

# **Charlton Athletic FC and Community Trust**

## **Equality (Equity), Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)**

*All Different; All Together; All Charlton*

### **Community Usage**

Community projects supported by Charlton Athletic FC and Community Trust

**Annual Report: September 2022 to August 2023**

## Introduction

Charlton Athletic FC, alongside its Community Trust (Club Community Organisation – CCO), have a long, proud and important history of promoting equality and tackling discrimination. The relationship between Charlton Athletic FC, the Community Trust, and the local community, is of paramount importance.

As we highlight in our CAFC EDI Statement: “We want to build on this ‘unique proud, heritage’, by committing to integrating and embedding EDI across all areas of the Club - from Our Players and Our Staff, to Our Fans and Our local communities - and to making a difference”.

Charlton Athletic FC, its stadium (The Valley), and Training Ground, are located in the ‘heart of the community’. We recognise that we can have a positive impact on local communities, addressing a wide range of socio-economic issues such as those relating to education, health, and social inclusion. We have worked alongside, and engaged with, local community groups for a number of years. The stadium and other premises have long provided a crucial community resource, supporting and engaging with a diverse and wide range of community groups and voluntary sector organisations.

We are proud of the relationships that we have built and established with local community groups, and will continue to maintain and strengthen our engagement across all areas of the local community.

This Report provides a summary of the diverse range of community projects and initiatives delivered at the Club’s premises – including Player supported Appearances.

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## Valley Central Youth Hub

Valley Central Youth Hub runs weekly youth sessions every Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday evenings at the home of Charlton Athletic Football Club. The youth club offers a wide variety of activities for all young people aged 8-19 and up to 25 for young people with special needs and disabilities. Our generic activities include cooking, arts and crafts, pool table, table tennis and a variety of games.



The youth club also delivers a range of workshops and discussions around relevant topics and issues young people face in today’s society such as bullying, social media safety, grooming, peer pressure and much more. Young people also have the opportunity to take part in off-site trips and residential.



### **Young Greenwich Summer Holiday Activity Fun (HAF) at Valley Central**

Young Greenwich Summer Camp (HAF) is a free programme combining physical activity with active learning and a youth club creative arts offer. This camp also includes breakfast and a hot meal for every young person who attends. The project is aimed at young people aged between 8 and 15 in receipt of free school meals at the Royal Borough of Greenwich.

### **Men's Health Social Evening**

CACT's Men's Social Evening's run every Monday at The Valley. This group provides the opportunity for men to come together to build new relationships, connect with others and support one another in a fun, friendly and social way. The weekly group enjoys a variety of different activities from taking trips to local amenities like crazy golf, the cinema and even the local pub to taking advantage of what Valley Central has to offer, including table tennis and pool. This group provides opportunities and support to those who may feel isolated.

### **Extra Time**

The Extra Time Hub is a chance to get together once a week to take part in a wide variety of activities for health and exercise, from dance classes, to singing and curling. The aim of the Hub is bringing together retired and semi-retired people to engage them in 'active ageing'.



The Extra Time Hub is all about participation, people discuss and request the activities they'd like to do and places they'd like to visit. As well as the weekly Wednesday sessions at The Valley, there are a number of group day

trips. Past trips have taken the Extra Time group to Margate, Herne Bay and Canterbury Christmas Market.

### **Education and Employability Traineeships**

A 12-week education and employability programme for young people aged 16-24 who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET); it incorporates work experience to help prepare young people for their future careers by giving them the tools and experience required.

Trainees are referred and recruited from a variety of different places, including internally from other programmes, with referrals from Young Greenwich and CACT Mentoring. External referrals come from key partners including Local Authorities, Job Centre Plus, Pupil Referral Units and Royal Borough of Greenwich's Early Help & Children's Services departments.

Employability outcomes are crucial, with the objective of building the individual's self-esteem and interpersonal skills. The 100 hours work placement provides individuals with meaningful work experience, to best prepare them for their futures.

Traineeships are planned and delivered by a qualified teacher providing young people with:

- Education: English, Maths & Functional Skills
- Employability: CV writing, mock interviews & potential realisation
- Employment: Bespoke work placements in an area of interest

Lessons are delivered from Charlton's Valley Central Youth Hub, situated at Charlton Athletic Football Club's stadium. This more informal setting proves an effective learning environment, appropriate for young people, with many learners not ready for the sometimes more intimidating surroundings of a mainstream college.

### **Live Well Greenwich**

Live Well Greenwich is commissioned by the Royal Borough of Greenwich and delivered 6 days a week, operating from the CAFC Stadium.

It has humble beginnings, originally commissioned to support the Greenwich Get Active physical activity programme and the Kick the Habit smoking cessation programme. Over the years, it has expanded to offer a single point of access; an all-inclusive service to support residents and refer them to a range of community programmes across the borough. Live Well Greenwich now acts as the foundation for all of our Health Improvement work at CACT and CAFC.

Support is available through our free Live Well Community Hub helpline, where residents can connect with trained Health Improvement Advisors.

The Live Well team helps with:

- Eating well
- Moving more

- Social and community activities
- Stopping smoking
- Drinking less
- Housing needs
- Money, debt and benefit advice
- Employment and training
- Support for managing your long term condition

Health Improvement Advisors provide signposting and support to help residents live well, including referring and booking onto any services they may need. This includes referring to a network of local Live Well Coaches, who develop and maintain relationships with clients, motivating them towards leading healthier lifestyles.

Live Well Coaches offer up to six 45-minute sessions to help implement lasting lifestyle change and help people long term. These sessions take place within GP surgeries around the borough.



### **Kicks Saturday**

Charlton's Premier League Kicks projects uses the medium of sport to engage with young people and it is targeted at those living in communities where they are considered to be more vulnerable to crime either as victims or potential offenders.



The programme builds safer, stronger and more respectful communities through the development of young people's potential and engages youngsters who had previously proven 'difficult to reach' and guides them towards a range of healthy and constructive activities.

A key objective is to break down barriers between police and young people and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in the targeted

areas.

The free sessions for 8 – 18-year-olds are proven to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and increase interest in sports while creating life-changing opportunities that lead young people to find employment and education. Sessions take place at the CAFC Training Ground.

### Girls On the Spectrum

This is an extension of Charlton Kicks project and consists of free monthly football sessions for girls with autism aged between 8 and 18 years old, delivered at CAFC's Training Ground.

As part of the project the girls participating got the chance to attend live football matches at The Valley and The Oakwood. The participants also support CACT and Club events, performing roles such as being the mascots.



### Post – 16: Training Ground

Charlton's Post-16 Football and Education Academy is aimed at boys and girls aged 16-19 who are interested in combining their education with the life of a professional footballer. It is a two-year, full-time education and football development programme delivered in partnership with our education provider SCL.



Over the past three seasons, the Post-16 Academy students have produced a 100% pass rate across both Level 2 and Level 3 in Sport. Players have had the opportunity to trial with the CAFC Academy, exit routed into semi-professional and grassroots football and three players have headed to the USA for University in partnership with John Robinson Soccer USA.

### **Charlton Upbeats**

The Charlton Upbeats is a specific programme for children and adults with Down's Syndrome and has become a firm favourite with the Charlton fans. They also play in the Kent Adult Disability League and were successful in being league winners in their first season. The Upbeats are also 9 times, National Down's syndrome champions.

The programme specialises in providing a progressive and safe environment for players of all ages to



reach their full potential. It provides a clear pathway for young players who are learning the basic skills in the game up to senior competitive football.

### **AIM**

Football session for young people with Autism delivered weekly at the CAFC' Training Ground, providing a safe and inclusive environment to improve on their football abilities whilst developing other skills and meeting new people.

## Charlton Athletic Invicta FC

Charlton Athletic Invicta FC are Charlton Athletics' LGBTQ+ inclusive team.

Invicta were the first LGBTQ+ inclusive team to formally affiliate to a professional club and community trust in the UK.

Invicta became affiliated in 2017, and have gone from strength to strength - promoting equality and diversity in football, across a wide range of LGBTQ+ themes.





In February 2020, Invicta received the Grassroots Football Award at the inaugural Football v Homophobia awards. Invicta train and play their home games at the Club's Sparrows Lane training ground, competing in the London Unity League.



## Holiday Courses

Charlton runs holiday football courses across the year for both boys and girls aged 4-15 at CAFC's Training Ground, as well as, in other venues across Southeast London and Kent every half-term and school holiday. From skills sessions to football tournaments, young people will take part in various football-based activities whilst taking part in the course.



At the end of each week, participants take part in a penalty shootout tournament and prizes are given out by the coaching team.

### Advanced Centre

The Charlton Athletic Community Trust's (CACT) Valley Gold Advanced Centre is a football programme



aimed at young males, aged between 5 and 13 years old, who stand out for their footballing abilities, providing them with elite training and opportunities to progress into the Charlton Athletic Football Club's Academy.

The sessions are run on Tuesday and Friday evenings at CAFC's

Training Ground and are delivered by UEFA A and B licensed coaches. The training provided follows CAFC's Academy's curriculum and scheme of work, which focuses on enhancing players' technical, physical, social and psychological abilities.

To become a participant of the Advanced Centre, players need to be formally invited by a CACT coach or a CAFC scout by attending one of CACT's football sessions and displaying great technical abilities, good understanding of the game and excellent movement skills.

### Head in the Game

In partnership with 'Head in the game', a collaborative 12-week mental health and wellbeing programme was delivered, starting on the 17th April at CAFC's Training Ground.

Aimed at men from West Kent and South London, the football-based programme allowed the participants to engage in weekly sessions whilst improving their mental health as well as their fitness levels.



## Themed Match Days

CAFC and CACT deliver in partnership a variety of themed match days, including:

- 'Young Greenwich/Greener Game',
- 'Red, White and Black Day' – Promoting Equality and Tackling Discrimination
- 'Football V Homophobia Day'
- 'Rainbow Laces Day'
- 'Her Game Too'
- 'Breast Cancer / Menopause Day'
- 'Junior Addicks Day'

A key feature of last season was the **Red, White and Black Day**, highlighted below:

Special guests Baroness Doreen Lawrence OBE and Charlton Legend Paul Mortimer led the annual Charlton Athletic and Charlton Athletic Community Trust (CACT) Red, White and Black Day on 2 April at The Valley.

Red, White and Black Day is an initiative that has been part of the Charlton fabric for over 25 years. This year the parade from Charlton station to The Valley included over 300 people from the Charlton family for a day that celebrated diversity and inclusion. This year's event theme was **'All Different, All Together, All Charlton'**.

Baroness Doreen Lawrence, one of the most high-profile Equality campaigners in the UK who has fought tirelessly for social justice, led the parade, alongside Paul Mortimer, a former Charlton player and now Patron of LGBTQ+ supporter group Charlton Proud Valiants. A leading representative from the Royal Borough of Greenwich joined the parade, as well as men's U23 players and Charlton Athletic Women's players plus CACT's Chair of Trustees Marilyn Toft and CACT's Trustee Martin Griffiths CBE and representatives from Charlton Athletic.



The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Greenwich presents Baroness Lawrence with a Charlton shirt to commemorate the life and legacy of her son Stephen Lawrence

In addition to the Community Parade, Charlton hosted two free webinar sessions in March as part of the Red, White and Black Day, together with the Stephen Lawrence Day Foundation and University of Greenwich.

**CHARLTON ATHLETIC RED, WHITE AND BLACK DAY 2023**  
**MONDAY 27 MARCH (7PM - 8PM) - FREE WEBINAR - #RWB2023**

**ALL TOGETHER, ALL DIFFERENT, ALL CHARLTON:**  
**A CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF STEPHEN LAWRENCE**

As part of #EFLTogether Month, Charlton Athletic, the University of Greenwich and The Stephen Lawrence Day Foundation will be hosting virtual panel discussions looking at **Football and Equality**, in conversation with:

**Sean Clare**  
Charlton Athletic First Team Defender

**Tracey Leaburn**  
Head of First Team Player Care (Charlton Athletic)

**Michael Hector**  
Charlton Athletic First Team Defender

**Charlotte Richardson (Host)**  
CharltonTV

Logos: ITRM, Charlton Athletic, 30th Anniversary Stephen Lawrence Day, University of Greenwich, EFL TRUST, EFL

The webinars celebrated the life and legacy of Stephen Lawrence as this year marked 30 years since his murder in Eltham. On Monday 27 March, Charlton Athletic men’s first team players Sean Clare and Michael Hector joined the club’s Head of First Team Player Care Tracey Leaburn for a webinar around the theme of ‘All Together, All Different, All Charlton’, hosted by Charlotte Richardson.

On Tuesday 28 March, Dr Leroi Henry, a University of Greenwich Senior Lecturer, hosted a webinar with Paul Elliott CBE, the FA’s Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Special Advisor to the Chair and CEO; Jess Neil, CEO of the Stephen Lawrence Day Foundation; and Sunder Katwala, Director of British Future.

**CHARLTON ATHLETIC RED, WHITE AND BLACK DAY 2023**  
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**Paul Elliott CBE**  
(FA EDI Special Advisor to the Chair and CEO)

**Jess Neil**  
(CEO - Stephen Lawrence Day Foundation)

**Sunder Katwala**  
(Director of British Future)

**Dr Leroi Henry (Host)**  
(Senior Lecturer - University of Greenwich)

Logos: ITRM, Charlton Athletic, 30th Anniversary Stephen Lawrence Day, University of Greenwich, EFL TRUST, EFL

## Upbeats Day

Another key match day to highlight was the **Upbeats Day**, showcased below:

On Saturday 29 April, over 180 Charlton Athletic supporters gathered to take on the 9-mile Upbeats Walk, sponsored by DNEL Events.

This annual event was its most successful yet, bringing in over £49,000 for the programme which supports young people and adults with Down's syndrome.

All the money the walkers have helped to raise will allow the Upbeats to continue to provide vital opportunities to the Upbeats over the next 12 months, from their regular football training sessions to playing in tournaments across the United Kingdom. There will also be more opportunity to offer the Upbeats a range of social and employment-related activities throughout the year.

Ahead of the walkers setting off from CAFC's Training Ground, CharltonTV's Scott Minto introduced legends Bob Bolder, Simon Webster and Paul Mortimer, and then First-Team Manager Dean Holden.

Despite it being a matchday, Dean even joined one of the walking groups himself for the first part of their journey around New Eltham.

The halfway point for the walkers was at Charlton Lido and Lifestyle Club, where walkers were greeted by the Upbeats and members of the visiting Everton in the Community (EITC) Down's syndrome team.



When reaching the finishing line pitch side at The Valley, the walkers were met with a fantastic atmosphere with Upbeats, EITC players and CACT Ambassador Dave Berry among those ready to clap them over the finish line.

The Upbeats and EITC players then got ready to face each other on the pitch. There was so much talent on display, with Everton winning the first game and the Upbeats winning the

second thanks to a hat-trick from William Ely, but it was a memorable meeting for all involved.

Men's first-team player Ryan Inniss presented medals to the Upbeats and EITC players after their games.

During the matches, CACT Ambassador Dave Berry interviewed a range of Charlton faces as well as a few of the Upbeats.

Dean Holden said:

“I was at the Training Ground there for the walk, and you can see what it means to them, and it’s not just the guys as well; the families, the siblings, it’s not been an easy time. So, the more we can do to improve their life, we have to do it. Football is a game for everyone.”

Young Upbeat Betsy was delighted to be chosen as a mascot and walked out with the Charlton Athletic and Port Vale first-team players.

At half-time the Upbeats did a lap of honour before gathering pitchside to watch Upbeat Jonathan West take on the Valley Gold Crossbar Challenge! Valley Gold kindly donated £500 to the Upbeats.

After a 3-2 win from Charlton Athletic’s men’s team against Port Vale, Danny Mardell was named as the Player of the Match from the Upbeats game. Danny took part in the 9-mile walk himself and raised over £6000! Charlton Athletic Women’s players also wore Upbeats t-shirts ahead of their 1-1 draw with Crystal Palace Women on Sunday 30 April.

### **Charlton Food Bank Club**

Delivered from Valley Central Youth Club every Friday, the Food Club provides the opportunity to local residents to buy a full box of quality products by a much cheaper prize. The club has high number of attendees every week and provides residents with healthy food options.



### **Charlton Athletic Reminiscence group**

A group of Charlton fans who meet every Thursday afternoon at Valley Central Youth Club, at the CAFC’s stadium, to have tea/coffee and socialise. They are very passionate about football and Charlton and spend most of the time discussing about how the season is going, the latest matches, changes in the squad team and management and other Charlton-related topics.

### **Ability Counts**

A club based in CAFC’s Training ground, with teams playing in adult and junior divisions.

Ability Counts is a Chartered Standard Club who specialise in providing Disability football. Since it started in 2005, it has grown from strength to strength, providing football to hundreds of children and adults with weekly sessions run by qualified FA coaches who have a good knowledge of disability football.

The club is self-funded and run entirely by volunteers.



### Football v Homophobia tournament

An initiative supported by the Club and the Proud Valiants, this tournament takes place once a year and reunites a variety of football teams from different backgrounds, including CACT Invicta FC, in support of LGBTQ+ rights and to raise awareness of homophobia in football.



## Charlton Athletic Sensory Room

Charlton Athletic Football Club has recently opened a Sensory Room located at the Stadium, providing a safe space for young people and adults with disabilities to be able to watch matches and engage positively as fans.



This increases inclusivity and the diversity of the fan base, as it gives opportunities to participate and enjoy a live match experience to people that wouldn't be able to otherwise.

## Player Appearances at Community Projects

CAFC Men's Team and Women's Team players contribute to community projects by giving their time to come to projects, talk to participants, and engage in a variety of ways.





The table below provides an overview of all the Charlton Athletic Player Appearances conducted last season, in a variety of Charlton projects:

| <b>CACT Project</b>             | <b>Player(s) / Manager</b>             | <b>Visit role</b>   | <b>Date</b>       |
|---------------------------------|--|---|-------------------|
| <b>Football Holiday Courses</b> | Ella Rutherford                        | Q&A and photos with over 50 participants  | 17 August 2022    |
| <b>Trauma Training Workshop</b> | Corey Blackett - Taylor                | Listening to and interacting with trauma workshop for young people  | 06 September 2022 |
| <b>Greenwich Film Festival</b>  | Rachel Newborough                      | Watching a screening of Bend it Like Beckham at The Valley and being part of a panel discussion around women's football                               | 21 September 2022 |
| <b>CACT Awards</b>              | Ben Garner                             | Attendance at CACT's awards evening with a 100 other partners and stakeholders invited  | 06 October 2022   |
| <b>Upbeats Training</b>         | All man's first team players and staff | Surprise visit to Upbeats training session, with 30 participants. CAFC Players had kickabout and photos with the Upbeats players                      | 15 October 2022   |
| <b>Football Holiday Courses</b> | Jake Forster-Caskey                    | Q&A and photos with over 50 participants  | 24 October 2022   |
| <b>Football Holiday Courses</b> | Emily Simpkins                         | Q&A and photos with over 50 participants  | 28 October 2022   |
| <b>EFL Girls Cup</b>            | Ryan Innis                             | Watching matches and posing for photos with participants  | 24 November 2022  |
| <b>EDI Training</b>             | Sean Clare                             | Discussion on the importance of EDI and photos  | 24 November 2022  |
| <b>PL Kicks</b>                 | Angela Addison<br>Sophie O'Rourke      | Q&A and coaching at Kicks session   | 30 November 2022  |
| <b>EFL Kicks Cup</b>            | Terell Thomas                          | Watching matches and posing for photos with participants  | 01 December 2022  |
| <b>Football Holiday Courses</b> | Jojo Wollacott                         | Q&A and photos with over 50 participants  | 20 December 2022  |
| <b>EFL Week of Action</b>       | Sean Clare                             | Speak to around 100 to 150 participants on the importance of reading, sharing what he reads and taking pictures and autographs with the young people. | 17 January 2023   |
| <b>EFL Week of Action</b>       | Beth Roe                               | Book reading session with local primary school and interview with local press   | 20 January 2023   |
| <b>Upbeats Training</b>         | Lois Roche<br>Hannah Godfrey           | Attend Upbeats session to show support  | 24 January 2023   |

|   |  |  |                  |
|---|--|--|------------------|
|   | Ella Rutherford<br>Corinne Henson              |  |                  |
| <b>Schools Tournament</b>                     | Todd Kane                                      | Q&A and photos with over 50 participants   | 02 February 2023 |
| <b>Girls Tournament</b>                       | Hannah Godfrey<br>Lois Roche                   | Q&A session and photos   | 03 February 2023 |
| <b>Schools Winter Cup Competition</b>         | Miles Leaburn                                  | Q&A and photos with over 100 participants  | 09 February 2023 |
| <b>Football Holiday Courses</b>               | Mannie Egbo                                    | Q&A and photos with over 50 participants   | 16 February 2023 |
| <b>Post-16 Football and Education Academy</b> | Macauley Bonne<br>Albie Morgan                 | Q&A with 30 to 40 students aged 16-19. Players provided a background to their careers and explained the ups and downs of football life | 20 February 2023 |
| <b>Avery Hill Youth Club</b>                  | George Dobson<br>Poppy Soper                   | Discussion on sustainability topics with 15 to 30 young people and judging best design of a 'green' CAFC logo                          | 21 February 2023 |
| <b>PL Primary Stars Tournament</b>            | Sophie O'Rourke<br>Heidi Logan                 | Q&A and signing session  | 03 March 2023    |
| <b>PL Kicks</b>                               | Steven Sessegnon                               | Playing in a FIFA tournament with participants of CACT's Kicks project   | 07 March 2023    |
| <b>Red, White and Black Day</b>               | Tracey Leaburn<br>Sean Clare<br>Michael Hector | Zoom call to discuss various areas on tackling racism  | 27 March 2023    |
| <b>Red, White and Black Day</b>               | All women's first team players                 | Visit from Stephen Lawrence Foundation ahead of themed match day   | 31 March 2023    |
| <b>Football Holiday Courses</b>               | Corey Blackett - Taylor                        | Q&A and photos with over 50 participants   | 03 April 2023    |
| <b>Football Holiday Courses</b>               | Ella Rutherford<br>Corinne Henson              | Q&A and signing session  | 05 April 2023    |
| <b>Football Holiday Courses</b>               | Melissa Johnson<br>Sian Rogers                 | Q&A and signing session  | 12 April 2023    |
| <b>Football Holiday Courses</b>               | Michael Hector                                 | Q&A and photos with over 50 participants   | 13 April 2023    |
| <b>Football Holiday Courses</b>               | Chucks Aneke                                   | Q&A and photos with over 150 participants  | 29 July 2023     |
| <b>Football Holiday Courses</b>               | Conor McGrandles                               | Q&A and photos with over 50 participants   | 25 August 2023   |