops as well as weekly sessions, allowing them to socially mix with other young people they have never met.

PL Kicks also gives young people the choice to choose what activities they would like to take part in through an initiative called Youth Voice. The initiative is designed to get young people to share their ideas and experiences to not only aid their learning, but the learning of their peers too.

In 2023 we partnered with the Michael Carrick Foundation Boot Room. Over the year, we collected and distributed hundreds of football boots, as well as winter coats and Christmas gifts to young people and families across the Tees Valley.



Where are they now - Hazel

When Hazel came to the UK in 2016 she was in a desperate place, her two-year old daughter was the only constant in a life that had been torn apart. They were initially placed in Leeds and had just settled there when they were relocated to Middlesbrough.



had faced and supported by the Foundation team who she felt genuinely cared helped Hazel to regain some stability to her life.

“I don’t know where I would be without them, really. They have been so helpful, so supportive from the moment we lived here. Stephanie (Hazel’s daughter) has grown up with their support too and we will always be grateful.”

Hazel is now a casual coach with the Foundation, working on our health and wellbeing programmes as well as her full-time role locally working with immigration services in Teesside, helping people through the journey she knows better than most.

“The Foundation and the communities of Teesside have helped me save my life. There are warm and good people there and now I am determined to pay them back and help in any way I can.”

“I cried more than I knew I could,” she says. “Leeds was totally different to anything I had known. My life had been ripped apart. We were in a good place back home, living to a good standard and suddenly we had nothing and in a different country with a different way of life. And then we moved again, to what to us was another totally different place.”

The Foundation has been a huge part of Hazel putting her life back together, having first engaged with the Foundation through our Women’s Football Welcomes programme, she was able to become part of a community again. Working with people who shared some of the challenges she



In total, we engaged with **3,241** individuals across inclusion and community cohesion.

Inclusion and Community Cohesion

Through our Active Through Football, Chances, Football Welcomes, Premier League Kicks and Switch It programmes, we make an impact which reaches beyond that of the participant.

Targeted Youth

Our Targeted Youth team provide support to hundreds of young people across Tees Valley per year through Chances, Premier League Kicks Targeted and Switch It. Working with four Local Authorities; Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland, Stockton and Hartlepool and the Police Crime Commissioner for Cleveland, we provide meaningful mentoring and support to young people at risk of or already engaged in the criminal justice system.

Through the Chances programme, in partnership with Substance, 383 young people were referred with the following risks:

- 25% were referred from statutory organisations
- 75% were referred from our programmes
- 83% of participants had low school attendance
- 49% were not in education, employment or training (NEET)
- 49% had a history of criminal offences (187 individuals).

- Overall, from the whole group engaged,
- 21 had an improvement in school attendance by 5-10%
 - 49 received a qualification, and two completed a 30-hour work placement
 - 21 of those with a history of criminal offence recorded three-months of not offending
 - 94% of participants increased their physical literacy by the end of their mentoring.

Through engagement with our East Cleveland Youth officer, Participant H's life took a positive turn:

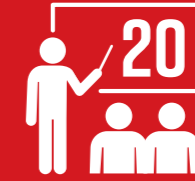
"Sessions with the Foundation have helped me to understand why I need school so I can be successful later in life." Their mum added: "The Foundation have helped support Participant H during school with the regular meetings and they have also given them opportunities to try out new things. The Foundation have really helped my child to improve their behaviour both within school and out of school and stopped them going down the wrong path and steered them to make better choices."



Football Welcomes

Football Welcomes is a programme for refugees and asylum seekers who have difficulties in their own country. Supported by Amnesty UK and Methodist Asylum Project (MAP) Middlesbrough, we use football as an engagement tool to help participants become part of the Tees Valley community, make friends, gain vital support and rebuild their lives.

Many participants have gone on to work for or volunteer with the Foundation, taking the opportunity to give back to a welcoming community.



20 participants who attend Football Welcomes progressed into an education, employment, training or qualifications.



27 different countries were represented

Abdullah: I want to give back

Having fled his home in Somalia due to persecution almost seven years ago, Abdullah was moved to Middlesbrough four years ago.

Through his participation in Football Welcomes, he settled into his new home which provided a structure in his life.

"It gave me something to look forward to and has enabled me to build up my social network, meet friends and learn about my new home through my love of football."

Abdullah became a volunteer, an opportunity which had a positive impact on him, to the point that he now feels a great sense of belonging to the area and the local community.

"Being able to volunteer with the Foundation has meant so much for my mental health and my wellbeing. In this time where I am waiting to know my future, it gives my life a purpose. I have met so many new friends here, friends I consider as family now."

"I want to give back," he says. "I was once in their position; I know what it feels like. Teesside and MFC Foundation in particular has been very good to me. I want to say thank you by helping others."



Inclusion and Community Cohesion in numbers



Participants in 2023



Stated they had a disability



Engaged in social action or volunteering



Targeted interventions to help over 400 of Teesside's most vulnerable young people



Young people attending PL Kicks

Education and Employability

Move and Learn

The programme consists of two elements – the school-based Move and Learn programme and the Joy of Moving Festivals - which have been developed in conjunction with the EFL Trust and designed to inspire children to move through play, and in doing so, build up key skills such as physical fitness, motor coordination, cognitive functions and creativity and life skills.

Noah is a pupil with autism from Eggescliffe Primary School, he often struggles in social situations, his class are generally a very sporty group and Noah sometimes struggled to express himself in PE because of the social aspect of the lesson. The Foundation taught Noah across two programmes, our PE lesson support and Move and Learn. Our team quickly noticed that Noah was overwhelmed by social situations and adapted certain aspects of the sessions to suit Noah's needs. The first topic was tennis, with an understanding that competition isn't always against others, but against trying to improve their own ability. This really helped Noah as he could focus on improving himself, rather than comparing himself against more talented children.



The second programme was Move and Learn where Noah thrived with the session split up into two parts, a health workshop and a physical activity session. Noah particularly enjoyed the workshop and really engaged in group work more than he normally would, often being the first to want to answer questions in a group setting, which is something he wouldn't previously do. His confidence rocketed and transferred into the practical sessions. Eggescliffe Primary School PE lead, Devon, shared: **"I'm so pleased with the impact these sessions have had on Noah. He is someone who needed this boost in confidence to help him excel because he really enjoys PE but just doesn't know how to express himself. To see and hear new of his progress was really amazing!"**

Delivering educational courses and workshops aimed at assisting young people and adults in obtaining knowledge, skills, qualifications and employment.



Premier League Primary Stars

Premier League Primary Stars uses the appeal of the Premier League and Middlesbrough FC to inspire children to learn, be active and develop important life skills.

We work in 15 primary schools across the Tees Valley, inspiring children aged 5-11-years old in the classroom, the playground and through sport. Teaching covers subjects from English and Maths to teamwork and PE, with supporting activity ideas like worksheets, lesson plans and fun assemblies.

Schools can also enter local football competitions with the opportunity to progress to national events organised by the Premier League. That's what St. Edward's Primary School did, representing the North East at the National Finals, beaten 2-1 by Sheffield United in the final of a national competition held at Huddersfield.



Bright Lights

The five-week Bright Lights programme is run in partnership with Teesside Park and British Land, aims to give young adults aged 18-24 high quality learning and development in retail, advice from industry experts and support with interviews and applications. Working with the retail park and its businesses has led to some participants being offered employment.

Young adults on the programme have gained valuable retail experience with Asda, Boots, Marks and Spencer, Morrisons, Nando's, Pets At Home, Pizza Hut and The Works.

In 2023, 55 individuals transitioned into employment from Foundation employability programmes.



Foundation Degree

In partnership with the University of South Wales and EFL Trust we offer a unique and exciting way into building a successful career within the sports industry.

Our Sports Coaching and Development foundation degree runs for two-years and mixes educational content with practical learning.

They are supported every step of the way by our qualified and experienced tutors who want students to be the best they can possibly be.

Education and Employability in numbers



Participants



Sessions delivered



Adult offenders developing leadership skills through football award



People engaged on employability programmes



Progressed into education, employment or training outcomes

Where are they now - Andy

Andy joined the Foundation's employability programme in late 2021 having struggled to find work since leaving college. He had been referred by Jobcentre Plus and had quickly demonstrated his attitude to work and willingness to learn. This attitude helped Andy to secure employment with the Foundation through the Kickstart scheme. He was one of many successes that resulted in the Foundation winning the North East England SME Award for at the National Kickstart Awards Ceremony in 2022.

As his Kickstart role came towards its end Andy spent time discussing his development plan with the Employability team. He particularly enjoyed supporting trainees through their classroom sessions and he identified classroom assistant roles as a potential future role. A targeted CV was produced and Andy applied for vacancies with the support of the team, securing a 12-month contract at Archway

Academy's history department alongside continuing to work at the Herlingshaw Centre. The year was a huge success and Andy accepted a permanent contact and has the opportunity to build a long term career in education.

"The support and experience I received from the MFC Foundation allowed me to push myself and helped start my career."



Fundraising and Events

In a record-breaking year of community fundraising Teessiders supported our work come rain or shine! Highlights included **Roary's Big Bike Ride** and our inaugural **Memory Walk**.

The 2023 events included our **Golf Day**, **Fizz Friday** and the fantastic **Football Tournament** hosted by Middlesbrough College, all culminating in the **Foundation Dinner** in November, the biggest party of the year!



Thank you to all our supporters, if you would like to fundraise to support our work email: Fundraising@mfcfoundation.co.uk

Health and Wellbeing

Improve the health and wellbeing of our local communities by providing programmes designed to promote healthy living.

Think With Your Feet - Participant of the Year Darren Redshaw

Redcar and Cleveland has the highest suicide rate per capita in England (ONS Sept 2022). Our mental health programmes are a direct response to save lives. Think With Your Feet is a peer support group that takes place weekly and is open to all.

A lack of confidence and isolation are common attributes when participants first join. When Darren Redshaw joined the programme he wasn't in a good place, struggling physically and mentally.

Since joining, there has been significant improvement in his welfare and self-belief. Other members of the group now see him as a leader and an inspiration.



"There are no words for it," he said, wiping away a tear on receipt of the award. **"From where I've come from, well, this is my biggest achievement ever. You get to my age and you think there's nothing for you. Then you meet these guys (who run the programme) and the ones at the sessions... it's then you realise you're not the only one who has struggled."**

Walking Football - Staying Active

Walking Football is one of our most popular sessions for men and women aged 35+.

"I didn't think the games would be so competitive, I've love it," says Geoff. **"When you get to a certain age you think that's it, there's nothing for you. How wrong was I? These sessions help you feel part of something again."**

Fellow participant Jackie admits, **"I wasn't sure at first."** She adds: **"But I'm really glad I stuck at it because this is a great group and a great way to keep fit. It doesn't really matter how good you are, you're made to feel welcome and we all look forward to it every week."**



Team Talk

Established after the local steelworks closed in 2015, our Team Talk programme exists to stimulate the mind and provide kinship.

Many of the friendships in the group are as old as the programme itself, with participants meeting every Thursday at Redcar Athletic's Green Lane ground with nothing on the agenda other than tea, biscuits and a catch up.

"I know for some, this has been a lifeline," says long-term participant Pat. **"Like a few of us, I needed to mix with likeminded people. We understand each other and we can help so many people."**

There's a social action aspect too where the local community benefits from something as simple (yet effective) as a litter pick or beach clean.



FIT Boro

70.5% of adults in the Tees Valley are classified as over-weight or obese, the highest rate in the UK



A health programme that started out to help 35-65-year-olds with their physical wellbeing, has proven effective for mental wellbeing too. The 12-week programme has many success stories which continued to impact the lives of participants long after their sessions were over.

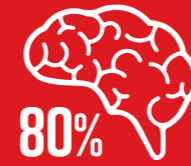
10 weeks after giving birth, Natalie attended FIT Boro and shared **“Over the course of the programme, I lost 1 stone, went down two dress sizes and most importantly felt like myself again. I’m extremely proud of myself for achieving the targets set and for regaining a confidence I thought I had completely lost.**

“Physically and mentally the programme was everything I needed at that time and really helped me to focus on something that I could control when other aspects of my life seemed to be out of control. Life with a new baby is unpredictable and the class gave me a sense of routine and fuelled my motivation.”

Continuing in 2024, look out for the new look Match FIT.



Health and Wellbeing in numbers



of participants reported improved mental wellbeing



of FIT BORO participants reduced their BMI



Health and wellbeing sessions delivered



lost per person on average



took part in team talk mental health support sessions



health checks delivered by the Boro health bus

Where are they now - Ged

In April a team of fundraising volunteers cycled from Hull to the Riverside Stadium ahead of our league fixture in Roary’s Big Week.

One of the riders was Ged who had a very personal reason for riding.

“Why do I want to support the Foundation? That’s easy,” he said, going on to explain: **“In 2019 I had a knee replacement. The short version of a long story is I lost my fitness and my confidence went with it.**

I was suffering from the mental health issues this and the pandemic brought. I was over 16.4 stone when I started with FIT Boro. Thirteen weeks later I had lost almost 3-stone was confident to push myself and my fitness was back.

Now I want to challenge myself to do more in one day than I could achieve before my knee was replace and payback the faith the trainers had in me.

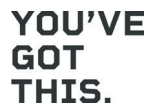
I owe the Foundation team everything. And that, quite simply, is why I’m taking up this bike ride and would love as many as possible to be there too.”



Our Partners - Thank you



Prince's Trust



Foundation

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