



**COMMUNITY SPORTS
& EDUCATION
TRUST**

REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 1102239

Little Book of

Big 
Impact

2025

Headline sponsor:



THE LITTLE BOOK OF BIG IMPACT

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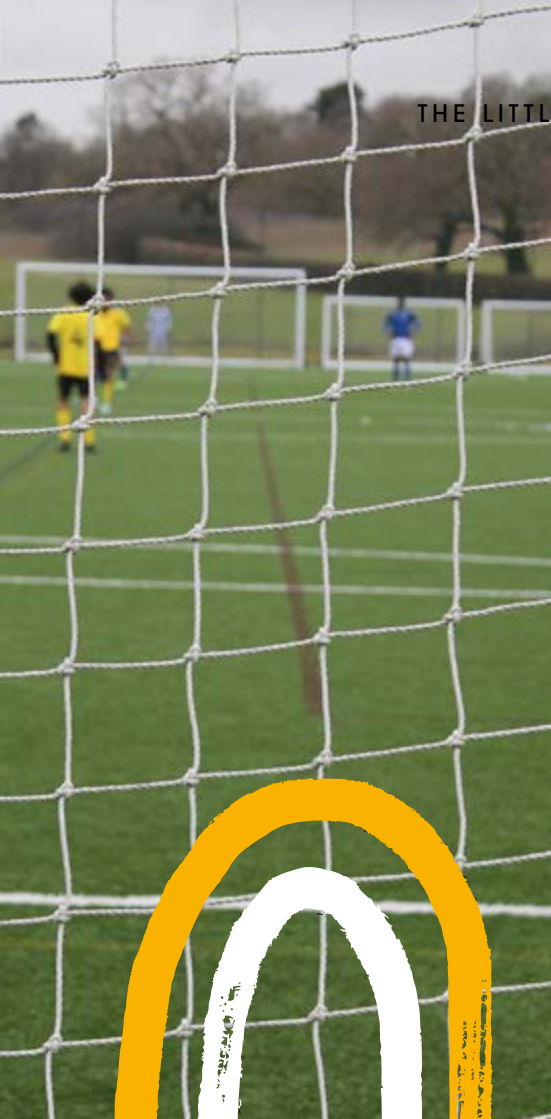
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**The Trust
makes
me proud
to be a
Watford
fan."**

– Annual Community
Survey



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Introduction

Welcome to the annual showcase of our work in the community.



Rob Smith,
*Community
Director, Watford
Football Club's
Community Sports
and Education
Trust.*

With another year's achievements captured so well in this book, it provides a great reminder of the fantastic team of staff, trustees, patrons, volunteers, partners, and supporters we have here at Watford FC's Community Sports and Education Trust. As custodian of this amazing charity, I will never tire of thanking those that make it all possible. If you are reading this as one of them, thank you, and if not, we'd love to have you as part of our ongoing work to build healthier, happier, stronger communities.





Introduction



Scott Duxbury,
*Chairman and
Chief Executive
Officer, Watford
Football Club.*

There is a lot to be proud of about this wonderful, community-based and progressive football club. I continue to be astounded and immensely proud of the work we do in the community, largely through the Community Sports and Education Trust. Thank you to all the patrons, trustees, staff, players, volunteers, supporters, donors, sponsors and community sponsors.





Simon Macqueen
MBE, Chair,
Watford Football Club's Community Sports and Education Trust.

Both personally and professionally, through my work as Director of Strategy at Sport England, I know the indisputable benefits sport and physical activity can have on lives and society.

Since becoming Chair of the Trust, where I spent my early career as a coach, I have seen and heard first-hand the true impact we are making to local people, through the power of football and Watford FC. In truth this publication could be thousands of pages long, however, the special and inspiring stories and statistics you will read, show without hesitation that the Trust improves and saves lives.


**One Goal –
Healthier,
Happier,
Stronger
Communities.**



Vision







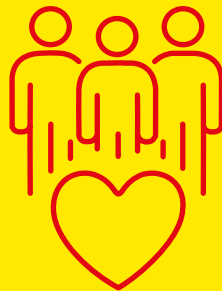
**To expand the Watford
FC family by providing
opportunities in
Hertfordshire and
London, to enrich
people's lives, create
special memories, and
enable positive futures.**

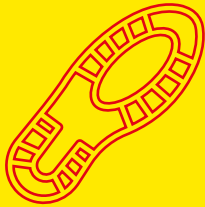
Mission

Our Users

16,869

**Unique
Users**





1,572

Average weekly
footfall at our Cedars Youth
and Community Centre*

1,101

Average weekly
footfall at our Meriden
Community Centre*



*Weekly footfall numbers in addition to unique users number.



Annual

90%

**strongly agree
or agree the
Trust helps
people lead
a healthier
lifestyle**



Community Survey

90%



89%

**strongly agree
or agree the
Trust helps
people improve
their physical
wellbeing**

**strongly agree
or agree the
Trust helps
people improve
their mental
wellbeing**



88%

**strongly agree
or agree the
Trust improves
people's self-
worth, self-
esteem and/or
confidence**

84%

**strongly agree
or agree the
Trust increases
people's sense
of connection to
the community**

86%

**strongly agree
or agree the
Trust brings
people from
different
backgrounds
together**

84%

**strongly agree
or agree the
Trust helps
improve
people's social
and life skills**



I appreciate how much the Trust promotes inclusion ... as both my boys are neurodiverse. They are made to feel special and included, never once having to justify who they are or that their needs are different. Thanks for all you do, I can't fully put into words how good this community has been to us as a family. Keep doing what you are doing please, you are making a real difference." - Annual Community Survey



What sets [the Trust] apart is its ability to bring together individuals from diverse backgrounds, creating a truly inclusive community. It's heartening to see people of different ages, abilities, and cultural backgrounds united by their love for football."

- Annual Community Survey





It sets me up for a good week at school. I really like how engaging and kind the staff are, I feel genuinely supported by them. They've taught me so many new skills and have also helped me understand more about mental health."

- Premier League Inspires Participant

Being part of the programme has made me realise how important learning and listening really are. It's shown me that when I focus on something I enjoy, I can achieve far more and set myself up for success."

- Premier League Inspires Participant





88%

of participants are now feeling more inspired and engaged in educational settings




Premier League Inspires

A curriculum-based programme aimed at young people who are at risk of not fulfilling their potential.







A wellbeing session for men aged 18–65, using physical activity and workshops.



“

Man On! gives me something to look forward to on a Monday. Everyone's in the same boat, working on their mental health, getting active, having a laugh, and leaving the egos at the door. It feels like a band of brothers, especially moments like the Hackney Half fundraising event where there's a real sense of unity and support. Working from home can feel isolating at times, but Man On! is a release, the running, the football, the good vibes. It puts a smile on my face and makes me feel like I've done something purposeful.”

– Man On! Participant



Spotlight On Yeganeh

Education Champion (11+)

Yeganeh joined our Foundation Degree in Football Development and Coaching in September 2023, stepping into a course where she was the only female participant at the time. From day one, she embraced every session with energy, passion, and determination, eager to learn and grow in her skills.

Throughout the programme, Yeganeh showed remarkable commitment. She engaged enthusiastically in all activities,

attended consistently, and tackled every challenge with resilience and focus. Even when faced with personal obstacles, her dedication never wavered, and she continued to give her best at every opportunity.

In June 2025, Yeganeh reached an extraordinary milestone, becoming the programme's first ever female graduate. Her achievement marks her out as an outstanding role model

and ambassador for women's football, demonstrating what can be achieved through perseverance, passion, and determination.

Yeganeh's journey inspires others to break boundaries and aim high – showing the lasting impact of opportunity and hard work.



We are super proud of Yeganeh. She always approached her studies with a smile on her face and made no complaints or excuses about being the only female on the course at the time. I can't wait to see what's next for her. "

– Laura, Higher Education Lead





In partnership with
Middlesex
University
London

BSc Football Coaching and Performance

Degree delivered in
partnership with Middlesex
University.



I would recommend this course highly. The tutors are really supportive and they help you a lot. We also get to visit the Academy and have guest speakers which is great for networking and building up contacts in the game. I personally am really enjoying the course and can't wait for all that is to come."



- Degree programme participant





Whitmore High School Football & Education Scheme

Post-16 football and education scheme in partnership with Whitmore High School.



Westfield Football Academy

Post-16 football and education scheme in partnership with Westfield Academy.



Samuel Ryder Football Academy

Post-16 football and education scheme in partnership with Samuel Ryder Academy.



Samuel Ryder Football Academy is the perfect way to balance your academics and sports. Having high-quality training sessions with a high-level coach gives you a break from studies, also helps you improve your football game.

We are exposed to great opportunities ... and I've gained valuable experience working with younger age groups and working as part of a team.

Overall, it builds a great sense of community and a great atmosphere for learning both on and off the football pitch."

- Samuel Ryder Participant





EXTRA TIME

For people aged 55+.
Designed to improve
members' social,
physical, and emotional
wellbeing.



**We're
like a big
family."**

- Extra Time
Participant



**100+
people**

across 3 venues

100%

of participants
have improved
feelings of social
connectedness

100%

participants
have improved
physical health/
wellbeing



Spotlight on Pearl

Mental Health Champion



When Pearl reached a major turning point in her life – moving from primary school into secondary – her mum, Selina, began searching for support that could help her daughter feel safe, confident, and understood. What followed was not one, but two opportunities through the Trust: Youth Link and Empower.

Pearl's journey began with Youth Link, where she arrived feeling a mix of excitement and nerves. The sessions, held at Vicarage Road Stadium,

quickly became a safe and welcoming space where she could begin to talk openly about her feelings, worries, and experiences. Supported one-to-one by the Trust's Health and Wellbeing Project Officer, Ines – someone Pearl described as "kind" and who helped her "open up and talk" – she was gently guided through conversations around school, home life, and anxiety.

Through these sessions, Pearl was introduced to practical

copied strategies and positive affirmations, including phrases such as “I am brave” and “I will enjoy school,” which she repeated daily to build confidence and self-belief. These small but powerful tools helped her feel more in control of her thoughts and emotions.

Soon after, Pearl was also introduced to the Empower programme, where her journey continued within a group setting. Through physical activities, workshops, and shared discussion, she quickly formed strong connections with her peers. She spoke proudly about creating a “girl group” and a shared “girl code” helping her feel included, understood, and supported by others with similar experiences.

One Empower activity that stood out was creating a personal wellbeing toolkit – a collection of strategies Pearl could use whenever she felt anxious. Combined with the consistent support of staff, Pearl began to feel happier, more confident, and increasingly positive about the future.

Selina saw the impact first-hand. Knowing Pearl was safe, meeting new people, and realising she wasn’t alone in how she felt, brought reassurance to the whole family.

The change became most clear as Pearl prepared for secondary school. What had once felt overwhelming turned into excitement. She began



looking forward to school and, within her first week, made new friends independently – a powerful sign of her growing confidence.

Now, Pearl describes feeling safe, happy, and supported. Reflecting on her experience, she encourages other young people to take that first step, knowing they'll find understanding, friendship, and practical ways to cope. Her journey shows how timely, compassionate support can help young people feel empowered, confident, and ready for whatever comes next.



Pearl is a charismatic, cheerful girl who has been an absolute joy to have at Youth Link. Watching her grow and gain confidence in herself has been truly wonderful. Her resilience shines through – she shows up with a smile every time and consistently puts her learning into practice. I am incredibly proud of her!"

– Ines, Health and Wellbeing Project Officer





A social prescribing service linking children and young people to relevant non-clinical provisions.



You've helped her in so many ways. The change in her self-belief, her confidence and the way she now navigates and manages different situations has been so lovely to see. She's got her spark back, and you gave her the outlet she needed to thrive. I'll be recommending you to everybody!"

– Parent, Youth Link



This has been life changing for us as a family since the loss of my son and my cancer diagnosis in 2023. He has refused many therapists, so you definitely have truly gifted and talented staff that keeps the kids happy to return! Well done."

– Parent, Empower Participant



Wellbeing programme for children aged 9–12, using physical activity and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy.





Helps young people understand risks from drugs, alcohol, and other behaviours while developing confidence and decision-making skills.



500+

young people participated in the programme across **6 schools** in Harrow

36

young people identified as high-risk, received **6 hours** of targeted mentoring support



The programme made me realise that the choices we make now can affect our whole future. It helped me understand the risks around drugs and alcohol and gave me the confidence to say no if I'm ever in that situation plus educate others." – Choices for Change Participant







Primary school programme combining classroom and practical-based sessions focused on mental health.



An amazing programme for opening up conversations around mental health."

- Primary School Teacher



Then



Now!

Spotlight On Pamir

Social Action Champion

Pamir first joined the Premier League Kicks project in 2020 through Free School Meal Holiday Camps, before progressing into Mini-Kicks Football at Cedars Youth & Community Centre. From the outset, he was known for his kind, friendly nature and quickly became a valued part of the sessions.

As Pamir continued to attend, coaches created opportunities for teamwork and collaboration, helping him build strong connections with others and grow in

confidence. His enthusiasm and natural charisma soon came to the fore, and he became increasingly engaged within the sessions. When Pamir later transitioned into the older age group, he brought these skills with him, using his established relationships with coaches and staff to settle in quickly and build new friendships. It wasn't long before he became one of the most connected participants in the group.

In September 2024, Pamir's journey came full circle when he was invited to volunteer with the Premier League Kicks project. He accepted with enthusiasm and has since become the most consistent volunteer in Harrow, supporting weekly Mini-Kicks sessions and Girls' Football. He works closely with coaches to help set up and deliver sessions, lead warm-ups, referee matches, and support younger participants. He has also continued his development by completing an Introduction to Coaching Multi-Skills qualification.

Pamir's positive impact extends beyond weekly sessions. He was nominated for a Jack Petchey Achievement

Award and selected to join the Premier League Kicks Youth Board, where he contributes to shaping future delivery and community initiatives. Most recently, he successfully secured £1,000 in funding to deliver a community football tournament for local young people.

From participant to volunteer and youth leader, Pamir has used his experiences within Premier League Kicks to support others and drive positive change – a powerful example of the lasting, full-circle impact of the project.





Joining the Premier League Kicks project is the best thing I have ever done! It has really helped me develop my social skills and broaden my social circle. It has provided me with the opportunity to do volunteering at the Community Centre where I have been attending for many years. I am very proud to sit on the Youth Board and give young people a voice!"

- Pamir, Premier League Kicks Participant and Volunteer

Spotlight on Lilya

Football Champion

Lilya began her football journey with our Premier League Kicks Girls' sessions, joining as a keen participant eager to develop her skills. From the start, she showed dedication, determination, and a willingness to challenge herself at every session.



As she continued to train and play, Lilya's hard work and commitment quickly became

apparent. She progressed to play for Northwood Youth U13s and now trains at our invite-only Player Development Centre – a testament to her ambition, talent, and perseverance.

Lilya's journey demonstrates not only her personal growth as a player but also her impact as a role model. Her dedication, skill, and kind, encouraging nature continue to inspire those around her, showing the power of commitment, teamwork, and passion in sport.



A programme aimed at diverting young people from anti-social behaviour and building stronger communities.



**100%**

of participants have improved physical wellbeing and enjoy engaging in football/sport

**96%**

of participants have improved interpersonal relationships and a positive attitude towards others

**95%**

of participants have improved confidence and self-esteem

**90%**

of participants have developed their skills and knowledge

“

Premier League Kicks has become a huge part of my week. I first came down as sessions were free to just play football with my mates. Through the project, I've had the chance to represent the Trust at tournaments and gain a qualification that will help my future. I never thought a free football session could turn into an opportunity to build something for myself."

- Premier League Kicks Participant



66

The programme has meant a lot to me and helped me grow and build skills I never knew I had. I was nervous about going to secondary school next year, but this programme has really helped me, and my mum, feel more ready for the future."

- Change Makers Participant



98%

of participants show a more positive attitude towards education

CHANGE makers

A small-group mentoring programme, with primary and secondary schools, helping high-risk young people develop essential skills.



Spotlight on Ollie

Education Champion (U11)

From the moment Ollie stepped into our Premier League Primary Stars session, his enthusiasm was clear. PE quickly became a real strength for him, and he approached every activity with energy, positivity, and



a willingness to give his best. Whether he was running, playing, or working as part of a team, Ollie relished the chance to be active and challenge himself – always with a big smile on his face.

As he continued to take part in sessions, Ollie grew in confidence when working with both coaches and classmates. He showed excellent teamwork and particularly enjoyed collaborating in small groups, where he supported others

and contributed positively. His enjoyment of PE shone through in every session.

Ollie's teacher also noticed a meaningful improvement in his social and emotional skills through his involvement

in Premier League Primary Stars. His journey demonstrates how high-quality PE can help young people build confidence, form strong connections, and develop a lasting love for being active.



**Scan the code to
watch Ollie's story!**



97%

of pupils were more excited and engaged in PE after the programme

91%

of pupils were more excited and engaged in non-PE subjects after the programme



Premier League
Primary Stars

Using Watford FC to educate in schools, across PE, English, PSHE, and Maths.



66

The coaches' enthusiasm, expertise, and ability to engage the children so meaningfully made a lasting impression on everyone. The children left sessions feeling empowered and motivated. It was a truly memorable experience that will have a lasting impact on both pupils and staff."

- Year 5 Teacher





Helping primary school children develop their physical, cognitive, and social skills.



The coach ensured that sessions were engaging, active and interesting. Both the practical and theory sessions were always well planned, well resourced and well structured. The pupils absolutely loved having Watford coaches in to help with their learning each week, thank you for your time and effort over the last six weeks!"

– Primary School Teacher





Adult weight management programme supporting behaviour change and sustainable weight loss, including Shape Up, and Shape Up Together for people with learning disabilities.

96%

of participants have significantly improved levels of physical activity

Participants on the programme collectively lost over

1,100kg

which is equivalent to **two polar bears!**



Many of our members, who all have learning disabilities, live independently, so cooking and eating is very important for them. This course really helped teach them how to make nutritious meals from scratch. "

- Shape Up Together Partner





Spotlight on Tom

Physical Health Champion



Tom joined our Shape Up Together programme over the summer of 2025, stepping into a supportive environment designed for participants with learning disabilities.

This wasn't the first time Tom had engaged with the Trust though ... Notably, he was part of our football team that proudly represented Watford FC and the Trust at the Special Olympics Catalunya in Barcelona, where he played an important role in showcasing the

team's spirit, commitment, and sportsmanship on an international stage.

Back to 2025, and from the first Shape Up Together session, he engaged fully in every exercise, showing determination, positivity, and a willingness to challenge himself.

As the weeks progressed, Tom became a natural leader within the group, offering encouragement and support to his peers and helping to create a motivating, inclusive atmosphere. His commitment and energy were clear to everyone, and he inspired others to give their best too.

By the end of the twelve-week programme, Tom could see

and feel the difference – he was fitter, happier, and more confident in himself. Since completing the programme, he has continued on this journey, maintaining regular exercise and making healthier choices, which have already led to positive changes, including weight loss. Tom's journey demonstrates how dedication, support, and opportunity can combine to create lasting, meaningful impact.





This course has been the best thing I have ever taken part in. The sessions have been incredibly fun and informative and so non-judgemental. I've loved every second."

- Shape Up Participant





Spotlight on Jeffrey

Community Champion (Youth)

Jeffrey's journey with Premier League Kicks began eight years ago as a participant, and over time he has grown into an exceptional young leader. From his early days on the programme, he demonstrated a natural ability to connect with others and a passion for contributing positively to his community.

As his skills and confidence developed, Jeffrey took on more responsibility, becoming captain of our Premier

League Kicks Cup team and leading them all the way to the national finals. Alongside this, he began volunteering to support other participants across the programme, sharing his experience and guidance with the next generation.

Jeffrey's leadership extends beyond football. As Chair of our Youth Board, he drives initiatives to create safer communities and more opportunities for



young people. He has represented Premier League Kicks at Wembley, speaking passionately about violence reduction, and has been interviewed by the BBC on the importance of funding youth work.

From participant to leader, volunteer, and advocate, Jeffrey's journey demonstrates the impact of long-term engagement, dedication, and a commitment to making a difference. His influence


continues to inspire everyone around him and highlights the transformative power of youth programmes.



Spotlight on James

Community Champion (Adult)






Earlier this year, Man On! participant James was facing a challenging period in his life, but his journey took a turning point when he attended a Stepping Over the Sidelines event at Watford FC, delivered on behalf of the FA and Herts FA. Since that session, James has embraced coaching with remarkable dedication and enthusiasm, using his experiences to grow both personally and professionally.

He has thrown himself into every opportunity to learn and contribute, attending CPDs across the South East and returning to study on the Trust's BSc Football Coaching and Performance Degree.

James has expanded his impact by coaching multiple teams across different age groups, taking roles at Hendon Football Club, and volunteering with the Frank Soo Foundation. His commitment to coaching now benefits the young people he inspires, helping them develop as players while instilling confidence and teamwork.

His journey demonstrates the power of opportunity, mentorship, and determination, and highlights how one person's dedication can create lasting, positive change for those around them.





Spotlight on Ze'ev

Equality Champion



Ze'ev's passion for the Trust has always been clear, and he has become a valued member of our community through his dedication and support. He generously shares his lived experiences of his faith and regularly offers his time and insights to help the Trust uphold its values of equality, diversity and inclusion.

As an active member of the Jewish Hornets, Ze'ev plays a key role in supporting the

Trust's EDI work. This includes helping to host the annual Chanukah Party, which he spearheaded this year in partnership with the Club and Trust. The event created a joyful celebration that brought people together and helped promote understanding and inclusion within the Watford FC community.

Ze'ev also took part in The Taylor Trek, raising over £700 to support the Trust's work in the community.

Ze'ev's contributions continue to inspire others and strengthen the Trust's commitment to creating a welcoming and supportive environment for everyone.



I was delighted to participate in The Taylor Trek in honour of Watford's greatest manager Graham Taylor OBE. It was a very fulfilling day."





Spotlight on Giancarlo

Fundraising Champion



In 2012, Giancarlo and Gianpiero Gaglione lost their youngest brother Lanfranco to suicide. In 2025, the Gaglione family brought a vibrant community football event to Vicarage Road Stadium, culminating a fantastic run of annual fundraising activities since 2021, totalling over £900,000 for mental health charities and initiatives.

The Mental Health World Cup started with a community football match in the family's local park. Fourteen years on, their casual kick-about is now a fully-fledged charity tournament, entirely volunteered with players fundraising nationwide and flocking to football stadiums to play in the Mental Health World Cup each spring.

Out of a life lost, the Mental Health World Cup has undoubtedly supported and saved countless lives through dedicated and passionate awareness and fundraising.

Giancarlo approached the Trust in 2024, explaining the plan for the Mental Health World Cup, and the success achieved at QPR's Loftus Road. From that moment, Giancarlo worked tirelessly, alongside Trust and Watford FC staff, to bring the Mental Health World Cup to Watford. In a moment of need, WD18 fan channel joined the team. Armed with their previous experiences with the WD18 Cup, the founding members Charlie Zazzera, Sam Ucko, and Jacob Culshaw, gave



the event the boost that was needed, and plans were soon set to host the first-ever Mental Health World Cup at the home of the Hornets, Vicarage Road Stadium.



The main goal of the tournament was clearly achieved with the amount raised and the overwhelming awareness of mental health. The 32 teams competed in good spirits in the hot temperatures, with a uniquely Watford buzz about the day with the likes of former Hornets Lloyd Doyley, Adrian Mariappa, Dan Gosling, Marvin Sordell, Tommy Smith, and Luther Blissett OBE DL.

It took a team to bring the event all together, but it was the mastermind and work of Giancarlo that undoubtedly was at the heart of its triumph.





Spotlight on our Golden Memories Team

Volunteer Champions



Our Golden Memories volunteers have always been at the core of the programme, ensuring every session runs smoothly and participants feel supported and valued, even during periods of staff change. From baking cakes and setting up activities to running quizzes, making teas and coffees, and sharing friendly conversations, their dedication and passion are evident in every detail.

Week after week, our volunteers go above and beyond, bringing warmth,



energy, and care to every session. Their understanding of and attention to participants' needs creates an atmosphere

where guests and their carers feel welcomed, supported, and genuinely valued.

The impact of their commitment is clear to anyone attending a Golden Memories session. These volunteers are more than

helpers – they are the heart of the programme, inspiring joy, connection, and a sense of community that makes a lasting difference.

Thank you, Colin, Simon, Geoff, Gill, Tim, Aiden, Jan, and Helen!







The singing together at the end of the session we absolutely love. We often find ourselves walking down the street singing the songs we have sung within the sessions!"

- Golden Memories Participant





GOLDEN MEMORIES



A reminiscence programme for those with mild/moderate dementia, using the history of Watford FC.





I just wanted to say thank you to the team of volunteers for the wonderful celebration this morning. We really enjoyed ourselves, the sessions really brighten up our week."

- Golden Memories Participant



Spotlight on Colin

Overall Trust Champion



If you arrive early at one of our Golden Memories sessions, there's a good chance Colin is already there. Whatever the weather, he's on hand with a smile, helping with car parking and setting the tone for a warm, welcoming day where participants can relax and enjoy themselves.

Colin's commitment was especially clear during The Taylor Trek. While many were still arriving, Colin had already been volunteering since before 7am, supporting the event from start to finish.

After a long and demanding day, his dedication didn't stop there. The very next day, he was back with the Golden Memories team – this time carrying homemade cakes he had baked the evening after the Trek, ready to be shared with participants and staff.

Whether appearing in character as Harry the Hornet, quietly supporting others, or simply bringing energy and kindness to every event, Colin consistently goes above and beyond what is expected of a volunteer.

Having previously won our Community Champion (Adult) in 2023, Colin's reliability, generosity, and enthusiasm over many years, and many different projects, activities, and events, show without doubt that Colin has become a huge part of the Trust's family. Truly a deserving Overall Trust Champion.





It's brought me out of myself. Post-stroke, I stayed away locked indoors, I didn't come out and socialise or speak to people. Meeting new people has helped, you feel comfortable because like you, they have been through similar things and everyone's stroke has affected them differently."

– Stroke Rehab Participant



Stroke Rehab Programme

Fun, supportive sessions helping people rebuild strength, confidence, and wellbeing after a stroke.





Falls Prevention Programme

Free 12-week course helping adults 65+ build strength, balance, and confidence.





After my fall I lost a lot of confidence. The Falls Prevention classes have really helped me get it back. The sessions have improved my strength and balance, but just as importantly they've helped me feel confident doing everyday things again without fear. The instructors are supportive, the atmosphere is welcoming, and it's reassuring to be around others who understand. I feel steadier, more positive, and much more like myself again."

– Falls Prevention Participant

Spotlight on Jamie

Coach Champion



Jamie began his journey as a casual Premier League Kicks coach, and from the very start, he demonstrated dedication, enthusiasm, and a commitment to the values of the Trust. Week after week, he goes above and beyond, leading sessions with inclusivity, energy, and a genuine passion for engaging young people.

Over time, Jamie has taken on a variety of roles, supporting delivery at the national Premier League Kicks tournament and the Vitality Mile event, and even stepping

into character as Harry the Hornet during The Taylor Trek, leading sixty children around Watford! Alongside this, he consistently shows kindness, patience, and a willingness to learn from both colleagues and participants, ensuring everyone has a positive and supportive experience.

Jamie's journey reflects the impact that dedication and heart can have on young people and the wider community. His enthusiasm, leadership, and commitment make him a truly deserving recipient of this award.







The coaches were amazing and [my son] made many lifelong friends and developed his love of football."

– PDP Parent



905

participants on our
player development
programmes



PDP

Additional training for 'advanced' football players. Includes Skills Centres, Player Development Centres, FA Talent Hub, and Emerging Talent Centre.



Football Camps

Seasonal activities during the school holidays. We also deliver free Holiday Activity and Food camps.

Matchday Packages

Football coaching and ticket packages for Watford FC matches.



4,496

**football camp
sessions from 1st
September 2024
to 31st Aug 2025**





Spotlight on Steve

Trustees' Champion

When Steve first saw an advert for a part-time role with the Trust, he was simply hoping for a quieter chapter in his career. Sitting on a train home from Euston after a long day, he spotted an opportunity to become the Trust's Data Protection Officer. As a lifelong Watford fan who had just completed a GDPR project, the role felt too good to ignore.

"I was looking for something that would allow me to slowly wind down towards retirement," he recalls. "Working for a charity so

closely aligned to the club I loved was a dream come true."

Nearly eight years later, that quiet retirement plan looks very different. Steve is now the Trust's Head of Business Services, leading areas including governance, HR, communications, compliance, risk, safeguarding and equality, diversity and inclusion. His work helps ensure the Trust remains safe, compliant and sustainable, while supporting colleagues across the organisation to thrive.

Trustees describe Steve as instrumental in shaping the Trust's strategy and supporting its continued growth. His knowledge, experience and steady leadership have helped guide the organisation through challenges while strengthening its foundations.

Despite currently facing complex personal health challenges, Steve continues to support colleagues, respond to calls and emails, and lead key projects for the Trust.

Throughout his time with the organisation, Steve has





been motivated by the impact the Trust has on its communities. "Seeing our participants smile and laugh is the greatest highlight," he says. "Whether it's our Golden Memories dementia group singing together or hundreds of schoolchildren leaving the

Dome after a day of football, those are the reasons why we do what we do."

One project especially close to his heart is The Taylor Trek, a community initiative celebrating the legacy of Graham Taylor OBE and the connection between Watford FC and the town it represents.

"It captures who we are," Steve says. "It's inclusive, accessible and brings communities together."



Every step is a reminder of the legacy of Graham Taylor and his vision of that so very important connection between a Football Club and the town or city it comes from.”

Steve’s dedication, resilience and commitment to

supporting others embody the very values of the Trust. As colleagues and trustees alike recognise, the organisation is stronger because of his leadership – and it is extremely fortunate to benefit from his knowledge, wit and wisdom.





Spotlight on Kristian Trustees' Champion



Kristian's journey with the Trust began not with a job application, but with a university essay.

As a student, he chose to write about social media at Watford FC, interviewing Club staff and exploring how football could connect with its community beyond the pitch. That curiosity led to a two-week work placement, creating a brochure for the newly opened Cedars Youth & Community Centre.

Shortly after graduating, he received a call offering him



an interview for an internship – and in July 2013, he officially joined the Trust.

He started by capturing the energy and impact of National Citizen Service programmes – from residential trips in Wales to camping at Phasels Wood – telling the stories of young people growing in confidence and ambition. He also supported early work on The BEST Project, a healthy lifestyle programme

in primary schools that would later grow into the national Joy of moving initiative. It all started here in Watford.

By February 2014, Kristian had earned a full-time role and began building the Trust's presence online – at a time when social media was still “that new thing.” What followed was far more than marketing.



He became the person ensuring events didn't just happen – but succeeded. In the early years, this included looking after matchday mascots and seeing first-hand the joy on families' faces. Other highlights saw Kristian help sell 3,000 discounted tickets to schoolchildren for *that* FA Cup Semi-Final at Wembley, and an international trip to Barcelona for the Special Olympics Catalunya.

He has worked tirelessly behind the scenes to encourage Club players into schools and community projects, supported award-winning submissions, contributed to organisational strategy, and played a central role in producing



the Trust's annual Impact Report – capturing not just the social difference made in our community, but the financial savings created for wider services through preventative, meaningful work.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, he quietly supported efforts to provide hot meals and respite spaces for NHS staff. Across sleep outs, football marathons, gala dinners and Taylor Treks, he has been ever-present – often

invisible in the background, but absolutely pivotal.

The Trustee Award recognises those who truly live the values first envisioned by Graham Taylor OBE – integrity, inclusivity, innovation, dedication and determination. Kristian embodies them all.

He is key to ensuring our events are financially successful, even

taking part in some along the way!

Key to ensuring our community knows about our programmes. Key to celebrating the achievements of participants. And key to communicating and evaluating the impact of everything the Trust undertakes. Always front and centre – yet often unseen – Kristian has been instrumental in helping the Trust grow, evolve and continue building healthier, happier and stronger communities.

And perhaps what stands out most is this: he never seeks recognition. Kristian simply gets on with the work, brings people together, and goes above and beyond – every single day.





The Taylor Trek 2025

This season's Taylor Trek brought the Watford community together in a powerful tribute to the life and legacy of Graham Taylor OBE, raising more than £15,000 for the Trust and Rennie Grove Peace Hospice Care.

Over 200 participants took part in the charity walk across Watford and the surrounding areas, choosing from three routes that each reflected key moments from Graham Taylor's time in Hertfordshire. Supporters were joined by former players Luther Blissett



OBE DL, Richard Johnson, Lloyd Doyley and Dan Gosling, alongside Watford FC's Under-18s squad, creating a truly special sense of togetherness throughout the day.

Fundraising & Events

Routes ranged from a three-mile family walk to an 18-mile challenge, with every participant finishing with a memorable pitchside walk at Vicarage Road. Walkers were welcomed at the finish by the Taylor family, who presented medals in recognition of the collective effort.

Kindly sponsored by Mercer & Hole, the event was a fitting celebration of community, remembrance and the lasting impact of Graham Taylor's legacy.

Charity partner



Headline sponsor

**Mercer
& Hole**



**£15,000+
raised!**



**£40,000+
raised for 5
charities**

Stadium Sleep Out 2025

Nearly 200 people came together at Vicarage Road Stadium to take part in the Stadium Sleep Out, a powerful overnight event raising awareness of homelessness across Watford and the surrounding areas.

Participants swapped their warm beds for sleeping bags inside the stadium, experiencing first-hand the challenges faced by people without a safe place to sleep. With temperatures dropping below freezing, the night offered a sobering

Fundraising & Events

insight into the harsh realities of homelessness, while also creating space for reflection, learning and solidarity.

The event was delivered in partnership with One YMCA, New Hope, Herts Young Homeless, and DENS, and kindly sponsored by Foxtons.

Throughout the evening, attendees heard directly from the charities about the complex and lasting impact of homelessness, alongside the vital work being done

locally to support individuals and families in need.

Supported by a number of local businesses, the Sleep Out demonstrated the strength of community action.



Dreams United:
Stadium
Sleep Out

**£65,000+
raised!**

Mental Health World Cup 2025

The Mental Health World Cup at Vicarage Road brought football, fundraising and vital conversations together, raising more than £65,000 to support mental health charities.

The 32-team charity tournament was delivered in partnership with the Mental Health World Cup charity, and fan channel WD18, using



the power of football to raise awareness of mental health and encourage open, honest conversation. Funds were raised through team registrations, fundraising efforts, spectator tickets, a charity auction, and an event-day raffle.

Players, fans, former professionals and Watford FC staff came together for a day that combined competitive football with a strong sense

Fundraising & Events



of shared purpose. Beyond the action on the pitch, the event helped shine a light on the importance of mental wellbeing and the role sport can play in breaking down stigma.

Supported by a wide range of partners and sponsors, the Mental Health World Cup demonstrated how collaboration and community action can create meaningful impact, helping to raise awareness and support organisations working to improve mental health outcomes.

**WD
18**



Step Up for Health 2025

Seventy-seven runners and walkers joined us at Vicarage Road Stadium on 5th July to mark the NHS's 77th birthday with our Step Up stair-climbing challenge. Organised alongside West Herts Hospitals Charity, participants of all ages tackled the stadium stands, enjoying a lively warm-up before the climb.



24 Hour Football Marathon

On 13th and 14th June, we hosted our 24-hour Football Marathon at Watford FC's Training Ground, in partnership with AMYA. People of all ages joined forces, showing amazing teamwork, determination, and community spirit. Money raised was split with the Trust and the Model Village Project in Africa, which helps to create sustainable communities and lasting impact.

Fundraising & Events

Gala Dinner 2025

Our Gala Dinner took place on 20th March in Horizons and The View at Vicarage Road, bringing together partners, supporters, and members of the Watford FC family to celebrate another fantastic year of community work. Guests enjoyed drinks, canapés, a three-course meal, live music, and a lively dancefloor.

The highlight was our annual awards ceremony, recognising members of the community for their exceptional contributions across areas including mental health, education, volunteering, fundraising, physical health, equality,

football, and sustainability. This year also introduced the Trustees' Champion award, which celebrates a member of staff who has gone above and beyond to embody the values of the Trust.

It was a wonderful evening of celebration, showcasing the incredible impact of our programmes and the dedication of our staff, participants, and supporters.



Black History Month

Across October, participants of all ages engaged in themed workshops, stadium activations, Youth Voice discussions, and cultural sessions celebrating Black heritage and promoting anti-racism.

SHOW
RACISM
THE
RED
CARD



Women & Girls in Sport

Secondary school pupils attended an inspiring day of football, wellbeing workshops and carousel talks with elite athletes and professionals, delivered through our Premier League Inspires programme.

Equality, Diversity, & Inclusion



Celebrating Ageing

In partnership with Age Without Limits, we hosted a vibrant Extra-Time session at Meriden Community Centre featuring chair-based exercise, carpet bowls and social activities, promoting connection and challenging age stereotypes.

92%

**strongly agree or agree
the Trust promotes
equality, diversity,
and inclusion**

World Alzheimer's Month

As part of World Alzheimer's Month, Golden Memories hosted a special session in our Sensory Room, combining cognitive activities, therapeutic hand massages and social connection for those living with dementia and their carers.

Herts Pride

The Club and Trust proudly sponsored and attended Herts Pride at Cassiobury Park, with players, staff and volunteers supporting the event and celebrating LGBTQ+ inclusion within our community.



Meriden Community Centre

2,300

bookings at the centre

56 user groups

100%

of respondents described
our Customer Service as
Excellent or Good*



4.5 Star Rating
on Google reviews



A lovely venue. Always clean with wonderful staff.” – Respondent, Meriden Community Centre Activity Survey 2025.

Cedars Youth and Community Centre

6,953

bookings at the centre



4.4 Star Rating

on Google reviews



Absolutely beautiful pitch and staff members always happy and smiling and helping out. Inside the building great stuff as well – would recommend any team to bring their people here and enjoy.”

– Via Google reviews.

Thank You to Our Headline Sponsor



Thank You to Our Corporate Partners



M. K. Ginder & Sons
FUNERAL DIRECTORS



Coming Soon ...

To find out more about becoming a
Corporate Friend of the Trust, contact:

james.isaac@watfordfc.com

adam.sawyer@watfordfc.com

6,000+ Junior Hornets have officially registered with Watford FC.



Free Family Zones added around Vicarage Road Stadium on match days, including activities, and music. With catering offers also available, and the occasional special visit from former or current Watford FC players.

Hundreds of toys were donated by supporters and partners as part of this year's **Toy Drive**. With toys making their way to schools, deserving individuals, charities such as Watford Women Centre, and of course, the annual trip to Watford General Hospital, delivered by Santa's Hornet helpers!



Original Family Club

Matchday awareness campaigns were held to benefit local charities and good causes, including Royal British Legion, British Heart Foundation, and of course, the Trust!



As displayed on page 105, the Club and Trust continue to embrace **equality, diversity, and inclusion** with a host of campaigns, events, and collaborations. This includes the We campaign, and working with We Allies.

Watford FC Men's, Women's, and Academy squads continue to engage within the community, from school visits to football camps. Moussa Sissoko and Anna Filbey were named as the **Hornets' Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) Community Champions** for the 2024/25 season.



Strategy

We continue to work alongside and measure against our organisational five-year strategy 'Tactically Speaking', which runs until 2029. This is to help us keep on track to achieve our mission of expanding the Watford FC family by providing opportunities in Hertfordshire and London, to enrich people's lives, create special memories, and enable positive futures.

IT

Big change within our IT infrastructure, keeping our staff efficiently equipped for the modern world, maintaining our data security, updating broadband within our community hubs, and most obviously to the public, we have updated our email domain. All our staff and groups email addresses are now @watfordfctrust.com so update your diaries!



Behind the Scenes

People Strategy

As a charity caring for others is built into our DNA as an organisation, but who looks after those doing the caring? That's why we've been working hard behind the scenes to consult and collaborate on a new people strategy to ensure the Trust is a great place to work where everyone feels that they can contribute and belong.

Finance

Our audited accounts are submitted to the Charity Commission each year. These can be found here:

*register-of-charities.
charitycommission.gov.uk/en/charity-search/-/charity-details/4005453/
charity-overview?_uk_gov_ccew_
onereg_charitydetails_web_
portlet_CharityDetailsPortlet_
organisationNumber=4005453*





Coming to a Community Near You ...

We continue to keep on top of local need, community consultation, trends, and local and national strategies to ensure we are supporting the community in the best way possible. This includes several new projects ...

Looking Ahead



- **Futsal**

A new offer to our Player Development Programmes, this is a fast-paced indoor version of football.

- **Crime Reduction Through Sport**

Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour in our communities. Delivered via a partnership with Herts Sport & Physical Activity Partnership, and Street Games.

- **She Plays On!**

An extension of our hugely successful Man On! programme, this wellbeing programme for females has been funded by Three Rivers District Council.

- **Pledge United**

Combatting violence against women and girls in secondary schools. Funded via a community fund of over half a million pounds set up from donations from the EFL; its charitable arm, EFL in the Community, and The FA.

- **REACT: Retirement in ACTION**

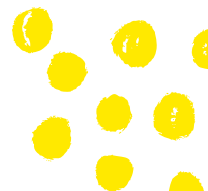
Supporting adults at risk of mobility-related disabilities. Funded via a community fund of over half a million pounds set up from donations from the EFL; its charitable arm, EFL in the Community and The FA.



 AL-HADIYA MUSLIM YOUTH ASSOCIATION	 BARCLAYS SPORTED	 BERNARD SUNLEY FOUNDATION		 BOROUGH COUNCIL
 EFL	 EFL IN THE COMMUNITY	 The FA	FERRERO	 FOOTBALL FOUNDATION
 The Frank Fox Foundation	 COUNTRYSIDE CHANGING PLACES CHANGING LIVES	 LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW	Harrow Giving	 Hatfield Community Sports Fund
 Hertfordshire Community Foundation Fostering local leaders	 Hertfordshire	 HERTSMERE	HS2	 Herts Sport & Physical Activity Partnership
 HYIE	 Jack Petchey Foundation Inspire • Motivate • Activate	 JOHN LYON'S CHARITY	 JOHN LYON'S CHARITY	 LTF

Operational Partners





The Trust has helped my daughter to find new ways to cope with the stresses of being a young carer and to find herself."

– Annual Community Survey



How You Can Help

- ♥ **Donate:** www.watfordfccsetrust.com/make-a-donation
- ♥ **Get involved** in one of our fundraising events
- ♥ **Become a corporate partner** of the Trust
- ♥ **Make us your charity of choice** when fundraising
- ♥ **Leave a legacy in your will** to the Trust
- ♥ **Volunteer with the Trust**

www.watfordfccsetrust.com



**COMMUNITY SPORTS
& EDUCATION
TRUST**

REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 1102239

The Trust's work this year and every year, is dedicated to the legacy of Graham Taylor OBE.

Forever in our Hornet hearts.