

# FOOTBALL FOR ALL!

**FUNDED BY:** The Hat-Trick Community Football project is funded by Greets Green Partnership, the Football Association and West Bromwich Albion Football Club.

**PROJECT BACKGROUND:** Hat-Trick is part of a national scheme which is aiming to tackle social issues through football. Locally, the scheme is a partnership between the Football Association, UEFA, Greets Green Partnership's Health Theme, Sandwell Council and West Bromwich Albion FC's Community Programme.

In 2005, Greets Green was chosen as one of the 19 allocated areas nationwide to provide football opportunities for children, young people and adults, while addressing issues such as health, community safety and education. A Community Football Officer was appointed in December 2005 to work on this project. His aim is to work closely with schools, local clubs and the community to get more people into football; develop leaders and coaches from within local communities and support the Government's target of providing two hours of PE in schools every week.

**PROJECT IN ACTION:** Russel Smith, who has a background in football development work and coaching, has been employed by West Bromwich Albion for three years to run the Hat-Trick Community Football Project throughout the Greets Green area.



*The Hat-trick project is encouraging youngsters and adults in Greets Green to be healthier, get involved and enjoy playing football.*



Russel says: "I'm trying to create a network of opportunities for the community of Greets Green to play and participate in football at all levels. It's about people being healthier, being involved, doing more activity and playing more sport. Hat-Trick is a great project because it doesn't just focus on youngsters, or just on boys. Making the most of your interest in football - playing, training, eating right and keeping active - is for everyone."

Kelly Simmons, The FA's Head of Football Development, says that the Hat-Trick national scheme was launched because the most obvious benefit football brings, is to health. "We are all aware of the increasing concerns about obesity in young people," she explains. "That's why it's so important for football's governing bodies and the government to work in partnership together to create more structured opportunities to play our national game."

"It follows on, that as young people become more active and involved in leadership and coaching opportunities, we are more likely to begin tackling anti-social behaviour and some of the other problems that stem from boredom and lack of direction."

**ACHIEVEMENTS:** The Hat-Trick Community Football Project well and truly 'kicked off' in Greets Green at the start of 2006 and is already giving residents of all ages greater opportunities to learn, play and get fit. Plus, different

communities are being brought together through the sport. It's also enabling local people to develop their skills by offering them a chance to gain coaching qualifications. The qualifications will mean that they can help organise community football in the future, and so encourage even more people to get active, or they could even go on to gain paid work in the field.

The project got off to such a flying start that it recently received national recognition by appearing as the lead story on the 'Grassroots' section of the FA's official website – [www.thefa.com](http://www.thefa.com) – when 40 pupils aged 14-16 from George Salter High School proved they were on the ball by completing a six week Junior Football Organisers course, their photograph and story were featured at the top of the FA's website. The course provided the youngsters with an insight into coaching and organising football training and tournaments for children.



*Footballers from the Pakistani community in Greets Green have taken their first step towards gaining coaching qualifications thanks to the project.*



Other achievements include:

- Youngsters from George Salter High School and local primary schools have been taking part in match-days at West Bromwich Albion. They've enjoyed a training session and lunch at the ground, before watching the team play.



*The Hat-trick project is for girls as well as boys.*

- Girls showing they're just as good as boys by getting stuck in to a five-a-side girls' tournament at George Salter High School. The tournament was eventually won by Newtown Primary School, and the Football Association's Girls Development Officer for the Black Country, Laura Milburn, was very complimentary about the ability displayed by all the teams who took part.

- Hat-Trick's Russel Smith and the Primary Care Trust's Joyce Hays working with the Eight Locks men's football team to offer health, diet and fitness tests. Manager, Goff Rowe says: "With Rus coming along we have tailored our training methods to add in these fitness aspects and the team has benefited by using this new approach." The player with the most improved fitness levels after the five month scheme was invited to attend Albion's home game against West Ham.

- Lyng Falcons U14's football team celebrating its successes, which have included winning the Bilston League Cup, thanks to support from the Hat-Trick project. They train under Elvis Bogle and Mark Garraty, assisted by former Aston Villa Defender, Bryan Small. Bryan coaches at their Saturday training sessions, with input from Hat-Trick's Russel Smith. Elvis says: "I enjoy putting something back into the community of Greet's Green."

- West Bromwich Albion's Baggy Bird helping out in May with the celebrations marking the refurbishment of Lodge Road Community Centre. The Hat-Trick project provides various football activities at the Community Centre and School including offering coaching sessions and running clubs for pupils.



*Local parents with their 'Soccer Parent' certificates which they completed on-line via the FA's website.*



- Half a dozen young footballers from the Pakistani community in Greet's Green taking their first step towards gaining coaching qualifications. They usually play at Lodge Road Community Centre and gaining coaching qualifications could enable them to lead football sessions in the community or gain work in the field.
  
- West Bromwich Albion player, Curtis Davies visiting three Greet's Green schools to introduce the Hat-Trick project. At Newtown Primary School, Curtis took part in a PE session, and at Ryders Green he participated in a computer workshop in the school's new learning centre. He then took part in a question and answer session with Year 10 GCSE pupils at George Salter High School.
  
- A Unity Football Tournament at George Salter High School in May, which proved a huge success, with 90 young people taking part. Youngsters from white, Yemeni, Bangladeshi, Indian, African Caribbean and Pakistani communities were joined by the Lyng Falcons football team for a fun-filled day of football. As well as being lots of fun, the day had the serious message of encouraging racial harmony in Greet's Green. It showed that football has one language and no boundaries.



*The Unity Football Tournament at George Salter High School, attended by Adrian Bailey MP, showed that football has one language and no boundaries.*

**For more information about the Hat-Trick Community Football Project, call Football Development Officer for Greet's Green, Russel Smith, on 08700 662 840 (local rate) or 07904 588095.**

Greet's Green Partnership was awarded £56 million in 2000 to deliver a 10 year regeneration programme under the Government's New Deal for Communities (NDC) initiative. It has funded more than 100 projects throughout the area, covering community empowerment, crime & community safety, education & lifelong learning, health, housing & urban form, jobs & enterprise and neighbourhood management. The Partnership area, which is adjacent to West Bromwich Town Centre, is home to just over 12,400 residents living in 4,900 households.

**To find out more, call Greet's Green Partnership on freephone 0800 953 0215.**



Greet's Green Partnership,  
 Ground Floor, Court House, 335-337 High Street, West Bromwich B70 8LU  
**Tel: 0121 533 3188**  
 Fax: 0121 533 3168