

Evaluation of the National Children's Football Alliance project, Football & Peace.

July 2014

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Introduction

National Children's Football Alliance (NCFA) is a coalition of agencies and organisations that safeguard and advance the rights of children in football. As a humanistic voice and advocate for children, The NCFA also acts as a focal point and network for those individuals and organisations seeking sustainable partnerships, information, education and/or training on child-centred approaches and children's rights in football. The NCFA seeks to protect childhood through football.

The Football & Peace Project (F&PP) was inspired by the Christmas Truce of 1914, it considered how the symbolic moment of First World War history relates to the contemporary mission of the NCFA. A number of NCFA projects have engaged children and young people from vulnerable groups which are outside the radar of structured football. F&PP linked the escapism of play with the historic and explored conflict resolution. It provided young people with the opportunity to research their heritage in World War One through the medium of sport. The F&PP provided teachers with the opportunity to engage pupils in subjects across their school's curricular, using sport as a vehicle. It also engaged the schools' families and communities who participated in research and activities. All participants were informed about the up-coming centenary commemorations and agreed to celebrate peace through play to commemorate the First World War, with the aim to inspire young peace makers through heritage.

Outcome aims

- Use local history resources to explore the war time histories of families, schools, sports clubs and people from diverse communities
- To have intergenerational dialogue between young people, older people, experts and enthusiasts to enrich the understanding of the First World War
- Create a short documentary film for 100 year's Centenary resources and produce a project website
- Produce an exhibition of participants work at a Football & Peace Day Celebration event

Background / brief history

The NCFA work closely with the Peace Village, Messines, Belgium, on developing International Football & Peace Projects. A UK project was established in Kent when the NCFA approached 10 schools that were considered to have vibrant Sport and History departments. All 10 schools' PE and History teachers expressed an interest in the project and requested details to present to their line managers and head teachers. It was felt that teachers passionate in their subjects would be best placed to manage their respective school project. It was also considered that the schools participating in the F&PP represent a broad spectrum of education from across Kent.

- Correspondence with Hugh Robertson, previous Sports Minister, Andrew Murrison MP, Prime Minister's advisor for the Centenary Commemorations, Samantha Heywood, Director of Learning, Imperial War Museum and Charles Byrne, Director of Fund Raising, Royal British Legion, led to the NCFA applying for funding at the Heritage Lottery Fund. In addition, letters of support were provided by potential project partners: Robert Illingworth, Service Development Librarian – Local History, Kent County Council, Evelyn Palmer, Schools Project Manager, Maidstone Borough Council's Maidstone Museum, Bill Thompson, Chairman, British Army Football Association and John Harvey, Community Chairman, Maidstone United Football Club. Subsequently, all the letters helped form the Football & Peace Project in terms of bolstering the bid for funding.

Without prejudice, the NCFA provide access for children to all forms of football. There was a clear indication from the above-mentioned experts that the need for a Football & Peace Project would best engage young people from diverse backgrounds, on a level of heritage, history and sport, which had yet to be contextualised in contemporary themes. It was also considered that football would not be the sole sporting activity of the programme. Although inspired by the Christmas Truces football games the F&PP would embrace rugby, cricket and boxing, all sports documented at home and abroad throughout WW1.

- Andrew Murrison MP raised the point when he said, “**I submit that the Centenary offers opportunity for historians and their students to explore the counter-intuitive, to challenge publicly held orthodoxy and to discover aspects of the conflict that remain obscure or contentious**” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_R0IBCSG6Q

The NCFA focused its resources on a project that would actively engage partners on helping develop the programme and listen to the schools that participated. It was also important that all partners felt valued in terms of input and they were given the opportunity to extend their respective networks through the F&PP’s growing profile.

Recruitment

Schools were recruited on the basis of their enthusiasm for the project, links in the community with WW1, a strong reputation in sport and history subjects. The schools that participated were able to thread the Football & Peace Project into their academic year with no disruption to their respective school curriculum. It was important that all the above-mentioned partners and schools were confident in delivering the project at an age appropriate level. Teachers asked their respective pupils (girls and boys) to volunteer for the project. All five schools reported that they were inundated with volunteers. Up to 20 pupils represented each school’s project team and a further 20 represented the school’s sports team, average age was 14 years old.

Who was involved.

Participants			
School	Project team	Sports Day team	Staff
Borden Grammar School	20 20 male	20 20 m	3 1 female / 2 m
Herne Bay High School	20 10 f / 10 m	20 15 f / 10 m	2 2 f / 1 m
High Weald Academy	11 11f	29 9 f / 20 m	2 1 f / 1 m
Oasis Academy Isle of Sheppey	19 10 f / 9 m	20 6 f / 14 m	3 m
Swadelands School	20 10 f / 10m	20 10 f / 10 m	2 2 f / 1 m
Special Guests (see appendix 1)			
Humboldt Gymnasium Bad Pyrmont, Germany			
		17 7 f / 10 m	2 m

'In terms of pupil recruitment demand was very popular. We were in a position to engage pupils in the Football & Peace Project that sometimes find history difficult or sport challenging. The Football & Peace Project was the perfect opportunity to cross the curricular in uncharted areas'. Paul Murray, Project Manager, Oasis Academy.

Project Partners			
Organisation	Project team	Football & Peace Day Celebration / Exhibition	Volunteers
NCFA	3	1	10
Kent County Council Libraries, Registration & Archives	2	1	3
Maidstone Museum	2	1	2
British Army Football Association	1	1	4
Maidstone United FC	1	2	2

'I value the opportunity that the project gave our staff, library volunteers and project participants to explore & highlight resources relating to sport and the First World War, especially as it reflected in the experiences of local people'. Robert Illingworth, Kent County Council – Libraries, Registration & Archives.

Football & Peace Day Celebration Sports Facilitators			
Sport	Project team	Sports Day Facilitators	Oganiser
Kent County Cricket	2	4	1
Kent County Football Association	1	4	1
Kent County Rugby Union	1	4	1
Olympia Boxing	2	2	1

'The event was well organised prior to our arrival so we understood where we had to go & what was required of us. There were many NCFA volunteers there to help us get sorted & allowed the event to flow in a relaxed manner. The children were fantastically well behaved which allowed them to play more games'. Natalie Curtis, Kent County Football Association.

Activities

Each school project team researched their heritage at home, at school and in the community. Online research tools were provided by NCFA, Maidstone Museum, Kent Libraries, and Registration & Archives. Links to National, regional and local resources, meant that the teams could use the F&PP website to discuss their work and upload there projects.

Outreach workshops facilitated by the NCFA, Kent Libraries, Registration & Archives supported the respective school projects with a short film, presentation and discussion, which contextualised the project teams' work. Some pupils took part in filmed interviews giving their opinions about why commemorating WW1 is important, which later featured in the Football & Peace short film.

School's project teams attended Maidstone Museum, Kent Libraries, Registrations & Archives, where they discussed their work with museum and library staff, as well as with volunteers and enthusiasts. Schools organised day trips to their local war memorial and one school went to London to see the theatre production of War Horse.

The Peace Day Celebration culminated in an exhibition of the project teams' work. Schools organised and assembled their exhibition which was then viewed by an estimated 500 people. Some project team members interviewed the Minister for Sport on the subject of why it is important that sport commemorates WW1, the interviews featured in the F&PP short film.

Each school sports team (including the special guests from Germany) took part in the Peace Day Celebrations: football, cricket, rugby and boxing. Before the activities took place, a ceremony commemorating WW1 given by the Royal British Legion and Reverend Phil Sheldrake from Saint Faith's Church, Maidstone, was observed by over 500 people. Speeches by the Minister for Sport and NCFA Chair, thanked the funders, project teams and volunteers, for their hard work and enthusiasm.

After the sports activities a Forum for all the project teams was attended by special guest speakers, Don Mullan, Flanders Peace Field Ambassador, Dr Emma Hanna, Greenwich University and Ivan Kakembo, Director of Uganda Soccer Academy. Hosted by ex BBC Radio 5 Live producer Chris Green, the project teams engaged in a debate about their work and how that affected them.

Outcomes Achieved

- Use local history resources to explore the war time histories of families, schools, sports clubs and people from diverse communities

All 5 project managers reported an upsurge of their pupils using the [Football & Peace Project](#) website and accessing local online history resources provided by Kent County Council's Libraries, Registration and Archives. The workshop feedback forms completed by project managers recorded:

	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Did the workshops support your project	5			
Degree of usefulness within your role	1	4		
Degree of usefulness to your school	1	4		
Quality and style of delivery	1	4		
Quality and usefulness of online resource	5			
Quality of admin arrangements		5		

For example, Borden Grammar School's project researched ex-pupils that had attended their school in the First World War. A number of pupils and staff found that they too had heritage links in their own families to the First World War when they used the Imperial War Museum's online [Digital Memorial](#).

'Excellent use of online resources and the degree of relevance to the local community. This allowed for higher levels of engagement and the students seemed particularly interested in those Old Bordenians and in particular the goalkeeper from Maidstone Football Club'. Mark Hughes, Project Manager, Borden Grammar School.

High Weald Academy's project engaged their literacy skills, researching WW1 letters and local members of the community appearing on the First World War memorial in Cranbrook. An introduction to the Kent & Medway in the First World War by Robert Illingworth, Service Development Librarian, Local History, Kent Libraries, Registration and Archives, helped provide the platform for more detailed information.

'Our pupils were really engrossed and enjoyed the workshops at school, Maidstone Library and especially the living history session at Maidstone Museum. It definitely developed a clear perception of local Cranbrook residents in WW1'. Duncan Fryer, Project Manager, High Weald Academy.

Herne Bay High School's project focused on the role of sport and Walter Tull, the first black British Army Officer and one of the first black professional footballers. A better understanding of the war time history was achieved when guest speaker Professor Adrian Smith, University of Southampton, introduced connections to WW1 through diversity, culture, sport and modern day football. After a visit to the local war memorial Project Manager reported that they witnessed their respective pupils engage on a higher level;

'They loved doing the research on Walter Tull and dressing up in the World War One uniforms at Maidstone Museum. There were activities they would not have had the opportunity to experience if it was not for the Football & Peace Project'. Lorraine Fairbard, Project Manager, Herne Bay High School.

Oasis Academy's project researched the Isle of Sheppey's WW1 heritage which led them to documenting recent archeologically digs on the island discovering WW1 artefacts. In this instance their F&PP linked up with their No Limits Project, a European wide project that also commemorates the First World War centenary.

'This project was relevant, a good example of how to get pupils engaged in research across the curriculum. They connected with local history and they enjoy their sport, on many levels'. Michael Walmsley, Project Manager, Oasis Academy.

Swadelands School produced a magazine about the Home Front during the First World War – pals Battalions, conscription and local companies, which were all considered important contributors in sport and in the War. A trip to Ypres was organised which stimulated many conversations about war and peace.

'Term 3 in Year 9 SOW involves conditions on the Western Front and the role of Britain at home during WW1, which connects to GCSE Unit called 'War and the Transformation of Society 1903 – 1928. Therefore, the Football & Peace Project became an added bonus for the students – they especially enjoyed the participation at the Maidstone museum..... It did provide the students with

an awareness of the Lenham Cross and how Lenham was effected during WW1'. Margaret Collingwood, Project Manager, Swadelands School.

- To have intergenerational dialogue between young people, older people, experts and enthusiasts to enrich the understanding of the First World War

Maidstone Museum, Kent Libraries, Registration & Archives provided a number of elderly volunteers to help pupils organise and plan their research. The pupils' first port of call after their introductions of their project work was to discuss their ideas with elderly volunteers. Volunteers and enthusiasts helped the project teams plan and start their research. Dialogue between young and old, provided accessibility to the subject matter and how to pitch at the right level. The experience and expertise shown by the volunteers ignited the project teams into action.

'It enabled us to work with secondary school pupils, which we rarely are able to do – and a kick start to researching our WW1 collection' Lucy Shipp, Maidstone Museum.

- Create a short documentary film for 100 year's Centenary resources and produce a project website

The [Football & Peace Project film](#) (duration 15mins) features 18 interviews with project teams, experts, enthusiasts, academics and special guest speaker at the Football & Peace Day Celebration, Helen Grant, Minister for Sport. The film contextualises WW1 and F&PP for young and old, then and now. Project teams wrote their own questions and interview and so doing interviewed one another, asking some frank and age appropriate questions, for example:

Do you think the Christmas Truce Happened?

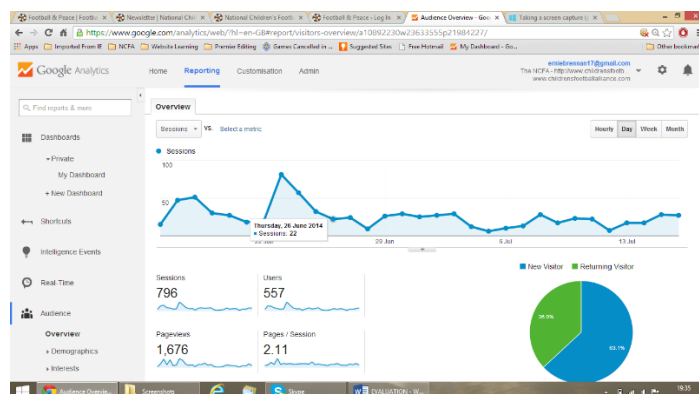
Before the Football & Peace Project what did you know about WW1?

The pupils candid answers and opinions, illustrate Andrew Murrison MP's call for young people to 'explore the counter-intuitive and challenge publicly held orthodoxy' (see page 4).

Some pupils from all project teams were given the opportunity to interview Helen Grant, Minister for Sports. Once again, they wrote the questions and experienced how to conduct an interview with a leading politician.

The Football & Peace Project film is now being linked to a number of websites featured on the [Football & Peace links page](#).

The [Football & Peace Project Website](#) achieved its outcome within the first month of its launch in November 2013. All Project teams uploaded their project outlines. Currently over 1676 page views.



- Produce an exhibition of participants work at a Football & Peace Day Celebration event

All project teams met the Friday 25th April deadline and produced their body of work at the Football & Peace Day Celebration exhibition at Maidstone United Football Club's Gallagher Stadium. Furthermore, Kent Rugby Union displayed a series of Rugby programmes from the period of the First World War and Kent County Cricket displayed England and Kent Cricketer, Colin Blythe's cricket bat from the First World War.



Helen Grant, Minister for Sport, views pupils work at the Football & Peace Project Exhibition

'It was inspiring to see so many young people both enjoying and being inspired by the combination of sport and First World War Centenary Commemorations' Helen Grant, Minister for Sport

'I looked through the various presentations presented by the schools and was very impressed with the amount of research and detail the children had gone into. If we (Army Football) can be of assistance to you in the future, please do not hesitate in contacting me'. Bill Thompson, British Army Football Association

Attended by over 500 people the day started with a commemoration to WW1 given by the Royal British Legion.



Last Post performed by British Legion

Football, cricket, rugby and boxing, were the sports facilitated by the respective local governing bodies.



‘As a boxing coach, merging sport and history made me think how much sport can unite people’, Wayne Smith, Olympia Boxing.

‘F&PP emphasised the role of sport in social cohesion’, Peter Robinson, Kent County Cricket.

‘Many International rugby players from all over the world fought and died for their countries in WW1. The F&PP gave me the chance to compare the game at the start of the century to the game we have today. Inspired by the Christmas Truce, this project does not fail to make young and old think about the role of sport’. Danny Vaughan, Kent Rugby Football Union

‘As a project partner I can say that the F&PP was an enjoyable experience’, John Harvey, Facilities Manager, Maidstone United Football Club.

The Football & Peace Day Celebration hosted a forum for all the project teams to discuss their work with a panel of experts. The experience allowed children to gain confidence in public speaking and discuss their work in an environment with academics.



Panel of experts from left to right: Chris Green (Presenter), Ivan Kakembo, Director of Uganda Soccer Academy, Don Mullan, Ambassador for Flanders Peace Field and Dr Emma Hanna, Senior Lecturer in History at Greenwich University.

In the spirit of the Christmas Truces the Forum was opened by the exchanging of gifts between the children from Germany with the project teams.



In the spirit of the Christmas Truces special guests Humboldt Gymnasium Bad Pyrmont, Germany exchange gifts with the project teams.

'Football & Peace Day Celebration will live long in the memory of our children. They had some great experiences and they truly felt like they were special guests – the hospitality was warm and welcoming. Thank you for making this possible'. Thorven Lucht, Teacher, Humboldt Gymnasium Bad Pyrmont, Germany.

'It definitely was inspiring: a great concept celebrating an ideal of crucial importance to the human race. You can't ask for more. The speakers were in turns moving, inspirational and informative. It was lovely to meet the two 'peace' speakers and hear their stories. To think of all those young minds just being exposed to that precious message is reward enough'. Mark Bateson, Kent County Council Community History Officer.

'It was a great day. The Forum was always going to be inspiring with such a line-up of speakers. It was a privilege to be there. I was very impressed with the way the Football Club embraced the project and for quality of the activities and facilities on the day. I was equally impressed at the young people's work and to see how they had grown in confidence since that visit to the History and Library Centre. The way they engaged with the Forum was great'. Gill Bromley, Service Improvement Manager, Community Cohesion and Heritage.

Media

Football & Peace Project had a six-point media campaign (see appendix 2) which achieved all its social media, press and radio targets. Features in The Sunday Telegraph, The Guardian, The Sunday Times and on Talk Sport Radio, gained the NCFE website an upsurge in online traffic, hits went from 500 to over a 1500 page views in the space of two months.

NCFE [Press Release](#) was accessible via the website, it featured the Heritage Lottery Fund's logo and thanked HLF for the grant. Kent Messenger and Kent FM Radio both featured articles on the Football & Peace Day Celebration.

CONCLUSION

Contextualising sport using the lessons learnt from the Christmas Truces engaged young people from a unique perspective. The F&PP brought a diverse selection of young people together; it enabled them to express themselves, research their heritage and to a degree take ownership for future years of commemoration. Young people found a heritage connection in their community, family and with their school, to the First World War.

Participants now recognise that it is important to commemorate the First World War and that sport throughout the period played a vital role in comradeship, community cohesion and propaganda. They discovered the humanitarian qualities fostered through sport's recreation and competition. They learnt how to investigate their heritage and utilise community and online resources.

Through guided discovery the history and sport aspect of the F&PP proved that intergenerational relationships are very important when maintaining respect and building intergenerational trust. Many young people discovered a sense of remembrance and began to understand why it is important to older and future generations. Conversely, many mature people found the interaction with younger people refreshing and enlightening in terms of context and how sport can be a passage to peace.

The F&PP film documents young voices 100 years on from the First World War. It illustrates that the language may have changed, politics has changed and indeed to a degree history has changed – however, what is clear is that sport remains as important in communities around the world now as it was then; in particular as a force for good in times of hardship. The film captures a new generation questioning their history and learning from their research.

The F&PP exhibition was the culmination of all the participants' hard work. Numbers to view the exhibition were above and beyond expectations. In addition the exhibition was considered of such interest that Maidstone Museum displayed it for four weeks following the event.

The Football & Peace Day Celebration commemorated the First World War with young and old people sharing the experience together. Sports games were played in the spirit of the Christmas Truces. All schools played in mixed teams with mixed ability and mixed gender. This proved to be a unique event with many of the sports facilitators saying that it was the first of its kind. It was clearly very popular in terms of attendance and the feel good factor was evident in the celebration of peace through play.

The F&PP Forum was a huge success in terms of young people experiencing their first ever public debate. The project teams asked the panel of experts for their thoughts with regard the exhibition work; specifically how it represented the current generation in the centenary years. All the panellists and the host, Chris Green, felt the standard of questions put to them by the project teams was very high and ultimately engaging.

Many young people consider football and sport differently now that they have participated in the Football & Peace Project (see appendix 3). They found time to consider how they felt about sport in the context of the Christmas Truces and sport played in the First World War. A major factor to the success of the Football & Peace Project was that it was not mandatory. The participants volunteered to take part; it was indeed over-subscribed and unfortunately there were not enough places to meet demand. In essence, the Football & Peace Project reached out to a generation and offered them the unique opportunity to discover their heritage at home and abroad.

Appendix

1. Invitation to special guests Humboldt Gymnasium Bad Pyrmont, Germany. Sponsored by Parents of HGBP. In association with International Children's Football Alliance.

Dear Thorven Lucht & Humboldt-Gymnasium Bad Pyrmont

Re: The Football & Peace Project, Peace Day Celebration on Friday 25th April, 2014 at Maidstone United Football Club's Gallagher Stadium.

The National Children's Football Alliance would like to invite you to the above-mentioned event as part of the First World War commemorations.

Inspired by the 1914 Christmas truce, the Heritage Lottery Funded, Football & Peace Project celebrates peace and commemorates the First World War. A programme of sports; football, rugby, cricket and boxing will take place along- side an exhibition of the children's project work.

The event starts a 10am with the reception at 12pm featuring key guest speaker Helen Grant, MP, Sports Minister.

Best wishes



Ernie Brennan

(Director)

R.S.V.P

2. Media Campaign Plan

Football & Peace Pilot Project Publicity Campaign

The mission is to raise the Football & Peace Pilot Project awareness.

A six point publicity campaign using the following;

Website	Press Release down load / contacts /
Email	Email Press Release with Newsletter to NCFA subscribers, stakeholders and associates feature Press Release
Social Media Blogs, online networks; Twitter, Facebook, MySpace? LinkedIn	Press Release to feature on social media with links to NCFA website.
Radio	National and regional. Plug press release to accessible stations
Press	National and regional. Press Release emailed to accessible News papers
Television	Plug press release to Regional Broadcasters April 25 th Peace Day Celebration
All forms of publicity to feature NCFA logo & HLF, web and contacts.	

3. School Feedback Forms Summary

Football & Peace Project Pupil's Feedback Forms Summary

61 out of 80 returned their forms.

A. Please tick	Yes	No
Was the Football & Peace Project enjoyable? Please explain why?	61	
'It was interesting and the information was taught in a fun way' High Weald Academy		

B Please tick	Yes	No
What part of the Football & Peace Project did you enjoy the most? Please explain why?	61	
5 - Trips out of school. 11 – Living History Group at Maidstone Museum 25 – Football & Peace Day Celebration		

C Please tick	Yes	No
What did you learn from the Football & Peace Project that you feel you will never forget? Please explain why?	61	
'I learnt how important football is to bring people together'. J Clark. Herne Bay High.		

D Please tick	Yes	No
Do you think the Football & Peace Project helped you learn about local history in World War One? Please explain why?	61	
'It taught me all about the memorial that I walk passed everyday on my way to school' Swadelands School		

E Please tick	Yes	No
Did the Football & Peace Project help you make links between history and sport? Please explain why?	61	
'Yes, because we could see how sport was used to get men to sign up to the war' Borden Grammar		

F Please tick	Yes	No
During the Football & Peace Project did you discuss WW1 with members of your family or older people in your community? Please explain why?	39	
'I spoke with my dad a lot because he said that his Great Granddad fought in WW1' Oasis Academy		

G Please tick	Yes	No
Did the Football & Peace Project make you feel differently about modern day football & sport? Please explain how?	56	3
'Yes, it reminded me that football isn't about the Premier League and big name signings, it's about people having fun and enjoying themselves'. Tom Sanders, Borden Grammar School.		

H	Please tick	Yes	No
How would you improve the Football & Peace Project? Please explain why?		3	
'More activities on the Peace Day Celebration for students who took part in the history side of the project'. Charlotte Ashenden, Herne Bay High School.			

I	Please tick	Yes	No
Did you enjoy the Peace Day Celebration? Please explain how?		53	
'The debate made history relevant today'. Herne Bay High School			

J	Please tick	Yes	No
What would you like to see on the Football & Peace website?		21	
'More information about the history of schools in WW1.' Oasis Academy			