

# IMPACT REPORT

2020



Registered Charity 1115222 | Registered Company 5664605



# OUR MISSION

**Sport 4 Life UK believes in a level playing field where every young person has the opportunity to create a better future for themselves.**

We are proud to provide the opportunity for young people (aged 11 to 29) to prepare for and move into sustained education, employment, or training by improving their employability and key life skills, through our sports-themed personal development services.

# WELCOME

**We are privileged to represent the 926 young people who have been given the opportunity to create a better life for themselves as a result of our combined support last year.**

And what a year! At the beginning of our company year, following a strategic review of our key services, and feedback from young people, we launched a new delivery model to better support our young people (aged 11 to 29). Then, like so many others, we had to make quick and significant changes as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the UK experiencing a jobs crisis greater than any we have faced as a nation. We are seeing the biggest rise in unemployment in over a century - on a scale higher than the great depression. And young people always fare worse in a downturn, and the impact of this reverberates through the years. Many have lost their jobs as a direct result of the virus, and for others - including those still in education - the prospect of future work and success seems increasingly distant. Interlinked to this crisis is a sharp downturn in young people's mental health and wellbeing, and a disproportionate impact on disadvantaged and ethnic minority communities. The vulnerable and marginalised always suffer worst, and suffer longest.

The changes we have made, both at the beginning of the year and at the onset of COVID-19, have helped us support over 900 young people to achieve 338 combined tangible outcomes. See page 8 and 9 for the full impact figures.

**THANK YOU TO ALL THOSE WHO STAND WITH US THROUGH CHALLENGING TIMES.**

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO BUILDING ON OUR RELATIONSHIPS IN THE YEAR AHEAD AND FURTHER DEVELOPING OUR SERVICES SO THAT WE CAN BETTER SUPPORT MORE YOUNG PEOPLE.**



**Tom Clarke-Forrest**  
Founder & CEO



**Hitesh Patel**  
Chair of Trustees



**77%**  
**OF YOUNG PEOPLE THAT  
PROGRESS THROUGH OUR  
NEET SERVICE MOVE INTO  
EMPLOYMENT.**

# WHY WE EXIST

- **Even before the COVID-19 Pandemic, young people who are born into disadvantage and live in the most deprived areas are playing catch up with their life prospects.**
  - 41% of Birmingham's children live in poverty and 31% across the West Midlands.
  - 43% of Birmingham's population and 28% of West Midlands population live in the top 10% most deprived areas nationally.
  - COVID-19: Lockdown highlighted a digital divide in society, with only 51% of households on the lowest income (£6,000 to £10,000) having internet access compared to 99% of households with higher incomes (£40,000+)
- **By the time they reach school, they are already behind and very likely to leave without good qualifications.**
  - Disadvantaged pupils are on average 18 months behind the rest of the class in academic achievement by the age of 16.
  - 38% of disadvantaged pupils fail key GCSEs (Maths & English), nearly twice as much as their peers.
  - 60% of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds don't have a level 2 qualification by age 19, compared to 30% of their better off peers.
- **This leaves these young people with limited opportunities in life and increases their chances of being long-term NEET.**
  - Young people without a Level 2 qualification or from disadvantaged backgrounds are over twice as likely to be long-term NEET than their peers.
  - 75% of young people who are NEET for three months have been NEET for 12 months.
  - Young people (aged 16 to 29) claiming out of work benefits was on the rise in Birmingham (9%) and the West Midlands (14%) even before the pandemic hit the UK.
  - COVID-19: Since lockdown, youth unemployment in Birmingham and the West Midlands increased by 69% to 26,920 and 90% to 90,805, respectively.
- **This leaves young people significantly more likely to be welfare dependant into later life.**
  - Long periods of unemployment make young people 7.9 times more likely to become NEET again.
  - Young men who are NEET are five times more likely to have a criminal record than their peers.

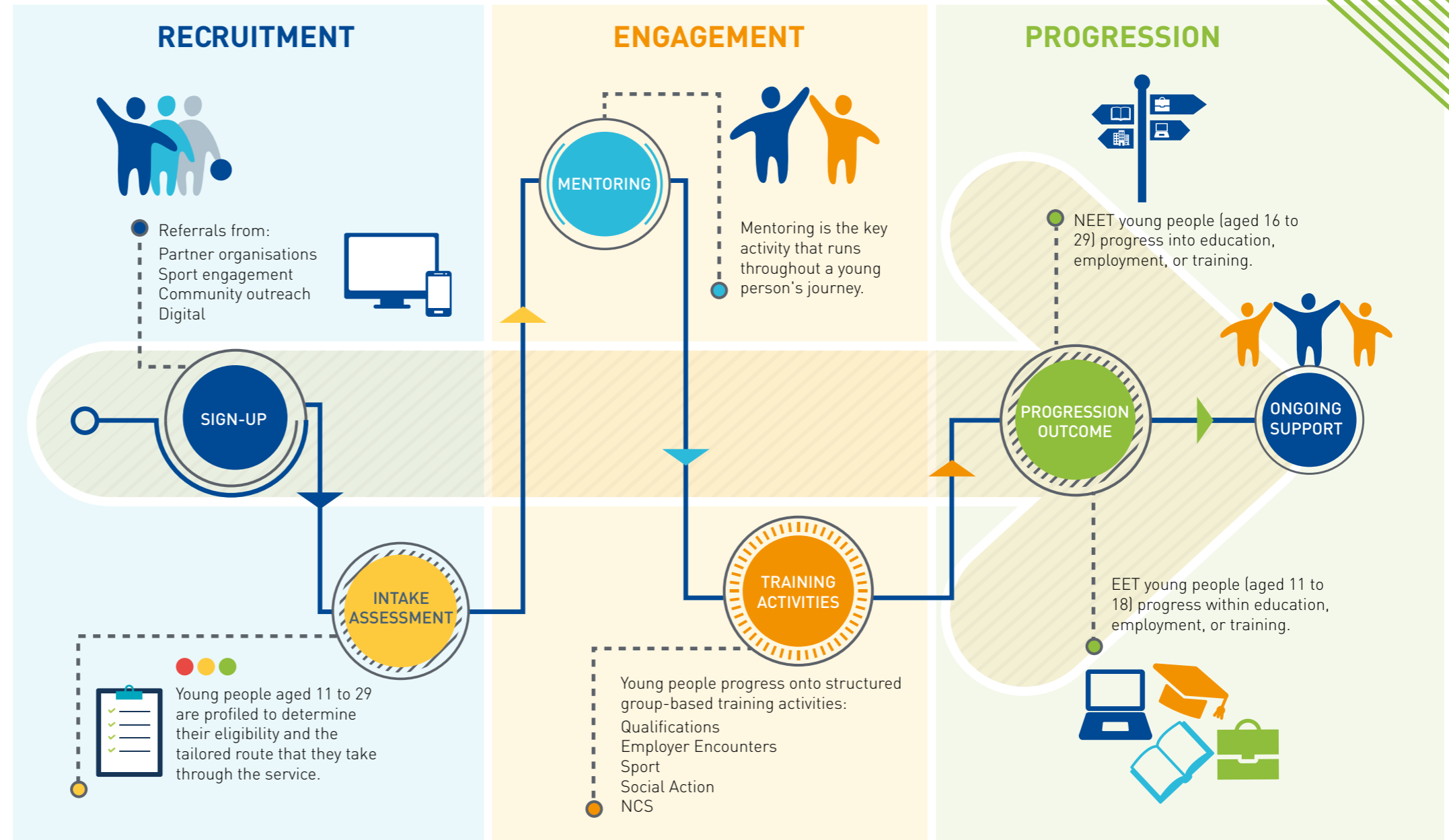
Statistics compiled from Index of Deprivation 2019, Office of National Statistics, Impetus-PEF, End Child Poverty, Child Poverty Commission, Birmingham City Council, House of Commons Library, The London school of Economics and Political Science, The Education Policy Institute, The University Of Cambridge.

# WHAT WE DO

Our sports-themed personal development services are designed to bring out the best in young people by providing them with high-quality sessions, mentoring, and guidance.

Our youth-led delivery model allows young people to sign-up and join our services through a range of recruitment pathways (including referral partners, schools and digital), engage intensively and bespoke in the 'mentoring' and training' activities, and move into tangible progressions. The model supports young people to overcome barriers, develop quickly, prevent lapses, and to ensure progressions are sustained.

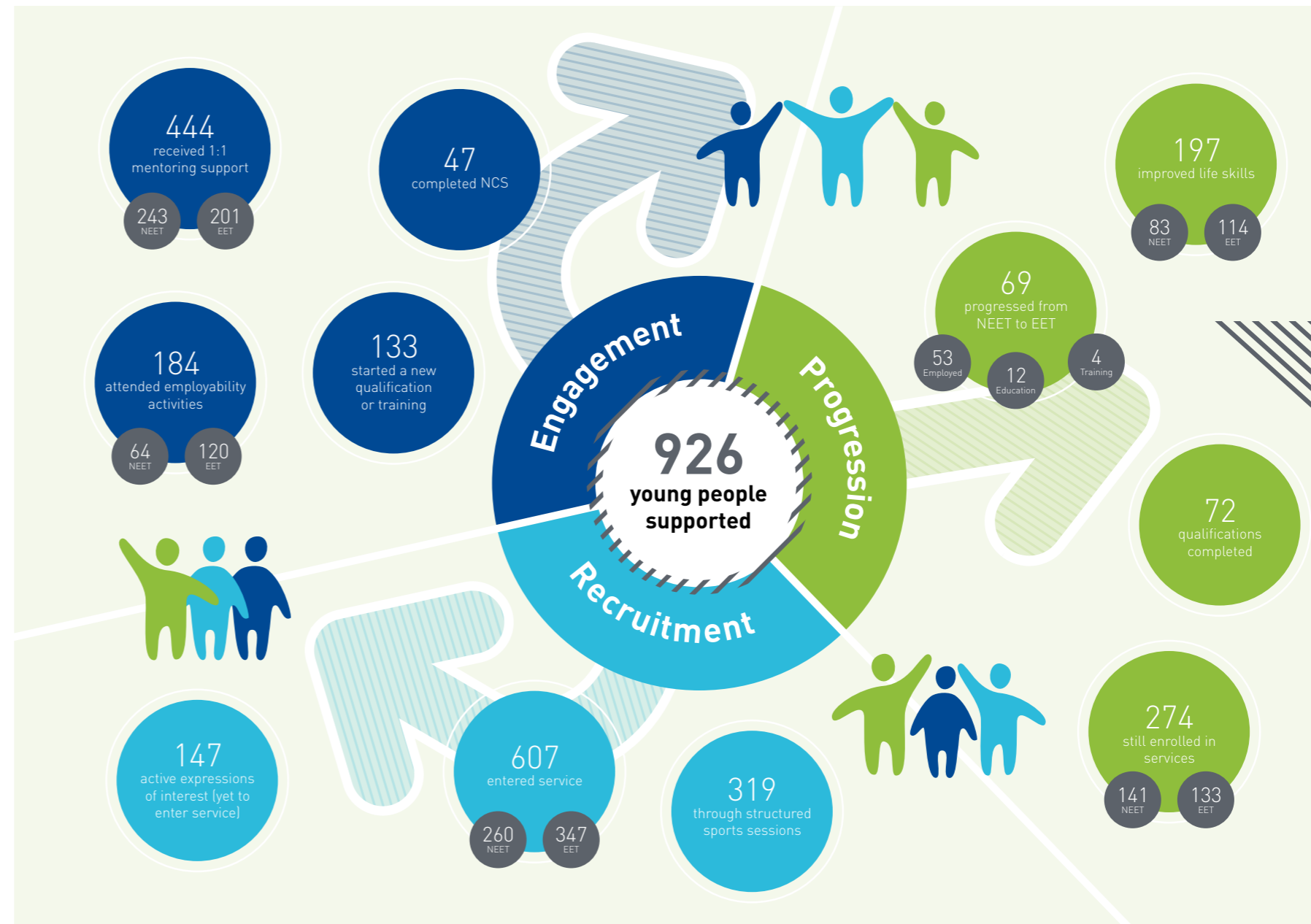
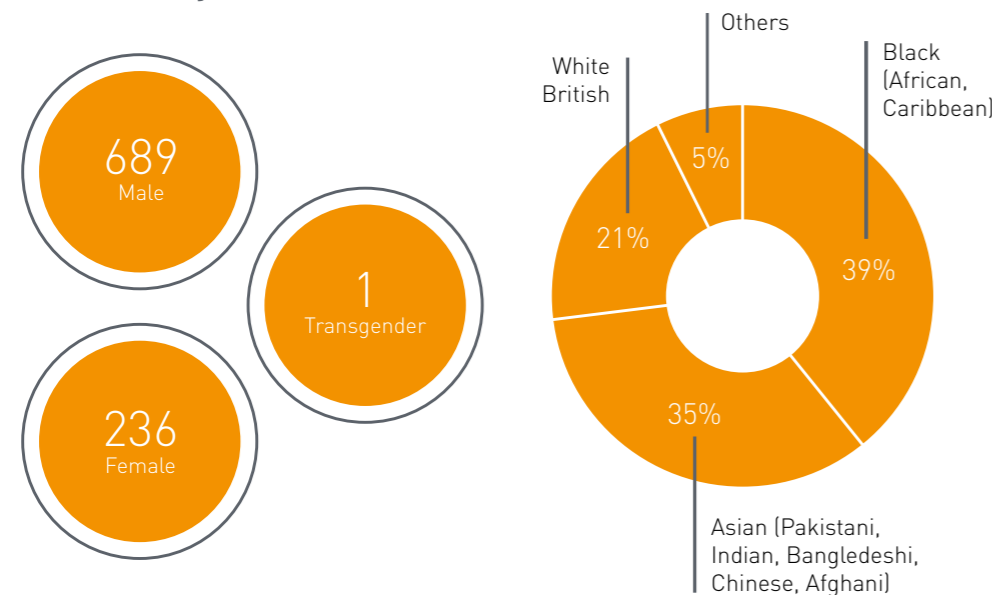
## WE'VE DELIVERED OVER 2,498 HOURS OF SPORT, TRAINING AND MENTORING SUPPORT



# OUR IMPACT 2019-2020

This impact is a snapshot of our 2019-20 year, as of 30/06/20.

## Beneficiary Breakdown



NEET: Not in Education, Employment, or Training | EET: (In) Education, Employment, or Training | NCS: National Citizens Service

# CHANGING LIVES



**Mohammed's story**  
Age 20

Sport 4 Life UK first started engaging with Mohammed towards the end of 2019. Mohammed had been referred through our presence in Kings Heath JobCentre.

Mohammed's situation was typical of young people who find themselves unemployed. He found the process of applying for jobs bewildering and desperately needed guidance and advice to help navigate the maze of online forms, creation of accounts and the frustration of not understanding why an application was unsuccessful.

Having never received any training or help, Mohammed struggled with the process of writing a compelling personal statement. In addition to this, Mohammed was also nervous about the prospect of actually being interviewed for a job, anxious that he would not be able to show his full potential to a prospective employer.

Sport 4 Life helped Mohammed to realise and communicate his strengths and transferable skills, while also being able to identify his weaknesses and areas for development.

Learning the skills to structure his job applications successfully was a significant breakthrough for Mohammed as this enabled him to apply for multiple jobs at once, confident that his applications would, at the very least be considered by a potential employer.

**“MY SPORT 4 LIFE MENTOR HELPED ME UNDERSTAND THE PROCESS OF MATCHING MY SKILLS TO THE JOB DESCRIPTION, AND THE ART OF KEEPING MY APPLICATIONS SUCCINCT AND RELEVANT TO THE ROLE.”**

Sport 4 Life also helped Mohammed to overcome his fears of interview situations by teaching him how to effectively research companies and provide meaningful answers to interview questions by using the STAR (Situation, Task, Actions, Result) method.

“It was great to be able to receive 1:1 mentoring for job interview prep. I could meet my mentor at the jobcentre and we could role-play the actual process of being in a job interview. This helped me anticipate difficult questions and give me the confidence that I could deliver under pressure.”

Since working with Sport 4 Life, Mohammed has successfully secured an engineering apprenticeship due to start in September 2020. He's also started working in a local Mcdonald's restaurant, where he's thriving as part of a busy team in a fast-paced, customer-focused environment.

Mohammed has not only gained in confidence and communication skills, he's also acquired valuable life skills that will equip him well throughout his career.



**Renee's Story**  
Age 24

Renee came to her initial mentoring session with Sport 4 Life UK after being made redundant from her car sales job; where she'd been working continuously since leaving education.

By the time she came to the initial session, Renee was devastated at the loss of her job and her motivation and confidence were at their lowest. She was very concerned that she had no idea where to go and what to do to get back into work.

Having had previous experience working at Westminster in an administration role before moving into car sales in the Midlands, Renee's aspiration was to return to work as a Civil Servant. However, she was worried about her CV: was it good enough? And what should she do in an interview as the interviews she had before were very informal?

**“I'D LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT ESPECIALLY DURING THIS TIME [COVID-19]. IT HAS BEEN REALLY USEFUL KNOWING THAT THERE IS SOMEONE THERE TO TURN TO DURING THIS LOCKDOWN AS AT TIMES IT CAN GET VERY OVERWHELMING.”**

After helping re-formatting Renee's CV with a professional profile, her Sport 4 Life mentor arranged for in-depth tuition on interview techniques through the Sport 4 Life UK Employer Encounters programme.

Together, Renee and her mentor looked at various civil service opportunities and development to improve her chances of a successful job application. As a result of this, Renee decided to apply for further education and commit to a Masters qualification in International Relations, furthering her existing degree as she felt she would benefit from a higher-level qualification.

Renee was thrilled to be accepted and is now studying with the university and hoping to move into a government civil service position on a permanent basis.

# COVID-19

**We stand together through this challenging period and continue to support young people.**

Like so many others, we have had to make significant changes as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Young people face increased uncertainty and many have found themselves unemployed as a direct result of COVID-19, and for those that were already out of work and education, the prospect of future work seems even more distant.

Our coronavirus action plan was set up to provide support for schools, key workers and young people isolated at home.



## ONLINE MENTORING

Online mentoring through virtual platforms helps us connect young people (aged 11-29) with experienced Sport 4 Life UK mentors to support them in making confident and informed decisions about their future, as well as the opportunity to check in on their wellbeing. At the beginning of the pandemic (March-July, 2020), 264 young people engaged in one-to-one online mentoring support.



## WORKING WITH SCHOOLS

Using a variety of online and distance learning approaches, we've been working with schools to support the most vulnerable individual students staying at home and provide group activities for those still in the classroom. Our aim is to support schools with one-to-one support and structure to pupils aged 11+ to help increase self-confidence and improve physical and mental wellbeing.



## ONLINE QUALIFICATIONS

We believe in building a better future for young people, and education is a key part of achieving this. We have expanded our services to help young people take advantage of online qualification opportunities so that they may upskill and develop their CV. At the end of July 2020, 54 young people had engaged with internal qualifications, 48 young people had attended employability activities, and we have supported 47 young people in starting online courses.

# THANK YOU

**We have been extremely grateful for everyone's support and contributions throughout 2019/2020, especially during COVID-19 and lockdown.**

In these uncertain times, young people need us now more than ever, and the support of our partners has helped us adapt and explore new ways to engage with and support young people remotely and digitally.

Thank you.



**“BEING ABLE TO LEARN NEW SKILLS, ACHIEVE A QUALIFICATION AND HAVE THE SUPPORT OF MENTORS HAS BEEN AMAZING. I CAN'T THANK YOU ENOUGH.”**

- Luke

# THE YEAR AHEAD

2019-2020 has been another year of significant change, both for Sport 4 Life UK and for the world. The road ahead is challenging and uncertain, but we will work tirelessly to support young people most in need and ensure that their futures are not defined by their present.

As the leading sport-for-employment charity in the West Midlands, we are well-positioned to be bold and ambitious over the next year. In the coming year (2020-21), we commit to:

**CONTINUE TO WORK WITH GOVERNMENT TO ENSURE YOUNG PEOPLE ARE REPRESENTED AND SUPPORTED**

**DELIVER SERVICES TO NEW AREAS IN THE WEST MIDLANDS REGION**

**ENGAGE AND SUPPORT MORE FEMALE PARTICIPANTS**

**LEARN FROM WHAT WORKS (AND WHAT DOESN'T WORK) TO BETTER MEET THE NEEDS OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE**





Youth unemployment is not yesterday's problem. The road ahead is challenging and uncertain, but we will work tirelessly to support young people most in need and ensure that their futures are not defined by their present.

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Sport4LifeUK



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