



# INSIGHT INTO ACTION

THE LESSONS FROM THE  
DOORSTEP SPORT CLUB  
PROGRAMME 2013 - 17



# SECTION 4

**GROWING LEADERSHIP,  
VOLUNTEERING AND SOCIAL ACTION**

**GROWING YOUNG PEOPLE'S  
LEADERSHIP, VOLUNTEERING AND  
SOCIAL ACTION 'KNOW-HOW'**



**The issue:** : Creating a volunteering offer that is attractive to disadvantaged youth and which narrows the gap in rates of volunteering between them and more affluent youth.

**The answer:** Doorstep Sport participants love to volunteer in their own neighbourhood and value the chance grow their skills and competence as well as improve the quality of the DSC offer and life in their community.

The DCMS strategy, 'Sporting Future' and the Sport England strategy, 'Towards an Active Nation' confirm the value of volunteering to sport, to communities and to the individual volunteer. We welcome this recognition because disadvantaged young people are under-represented in sport's volunteer workforce, both as short-term and long-term volunteers. This unfortunate situation creates a vicious circle - too little sport in a neighbourhood generates too few volunteering opportunities and in turn, too few volunteers generate too few opportunities to play sport. It's a cycle that Doorstep Sport can break since there seems to be an endless supply of disadvantaged young people who want to volunteer at their DSC.

At the start of the DSC programme, only a few hosts were providing opportunities for their participants to step up to volunteer. Hosts said they

were inhibited because the transition from participant to volunteer is not always easy and they needed support and training to make sure the young volunteer succeeded. We developed the training that hosts need to effectively mentor individuals through this transition. This training is not available anywhere else and it was developed with help from the Youth Action Network and the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation.

Since 2013, 131 hosts have helped over 3,300 young people step up and volunteer. Almost all the volunteers originally joined the DSC as participants. The number of volunteering opportunities could have been greater, but the roll-out was limited because funding for it was outside the scope of the DSC programme funding. About 150 hosts are still on the waiting list. By way of example – see case study example from [North Tyneside](#).

The DSC programme tells us that when the right structures and offers are in place, disadvantaged young people step up to volunteer, enjoy it and gain a lot from the experience. As a result, the quality of Doorstep Sport in their neighbourhood improves. Hosts insist that the young volunteers who have matured within their DSC, and are now employed by the host, are the best coaches on their staff.

The network nature of the DSC programme improved the volunteer experience. Young volunteers tell us that they like feeling part of a national network and meeting up with their peers from across the country at festivals, residential training opportunities and the other gatherings that shape the annual StreetGames calendar. For example, at the annual leadership residentials, young people consistently tell us that they love 'meeting new people' at these events and many continue to keep in touch through social media.

*"The residential has been nice, you get to meet people from all over the country... It's been tiring but it's been eye-opening as well... I've learned people skills, being in a room of different people it makes you adjust and it's given me social skills."*

## Young volunteer's views on volunteering: Why they like it

External evaluations identified a common set of motivations amongst the young volunteers. These are summed up as Fun, Altruism, Belonging and Self-development (FABS). When asked what they 'get out of volunteering', respondents most commonly mentioned experience, confidence, qualifications and new skills, friendships, enjoyment, helping others and a sense of achievement.

FABS confirms the lifestyle research. Once again, enjoyment, mixing with friends and seeing pathways towards personal goals are motivators.



## Young volunteers' motivations: FABS!

### FUN

Enjoyment pure and simple, smiles and laughter, feeling good in one's skin, mirroring other people's enjoyment, feeling good in doing good, extending and challenging yourself

### ALTRUISM

Giving / paying back to the community, doing good and feeling good in doing good, feeling valued by the community, helping and being helped

### BELONGING

Being a member of a group, team, club or family (of your own volition, not through any external compulsion or peer pressure), being affiliated to, allied to, associated with that team, increasing friendship networks, feeling valued by the community, having a place in the community, having people around whom you can trust and who will support you when times turn tough, helping and being helped

### SELF-DEVELOPMENT

Maturing and developing through life as an individual, increasing your stock of 'life-skills' – confidence, resilience, communication including listening, empathy and fellow-feeling, helping and being helped, growth in aspirations and ambitions and 'self-improvement', extending and challenging yourself, increasing 'technical' skills e.g. sports, leadership, gaining experience and qualifications – for themselves and for helping to open up careers



# Types of volunteer in Doorstep Sport

Almost all DSC volunteers are also participants and so live within the DSC’s catchment area. The most common age is between 16 and 22.

## The short-term volunteer

Some young people begin their volunteering journey by helping out at an event or festival. This experience is enhanced when the event is a high profile, large scale public event such as the Great Manchester Run. These opportunities help young people to see the benefit of volunteering for personal development, to experience the nice feelings gained when helping others, as well as its value to their story about themselves (their, ‘brandme’). This short term volunteering experience helps the young person build know-how to volunteer in sport. It also helps some to get started on the journey to being a more committed volunteer.

## The committed, long-term volunteer

A young volunteer who does more than support events can chose to learn to run the weekly DSC sports session, run tournaments and assist at our large-scale events - like summer camp or residential or design youth-led activities in their own patch. Many will enhance their communication and organisational skills through involvement in their club’s social media presence and by joining planning groups. Some will buddy-up with newcomers to help them settle in to the DSC.

For most, this journey starts out by ‘helping out’ in the session they are participating in. The coach or mentor identifies when the time is right to offer that individual the chance to get, ‘more involved and help out’ in the DSC. This notion of ‘helping out’ is important as young people often don’t feel like ‘volunteering’ is for them. Over time, the role, skills and confidence of the young person increase through experience and mentoring.

The volunteers hone their skills, grow their confidence and have the opportunity to gain recognised awards and qualifications. Volunteers have accessed 11,312 training qualifications and workshops to support their personal development and improve their skills for delivery in Doorstep Sport sessions.

## Youth Leadership

DSC volunteers are capable of much more than helping out. Clubs need to hear the voice of participants; participants need a voice in the running of their club. Otherwise, it’s not really ‘their club’. The volunteers are often this voice, and are heard through informal communication, formal committees, consultation groups, online surveys and responding to social media campaigns.

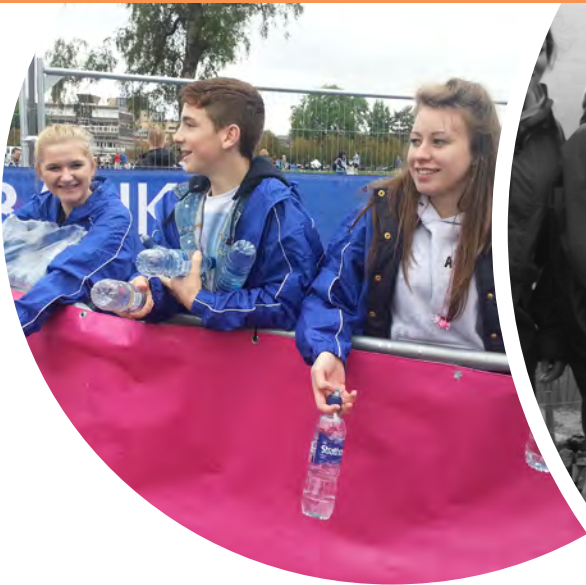
The DSC programme also found great things emerge when young people run their own micro-project. It is amazing what a group of 6 young people can do with £500. Examples include:

- Organising a themed roller disco for 50 young people across Birmingham
- Planning a European trip to represent England in a football tournament
- Devising and delivering a training day to reward 25 volunteers for their commitment to delivering Doorstep Sport.

For some long-term volunteers, their time on the programme brought them a Level 2 coaching award. This puts them on the first rung to earning money by coaching. The StreetGames Training Academy has built up expertise in training reluctant learners who require alternative methods of teaching and assessment.

### The DSC supports young volunteers by:

- Training hosts to support the transition from participant to volunteer
- Providing networking opportunities and the chance to share best practice for volunteers and mentors
- Providing development opportunities and qualifications for volunteers
- Providing opportunities to volunteer outside their local area on exciting projects like summer camp.
- Providing recognition and awards for host and volunteers.
- Providing resources and kit: programme uniform helps bond the volunteers.
- Financial support, for example, with a volunteer’s expenses.



## ‘Light Bulb’

### Practice

- Disadvantaged youth like to volunteer and get a lot out of it. They also improve a DSC’s offer.
- Coaches and leaders need training to support disadvantaged young people to step up to volunteer.
- Youth leadership is an excellent progression on from more traditional volunteering. Furthermore, the young volunteers like to take ownership of social action projects that deliver change for the benefit of other young people.

### Policy

- Volunteers increase their skills and capacities and enjoy themselves.
- Feeling part of a group of volunteers is very important and so are the symbols of belonging – like hoodies and Awards Nights.
- Many girls are reluctant to step apart from their peers and become a volunteer. New investment programmes should be mindful of this gender difference while not underestimating the number of girls who want to lead in the mixed environment.
- Young people value being stretched and will offer-up imaginative solutions to local problems.

## Training Workshops

StreetGames also provides **training workshops** across a range of different topic areas. If you are interested in learning more about growing young people’s leadership, volunteering and social action ‘know-how’ you may be interested in the following workshops:

- Volunteer Manager Training
- Mentoring Volunteers
- Youth Action with Volunteers



-  StreetGamesSportsCharity
-  @StreetGames
-  StreetGamesVideos
-  StreetGamesUK
-  [www.streetgames.org](http://www.streetgames.org)

