Chapter 1’s ‘Doorstep Sports Club’ programme

The Next Chapter begins in 2014
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**Purpose**

Chapter 1 is creating an exciting new initiative that engages clients in a way that promotes well-being and self-discipline and encourages positive behaviour through sport.

Sport is currently being used within the homeless sector to build a platform for development, whether it is part of a client’s rehabilitation process or as an activity that works in conjunction with a project’s support framework. Evidence has shown, sport can effectively improve a client’s wellbeing and provides learners with the necessary skills required for employment (Lindsey Horsfield, Sport Development officer Homeless Link 2012). Together with this, material from Groundswell highlights how research around homeless projects has found an enhanced need to further individuals’ aspirations, into a variety of roles, whether it is volunteering or further education. Such work has been proven through Chapter 1 The Limes Leadership programme.

Who will support Chapter 1 project’s with this new initiative?

Chapter 1 has now created a job, which will be known as the National Sports Development Manager (NSDM). Dean Ashton has been appointed to this role, and he will take the lead on all necessary responsibilities in helping projects set up their very own Chapter 1 Doorstep Sports Club.

Dean Ashton has a BA (hons) Degree in Sport Development and Physical Education and has been specialising in client engagement through sport for the past 4 years in Manchester.

Dean will work with the vision of Sport England and StreetGames to provide Doorstep Sport within Chapter 1 project’s nationwide, supporting the key aim to engage with young people in disadvantaged areas. He will work in partnership with strategic National Governing Bodies of Sport and StreetGames to provide tailored neighbourhood sport initiatives in a location and style people want.
What is a Chapter 1 Doorstep Sports Club?

Dean will work in partnership with a volunteer organisation known as StreetGames. Chapter 1 in Manchester has been working for several years with StreetGames, who are a nationwide charity and have worked with deprived young people to develop life skills through sport. StreetGames have created a new initiative known as the Doorstep Sports Club, working with deprived areas of the U.K. StreetGames have a fantastic track record of being a lead volunteer organisation for the Olympics and have sponsorship providers with the likes of Coca Cola and Cooperative bank.

The Chapter 1 Doorstep Sports Clubs will become part of the projects’ provision offering any sport from walking to dance, encouraging clients to engage in activities, and creating a ‘can do’ atmosphere.

The clubs will be fun, sociable and have a strong element of leadership. There will be a varied diet of competitive and non-competitive sports. Talented clients will be encouraged to join in the development programme for their project.
Why Sport?

Homeless clients face a variety of challenges. These can include drug use, alcohol use and mental health problems. Often a lack of meaningful activities exacerbates such problems and contributes to a failure to adhere to treatment regimens or take a positive action on moving to more secure permanent accommodation. There is an increasing evidence base which suggests that accessing activities enables homeless people to regain a positive identity, increase self worth and motivation, relieve boredom, develop new skills and build social skills and networks. Any of these factors can act as a catalyst for homeless people to make positive and lasting changes in their lives.

In this current climate homeless support projects are losing their funding and more clients are being sanctioned by their local jobcentre. This is why it is important to offer a more varied opportunity to engage, to support choice and create an atmosphere where clients will partake in some form of activity as part of the support process.

Volunteers taking part in Manchester very own homeless league (E.Quality F.C.), which is the first doorstep sports club to be ran by Chapter 1.

Dean Ashton has been working in the homeless sector for over 4 years creating sport initiatives to the homeless sector of Manchester.

The approach has allowed clients to develop life skills in preparation for independent living and most importantly gain the confidence to go out there in the 'big, bad world' and start a new career.
How can the National Sports Development Manager help your project?

Dean will be supported by a working template that has been established in Manchester. This will provide the benchmark for further provision in projects within Chapter 1, that value sport as a tool for developing independent living skills through a joint learning approach. The purpose of the programme will also support non-engagement and provide tools to set up schemes that promote positive engagement.

The model below illustrates the intervention of Doorstep sports opportunities, which has been established in Manchester at Chapter 1 The Limes, where strategic partnerships have been developed to support engagement into wider community sport programmes.

Dean is looking to support a Lead Staff Member within each Chapter 1 service that gets involved, to create a working Chapter 1 Doorstep Sports club that is suited to the particular client group. Dean will offer research, knowledge, funding and will act as a peer mentor to develop clear sustainable programmes that work with the projects’ aims. Barriers to participation will be addressed and a tailored Sport Development plan will be created with the Lead Staff Member after each project has been assessed on the client group’s favoured sport.

The role of the National Sports Development Manager will not be to lead the Chapter 1 Doorstep Sports Club but to provide the appropriate tools to create an effective working Sports programme.

Once the plan is drawn up for the project’s Chapter 1 Doorstep Sports Club, funding will be secured through the StreetGames’ Doorstep Sports Club initiative. Projects can be granted up to £3000 a year for 3 years, which will help support the provisional process of the programme.
Plan of Action

Access for All

It is important to note women and men struggle with certain barriers to accessing sport, but it is ensuring that staff or volunteers interested in encouraging participation consider the needs of the clients, when organising the sports activities. Barriers to sport participation include; childcare, travel, kit, food and water, religion, disability requirements, facilities, behavioural problems and low fitness or ability. These will be addressed as part of the project’s sport development plan.

This will remain an important aspect of the National Sports Development Manager’s role, maintaining access for all. Research with Groundswell and Homeless Link has shown that sports such as Tennis, Touch Rugby, Volleyball, Dance, Fitness, Football, Self Defence, Netball, Hockey Handball, Orienteering, Walking and Running are believed to be the most popular and cost effective sports in deprived areas.

The aim will be to get a basis of interest from the clients of what they would like to do, by offering taster sessions and linking with national governing bodies to locate local community facilities. This will help to establish the Chapter 1 Doorstep Sports Club within the services.
Step by Step plan: Chapter 1 Doorstep Sports Club

In a practical setting the projects will follow a model which has been used in a further education setting for college sports makers, which is supported by Sport England. Homeless Link and Groundswell, and found through research this is the best methodological approach to support individuals into community sports participation. This is currently being used at Manchester service Chapter 1 The Limes.

1. Implementation

At this stage, Chapter 1 services will be provided with an awareness workshop on the introduction of the programme and how staff will play a part in the establishment of activities within their projects.

Staff will be required to complete a short half-page Sport Development Plan with clients on their desired sport provision. This plan will look at potential barriers, support, and timelines to complement the services infrastructure.

Dean will support the implementation by strategically developing partnerships with sporting national governing bodies, community based programmes and volunteer opportunities.

2. Festival feel

One-off taster sessions/tournaments will be provided in a variety of sports for the clients, creating a fun festival feel to encourage participation. The aim of this session is to enthuse participants ‘to get involved’ and increase the awareness of what activities will be offered at the project.

3. PASS procedure (Provision, Assessment, Sustainability, Support)

At this stage project staff will be supported with session plan templates, certificates, code of conducts and learner progression booklets. Project staff will now be encouraged to work with volunteers to support quality provision to maintain sustainability within the activity offered.

Dean will look to attain evidence through evaluation and to provide intervention methods to support improvements made. Six-monthly surveys will be carried out to gain an insight into client involvement and case studies, will further support assessment methods which will be used for funding requirements. Dean will encourage small funding opportunities and encourage service user involvement to create bids to support their intended programme aims.
4. Cater for various needs

This programme will be made flexible to cater for all needs, developing partners with community based programmes and support from StreetGames who have programmes readily working with disabilities, women in sport, and sport activity templates for all needs, especially for doorstep sport in deprived areas.

The aim of the programme is to adapt to accept all participants by supporting awareness days in disability, women in sport, race, socio economic background and sexual preference. This will also be supported through national governing bodies in sport that have their very own specific equal opportunities support network.

Residents from Chapter 1 Warwickshire services taking part in Chapter 1 The Limes national football tournament known as Street2Feet.
Outcome

In a practical setting, the objective of the Chapter 1 Doorstep Sports Club is to develop a key theme that works with the structure of the sport activity, which could be a workshop on behaviour, respect, nutrition, drug misuse, etc. Sport can be the ‘carrot’ as they say, to work with other issues that will benefit clients when they move on into greater independence.

Community sports opportunities will be encouraged through this programme. In-house certificates and qualifications will be promoted to develop progression and reward positive behaviour.

The programme will support the tenancy training course, which will soon be part of Chapter 1’s working ethos for Chapter 1 projects. Qualifications will also be encouraged through a network of partners to promote motivation and individual development.

This model illustrates the concept of combining a sporting activity with a form of individual development support, which can present as a workshop or course. The purpose of the doorstep sports club is to offer opportunities to progress and allow residents to develop new skills throughout the process.
Sport Development Plan Indicator, Has it worked?

When the Sport Development plan has been created it is important that you recognise what you set out to achieve and how success will be measured. Dean will monitor and evaluate the original aims and intended outcomes of the project, to ensure the project’s practice make sense and is benefiting the clients.

Volunteers taking part in the Street2Feet football tournament

Dean will visit projects every 2-3 months to guide lead staff to develop the service’s sport programmes. These interventions will help the project with any issues that emerge when starting a new programme. He will use a monitoring and evaluating tool called views to gain an insight into client involvement and how we can support clients to further develop their life skills through the Chapter 1 Doorstep Sport process.

The feedback will also provide reports and case studies to build a platform for further funding bids, to maintain a sustainable working programme.
Project Case Study

Leadership Programme

Chapter 1’s Manchester hostel, The Limes, has become an Approved Assessment centre for delivering the community Sports Leadership award (CSLA), Levels 1 and 2. Chapter 1 offers this opportunity to residents as part of a pathway of engagement it has developed for its sports academy.

Initial Engagement

Recruitment to the CSLA courses is done through on-going opportunities to take part in sports activities in the service and with external partners. One of the major recruitment sites is the local Manchester homeless football league (E.Quality F.C) which has been affiliated to the Manchester County FA and includes teams from other services from across the region.

CSLA: Developing Leaders

The CSLA qualification requires students to plan and manage sport events. This serves as an opportunity for Chapter 1 The Limes to engage residents in volunteering opportunities. Via established local opportunities with football tournaments, marathons and events, including officiating and coaching courses with StreetGames and Manchester F.A. Clients gain an understanding of the benefits that volunteering can have for them and give wider access to their local communities. Chapter 1 The Limes also invites non-residents to take part in the courses. This increases the funding opportunities available to the project as they are able to drawn down additional money.

Chapter 1 The Limes has now broadened the scope of activities offered which now include Basketball, Rugby, Handball and Football. Residents who have completed the award have gone on to win national volunteering awards and have engaged in further education - both in sport and in other areas of study.

Volunteer receiving a national volunteer award for his contribution to the community of Manchester.
Engaging with the community

An underlining aim throughout this process is to increase the awareness of Chapter 1, reaching out to partners in the community to develop and create new programmes. The new doorstep sports club initiative will build partnerships with local community organisations, police, sporting governing bodies, housing, sports facilities, homeless projects, community projects, sports clubs and local authorities to support our aims and to develop possible funding avenues to develop a legacy for the programmes created.

Dean and lead staff will look to create a twitter page for the Chapter 1 Doorstep Sports Club to engage with partners within their area and promote positive work through this page. Facebook can also be used to engage further with clients, taking into consideration the confidentiality procedures and publicity protocols within Chapter 1. Newsletters and brochures will be encouraged to build new partners and promote positive work to residents and community organisations.

Training will be provided by StreetGames on how to engage further in the community, to create events such as festivals, open days or even sponsored events. This will develop new pathways for residents by increasing the awareness of your service, but services will gain an understanding of further activities that can be made available for your clients.
Dean Ashton states:

“The potential for sport to contribute significantly to community building and community cohesion is strongly recognised in England and reflected in a range of government strategies”;

- Community Building
- Neighbourhood renewal, focusing on ‘Reducing the Gap’ in relation to the most deprived areas
- Addressing Crime and anti social behaviour

“Sport is a powerful tool that breaks down so many cultural barriers. It has the power to motivate and provide a participant with the skills necessary for employment. Through my experience, housing associations have not given sport a chance, it may be an unknown quantity within this sector or providers have been unaware of how to make sports programmes sustainable. I have proved, through a well structured initiative, with the right partners, that not only does it change lives but it gives individuals a purpose in life”.

I have always said; “Once you find yourself, you fully understand what your barriers have been in life.” We only provide the opportunities to progress, it’s up to the individual to make valuable changes.

Chapter 1 provides accommodation and related support services to help vulnerable people enjoy a more fulfilled life. It is a charity, based on Christian principles, which offers human compassion and practical support to meet people’s needs respecting their faith, culture and social background. Currently Chapter 1 works in partnership with over 40 local and administrative authorities and has a growing network of some 50 projects across England.

Chapter 1 Charity Ltd
Charity registered in England No. 293232. Company No. 1937003 Registered with the Regulator of Social Housing H 3658

StreetGames is a national charity that changes lives and communities. We do it by supporting a network of projects which give sports and volunteering opportunities to young people in disadvantaged communities across the UK.

Streetgames UK Ltd
Charity registered in England No. 1113542. Company No. 5384487

Doorstep Sports: A Doorstep Sport Club provides a vibrant and varied sporting offer to young people in disadvantaged communities that is designed to grow their motivation and ability to adopt a sporting habit for life.

Research references
Homeless Link: Aiming high sport for all good practice guide 2010, U.K.