



TRANSFORMING THE LIVES OF YOUNG SOUTH LONDONERS

ANNUAL BROCHURE 2024/25



SUPPORT PALACE?



SUPPORT PALACE FOR LIFE

TRANSFORMING THE LIVES OF YOUNG SOUTH LONDONERS



We are Palace for Life, the official charity of Premier League football club Crystal Palace, and we have been a core part of the south London community for over 30 years.

Our aim is simple. We use the power of the most popular sport in the world – football, and the club we love – Crystal Palace, to help transform the lives of young south Londoners.

Every year, our dedicated coaches and mentors work with over 16,000 young people to provide regular, free physical activity, help with education, training or employment needs, and support with mental health and crime reduction through one-to-one mentoring.

Our place in the community is unique. We are the trusted partner of social services, police and local councils and provide the support and interventions they sometimes can't. We are welcomed into communities that are closed to many other agencies. We have the infrastructure, skills and experience to deliver safe and impactful programmes.

South London is a hotbed of talent, but growing up here can be tough. We're all about giving young people in our community the right opportunities to help transform their lives, in the way they want to, all using the unique power of Palace.

Last season was record breaking in more ways than one, so now it's time for a few thank-you's.

Special appreciation to those who participated in our seventh Marathon March and everyone who took on our 160-mile cycling challenge from Selhurst Park to the Molineux in May – both groups raised over £150,000 collectively.

To our Palace Aid partners, players and supporters, thank you. You made the day very special and raised some vital funds in the process! Huge gratitude also goes to our Investors, long-standing and new recruits alike, who continue to bring in crucial funds to support our work in south London. We can't wait to work together again this season.

To all of our funders and sponsors, we couldn't deliver the work we do without you. We appreciate your continued support and look forward to putting your funds to the best use possible. We are also hugely thankful to our PlayMakers, our volunteers who help young south Londoners throughout the year to achieve their dreams.

To everyone who has engaged with us or learned about us this season. By making any sized donation, talking to us on social media or simply spreading the word with your friends and family – it's this support that keeps our engine running and it's invaluable.

Thank you to the Premier League for their vital support and direction.

At Palace for Life, a big thank you goes to our incredible group of office staff, coaches and mentors who are out in the community day-in-day-out making a tangible difference to the lives of young people.

Of course, massive gratitude goes to our club, Crystal Palace F.C., and we simply can't thank them enough. The support we get from using the club's facilities, leaning on the staff's expertise and funding is absolutely central to our achievements.

Finally, thank you to every single participant who we have worked with and will work with in the upcoming season.

As we step into a new season, our ambition to support as many young south Londoners as we can is stronger than ever, and you can read about some of the impact we've had, and our aims for the future, in the following pages.

Mike Summers
CEO, Palace for Life



OUR VISION

A south London community with Crystal Palace F.C. at its heart; where every young person, irrespective of race, religion, belief, or background has the opportunity to lead a healthy and happy life.

OUR MISSION

To help young south Londoners grow using the power of sport and inspiring them to find a better path in life, for a better life.

OUR VALUES

TEAMWORK

We support everyone around us and treat them with respect, working together to achieve great results.

PRIDE

We are proud to represent Palace and aspire to be the best in everything we do.

INNOVATION

We are not afraid to try new things. We are creative and inspiring, and are always seeking new ways to progress.



KEY THEMES

We run a variety of projects designed to address key issues affecting young people in south London. Our work for the 2024/25 season focuses on three main themes, but is not limited to:

TACKLING THE UNDERLYING CAUSES OF YOUTH VIOLENCE

- Providing safe spaces to play football
- Targeted mentoring for young people at risk of getting caught up in crime
- Building of close partnerships with local community and faith groups, the Police, Violence Reduction Unit and other local key decision makers

IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH

- One-to-one mentoring
- Delivery of school-based mental health initiatives
- Free physical sports programmes

INCREASING THE NUMBER OF WOMEN AND GIRLS WHO PLAY FOOTBALL

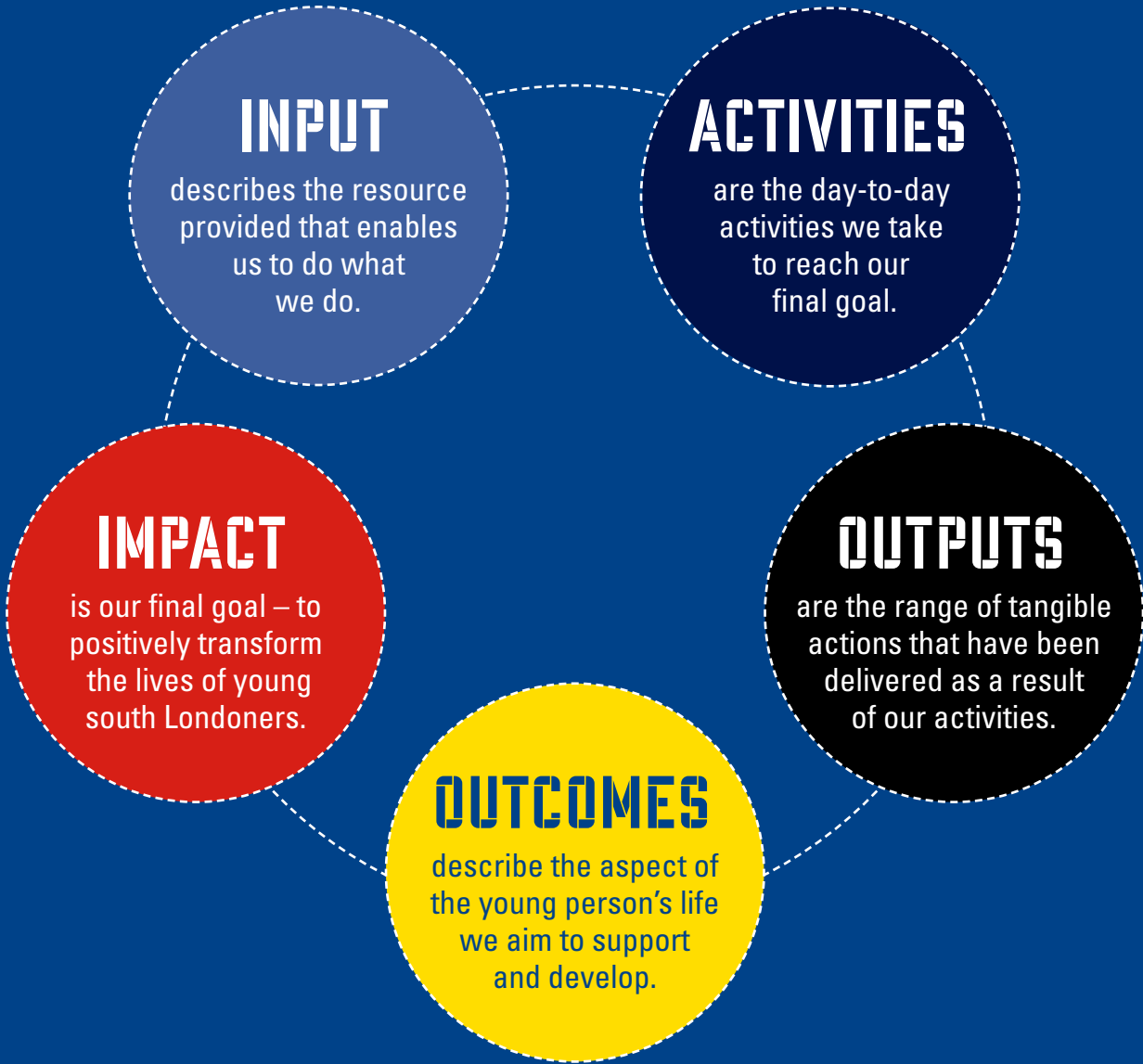
- Dedicated, regular football for women and girls
- Emerging Talent Centres
- Close ties with Crystal Palace Women

THEORY OF CHANGE

A Theory of Change is a map that shows why we do what we do, and how we expect to make a difference to the lives of young people in south London. In simple terms, it's a way of showing how our actions as a charity lead to positive outcomes for the people we work with.

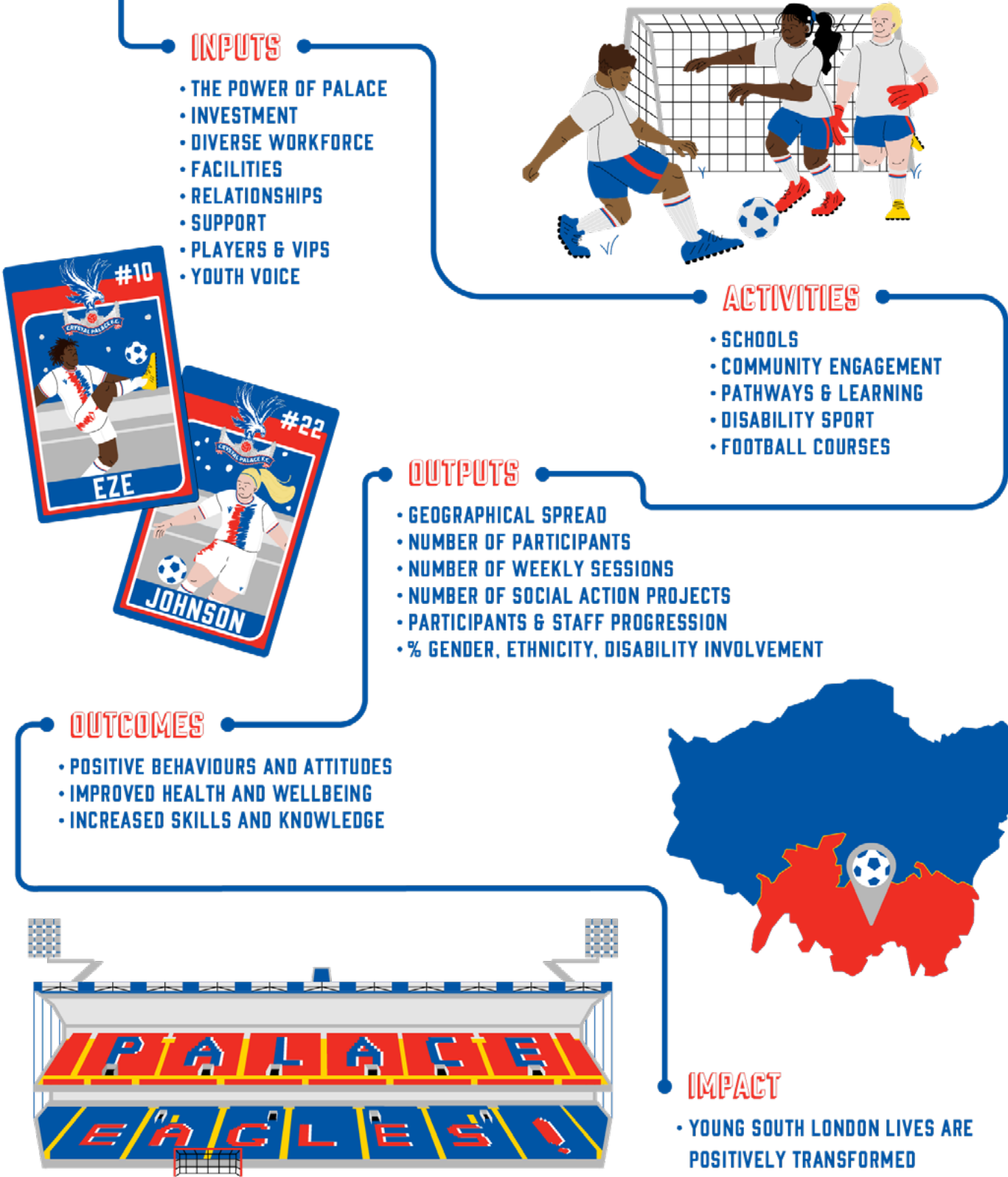
We started by defining our long-term goals and then mapped backwards to find out what we needed to do to make them happen.

Our Theory of Change is split into the five descriptors below.



THEORY OF CHANGE

SOUTH LONDON IS A HOTBED OF TALENT, BUT GROWING UP HERE IS TOUGHER THAN EVER. WE ARE DETERMINED TO ENSURE YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY ARE GIVEN EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO SUCCEED.



CROYDON: THE NUMBERS

Our work extends across different areas of south London, but the statistics from Croydon, our host borough, offer a clear snapshot of the local demographics and highlight some of the challenges that the young people we work with encounter.

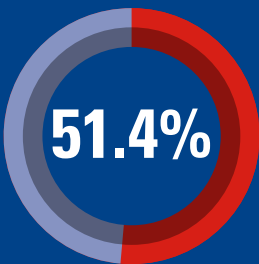
DEMOGRAPHICS



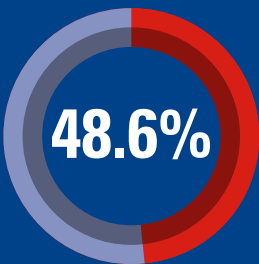
Croydon's is London's most populated borough, home to around **390,000** people



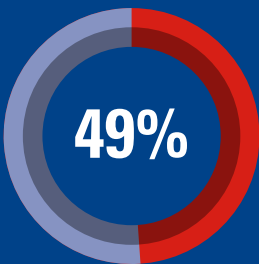
1 in 4 people in Croydon are aged **0-17** – the borough with the **highest proportion** of young people in London



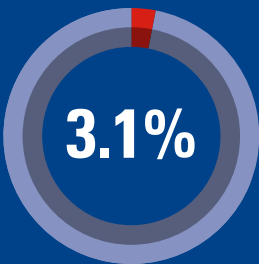
51.4% of Croydon's population is Female



48.6% of Croydon's population is Male



49% of Croydon's residents are from **Black, Asian, and mixed heritage ethnicities**



3.1% of Croydon's population identify as **lesbian, gay, bisexual and other non-straight identities** including, **pansexual, asexual, queer** and other

CRIME



In the rolling months to 31st March 2023, the total number of knife crime incidents in Croydon **DOUBLED** to **1,120** compared to the previous year's total of **543**

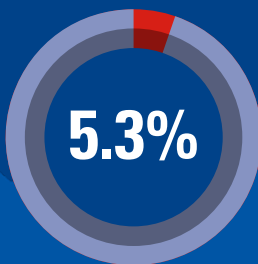


In 2022 and 2023, the number of **race hate crimes** averaged **863** per month, more than average of the previous year



22% increase in Met Police recorded offences involving a **knife or sharp instrument** in London in the last year (up to September 2023)

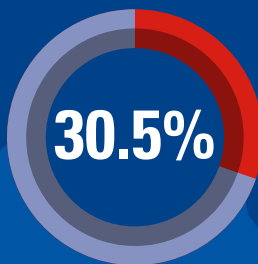
EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT



Unemployment in Croydon rose to **5.3%** in 2023, with **11,400** people jobless, up from **4.7%** in 2022



Croydon is in the top quartile compared to other London councils for having a higher proportion of **16-17-year-olds** not in **education, employment or training**



Almost a third (**30.5%**) of Croydon's population is aged **0-24**; adding pressure for education provision and other services for children and young adults





AKRAM'S STORY

PROMOTING COMMUNITY COHESION IN CROYDON

How one teenager is working with us to engage the Asian and Muslim community in football.

Akram lives in Croydon and is combining studying for a finance degree with working on our Get Involved community programme, which is funded by the Premier League and Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) and gives opportunities for young people and adults from the Asian and Muslim communities to participate in football and increase cohesion with other communities through joint activities.

He has been a volunteer for the last two years and is now a qualified coach where he leads sessions on the programme. Here, he speaks about his experiences:

I was the first participant in the Get Involved programme. It all began with an after-school football club hosted by the Palace for Life at my secondary school. Hazmi, a coach and now my mentor, recognised my interest in football and approached me with the idea of working with the Asian community and possibly pursuing a career in coaching the sport in the future.

They proposed an idea that appealed to me – to encourage the Asian community to get involved in football whilst also battling discrimination and identifying talent in the local area.

I remember being the only person at the first session but word quickly spread, resulting in many people who were interested in being a part of this project.

I began as a volunteer and have now become a coach working at community sessions, after-school clubs and player-development centres, as well as hosting tournaments and Iftar events at both Selhurst Park and Crystal Palace Academy. With the Get Involved project, we give children a chance to showcase their talent and help them improve their football abilities.

I also host community Iftar's during Ramadan, public charity events, and my very own mosque league on Sunday night where mosques in south London come together and play each other in a league format.

"They proposed an idea that appealed to me – to encourage the Asian community to get involved in football while also battling discrimination and identifying talent in the local area."

The sessions demonstrate how inclusive this Get Involved project is and how it caters to all ages in the community.

Hazmi, my mentor being by my side and consistently giving me advice on how to become a better coach, as well as praising me for my work, has boosted my confidence. Being able to coach young people has also allowed me to enhance my leadership skills and express my passion for the sport.

Football is important to me as I not only use it as a form of physical exercise but also as an escapism. It allows me to clear my mind and get away from the stress that I may have with university or work.



Football is significant in my community because it serves as a platform for social integration, encouraging interaction and cooperation among various groups of people. It provides a common ground for people from all walks of life to come together, celebrate successes, and support one another, fostering social cohesion within the community without making anyone feel judged.

Participating in Get Involved has given me a sense of belonging. There is a significant amount of discrimination against Asians in football, and as an Asian myself, giving young people the opportunities that I never had makes me feel like I am in the right profession.

It makes me feel happy that I can give back to the community and help younger people achieve their footballing ambitions. What I like most is seeing a lot of young people attend the sessions and giving them the opportunity that I never had while growing up.

Get Involved has helped engage and include the Asian community in football, as it takes into consideration religious timings, festivities and religious calendars across the year. It has provided me with a platform to be able to participate in the sessions when I was younger, allowing me to develop my footballing ability and express myself on the pitch. They also introduced me to different avenues, for example, the opportunity to become a coach.

It has allowed me to overcome many challenges, as I never thought that I would have the opportunity to become a football coach, especially due to my ethnicity. I want to gain all my coaching badges, make my way into elite football and become a coach at a big football club.

Akram's story was captured as part of a Premier League Charitable Fund and Goal Click collaboration to showcase the impact of the Premier League and Professional Footballers' Association Community Fund.



Akram helped host our third annual Iftar event at Selhurst Park as part of this year's Ramadan celebrations. Our Iftar events are part of our ongoing mission to welcome more people to the game, especially our local Asian and Muslim community, the latter of which makes up 11% of the community in Croydon.

DID YOU KNOW?

We had 583 unique participants on our Get Involved programme in 2023/24.

WHAT WE DO: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Working with 8 to 18-year-olds from the most vulnerable and marginalised groups, our Community Engagement programme encourages individuals to participate in free physical activities to help instil a long-term healthy

lifestyle. These sessions include our flagship programme Premier League Kicks, the Asian involvement initiative Get Involved and many of our girls' football sessions.

2023/24 SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

Hosted an **International Refugee Week tournament** at the Crystal Palace Academy, welcoming over **60 young people** from forcibly displaced communities

Fully funded **6 participants** to receive an **FA Introduction** to Coaching course

Welcomed over **2,000 unique participants** have taken part in over **50 different sessions**

Ran **10 workshops** to **264 participants** on topics such as **race and racism, LGBTQIA+ and CPR**

WHAT WE DO: DISABILITY SPORT



We support people of all ages living with a disability, including the delivery of Down's Syndrome, Powerchair, Vision Impairment and Mental Health football sessions. We help participants improve their motor skills and

physical fitness, as well as help build self-esteem and provide opportunities to interact with new friends and the wider community.

2023/24 SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

Brand-new classroom named in our honour at **SEND school Addington Valley Academy** in Croydon - affectionately known as **'Palace Class'**

Increased our **SEND** school delivery to **12 schools**

Over **750 participants** took part in our Disability Sport programmes this year

We started our first Down Syndrome-specific **GAME ON** employability cohort of **15 participants**

WHAT WE DO: ADULT HEALTH



Through our adult health hub, we deliver activities to help reduce social isolation, improve mental well-being and increase physical activity. This includes our popular Men and Women’s walking and recreational football teams.

2023/24 SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

Our Women’s Walking Football team trained with **Andrew Johnson** as part of their **2024 Marathon March** fundraising efforts

A large number of our **Women’s Walking Football team** once again took part in the Marathon March, raising **£1,750**

WHAT WE DO: PRIMARY EDUCATION



We work in numerous schools in south London, delivering the Premier League’s Primary Stars programme, Team Mates, Wildcats and After School Clubs, all to help support and engage children and their teachers through physical education, targeted interventions and events for children in primary school years as they transition into secondary. In the 2023/24 season, we engaged over 3,000 students in our Primary Stars programme.

2023/24 SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

We hosted **9 Primary school football competitions** at the **Crystal Palace Academy** facility

8,000 pupils were engaged within the school year

Delivered activities to over 80 schools across **Croydon, Bromley, Lambeth and Sutton**

Worked with **216 pupils** as part of our **Team Mates** programme, supporting them with **mental health** and **well-being**, and their transition from **Primary to Secondary school**

Secured funding from the **Premier League** for the **Fans Fund** programme, which aims to **engage diverse areas** of the community who may not be comfortable attending or engaging with football

WHAT WE DO: ROUTE TO EMPLOYMENT



Our Employment team support young people furthest from the job market and helps them feel ready for the world of work. Our flagship employment programme, GAME ON, supports young people into positive pathways into

education, training or employment through workshops, competitions and work experience. Participants will learn skills in leadership, teamwork, personal branding and entrepreneurship.

2023/24 SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

Over 250 young people attended our **Opportunities Fair for Careers in Sports**

In partnership with French charity **Sport Dans La Ville**, we hosted a tournament for corporate clients at the Academy for over **150 participants** to fund our **10-day French Exchange Trip** in July 2024

We grew our GAME ON programme to 164 participants

48 have gone into **full-time** or **part-time** employment

27 have engaged in volunteering roles or work experiences; qualifications in **Stewarding**, **Refereeing**, **Hospitality** (food hygiene) and **Construction**

55 have pursued **training qualifications** through our courses or external training programmes

24 have enrolled in **educational courses** ranging from college to higher education

WHAT WE DO: SOCCER SCHOOLS AND FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT



We deliver a range of football programmes for young south Londoners aged 5-18, focusing on player development, pathways and fun.

These are open to both boys and girls and can include pathways into the Crystal Palace Academy.

2023/24 SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

1,149 participants across **boys' and girls' Soccer Schools** resulting in a **26% increase** in revenue compared to 22/23

116% increase in **female weekly attendance** across our **Player Development Centres** in comparison to 22/23

5 male players attending **Crystal Palace Academy** for 8-week trials

8 female players offered **PGA** (Pro Game Academy) places at **Crystal Palace**, **Charlton** and **London City Lionesses**

WHAT WE DO: TARGETED INTERVENTION



Our expert mentors work with those who are facing challenging situations by engaging them in our one-to-one mentoring. Our mentoring offers support to those who are

at risk of entering the criminal justice system, those who need some help with their mental health, or those who need some guidance through challenging life experiences.

2023/24 SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

We have worked within **6 different education settings** across **Croydon** and **Bromley**, offering mentoring support following multiple referrals. In one college, **John Ruskin**, we have delivered **mentoring** and **group activities** to **75 students**

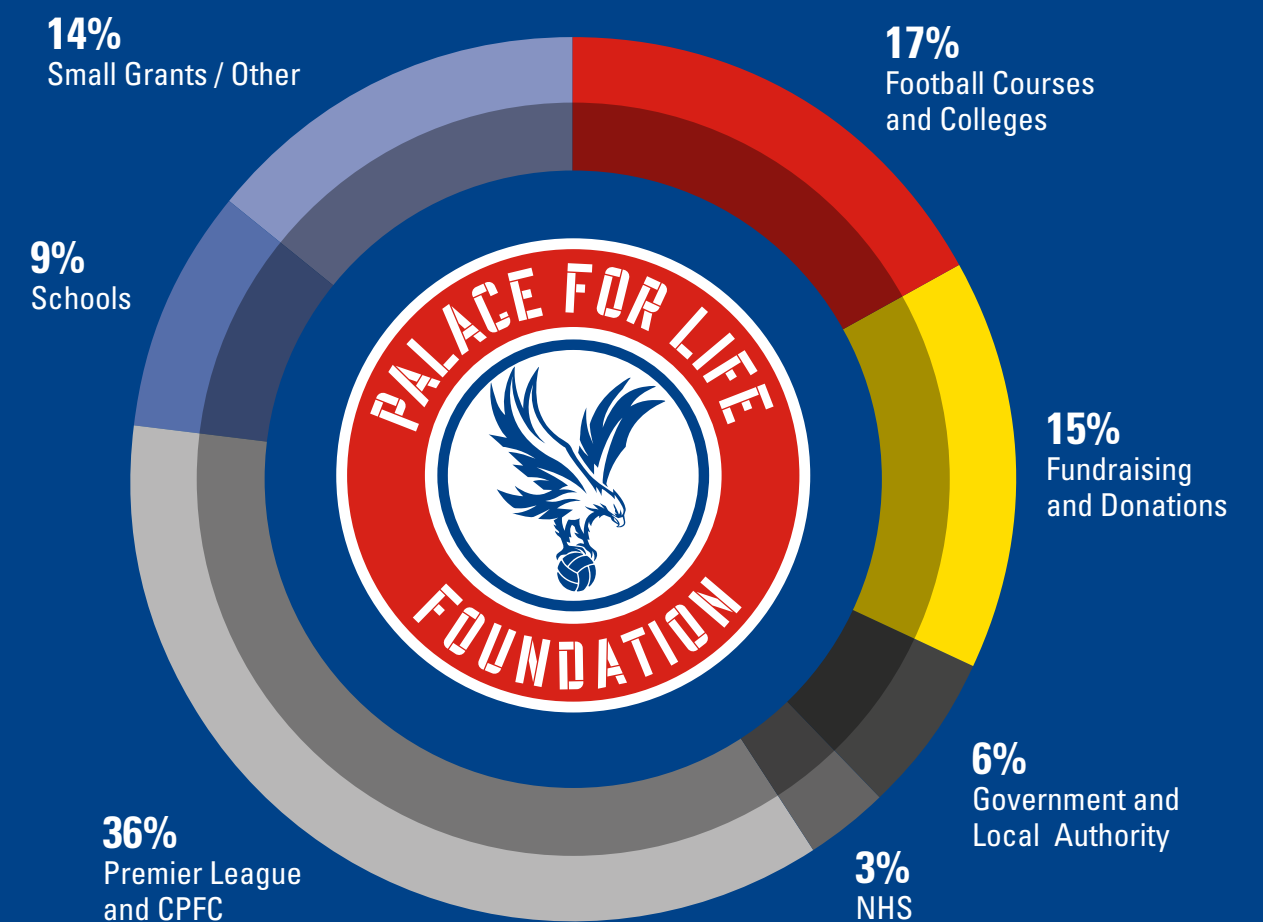
313 young people participated in mentoring activities or 1:1 mentoring

This included **101 young people** who participated in the **DIVERT** programme at the **Croydon Custody Suite**, where we work with under-25s who have been arrested, to get them back into **employment** and **training**

FUNDING OUR WORK

We have a diverse range of income sources to fund our work on a long-term sustainable basis, and to give us the flexibility to thrive irrespective of unexpected changes in external circumstances.

The forecast breakdown by source for the 2024/25 season is as follows:





MARY'S STORY

HOW MENTORING HELPED MARY ACHIEVE HER GREEN DREAMS

17-year-old Mary's struggles with anxiety left her feeling uncertain about her future, but she was certain that she wanted to pursue her dream of working in sustainability and politics. With the help of our mentoring and employment team, Mary was quickly snapped up for an apprenticeship with the City of London's Cleansing and Gardens Team and is well on the way to achieving her green dreams.

17-year-old Mary grew up in nearby Shirley with her Dad, a Palace fan and matchday steward at the club, so Palace would always play a part in her life. She began working with us back in October 2023 after struggling with anxiety and feelings of self-doubt. She left college, and whilst this was right for her to do, her choice to leave education left her feeling a different kind of pressure, which was to find a job.

This feeling weighed heavy on Mary and left her feeling hesitant about what steps she needed to take to pursue her real passion: sustainability and politics. Whilst participating in our GAME ON programme, which aims to set young people up with the skills needed to take the next steps in their career, she met Eimear, who felt Mary could benefit from taking part in our mentoring programme. Shortly after, they were paired up as mentor and mentee.

Mary and Eimear meet weekly at Selhurst Park, focusing on confidence-building and addressing day-to-day concerns. A key issue for Mary was finding work experience in sustainability and politics. With the help of Tom from the GAME ON programme, Mary soon began volunteering with Norwood Junk Action, a local non-profit organising community litter picks and art installations.

Mary's involvement with Norwood Junk Action gave her valuable experience and boosted her confidence. Despite initial challenges, like her new schedule and caring for a brand-new puppy, Mary's self-doubt began to dwindle. Eimear emphasised the importance of balancing professional commitments with personal well-being, helping Mary create a timetable that included volunteering and personal activities like gym sessions and self-care.

A crucial part of our mentoring programme is to provide practical support in amongst a variety of difficulties facing young south Londoners in 2024 – the continuing cost of living crisis, the little-known after-effects of being in education during the pandemic, and a fall in opportunities for local employment to name a few – but a large chunk of the work our mentors do is to offer regular encouragement and a listening ear. In Mary's case, one of the most useful ways to build her confidence was reminders of everything she has already achieved, like her speech to local students she presented for Norwood Junk Action.

With Eimear's support, Mary prepared a presentation for local students about a community project she would lead with Norwood



Junk Action. The project involved organising regular litter picks and creating an installation focused on mental health. Despite her natural nerves, Mary breezed through the speech and was over the moon with how it went.

With Mary now on a roll, she felt a lot more confident to interview for a sustainability apprenticeship at the City of London, a role she

"It's been incredible to watch Mary's confidence and resilience grow as she's progressed through the programme."

applied for a week earlier. Eimear supported Mary in her interview prep, providing positive encouragement and challenging her self-doubt. In Eimear's words: *"You just delivered a brilliant presentation to the school last week, you can smash this interview!"*. But really, it was all Mary's doing as she was promptly offered the role. Tom, who we mentioned earlier, also played a huge part in offering the practical support needed for this type of interview.

We spoke to Eimear who is delighted with how far Mary has come even though she's only halfway through the mentoring programme: *"It's been incredible to watch Mary's confidence and resilience grow as she's progressed through the programme. She's shown real*

determination and a willingness to confront her challenges. She's worked incredibly hard and should be extremely proud of her achievements."

Her new role with the City of London is in the Cleansing and Gardens team, which is responsible for the upkeep and cleanliness of the city's streets and the management of its green spaces. Part of her role will be to coordinate volunteering activities and promote the city's biodiversity action plan to volunteers and the wider public. Mary says the support and techniques offered by Eimear are helping her to believe she can reach her dreams despite her anxiety. Helping her to learn how to work with and manage her anxiety, instead of it being something that holds her back. Even though she has achieved so much already, Mary is only halfway through the programme, so her mentoring sessions are still ongoing for the next few months. Mary started her apprenticeship in February and Eimear will continue to support her throughout her journey. We can't wait to see what she gets up to next.

DID YOU KNOW?

164 young people received employment, education and training support through our GAME ON programme in the 2023/24 season.

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDRAISERS

Last season, Palace fans didn't shy away from a challenge. Their fundraising through our two flagship challenges, the Marathon March and Bike To events broke records in Palace for Life history, both in participation and in money raised!



MARATHON MARCH

Over 200 Palace fans took on our annual charity fundraiser, the 'Marathon March', walking 26.2 miles around south London to raise money for our programmes. Together, they raised over £100,000!



BIKE TO WOLVES

In our 'Bike to Wolves' challenge, 34 cyclists rode from Selhurst Park all the way to the Molineux, home of Wolverhampton Wanderers – a huge 160 miles – and raised £49,000.



PALACE AID

Think Soccer Aid, but Palace. We ran our biggest charity match ever in June, Palace Aid. We hosted over 40 celebrities and former players for a match to raise money to help end youth violence in south London. Andrew Johnson and Doc Brown went head to head once again, with AJ's team nicking the win in an 8-2 thriller.



INVESTORS CLUB

This season, we built on the success of the Investors Club, which is a group of like-minded individuals and businesses who have pledged to donate £1,000 or more to us each year. We're thrilled to have grown the group to 42 individuals and businesses who, as part of their membership, enjoyed two exclusive events including an in-depth discussion on transfer analytics with Lane Clark and Peacock and Academy insights with Academy Director Gary Issott in September. At our March Investors Club event, we were joined by Sporting Director Dougie Freedman and Head of Women's Football Grace Williams for a peak behind the curtain of the ins and outs of the role of a Sporting Director, and the secrets of the recent success of the Women's side and the squads' hopes for the future.

We also formally launched our Business Investors Club in June 2024, opening up the opportunity to invest in south London to local organisations so they too can make a huge difference through their businesses, play an active role in supporting our work on a philanthropic level, and act as vocal ambassadors and champions of our work across south London.

We can't wait to see the Investors Club grow even further this season with even more exclusive events and benefits.



HARRIS PHILANTHROPIES DONATE \$100,000 TO GAME ON PROGRAMME

Josh Harris, co-owner of Crystal Palace, and Marjorie Harris visited the state-of-the-art Crystal Palace Academy facilities to present a \$100,000 donation to us, which will go towards our flagship education, training, and employment programme, GAME ON.

Steve Parish, Crystal Palace F.C. Chairman said: "We're hugely grateful to Josh, Marjorie and Harris Philanthropies for their generous donation. It will make a massive impact on the most disadvantaged members of our community, particularly for those needing support with education, training or employment in an already challenging environment."



NATHANIEL CLYNE UNVEILS FOURTH SHIRT

Crystal Palace defender, former Academy player and south Londoner himself, Nathaniel Clyne visited his old school to unveil our limited edition fourth shirt. Only 1,000 were available and they sold out in a matter of days. All proceeds from the shirts went straight towards our work for a better south London.



15-year-old Tylei has gone from strength to strength since attending our Premier League Kicks sessions just under a year ago, earning herself a spot on our Emerging Talent Squad.

15-year-old Tylei from Lewisham is a rising star at Palace for Life. Her journey with us began when she started attending our girls-only Premier League Kicks community sessions at Selhurst Sports Arena, which is a couple of minutes walk from Selhurst Park. She joined us just under a year ago, and quickly caught the eye of her coach Gemma, who encouraged her to take her football to the next level. Encouragement that sparked an ambition to play at the highest level in the women's game – the Women's Super League (WSL).

Premier League Kicks is partly funded by the Premier League, and operates nationwide, offering free sports programmes to empower young people in underserved communities. For Tylei and many others, it can be their first introduction to football and offers a safe space for personal growth.

At Palace, our focus is on engaging young people in sporting activities to divert them away from crime and anti-social behaviour, or, simply, like in Tylei's case, to make new friends and play regular football in a safe and inclusive environment.

Tylei's mum discovered our free sessions online, and Tylei quickly embraced them despite initial her hesitation. With Gemma's support and a welcoming team, her confidence blossomed, which led to improvements on the field and friendships off it.

Tylei explained: *'at first I wasn't as confident, but after meeting some new people, I've made new friends.'* Over time, her new-found confidence translated into improvements on the pitch which earned her a place in our annual 'Kicks Cup' competition, where Premier League Kicks teams from clubs across the country go head-to-head in regional and national tournaments throughout the year.

Despite narrowly losing out in the semi-finals, Tylei played a key role in her team's progress as the top goal scorer in her team. She said she owes this to the communal and inclusive environment of playing within a welcoming team, and the supportive input from her coach, Gemma. Gemma noted: *"Tylei has a positive attitude towards football, not just for herself but also for her friends and peers around her. Since joining our Premier League Kicks sessions, I have seen her grow in confidence, make new friends and improve as a player."*

As Tylei was rapidly proving to be a promising footballer, ready to excel to the next level of her journey at Palace, Gemma gave her with the opportunity to attend a trial for our Girls Emerging Talent Centre (ETC) programme, which we launched in partnership with the Football



Association in August last year. It aims to provide more opportunities for girls to improve their footballing talent under the direction of highly qualified coaches, eventually improving their chances of playing the game at the highest level.

"Since joining us, she has shown a real dedication to her training, a constant willingness to want to improve, and great knowledge of the game."

Although Tylei felt 'shocked' and 'surprised' that she was offered a trial, she needn't have been. She passed with flying colours and is now excelling on the Under-16s team both as a player and a person.

Jake Foster, who looks after the Emerging Talent Centre (ETC) programme here spoke about Tylei's progress: *"Tylei joined our ETC programme after being recommended to us by my colleagues within the Premier League Kicks project. Since joining us, she has shown a real dedication to her training, a constant willingness to want to improve, and great knowledge of the game. Tylei has become a valued member of our Under 16 squad and conducts herself in a way to be a role model to the younger players we have at the centre. We can't*



wait to see Tylei continue to develop in our Emerging Talent Squad, and we're sure she is going to thrive in the upcoming fixtures." Gemma echoed Jake's sentiments: *"It's so inspirational to see Tylei come from a participant on our girls' Kicks sessions, to then go progress onto the ETCs. Hopefully, this will inspire other girls that they have the option to take their football journey further if they want to."* Tylei's is a shining example of what we're trying to do with every individual we work with – to use our expertise in our varying fields to open doors for young people in our community. As for Tylei, she explained in her own words the door she would like to open: *"I hope to play for West Ham in the WSL!"*, However, we hope that it's Crystal Palace.

DID YOU KNOW?

We increased female participation on paid football courses by 116% in season 2023/24 and 9 players, both boys and girls, from our Emerging Talent Centre's were offered a trial, or taken in for a period of time at the Crystal Palace Academy.



USING FOOTBALL TO HELP END YOUTH VIOLENCE

South London is a vibrant and dynamic place full of talented individuals, but growing up in many parts of the area can be tough. Young south Londoners face a range of complex issues, with youth violence being just one of them.

We work with a variety of local organisations to help address some of the underlying causes of youth violence, all with a shared goal: that young people can grow up with great opportunities in life, and not get caught up in serious violence. No single organisation can solve these issues alone, that's why we need all the firepower we can get. That's where community organisations working together, alongside the Met Police, Youth Justice Service, schools, colleges, pupil referral units and councils, pool our resources together to help tackle it.



PALACE AID

Our charity match, Palace Aid, made a return at the end of the 2023/24 season. This year, we partnered with Power The Fight, a violence reduction charity dedicated to supporting young people affected by violence. The profits from ticket sales and donations were evenly divided between their crucial work and our own mentoring efforts aimed at guiding young people at risk of falling into crime.



The event featured a range of notable guests, including regular captains Andrew Johnson and Doc Brown, as well as comedians Chloe Petts, Mo Gilligan, and rapper Michael Dapaah. We were also joined by Paul, Harry, Zack, Ross, Diane, and Jasmine from The Traitors Season Two, along with music artists Guvna B and Ramz.

While these high-profile events help raise awareness about our efforts to combat youth violence, we also maintain our ongoing Premier League Kicks football sessions. These sessions are designed to foster safer, stronger, and more respectful communities. Additionally, we continue our year-round one-to-one mentoring for young people at risk of entering the youth justice system, and we conduct school workshops aimed at building resilience among young people in south London.

CUT IT OUT

Cut It Out is an annual football tournament designed to bring together the Croydon community, celebrating cohesion among young people and local organisations such as the Met Police, Youth Offending Teams, and other key decision-makers.

It provides an opportunity for young south Londoners to play on the pitch at Selhurst Park during the off-season and celebrate the diversity of Croydon and the services within the borough that are open to the young people who live there.

Away from the football, the event also holds several stalls and information points from local delivery partners who offer positive pathways away from crime, violence and anti-social behaviour.

For Palace for Life, it's an opportunity to introduce relevant work such as one-to-one mentoring, Premier League Kicks and school workshops, which are all designed to help tackle the underlying causes of youth violence.

This year was no different as we saw hundreds of young people join the celebration, and we look forward to continuing the success of it in the 2024/25 season.



PHILANTHROPIC GIVING



Our Investors Club is a group of like-minded individuals and businesses who donate £1,000 a year or more, to support our work and help us reach even more young people in south London.

If you are interested in finding out more about the Investors Club, or giving a large, philanthropic gift, get in touch with our fundraising team at fundraising@palaceforlife.org

THANK YOU

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Ben Bailey Smith	Eddie Izzard	Saima Mohsin	The Rt Hon Steve Reed
Stephen Browett	Andrew Johnson	Susanna Reid	Chuka Umunna
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Investors - A huge thank you goes to our Business and Individual Investors for their support this season.

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