

Head In The Game CIC Impact Report

2021

2022



HEAD
IN THE
GAME



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Introduction

Welcome to Head In The Game CIC, we are delighted to be able to share with you our impact report highlighting the key differences our service has made to local communities and our project participants, since its inception in January 2021. The service was created as a direct response to the COVID-19 pandemic and escalating suicide rates in men between the ages of 18 to 55 across both Kent, East Sussex, London and Sheffield.

We have one overarching vision: to end male suicide in the UK.

With a three year strategy in place, we have identified the values & behaviours, aims, social objectives, ambitions and strategic goals required to ensure that we work towards our vision.

Head In The Game has become a lifeline for those that it supports. Our programmes deliver high quality sessions and outstanding performing results, thus making a real difference to the participants who attend.

With a clear focus on mental health, wellbeing and football, we have supported over 180 men in towns / cities across the country helping to make long term positive changes to their overall wellbeing and lives.

The next set of Public Health Data from the UK Government for suicide in 2021 is due to be released in the Autumn of 2022. These statistics are expected to reach devastating record highs. Head In The Game CIC is committed to not only addressing, but campaigning to ensure that these numbers do not increase in 2023.

Our mission has remained the same for the last 18 months, we tackle the stigma of talking about men's mental health in safe, secure environments, using football as the driving force to start those often difficult to have conversations.

This impact report reflects that perfectly.

Mark Pinkney

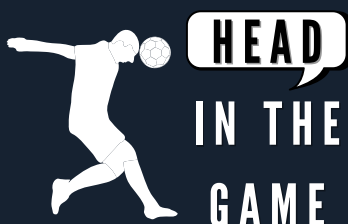
Mark Pinkney
Co-Founder / Director of Head In The Game CIC





Why Is Head In The Game Needed?

- Mental Health Crisis after COVID-19 pandemic (including the unknowns of long COVID)
- Direct response to the pandemic
- Social prescribing has never been more utilised than now
- Improving mental & physical fitness in men
- Hard to access readily suitable venues for men to talk in safe, secure and non-judgmental environments
- Increasing suicide rates across the South-East / London and the whole of the UK
- Biggest killer of men in the UK under the age of 45 is suicide
- The male suicide rate for 2020 was 15.3 per 100,000 compared to the female suicide rate of 4.9 per 100,000 (Data from The Samaritans 2020)
- NHS Mental Health Services are at full capacity
- Accessing football pitches has never been more expensive
- Not everyone wants competitive league football



88% of Head In The Game participants felt more freely able to talk about how they feel after 12 weeks on our programme

Our Three Year Strategy

This impact report is a way for Head In The Game to communicate the issues they we are trying to improve, as well as our strategy on how we have, and continue to facilitate long term change. It measures the impact that we make in people's lives, focusing on our social and environmental outcomes.



Vision

- To end male suicide in the U.K.

Mission

- To address mental health needs and make a positive difference to individuals wellbeing in communities

Values & Behaviours

- To promote positive change
- To be supportive, passionate and offer empathy
- Reactive to funders, partners and stakeholders
- To be a sustainable service
- For diversity to be at the heart of everything we do

Aims & Objectives

- To reduce the strain on frontline services (doctors, hospitals, A&E departments) by engaging with men at the earliest level of intervention.
- Prevent the need for A&E and ongoing care
- Improve health, increase confidence and self-esteem whilst reducing social isolation
- Tackle the stigma of talking openly about men's mental health
- Improve physical and mental wellbeing
- To become a campaigning organisation



Our Three Year Strategy

Social Objectives

- Promote positive mental wellbeing
- Create sense of community
- Deliver long term sustainable outcomes
- To be fully reactive to community needs

Ambitions

- Work in partnership with professional football clubs
- Continuation funding from National Lottery Community Fund
- Develop working partnerships with The FA, The SPFL and Irish FA

Strategic Goals

- Become a recognised organisation as a lead in mental health & wellbeing
- To promote diversity and inclusion
- Reduce social isolation and loneliness
- Increase unrestricted funding levels
- Multi-channel media offer that responds and promotes our mission
- Develop expertise to be able to influence external business's mental health practices

Metrics

- Partnership Outcomes
- Case Studies
- Unrestricted Funds
- Impact Reporting
- Social Return On Investment
- Evaluations
- CRM Data
- Social Media Reach

Impact

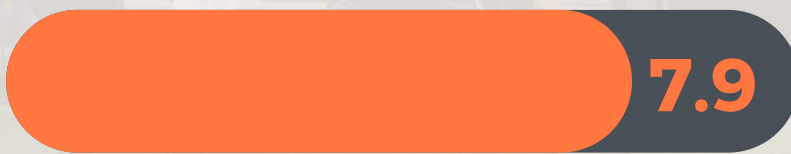
88% Of our participants felt mentally stronger

83% Feel physically fitter

When starting, average score out of 10 in terms of how the participant was feeling



Overall score when completing the programme



The above graph and results are based on 18 participants who attended Head In The Game sessions across a 12 week period between January and March 2022.

100%

Felt happier after attending Head In The Game for 12 weeks

100%

Would recommended Head In The Game to a friend

72% Feel more able to address their problems & concerns

66% Felt better equipped to deal with setbacks

88% Now feel more confident in themselves

94% Felt generally healthier

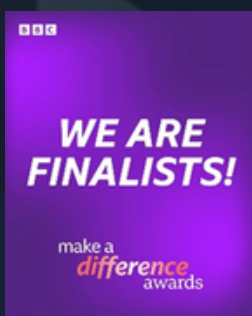
Key Achievements

Over £190,000 worth of funding won during 2021

More than 140 HITG sessions run in Kent, Sheffield, East Sussex and London during 2021 / 2022

Award Winning Service - Head In The Game Winners of Kent Mental Health & Wellbeing Award 2021

Finalists of BBC's Make A Difference Award 2022



Testimonials

Attending the 12 week programme was a personal change and added some social structure to my week. During the 12 weeks I felt my fitness improve from the weekly sessions which inspired me to do more fitness, so I started doing some strength training at home. Although I have been working on incorporating yoga sessions into a morning routine since the beginning of the year, I've found my personal discipline has improved in trying to attain a daily practice during the last 12 weeks. Thank you, Head In The Game - Medway Participant June 2022

Before I started I thought "how would playing football help with my mental health?" but being there and being a part of Head In The Game has changed my physical and mental health for the good - Maidstone Participant May 2022

I'm playing football twice a week now and feel a lot fitter mentally and physically. This is all down to HITG and how it's impacted my life. Great service and great coaches. Massive well done and thank you to all -Thanet Participant April 2022

HITG has been a rock for me in last 12 weeks and I really don't know where I would be in terms of my well-being without it. I have started to think more positively and not focus on the negative aspects that life throws at me. It has been a very rewarding experience and I have benefitted from the well-being coping techniques that Mark has taught me and also the wisdom shared by the other guys who lift me up. We feed of each other's positivity in an environment where we can talk openly and be heard without prejudice. Men generally do not express ourselves as we worry about our image and appearing vulnerable so this platform gives us the freedom to say what is on our minds. If HITG was available nationally I believe it would help society immensely, so much so that doctors would prescribe HITG sessions instead of drugs to lift one's mental well-being. The fact remains a healthy body, which HITG delivers each session, leads to a healthy mind. Long may it continue! - Medway Participant May 2022

The project has given me something to focus on and look forward to each week. Knowing I'm not alone in how I feel has been a big help - Thanet Participant Sep 2021

The weekly sessions are something that I really look forward to each and every week. Getting to play football again, try different training drills and importantly to have a shared forum both in person and digitally have brought joy and a feeling of acceptance to my life. Knowing that I'm not alone in my mental health journey is of great comfort. I am grateful to the HITG team for providing this service not only to me but to all those that attended my 12 week programme, but the other programmes run during the same period and future programmes for other people. The team deserves huge credit for starting such a great project and for their ongoing dedication to deliver such a helpful service. - Medway Participant May 2022



Both D and P have said how much they look forward to Mondays and coming down to Head in The Game. They also love how the people they have met at the sessions look forward to it too, as it makes them feel good being a part of it. Another comment from D was that it has completely changed his attitude towards fitness and since starting the programme, he has taken up running also!

Katherine Paine
The Amber Foundation July 2022



HITG provided me a lot during my time in need, from providing a safe place for us men to play football, talk, laugh, form friendships and most of all provide me with a range of tools to help me in my day to day life. - Maidstone Participant August 2022

I've struggled with depression most of my life – having been officially diagnosed at the age of 18. It has impacted my life in a number of ways including forcing me to drop out of university and affecting relationships with family and friends. The day I applied to be part of HITG Medway (and the reason for doing so) I realised that apart from zoom meetings with colleagues I hadn't seen or spoken to anyone other than my partner for over 2 months. I'm a pretty sociable person and enjoy the company of others but one of the symptoms and causes of my depression is shutting myself off from other people. So I signed up to HITG as a way of forcing myself out of the house and to meet some new people. It more than exceeded my expectations – both Mark's and David's abilities to make people feel at ease instantly whilst providing a space where we could be comfortable and open was vital. I really looked forward to Monday evenings and came away absolutely buzzing. Both from the football but also from the affirmation and encouragement provided in the chats. One evening after the session I asked someone who was there how they were doing and they said they were going through a really tough experience and we ended up having a really long chat. I felt completely ill equipped to know what to say but also got the sense that for them, just having someone to listen was enough. Which is what led me to want to be a volunteer coach with Head In The Game.

I've said it before but what you provide at HITG is completely invaluable and, as far as I'm aware, there really isn't anything like it at all. Which is surprising, given the rates of suicide and depression amongst men. It's clear to me that there needs to be a HITG session on every pitch in the country and so to help be a part of that and to be able to give back what was so important for me is an amazing opportunity. MB - Medway Participant & Ashford Volunteer

I was nervous about attending HITG but I have to say it has been one of the best things for my own well-being I have done. It's improved my understanding of my own mind and helped me speak about things I had previously bottled up. The sessions are great fun and pressure free (I could say as little or as much as I wanted). I've met some great people as well; I really look forward to every session. Chris Payne - Ashford Participant July 2022

“Head In The Game, it saved my life”

Colin Jones, Maidstone Participant - March 2022



Our Partners & Funders



Community
Sports
Trust



TOTTENHAM
HOTSPUR™
FOUNDATION



COMMUNITY
FUND

Live well
Kent and Medway



canterbury
city council



Sussex
Community
Foundation



SAM MALLIA
PHOTOGRAPHY

the
gym.
group



BAYPOINT

Geographical Reach

The communities that we have supported (and in some places, continue to support) are specifically chosen as they are areas of specific need where poor mental health statistics have been reported and suicide rates have increased. This approach ensures that we are reactive to the ever changing needs of the districts that we support.

- Sheffield
- Thanet
- Maidstone
- Canterbury
- Hastings
- Medway
- Ashford
- Millwall Football Club
- Tottenham Hotspur Football Club
- Brentford Football Club





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