

Company registration number: 08752389

Charity registration number: 1156690

Empire Fighting Chance

(A company limited by guarantee)

Annual Report and Financial Statements

for the Year Ended 31 October 2017

Mr Christopher Keates-Porter
FCA
Albion Dockside Building
Hanover Place
Bristol
BS1 6UT

Empire Fighting Chance

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Empire Fighting Chance

Reference and Administrative Details

Chairman	Dr S Newitt
Trustees	Mr M Bisp (resigned 1 November 2016) Mr J Sanigar (resigned 1 May 2017) Mr M Rees (resigned 1 November 2016) Ms C Leslie Mr D Fordham Crispin Busk Mr David Phillips (appointed 3 December 2016) Mr Alex Campbell (appointed 1 May 2017)
Principal Office	The Mill Lower Ashley Road Easton Bristol BS5 0YJ
Company Registration Number	08752389
Charity Registration Number	1156690

Empire Fighting Chance

Trustees' Report

The trustees, who are directors for the purposes of company law, present the annual report together with the financial statements of the charitable company for the year ended 31 October 2017.

Trustees

Mr M Bisp (resigned 1 November 2016)

Mr J Sanigar (resigned 1 May 2017)

Mr M Rees (resigned 1 November 2016)

Ms C Leslie

Mr D Fordham

Crispin Busk

Mr David Phillips (appointed 3 December 2016)

Mr Alex Campbell (appointed 1 May 2017)

The annual report was approved by the trustees of the Charity on 31 March 2018 and signed on its behalf by:

.....
Dr S Newitt
Chairman

Empire Fighting Chance

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees (who are also the directors of Empire Fighting Chance for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the and the financial statements in accordance with the United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the trustees of the Charity on 31 March 2018 and signed on its behalf by:

.....
Dr S Newitt
Chairman

Empire Fighting Chance

Independent Examiner's Report to the trustees of Empire Fighting Chance

I report on the accounts of the company for the year ended 31 October 2017 which are set out on pages 5 to 11 .

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed. The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of FCA.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me a reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

.....
Mr Christopher Keates-Porter
FCA

Albion Docks Building
Hanover Place
Bristol
BS1 6UT

31 March 2018

Empire Fighting Chance

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 October 2017 (Including Income and Expenditure Account and Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses)

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2017 £	Total 2016 £
Income and Endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	2	85,551	317,580	403,131	121,054
Charitable activities		68,663	-	68,663	43,408
Other income	3	26,140	-	26,140	13,962
Total Income		<u>180,354</u>	<u>317,580</u>	<u>497,934</u>	<u>178,424</u>
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		(22,714)	(688)	(23,402)	(8,400)
Charitable activities		<u>(63,942)</u>	<u>(210,330)</u>	<u>(274,272)</u>	<u>(156,144)</u>
Total Expenditure		<u>(86,656)</u>	<u>(211,018)</u>	<u>(297,674)</u>	<u>(164,544)</u>
Other recognised gains and losses					
Net movement in funds		93,698	106,562	200,260	13,880
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		<u>76,769</u>	<u>11,710</u>	<u>88,479</u>	<u>74,599</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u><u>170,467</u></u>	<u><u>118,272</u></u>	<u><u>288,739</u></u>	<u><u>88,479</u></u>

All of the Charity's activities derive from continuing operations during the above two periods.

Empire Fighting Chance
(Registration number: 08752389)
Balance Sheet as at 31 October 2017

	Note	2017 £	2016 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	7	5,000	7,500
Current assets			
Debtors	8	24,503	1,571
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>271,430</u>	<u>91,352</u>
		295,933	92,923
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	9	<u>(12,194)</u>	<u>(11,944)</u>
Net current assets		<u>283,739</u>	<u>80,979</u>
Net assets		<u><u>288,739</u></u>	<u><u>88,479</u></u>
Funds of the Charity:			
Restricted income funds		118,272	11,710
Unrestricted income funds			
Unrestricted income funds		<u>170,467</u>	<u>76,769</u>
Total funds		<u><u>288,739</u></u>	<u><u>88,479</u></u>

For the financial year ending 31 October 2017 the Charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

- The members have not required the Charity to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476; and
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements on pages 5 to 11 were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue on 31 March 2018 and signed on their behalf by:

.....
Dr S Newitt
Chairman

Empire Fighting Chance

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 October 2017

1 Accounting policies

Summary of significant accounting policies and key accounting estimates

The principal accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Empire Fighting Chance meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

Income and endowments

Voluntary income including donations, gifts, legacies and grants that provide core funding or are of a general nature is recognised when the Charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Donations and legacies

Donations and legacies are recognised on a receivable basis when receipt is probable and the amount can be reliably measured.

Grants receivable

Grants are recognised when the charity has an entitlement to the funds and any conditions linked to the grants have been met. Where performance conditions are attached to the grant and are yet to be met, the income is recognised as a liability and included on the balance sheet as deferred income to be released.

Expenditure

All expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to that expenditure, it is probable settlement is required and the amount can be measured reliably. All costs are allocated to the applicable expenditure heading that aggregate similar costs to that category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of resources, with central staff costs allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use. Other support costs are allocated based on the spread of staff costs.

Raising funds

These are costs incurred in attracting voluntary income, the management of investments and those incurred in trading activities that raise funds.

Charitable activities

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the Charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

Empire Fighting Chance

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 October 2017

Support costs

Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activity cost categories on a basis consistent with the use of resources, for example, allocating property costs by floor areas, or per capita, staff costs by the time spent and other costs by their usage.

Governance costs

These include the costs attributable to the Charity's compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements, including audit, strategic management and Trustee's meetings and reimbursed expenses.

Taxation

The Charity is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the Charity is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

Tangible fixed assets

Individual fixed assets costing £0.00 or more are initially recorded at cost, less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation is provided on tangible fixed assets so as to write off the cost or valuation, less any estimated residual value, over their expected useful economic life as follows:

Asset class	Depreciation method and rate
Fixtures and Fittings	25% Reducing Balance

Trade debtors

Trade debtors are amounts due from customers for merchandise sold or services performed in the ordinary course of business.

Trade debtors are recognised initially at the transaction price. They are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment. A provision for the impairment of trade debtors is established when there is objective evidence that the Charity will not be able to collect all amounts due according to the original terms of the receivables.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash on hand and call deposits, and other short-term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

Empire Fighting Chance

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 October 2017

Trade creditors

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of business from suppliers. Accounts payable are classified as current liabilities if the Charity does not have an unconditional right, at the end of the reporting period, to defer settlement of the creditor for at least twelve months after the reporting date. If there is an unconditional right to defer settlement for at least twelve months after the reporting date, they are presented as non-current liabilities.

Trade creditors are recognised initially at the transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted income funds are general funds that are available for use at the trustee's discretion in furtherance of the objectives of the Charity.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds are resources set aside for specific purposes at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted income funds are those donated for use in a particular area or for specific purposes, the use of which is restricted to that area or purpose.

2 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds			
	General	Restricted	Total	Total
	£	funds	2017	2016
		£	£	£
Donations and legacies;				
Donations from individuals	15,551	-	15,551	10,181
Grants, including capital grants;				
Grants from other charities	70,000	317,580	387,580	110,873
	<u>85,551</u>	<u>317,580</u>	<u>403,131</u>	<u>121,054</u>

Empire Fighting Chance

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 October 2017

3 Other income

	Unrestricted funds		
	General £	Total 2017 £	Total 2016 £
Fees and supplies	-	-	(180)
Rental income	26,140	26,140	14,142
	<u>26,140</u>	<u>26,140</u>	<u>13,962</u>

4 Analysis of governance and support costs

Governance costs

	Unrestricted funds			
	Designated £	General £	Total 2017 £	Total 2016 £
Audit fees				
Other fees paid to auditors	-	1,150	1,150	1,404
Professional Fees	-	25,447	25,447	8,867
Other governance costs	120	-	120	-
	<u>120</u>	<u>26,597</u>	<u>26,717</u>	<u>10,271</u>

5 Grant-making

Analysis of grants

The support costs associated with grant-making are £Nil (31 October 2016 - £Nil).

6 Taxation

No tax was charged in the year (2016 - £nil).

Empire Fighting Chance

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 October 2017

7 Tangible fixed assets

	Furniture and equipment £	Total £
Cost		
At 1 November 2016	10,000	10,000
At 31 October 2017	10,000	10,000
Depreciation		
At 1 November 2016	2,500	2,500
Charge for the year	2,500	2,500
At 31 October 2017	5,000	5,000
Net book value		
At 31 October 2017	5,000	5,000
At 31 October 2016	7,500	7,500

8 Debtors

	2017 £	2016 £
Trade debtors	24,503	1,571

9 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2017 £	2016 £
Trade creditors	8,412	8,412
Other creditors	2,872	2,872
Accruals	910	660
	12,194	11,944

10 Charity status

The Charity is a Charity limited by guarantee and consequently does not have share capital. Each of the trustees is liable to contribute an amount not exceeding £Nil towards the assets of the Charity in the event of liquidation.



OUR IMPACT IN 2017

www.empirefightingchance.org
info@empirefightingchance.org

The Mill
Lower Ashley Road
Easton
Bristol BS5 0YJ

Empire Fighting Chance was born of the streets to fight the impact of deprivation on the lives of young people. Our powerful combination of non-contact boxing with intensive personal support, challenges and inspires young people to realise their unique potential.

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INTRODUCTION


Empire Fighting Chance was born on Bristol's streets 11 years ago to fight the impact of deprivation on young people's lives. We use a powerful combination of non-contact boxing and intensive personal support to challenge and inspire young people to realise their unique potential.

We are passionate about impact. Making a positive difference to the lives of young people is the reason we exist and what drives us. We grew organically from discovering the impact of boxing on young people's lives. Boxing's 'street credibility' in deprived communities meant that we could reach even the toughest young people, while the sport has unique ingredients that promote their development.

We soon recognised that boxing alone was not enough to address the multiple, complex issues faced by young people in deprived communities. Over the years we have developed a pioneering approach to supporting our target group, featuring 5 services at our inspirational gym: non-contact boxing, mentoring, education, therapy and careers. Despite many young people having a history of failed interventions, we are having a profound impact on their lives.

We are proud to present our achievements in 2017 in our first Impact Report. 2017 was a seminal year for us. There were many highlights, though 3 stand out:

- We started our journey from a local Bristol charity to a national organisation through piloting our work in nearby South Wales.
- We increased the number of young people we supported to 2,260. We also worked with increasing numbers of the most vulnerable young people, such as those outside mainstream education.
- Our co-founders swapping evenings and weekends volunteering their time to head it up full-time, Martin as CEO and Jamie as COO.



Our achievements were made possible only through the generous support of our partners. We thank the funders, companies and individuals who have believed in us and helped us to transform young lives. If, after reading this, you would also like to support us, then please do get in touch.



WHO WE ARE

Our story began 11 years ago when our founders, Martin and Jamie, spotted 2 young men dealing drugs in a park near to the Empire Boxing Gym in inner-city Bristol. They decided to tackle their behaviour and invited them for a private training session. Both enjoyed the session and turned up the following week with a few friends. Within 6 weeks 50 young people were attending sessions 5 nights a week. Over time, we've evolved from a small boxing project into a professional charity.

We work at the street level, out of boxing gyms in the heart of deprived communities.

We target young men and women aged 8 to 25 who experience significant challenges in their lives, including those who have been excluded from school, involved in crime and experiencing mental health issues. Many experience multiple, complex challenges and have come to Empire Fighting Chance after a series of failed interventions.

We have created an intensive and holistic programme to reflect the young people that we work with. Young people benefit from a personalised programme built from our 5 services:

- Non-contact boxing
- Mentoring
- Education
- Therapy
- Careers.

We now inspire 200 young people each week at our state-of-the-art gym and deliver the UK's largest non-contact boxing programme to children at risk of exclusion from school. Our work is increasingly being recognised. We were proud to have worked with the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Boxing on how sport can improve mental health, while our outstanding results have inspired local authorities in nearby South Wales to help us to replicate our programme in their deprived communities.

We have exciting plans to evolve into a national charity and harness the power of boxing to transform the lives of thousands of young people across the UK.

THE PROBLEM WE'RE TACKLING

We exist to fight the impact of deprivation on the lives of young people. We developed our programme in Easton and St Pauls, 2 of the UK's most deprived areas. Young people in these communities face a devastating mix of issues.



“I can’t recognise the person I was 3 years ago. My attitude has improved towards education and where I want to go in life. Empire Fighting Chance has made me realise there are more important things than smoking drugs and getting into fights. I can’t thank them enough.”

Underperformance at school

We work with young people who are failing at school, underperforming academically or at risk of exclusion. In Easton, only 43% of young people achieve 5 or more GCSE grades A–C including English and Maths, compared to 69% nationally, while Bristol schools give out more fixed-term exclusions to their pupils than any other UK local authority. We work with young people whose severity of behaviour has meant they are outside mainstream education.

Poor health

Poor physical health is rampant: 40% of Easton's residents do not take the recommended level of exercise each week, and only a third participate in sport. Obesity is a particular challenge among young people and can lead to more serious health conditions.

Poor mental health

Mental health issues are rife. We encounter many young people experiencing problems such as depression, anxiety, conduct disorder and low self-esteem. Poor mental health has devastating consequences – it disrupts young people's education, leading to poor attendance at school, challenging classroom behaviour and even exclusion. Many young people with poor mental health engage in criminal activity – 1 in 3 who offend have a mental health issue. Others withdraw completely.

Challenging family lives

Many of the young people we work with are from single-parent families, with few positive male role models in their lives to learn from. Intergenerational worklessness limits aspirations, while chaotic home lives inhibit performance at school.

Crime

Gangs target vulnerable young people and involve them in antisocial and criminal activity. Ashley ward, where St Pauls is located, has the worst crime offence rate of Bristol's wards, with parts suffering from some of the highest crime rates in the UK.

Unemployment

Many young people are heading towards a life of unemployment. In Easton 24% of 16 to 24-year-olds are unemployed, while in St Pauls 1 in 2 Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic young people are out of work.

Despite the huge challenges they face, few services exist to support young people. A recent Bristol Healthwatch report revealed that only 25% of Bristol's young people with a mental health problem receive help. Even fewer services inspire a young person by reflecting their interests and harnessing their talents.

The lack of appropriate support for young people gave us the inspiration to establish Empire Fighting Chance. These issues persist in deprived communities up and down the country, giving us the inspiration to expand our work across the UK.

OUR WORK

Our programme is built on decades of working with vulnerable young people from deprived communities. We offer 5 main services to young people. Each young person's programme features a combination of these services to meet their individual needs.

1. Non-contact boxing

We offer regular non-contact boxing sessions at our gym, an aspirational and non-stigmatising environment. We welcome young people of all backgrounds and abilities to our open sessions in the evenings and at weekends and we run smaller group sessions throughout the week. Our experienced coaches facilitate a range of engaging physical activities, from speedball workouts and pad work to shadow boxing and dodge ball. The sport attracts young people to our programme, teaches skills such as discipline, improves physical and mental health and builds trust.

2. Mentoring in the ring

We offer a structured 20-week programme, created by a psychologist, that combines non-contact boxing with mentoring. Each young person is matched with a 'coach', who acts as a boxing coach and mentor. During weekly sessions, physical activities are interspersed with individual or group discussions. Each week we communicate a key personal development message. For example, we discuss the importance of mastering moods to improve behaviour. More broadly, our coaches use the sessions to assist young people to establish personal goals and start to take positive actions towards achieving them. Conversations between the young person and the coach continue naturally outside the ring.

3. Education at the gym

We offer support that complements learning in school, including remedial Maths and English sessions. We are in the process of professionalising and expanding our education service by hiring an education specialist. We will shortly offer homework classes, provide a quiet, safe space and teaching support, and facilitate ASDAN qualifications – qualifications based on personal, social and employability skills.

4. Therapy outside clinic walls

Local mental health specialists base qualified therapists in our gym to become familiar with young people and build trust. The therapists use proven, engaging techniques such as Therapeutic Boxing with young people to better understand and manage their emotions and change negative ways of behaving.

5. Creating futures

We offer a range of support to enable young people to progress into employment, education or further training. We use non-contact boxing sessions as an engaging way of exploring young people's talents and career goals, holding informal discussions in between physical activities. We actively seek suitable employment opportunities through our growing network of employers. We also offer young people individual support in securing opportunities and navigating through the early days of their new life.





THE POWER OF BOXING

Boxing is at the heart of our work with young people. Boxing provides a number of significant benefits that enable us to transform young lives.

1. Credibility among young people

Boxing's grittiness makes it an attractive sport for young people from deprived communities to participate in. Our gym in inner city-Bristol has a long and proud history of producing World, European, Commonwealth and British boxing champions, enhancing our credibility in the eyes of young people.

2. Vehicle for open communication

Our boxing is crucial for gaining a young person's confidence and breaking down barriers to honest communication. As people focus on the physical activity, such as hitting a punch bag, they relax, drop their guard and open up to us. We've learned that this is particularly important for young men who face pressure in their community to be emotionally strong and silent. Similarly, boxing presents the optimal time for us to mentor young people. Sport clears the mind and creates a positive learning state, while gaps between physical activities present natural opportunities for discussions.

3. Physical health benefits

Our sessions are fun and engaging but they are also physically demanding. They increase levels of physical activity and address issues such as obesity. The young people we work with face barriers to improving health – cost can be prohibitive while gyms and other sports environments can be intimidating. In contrast, our sessions are free and we have made our gym as welcoming as possible for people of all backgrounds.

4. Mental health benefits

Exercise changes brain chemistry by releasing serotonin and endorphins, reducing anxiety and the risk of depression and creating happier moods. The sport also reduces stress and tension, as bodies are better able to control cortisol levels. In addition, as fitness levels and boxing skills increase, young people's self-esteem is given a huge boost, making them more resilient to other mental health challenges. Importantly, we provide young people with exercises that they can use themselves so that they can self-manage their condition.

5. Life skills

Our boxing teaches young people many skills that they can benefit from in their wider lives. Among many things, young people learn the importance of perseverance, discipline, respect and pride. We have found boxing to be particularly effective in managing anger, with the sport teaching young people to rechannel their aggression and to stay calm.

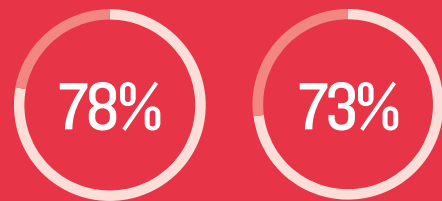
Each and every day we see how boxing can transform young lives. We are building an evidence base so that we can demonstrate the effectiveness of the sport to others. Our vision is for young people in deprived communities across the UK to be able to benefit from the power of boxing.

OUR IMPACT IN NUMBERS

In 2017 we supported

2,260 young people

WE IMPROVED EDUCATION



of targeted young people improved their attendance at school

have better behaviour in school

WE REDUCED CRIME



are getting into less trouble

are less likely to be part of a gang

WE IMPROVED PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH



are fitter

are happier

WE BUILT YOUNG PEOPLE'S ATTITUDES AND SKILLS



are more positive about their future

have increased aspirations

are more confident

are more able to overcome challenges

WE IMPROVED RELATIONSHIPS



improved their relationships with their family

find it easier to make friends

WE HELPED YOUNG PEOPLE TO PROGRESS INTO CAREERS



of targeted young people have progressed into employment, training or further education

STORIES

Behind the numbers are real young people. We work with some of the most vulnerable young people in the country. We hear about things that no child should have to go through. Experiences upsetting even for us tough boxing people. But, despite their difficult past, we've yet to meet a young person who isn't able to create a positive future. Below we share some of the stories of young people we have challenged and inspired to realise their unique potential.



PAUL'S STORY

Paul (not his actual name) came to us following an approach from his secondary school. He had been suspended several times and the school were looking to permanently exclude him. Paul was having persistent and frequent aggressive thoughts, which often manifested in violent actions. Paul did not meet the threshold for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and therefore, despite the above, could not access mental health treatment.

Since our intervention Paul's violent outbursts have reduced significantly, with only 1 instance recorded in the whole of 2017. Previously there were multiple incidents each term. He continues to stay in school and is actively starting to manage his own behaviour.

"Boxing with Justin makes me feel more relaxed; we chat about everything and when I'm feeling down I can get things off my chest." Paul

"Since starting, Paul has changed the way he carries himself and as a result is much more positive and resilient." School support worker

TED'S STORY

Ted (not his actual name) had a difficult start. His dad was a notorious member of a Jamaican gang and is currently serving a life sentence for gang-related murders. Since starting secondary education Ted has been excluded from a number of schools owing to violent behaviour. He was finally excluded from a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) after he brought a knife to school. He was experimenting with cannabis and involved with gangs.

We approached Ted through our outreach work. After we had built a good rapport with Ted, he started on our programme. His progress was exceptional. Ted was accepted back into mainstream education. He has now been in school for 22 weeks without an incident, the longest time since primary school. Ted is no longer involved with drugs or gangs and has even started to become a role model for young people in school.

"I used to get so angry," Ted explains. "But these days, as I know I've got a session with Empire after school, it motivates me to get through the day." His attitude has changed so much that we've given him some coaching responsibilities for new members, something he's really good at. "Teaching shows me how much I've learned... I feel calmer."

JAMAL'S STORY

“They say whatever doesn’t kill you makes you stronger. My struggles and hardships with bullying, issues with police, issues with homelessness, issues with health and issues with drugs. I didn’t really care about life any more , I felt suicidal, I wasn’t thinking correct. People make assumptions: he’s black, he must be drug dealer.

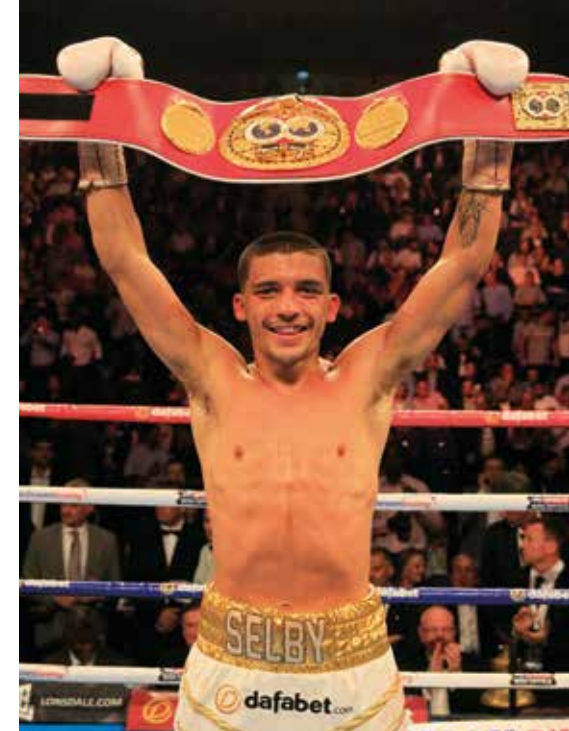
People judged me but never knew me. In the club they listen to what we got to say, talk to us about life and decisions. When I went to Empire I found more than just a club; I found family, I found community, I found something to be part of.

It is more of a home to me than just a ring and a bag; I came from a bad place and now I am on my way to sorting it out, a step at a time. I think Empire walked my hard mile with me.”



EXPANDING TO SOUTH WALES

In 2017 we embarked on the first part of our exciting journey towards becoming a national organisation. Our work is ripe for scaling up as most deprived communities have a boxing gym, while boxing is a powerful tool for attracting, engaging and developing vulnerable young people.



The timing for expansion is right. We have a successful, stable programme in Bristol and significant expertise in supporting vulnerable young people. We have developed a sustainable business model that supports our efforts to expand, with local schools paying for our services.

We chose South Wales as our first destination owing to the level of deprivation and its close proximity to Bristol. This meant we could test our model whilst maintaining the high-quality delivery we have become known for. Finally, our strong relationships within the South Wales boxing community via ambassadors Chris Sanigar and Barry World Champion Lee Selby meant we were able to identify appropriate communities easily.

The situation is so urgent that the local authorities invited us to adapt our programme for their communities. With their support, and a grant from the Masonic Charitable Foundation, we ran our programme from local boxing gyms in 4 areas. During 2017 we supported over 200 young people in South Wales.

Tackling behaviour issues in Barry

We launched our first programme in South Wales in Barry. We ran 20 non-contact boxing and mentoring sessions on a weekly basis for young people from two local secondary schools and a Pupil Referral Unit. Each school had identified a small group of boys and girls in Key Stage 3 (13–14) who had shown signs of behavioural difficulties in school.

At the end of their programme, the young people reported the following:

- 100% are more positive about the future
- 82% are happier
- 73% are more able to achieve their goals
- 70% are more likely to listen to other people's opinions
- 63% are more likely to stay calm when angry.

Reports from the 3 schools supported these positive results. Barry Comprehensive reported that 60% improved their behaviour, while the Deputy Head of Bryn Hafren Comprehensive explained that “since the girls have been on the programme they have become more co-operative in school and have improved their attitude towards staff and their lessons.”

The success of our pilot projects in South Wales has encouraged us to establish our work in the region. Within 3 years, we aim to have supported over 1,000 young people. We will scale up our work sustainably, generating a significant proportion of income from schools paying us to deliver our programme to children at risk of exclusion.

DEEPENING OUR IMPACT

We are proud of the impact that we have had on young people's lives but we always want to go even further, and deepen our impact. By listening to young people and analysing our performance we continuously make improvements to our programme. In 2017 we made a number of important changes. Below we highlight 3.

Extending opening times

We heard from young people how important it was to fit our work around their lifestyles, so we extended our opening hours. We are now around late into the evening and on weekends to offer support. Young people now benefit from several of our activities being run at the times most suitable for them. We are also launching an emergency service, providing young people with a phone number that they can call for advice outside our opening times.

Summer programme

Young people have little to do during school holidays, which can lead to destructive behaviour. So in the summer of 2017 we ran a free, daily programme from our gym featuring multiple sports, including non-contact boxing, cricket, dance, touch rugby and football. We used our gym and multi-purpose hard court to run the various sporting activities. We welcomed young people aged 8 and above from local primary and secondary schools.

Launching a careers service

We launched a new programme to help young people to progress into a career. Many of the older young people we work with struggle to progress into work. In the past we only focused our efforts on addressing the underlying factors preventing young people's progression into work, such as low aspirations and poor education. Through consultations with young people, we established a need to provide more direct support.

In the autumn we recruited a careers manager to create and lead our new programme to support young people in progressing into employment, education or further training. Key current activities include:

- **Direction:** we help young people to identify their passions and talents and set career goals that encourage them to succeed. We are piloting the use of non-contact boxing sessions to do this, turning dry, difficult discussions into engaging, natural conversations that take place between physical activities.
- **Opportunities:** we actively find young people employment, education and training opportunities through our growing network of employers.
- **Individual support:** young people benefit from regular individual support to assist them to access opportunities. For example, we might provide advice on how best to present themselves to employers. We continue to offer support after the young people have progressed, to help them to move away from their entrenched lifestyles.



ESTABLISHING STRONG FOUNDATIONS

We know that we will only achieve our ambitious plans to become a national organisation if we establish strong foundations. In 2017 we made significant progress towards creating an organisation able to support and sustain our growth.



Our first CEO

Volunteering his time as our CEO, our co-founder Martin Bisp has overseen our transformation from a small boxing project into a professional charity running an award-winning youth programme in Bristol and South Wales. In February 2017 Martin became Empire Fighting Chance's first full-time CEO to lead us through the next stage of our journey towards becoming a national charity.

Creating financial sustainability

We developed a fundraising strategy to achieve significant growth, diversify income and create financial independence. Highlights include:

- Recruiting our first head of fundraising to develop corporate and major donor fundraising programmes
- Growing income we earn from schools for delivering programmes to pupils at risk of exclusion
- Securing multi-year grants from several funders, including Big Lottery Fund, Henry Smith Charity, Paul Hamlyn and Tudor Trust
- Increasing income from £180k to £497k.

Building a stronger team

In 2017 we doubled the number of staff to 14. We now have an outstanding team, with specialist expertise in key areas and experience to draw upon to achieve our future plans. Meanwhile, we strengthened our board by recruiting 3 talented trustees, including experts in finance and marketing and a successful entrepreneur.

A growing reputation

Our impressive results have inspired increasing numbers of organisations to approach us. In 2017 we developed a partnership with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to deliver our sports-based mental health intervention. Our success in South Wales has led to organisations approaching us to explore partnership to expand our work across the country.

During the year we leveraged our growing reputation to advocate the use of sports-based community interventions to tackle issues faced by young people in deprived communities. Highlights include:

- We were invited to participate in the cross-sector Bristol Leadership Challenge to address poor mental health in the city.
- We began exploring with Bristol's Mayor how our 'asset-based' approach to working with young people could be adopted in statutory services.
- We were proud to be invited to the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Boxing to share our approach to working with young people.
- We were proud to be recipients of 2017 Charity of the Year at the Bristol Life Awards.

Improving how we manage our impact

We were selected to join Social Investment Business's Impact Management Programme to improve how we manage our social impact. Working with an experienced non-profit consultancy firm, we are improving how we analyse our impact on young people's lives and respond to findings. We will become better able to generate and use evidence to improve our programme and increase our impact.



OUR LEARNING

We know that Empire Fighting Chance is not perfect. There are improvements we can make to have an even greater impact on young people's lives. We invest considerable time in identifying learning and use it to shape our future. Below we present a small selection of the insights we gained during 2017.

Working with families

Many of the young people we work with lack positive relationships with their parents/carers. Our own experience has backed up the widely accepted position that parents/carers play a central role in supporting their children's development. Effective relationships between parents/carers and children are associated with higher self-esteem, better performance in school and fewer negative outcomes such as depression and drug use. We recognise that we must address this by creating an intervention that builds positive relationships between young people and their parents/carers. We plan to run a project that harnesses non-contact boxing to bring families together.

Importance of mental health

Poor mental health affects significant numbers of the young people we work with. It is often an underlying cause of other problems. Poor mental health, for example, can lead to poor attendance at school, while young people with mental health issues are 10 times more likely to be excluded from school.

Evidence demonstrates that therapy offers young people a high chance of overcoming problems. However, young people in deprived communities often fail to obtain treatment as it is viewed with scepticism, while admitting to a mental health problem is considered a weakness. Meanwhile, those who do want therapy are slipping through the system,

not meeting the threshold for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) but urgently requiring help to prevent issues becoming more serious.

We have decided to partner with local agencies to deliver therapy at our gym. Unlike some traditional clinics, our gym provides an environment in which young people will feel safe and comfortable. Therapists skilled at building rapport with the 'hardest-to-reach' young people will use boxing and other creative techniques to support young people in addressing mental health issues.

A 1-stop shop

We have become increasingly convinced that delivering multiple interventions from our gym will generate significant benefits. 3 stand out:

- Young people enjoy our informal and inspirational environment.
- We can better monitor the quality of services that young people receive.
- We can create a more co-ordinated approach with our delivery partners.

During this past year we have decided to professionalise our education, careers and mental health services and to deliver them from our gym. We plan to use our model to demonstrate to policy makers the value of a co-ordinated, community-based approach for supporting young people.

OUR FUTURE PLANS

The stories of young people whose lives we have helped to change make us more determined than ever to scale up our work across the UK. 2018 will be a critical year. We will plant the seeds that enable us to grow, with 3 priorities directing our efforts.

1) Improve our programme

We will introduce several improvements so that we can achieve an even greater impact on young people's lives. Our gym in Bristol will become a centre of outstanding youth services, and we will adapt our improved delivery model to other locations as we scale up work. Highlights include:

- Running a weekly non-contact boxing programme for parents and children in deprived areas to bring families together while improving physical and mental health
- Offering therapy from our gym through local partner NAOS, experts in providing therapy for 'hard-to-reach' young people
- Professionalising our education support by recruiting a qualified education specialist to deliver activities such as remedial Maths and English sessions and homework classes from our gym.

2) Establish our work in Wales

We will establish a strong presence in our first location outside Bristol. We will significantly increase our programme in South Wales and, to widen our impact, develop a training programme to equip boxing clubs in other parts of Wales to run our programme. We will develop a sustainable business model, securing income from a range of sources including earned income from schools.

3) Create a national profile

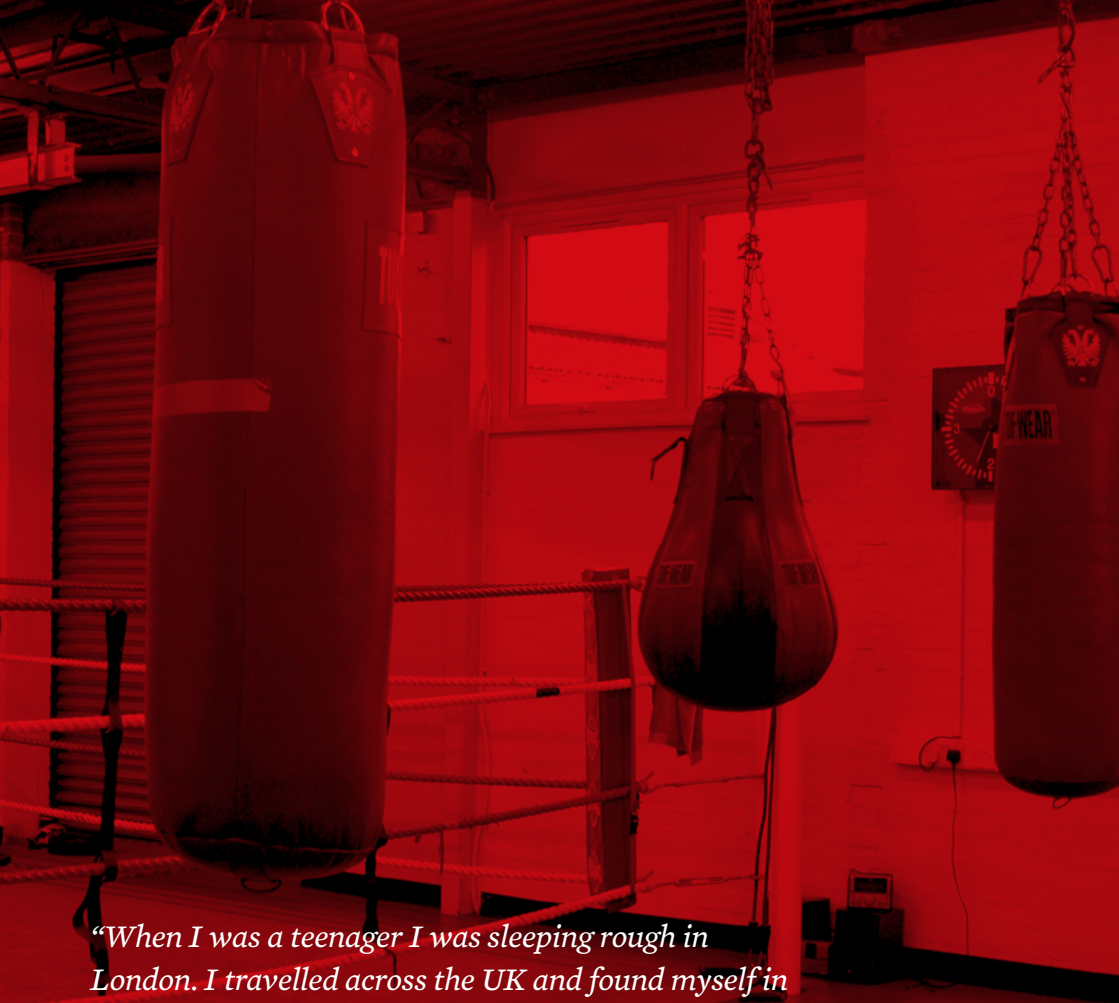
We have built a strong reputation in Bristol. We now want to increase our visibility and credibility at a national level to support our plans to expand, and to put us in a stronger position to influence policy and change attitudes. We will focus our efforts on advocating the use of sports-based community interventions to improve young people's mental health. We believe that our pioneering approach to addressing mental health through boxing gives us a unique voice that people will listen to.



A FINAL MESSAGE

We would like to thank everyone who has supported Empire Fighting Chance. It is the generosity of our supporters that makes all of our achievements possible. We look forward to continuing to work together to transform young lives in the future.





“When I was a teenager I was sleeping rough in London. I travelled across the UK and found myself in Bristol, where I was put into emergency housing and introduced to Empire Fighting Chance. I worked with my coach, Justin, for about 20 weeks. He helped me a lot with changing my outlook on positive thinking and changing negative things that influenced me. I am now working full-time and I come back to the gym from time to time to check in. Empire has really helped me a lot to get back on my feet and follow the right path.”
