



SAINTS  
FOUNDATION



IMPACT REPORT 2026

CHARITY NO. 1090916

# Introduction

**We asked a selection of our participants to write an introduction to this years' Impact Report based on what they want the reader to know about Saints Foundation.**

Saints Foundation is a welcoming place. How we got involved is different for all of us, but what's key is what has kept us involved – the people and the chance to try new things.

There is lots of information within this Impact Report, but what we'd really like you to know is that Saints Foundation is a place where you can express yourself without being judged and where you don't feel lonely.

You can take what you need from the sessions, whether

that's improving your mental and physical health, having more confidence, getting back into education or realising and getting the help you need. It's somewhere that helps you to achieve your goals.

Continue to support Saints Foundation because of the work they do, not just with us, but others, to help them out and on the right path.

Our key message for you from this report is that with Saints Foundation, there is always someone there for you.

## PARTICIPANT COMMITTEE

### Board of Trustees:

Rachel Goldsworthy (Chair), James Few (Vice Chair), Francis Benali MBE, Helen Fisher, Anne Hendon-John, Amendeep Kaur Heer, Dishu Kaur Umfleet, Phil Parsons, Ben Walker, Ros Wheeler.

**Honorary Life Patron:** Tina Croucher



# How We Measure Change

We measure the difference our work makes by looking not just at the changes it supports people to make but also at what works best, for who, and why.

We try to understand the reasons behind change, not just the numbers. This helps us learn what really makes a difference so we can keep improving.

All our projects are measured against a shared set of goals, which helps us to be consistent, even when we use different tools to evaluate each project. Most importantly, people who take part in our work get to share their voices. You'll hear directly from them in this report; what they think has changed and how things could be even better.

We've also looked at value for money, using a special study called a social return on investment, carried out by independent experts.

We know we're still learning and improving how we evaluate our work. But we believe in being honest and open about how we measure our impact.

## Our Purpose:

**We support people in need throughout Southampton, providing life-changing opportunities to help our city and its communities thrive.**

To help us achieve this, we focus on five key goals that link with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals:



### Health

Helping people live healthier lives



### Education

Improving learning and opportunities



### Pathways

Creating positive pathways for those involved in, or at risk of involvement in crime



### Employability

Helping people access work and training



### Gender Equality

Supporting equal opportunities for everyone

We chose these goals after carefully looking at what our city needs most and working with partners and our communities to decide where we can make the biggest difference.

# Our Approach to Social Value

Social value is about the wider good that the outcomes achieved by our participants bring to people and the community, and is based on actual outcomes achieved, such as lives improved, stronger communities, or money saved for public services (like the NHS, police, or welfare system).

This is not something usually reflected in financial reports, but it looks at how our work benefits society as a whole.

This year, for the second time we are measuring the social value of our projects. We commissioned specialists Substance to undertake this work.

**For every £1 we spent on our projects, we generated £6.46 of social value in the city.**

Overall, in 2024/25 Saints Foundation generated

**£10,460,000**

*in social value*

This is over **£3 million more in social value than in 2023/24** with this being driven by both an increase in engagement and an increase in the positive pathways that participants were able to access.



Imagine we spend £1 running our Employability pillar and one of the young people gets support and eventually finds a job;



that's not just a win for that person, it also means less strain on benefits, more taxes paid, and improved wellbeing;



or if we spent £1 on our Pathways projects to help young people stay out of trouble, that's good for the community and saves money on policing, social services or even the cost of prison accommodation.



This outcome has value; and if all these benefits add up to £5, then we have created £5 of social value for every £1 we spent.

# Participant Outcomes

Throughout 2024/25 we worked with 6,511 unique participants, that's +13% more than last year and equates to 2.4% of Southampton's population. Furthermore, 87% of the people we engaged with were who we'd intended to work with, and 521 of our participants took part in more than one Saints Foundation project last year.

**5,545**

Participants achieved a positive outcome this year

VS

**4,930**

last year (+12%)

**12,991**

positive outcomes were achieved by those participants

VS

**11,796**

last year (+10%)

*"Made me believe I do have a future"*



**3,386**

Participants improved their mental wellbeing (+492 YoY)

*"It has inspired me to chase my dreams"*



**2,607**

Participants raised their aspirations (+92 YoY)

*"I could talk to people about my feelings without feeling ashamed"*

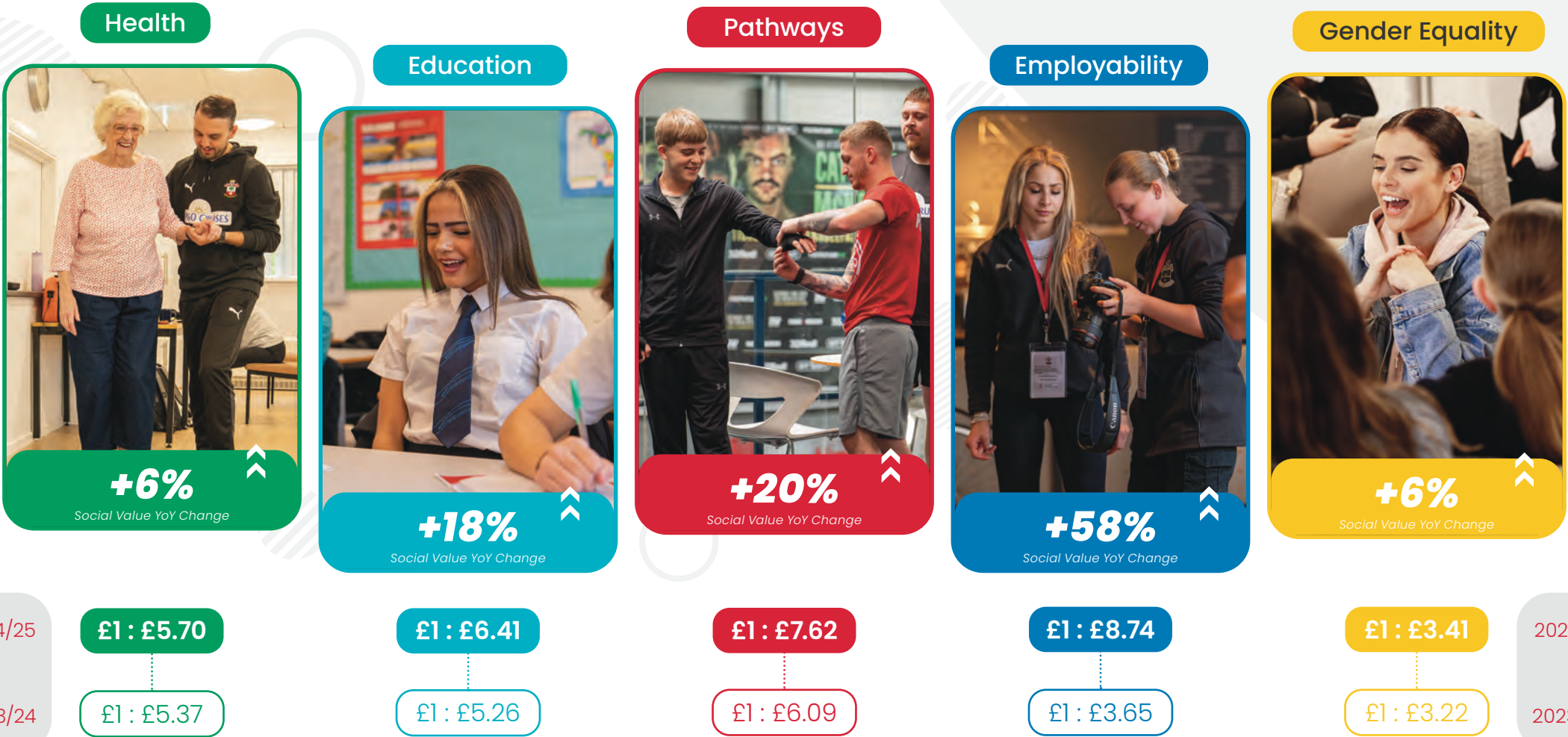


**2,674**

Participants formed stronger positive connections (+115 YoY)

# What's Changed Since Last Year?

The social value ratios of our five focus areas



We need to ensure every participant has a clear exit route from the project, whether that's internal or external.

### Action

We implemented a dedicated staff role to support with participant progression into paid work, as well as self-funding an 'internal caseload' within our employability pillar to support participants on what's next.

We need to mitigate against changes in employment opportunities for our employability work and diversify exit routes.

### Action

We have strengthened our relationships with partners outside of Southampton FC, providing increased resilience.

We need to strike the right balance with session size; no shows have an impact on smaller sessions and larger sessions can impact relationships.

### Action

The implementation of Senior Saints Hubs gives participants more options to engage, reducing average session size. Furthermore, for some of our interventions we have reduced the maximum group size to better meet participants needs.

We need to give new projects & areas time to grow and to learn from our practice as we become more experienced.

### Action

We have built this into our funding bids, and had comprehensive points of review for new areas of work, and new projects.

High average contact time, and the opportunity to engage multiple times per week increases participants likelihood to achieve an outcome.

### Action

The new Senior Saints Hub model provides participants with the opportunity to engage for 4x as long, alongside our Premier League Kicks provision running throughout the Summer. Saints By Your Side implemented pre engagement meetings and then ongoing monthly catch ups for project graduates and our Premier League Inspires project implemented 'catch up' sessions in school holidays for those who missed sessions in term time.

### What haven't we done.

1. Re-launched Saints Ability, the final project outlined within our theory of change
2. We haven't moved regular sessions from the stadium, although we plan to explore this next season
3. We haven't yet learned about the full impact of preventative mental health work

We believe in being transparent about the things we have and haven't managed to do. These key learnings from 2023/24 outline what we have managed to achieve, and what we still look to do in the future.

# Learnings

# Health

## Increasing positive health behaviour changes

Southampton has a significantly lower life expectancy than the national average– those living in the 20% most deprived (Southampton Data Observatory Inequality Profiles, 2021) areas have a mortality rate almost 2x higher than those living in the least deprived areas (Southampton City Council, 2024)

Our **Health** projects are shaped by the needs and ideas of our local communities. We're not just running sessions, we're focused on making a real, long-term difference to the health and wellbeing of everyone we work with.

Teaming up with the NHS, health agencies, City Council, and a network of community organisations allows us to make sure our efforts are targeted to meet local priorities. This helps us keep improving and ensures we're meeting the specific needs of our city and the people in it.



***"I have now got my life back!! I am more confident about falling now knowing that I have the tools to get back on my feet again."***

– Falls Recovery participant

### Falls Recovery

Falls Recovery gets people who have had an injurious fall back on their feet, working in our communities with NHS-referred patients to improve mobility, strength, and balance.

### SO14 Active

SO14 Active uses fun sport-based activities to encourage people aged 16+ in St Mary's and other local neighbourhoods to lead healthier, more active lives.

### Senior Saints

Senior Saints strives to help over 60s improve their lifestyle and maintain their independence through a mixture of physical exercise and social activities.

### Saints By Your Side

Saints By Your Side gives local men the tools they need to better manage their mental health through in-person group support sessions.

## Social Value Generated in 2024/25:

# £2,980,000

(+20% YoY)

## 59%

of participants of **Senior Saints** either reduced their levels of loneliness or increased their levels of physical activity, during their time on the project

## 64%

of **Saints By Your Side** participants increased their knowledge of mental health support or where to get help for mental health challenges

## 84%

of participants reduced their risk of an injurious fall through taking part in the **Falls Recovery** project

## 54%

of participants increased their physical activity levels through taking part in the **SO14 Active** project



**Learnings:** There is room to explore how we engage adults living in areas of deprivation.

# Education

## Increasing engagement in education

Southampton has one of the highest (Department for Education, 2024) rates of secondary school absence in the country, with 11% of all lessons missed (LAIT, 2024).

Going to school regularly is essential for helping young people to succeed in their education and reach their full potential later in life. It also helps them feel included and connected to others.

Our **Education** work supports these young people by working alongside schools to identify those who need extra help. We then offer support through one-to-one mentoring, group sessions, classroom support, and sports activities, which have all been designed to help students feel more engaged and confident in school.



***"I can open up and talk to people better not keep it all in"***

- Community Champions participant

## Community Champions

Community Champions places Saints Foundation staff in local secondary schools full-time, so they can help pupils who struggle in a traditional classroom setting reach their potential.

## Premier League Inspires

Premier League Inspires develops personal skills and aspirations of pupils in alternative settings, including our city's Pupil Referral Units and Special Educational Needs schools.

## Premier League Primary Stars

Premier League Primary Stars provides targeted support in primary schools to inspire children to learn, be active, and develop important life skills.

Social Value Generated in 2024/25:

£4,090,000

(+42% YoY)

60%

of participants increased their engagement in school through taking part in the **Premier League Inspires** project

64%

of participants improved their mental wellbeing through taking part in the **Community Champions** project

79%

of **Premier League Primary Stars** participants achieved at least one positive outcome



**Learnings:** The more likely a participant is to feel that they can talk to a member of staff, the more likely they are to achieve positive outcomes.



## Robert

### Senior Saints

3 years ago, Robert took a nasty fall which would leave him hospitalised. This year, at 72-years-old, he took on the Big Saints Skydive to give back to the cause that helped him find his confidence again.

*"It is the friendships that really make the difference, some of the people who I was at my very first session with, I still talk to on a regular basis to this day."*

1,017

participants made a sustained health behaviour change (+280 YoY)

2,227

participants increased their engagement in school (+227 YoY)

## Ethan

### Premier League Inspires

Due to living with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD), Ethan had no career ambitions or future aspirations before working with Premier League Inspires. After making such a positive impression on staff during work experience, he would start volunteering weekly at our Falls Recovery sessions.



In the transition from primary to secondary school, Erin lost her confidence, was struggling with anxiety, and clashing with her parents. Through working with the Premier League Kicks project, she not only regained her confidence but became a leader among her peers.

## Erin

Premier League Kicks

*"Special school children deserve the opportunity for work experience and to be able think about their future as much as anybody else."*

– Teacher at Cedar School

*"It wasn't until she started getting involved with Saints Foundation that I really got her back."*

– Erin's Mum

1,262

Participants reduced their offending or risk of offending (+283 YoY)

Read more about our impact stories



# Pathways

## Reduced offending

Southampton has the 14th highest crime rate in England and Wales, and 5th highest for violence with injury (Southampton Safe City Strategic Assessment, 2023/24).

Our **Pathways** Pillar is all about helping our participants move toward a positive future. We work with individuals facing tough challenges like gang involvement, peer pressure, or offending behaviour, and support them in reaching the goals that matter to them.

Whether it's helping young people get into education, providing access to leisure activities, or supporting adults to rebuild their lives and rejoin the community, **Pathways** offers the guidance, resources, and encouragement they need to take their next step forward.



***"It's been someone to talk to and help bring my confidence up, helping me feel good about myself again."***

**- Saints Switching Play participant**

### Premier League Kicks

Premier League Kicks uses football as a hook to connect with 8 to 18-year-olds, offering young people positive ways to spend free time, helping to unlock opportunities for their future.

### Saints Switching Play

Saints Switching Play works with referred young people aged 11 to 17, using targeted interventions to prevent and challenge offending behaviours.

### Saints Restart

Saints Restart supports ex-offenders with resettling in Southampton, working with HMP Winchester to support positive reintegration back into community life.

## Social Value Generated in 2024/25:

# £2,544,000

(+48% YoY)

## 86%

of **Premier League Kicks** participants made a new friend through taking part in the project

## 69%

of participants did not re-offend within 6 months of taking part within the **Saints Switching Play** project

## 90%

of participants achieved the goal that they set themselves when they initially signed up to the **Saints Restart** project



**Learnings:** Experience matters; we continue to see the more established a project is, the higher it's social return on investment.

*"I managed to get my first job from attending sessions at Saints Works."*

– Saints Works participant

# Employability

## Reduced unemployment

21% of Southampton's population are economically inactive. (Southampton Economic Dashboard, 2023/24)

Starting work for the first time can be tough, especially for many of the young people we support, who often face extra challenges that affect their confidence and motivation. These pressures can lead to issues like poor mental health or anti-social behaviour if the right support isn't in place.

Our **Employability** Pillar helps young people discover their strengths, build confidence, and take steps towards their first job.

By working in partnership with the DWP, local businesses, colleges, and industry experts, we connect young people with the training and opportunities they need to succeed. Saints Foundation helps them unlock their potential and build brighter futures.



### Saints Works

Saints Works engages 16 to 19-year-olds not in education, employment, or training (NEET) to develop their employability and life skills so they can take their first steps into the world of work or back into education.

Social Value Generated in 2024/25:

£685,710

(+282% YoY)

66%


of participants entered into employment or education through taking part in the **Employability** projects

57%

of participants improved their mental wellbeing through taking part in the **Employability** projects



**Learnings:** The growth in engagement comes with a price – whilst it helps increase social value, it has a negative impact on our ability to support people to achieve stronger positive connections and increase their aspirations.



***"If I see people being disrespectful, I can tell them to stop. You don't have to look sad to be sad"***

– Team Mates participant

# Gender Equality

## Women and Girls Thriving

A recent report by Plan International, 2025 highlighted that Southampton is one of the toughest places in the UK to be a girl – and in Southampton intimate partner violence is 1 of the top 10 risks of years of life lost to disability for women (Global Burdens of Disease, 2019).

Our **Gender Equality** Pillar focuses on building a fairer, more inclusive community by empowering girls to reach

their full potential and educating young people of all genders to understand and challenge inequality.

Through education, advocacy, and targeted projects, we break down stereotypes, remove barriers, and promote equal opportunities for everyone within the Southampton community.

## Changemakers

Changemakers empowers, inspires and develops leadership potential in girls aged 11-16, opening up pathways and boosting aspirations for the future.

## Saints Team Mates

Saints Team Mates, in partnership with Yellow Door, is delivered in local primary and secondary schools to encourage positive relationships, challenge gender bias, and reduce discrimination against women and girls.

Social Value Generated in 2024/25:

£153,510

(+57% YoY)

59%

of participants who took part in **Saints Team Mates** increased their understanding of gender stereotypes and why they are harmful.

71%

of **Changemakers** participants achieved an outcome that contributes towards women and girls thriving.



**Learnings:** There is still room to improve how effective we are at ensuring our projects are accessible to those who need them most.



## Jess

### Changemakers

In her own words, Jess was “scared of getting things wrong” so often wouldn’t speak at all, and her voice would very rarely be heard whether it was in, or out of the classroom. While Jess’ journey culminated in Changemakers, positive connections through Community Champions and Premier League Kicks all led to her becoming a leader and role model to other participants.

*“If I didn’t do Changemakers, I wouldn’t be where I am today. I wouldn’t feel confident in my voice, and I wouldn’t feel ready for the next stage in life.”*

**99**

participants became  
gender equality allies  
(-3 YoY)

# Kurtis

## Saints Works

Kurtis was low on confidence when he first engaged with us, had been out of education for well over a year and didn't see any pathway into his dream career. Through Saints Works, he gained confidence and attended workplace tours with our Corporate Patrons Williams Shipping, where he impressed with his passion. Kurtis has now been employed with them, and has continued to thrive in his role.

*"Saints Works is a brilliant opportunity for us to identify and work with individuals that really want to be involved in those sectors that are relevant to what we do."*

- Corporate Patron

67

participants entered  
employment or  
education (+57 YoY)



Read more about  
our impact stories



# How can you help?



Registered with  
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REGULATOR**

## Make a donation

Consider making a one-off or recurring donation to support our work.



The work we do within the community is not possible without the generosity of people, businesses, and institutions who care about the city – quite simply, we couldn't do it without you.

Your support is essential to our work. Whether through donations, fundraising, or corporate support, every contribution plays a vital role in helping us reach more people and create lasting change.



Promote us on social media



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