

# ANNUAL REVIEW 2017-18

REACHING THE WORLD  
OF SPORT FOR CHRIST

CHRISTIANS IN  
**SPORT** 

# DIRECTORS MESSAGE

In the last year we have had the privilege of speaking about the life of former England footballer and Christians in Sport trustee Cyrille Regis. His death in January, at the age of 59, was a major shock and it came just two days after he joined us at our Birmingham Partner Evening. Having come to faith through the testimony of a number of faithful sports people, Cyrille spent the next 28 years influencing hundreds of young leaders with his generosity, kindness and unashamed standing for Christ.

Whilst we may not all have Cyrille's sporting gifts, we are all called to follow Jesus' Great Commission in Matthew 28 to go and make disciples of all nations. People come to know Christ because Christians like Cyrille, live for Him and speak of Him in their world of sport. In the last year it has been greatly encouraging to hear stories of people doing just that.

In an increasingly complicated world, the message we have is simple: we long for all sportspeople, the millions of people who play, coach, officiate, administrate and transport, to have a chance to respond to the amazing message of the gospel.

This year there have been a number of real highlights, many of which you can read about in detail in this Annual Review. 46,000 sportspeople came

to a guest event last year, over 1200 churches and individuals downloaded our Sports Mission Pack, we supported over 450 elite sportspeople and globally we've been involved in training hundreds of leaders for sports mission, including running a focussed month of training and mission for 26 European students. On top of all this we also launched a brand new Sports Plus camp at Monkton Combe School.

Amongst all those numbers, however, stories like this one stand out. A parent of a child attending Sports Plus for the first time wrote to us after camp. She copied a text her daughter had sent:



"THIS IS AMAZING! Everything about it is so fun and enjoyable and amazing. The people are AMAZING, the meetings are AMAZING, the sport is AMAZING.

That's not a bad recommendation from the girl who did not want to stay at the start of the week! And as for our son, well he told us he 'became a Christian' whilst away for the week! I'm not sure we could have asked for more."

This story is a microcosm of what God is doing in the world of sport and we are so grateful for your prayers and for the money you give to make this all possible.

As you read the stories in this Annual Review and as you continue to support the work of reaching the world of sport for Christ, may you be greatly

encouraged by all our awesome God is doing to fulfil His plans for the gospel going to all nations, to all people groups and to the world of sport.

**Graham and Keith**

*All stats and figures are from our financial year of 1 September 2017 - 31 August 2018.*

# ENGAGE

OUR GOAL BY 2020 IS TO GIVE 150,000 PEOPLE THE OPPORTUNITY TO HEAR AND RESPOND TO THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST.

TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL WE ARE:

- **ENGAGING SPORTSPEOPLE IN THE BRITISH ISLES**
- **ENGAGING ELITE SPORTS PEOPLE**
- **ENGAGING SPORTS PEOPLE INTERNATIONALLY**
- **ENGAGING SPORTSPEOPLE THROUGH DIGITAL RESOURCES**

FROM ALBANIA TO ABERDEEN IN THE LAST YEAR OVER 46,000 SPORTSPEOPLE HAVE ENGAGED WITH THE GOOD NEWS AT A GUEST EVENT.



# MEETING A REAL NEED IN THE WORLD OF TOP-LEVEL TRACK AND FIELD.



Two staff members headed to the Gold Coast, Australia, in April for the Commonwealth Games. Over the summer, this developed into an increasing number of Bible studies taking place at the world-renowned Diamond League events. Here we saw Christian athletes not only coming to study the Bible themselves, but inviting their friends to come and hear about Jesus at these gatherings ahead of competition.

Compared to the year before, twice as many track and field athletes have engaged with the gospel. We do this focussed work with elite athletes, not because they are any more important, but because of the unique situations, pressures and time constraints these

athletes face.

Accessing genuine Christian community for top level sportspeople is often extremely difficult. In the world of track and field, this is exacerbated as their careers take them to another country each week of the year, with another expectation to perform. Our staff have travelled to meet these athletes where they are, read the Bible with them and encourage and challenge them in their faith.

The result of much gospel outreach is not easily seen but we trust the Lord of the Harvest to continue to do His work. It has thus been a great joy witnessing real growth this year in this specific area of performance sport.



**122 athletes attended Bible studies held at the Diamond League events**



**467 elite sportspeople were supported including 149 professional footballers**



**Bible studies at 10 PGA European Tour events and at 3 LPGA Tour events**

## STUDENT SUPPERS SOURCE OF GREAT ENCOURAGEMENT

Two of the main things we love to do at Christians in Sport is to speak at events where sportspeople can hear the gospel and to resource others to do the same.

Set piece events provide a great opportunity for people to invite their friends to something a bit different where they can hear a clear gospel message.

In our university work, hundreds of students meet each week in groups to be trained, to pray and support each other in their evangelism within university sport. This last year students have been challenged to put on



Dialogue Dinners, where friends come, eat a meal, hear someone's testimony and have a chance to ask questions about their faith.

In one university, Keele, this has seen them grow from not having a group a few years ago, to running six Dialogue Dinners in the week before their Christian Union events' week. All three of the group's leaders have come through Sports Plus and one of them, Peigi, who used to be on our Academy, describes the impact:

**"We had seven people at the cross country dinner. It was a really nice atmosphere and the perfect number for it. We gave out flyers and spoke about Uncover Bible studies. Eight of those at the hockey dinner were keen to go through Uncover, while three rugby girls wanted to come to church! We're praying this is just the start of our teammates coming to know Jesus."**

This is one university out of many, where sports playing students are boldly sharing their faith with their mates. Our prayer is that we would continue to see this boldness and passion for Jesus lead to many students having the opportunity to hear the gospel on our campuses.



On average 18 guest events took place across the work each week

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49 student Dialogue Dinners were held in 2018 compared to 15 in 2017

## WORLD CUP PROVES CATALYST FOR CHURCHES WITH SPORTS MISSION PACK

An increased demand by the church to run guest events, led us to creating our free downloadable Sports Mission Pack. This year, with the Football World Cup we saw a significant increase in people making use of it to share Jesus with sports people around them.



**"The quiz is an excellent resource. A local boxer gave his testimony and a Christians in Sport staff member followed up with an explanation of the gospel message. Both were really clear, and I did not recognise any of the people on some of the tables!"**

*Tim Lynas, Clitheroe's Church Sports Quiz*

**"You could have heard a pin drop when the film went on at half time. People were still chatting about it long after the game had finished. It was really encouraging and it's paved the way for future events of the same kind."**

*Stephen Collins, Killowen Parish Church's World Cup Big Screen Event*



### What's in the pack?

- The Sports Quiz
- Assemblies and lessons for teachers
- Guides to running different events
- Resources specifically created for the World Cup



673 young people attended Sports Plus. 104 came to the first ever camp at Monkton Combe



Virtually every second of every day, somebody somewhere is watching or listening to our content



1315 downloads of our Sports Mission Pack, a 127% increase from 2016-17

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# EXPAND

OUR GOAL BY 2020 IS TO GROW THE NUMBER OF LEADERS EXPANDING THE WORK TO 1,000.

BY 2020 WE LONG TO SEE A GROWING NUMBER OF SPORTS CLUBS AND TEAMS WITHIN 300 TOWNS, CITIES AND ELITE SPORTS IMPACTED BY THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST. WE CANNOT EXPAND TO NEW PLACES AND ELITE SPORTS WITHOUT LEADERS IN THE MISSION FIELD.



PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE IN A TOTAL OF 163 TOWNS, CITIES AND 5 ELITE SPORTS WITH 460 LEADERS ENGAGING PEOPLE WITH THE GOSPEL IN 2018. THIS DOESN'T INCLUDE THE 408 SPORTS PLUS LEADERS WHO SHARED JESUS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE THIS SUMMER.



## BREAKING NEW GROUND IN THE 17<sup>TH</sup> YEAR OF THE INTERNSHIP



For the first time, our Internship programme was regionalised with interns placed across the British Isles. This increased capacity provided opportunities for growth regionally, but also provided challenges in training a group of people geographically dispersed. Together with local partner churches, the 2017/2018 cohort of interns were equipped with both a practical and theological grounding through local ministry training programmes, a series of 'Block Training' weeks and weekly remote training via conference calls. Across the year it was a joy to see the interns develop as they passionately

shared Christ with sportspeople.

Rev Mike Keirle is the Dean of Jersey where intern Vusa was based. He reflects on some of the lessons interns have learnt serving in a challenging mission field.

**'Coming to the Channel Islands gives a different and distinct cultural environment in which to work. An intern here, expands their understanding of how mission works in different frameworks and the importance of contextualizing the gospel wherever we find ourselves.'**

### Training Leaders further afield

In July, we were part of the European Sports Mission programme for the 3rd year running. 26 attendees, aged between 18 and 25, took part in two weeks of training in sports mission before putting it in to practise by serving on a two-week mission in one of Macedonia, Romania or Malta.

The European Sports Mission is a key way in which we partner with sports mission initiatives on the Continent, as we continue to take a leading role in the European Christian Sports Union. The hope is that these missions in Macedonia, Romania and Malta become self-sustaining over the next few years - as we have seen in Moldova.

PLAY. PRAY. SAY.



137 students trained to Play, Pray, Say at Clubhouse Xtra conferences in Northern Ireland and England

160 one-to-ones with university group leaders



# ONE TOWN. ONE MESSAGE. THOUSANDS OF SPORTSPEOPLE.

Sport has always been high on the agenda for Richard 'Leady' Leadbeater. A former professional footballer, now vicar of King's Church Guildford, he has swapped his boots for a racquet down at Pit Farm Tennis Club. The church he leads was established only 4 years ago, and nearly a quarter of the congregation is involved in sport.

For Rev. Greg Cushing, it's a bit different. Having been introduced to

Christians in Sport whilst representing Cambridge in the rugby Varsity at Twickenham, Greg now ministers to a rural congregation in Surrey with just a handful of sportspeople.

At Grace Church Guildford, the make-up is different still. Working with students, Lois Newcombe comes across many involved in university sport and is herself involved as a rugby coach at the University of Surrey.

Guildford

Guildford is one of 59 towns and cities in the British Isles where training events, guest events and partnerships with leaders are taking place



There is an expanding work in 96 towns and cities around the world

One town, several churches, many leaders with a passion for sharing Jesus in the world of sport!

As one of our 300 target towns for sustainable mission by 2020, Guildford is a prime example of how reaching the world of sport plays out at the local level. This year alone, we have been privileged to speak at four evangelistic events, each tailored to a different audience within the town. As we train and empower these leaders to run events that fit their individual context, our role is to provide them with the speakers and resources they need.

For Greg, the idea of a sports quiz like in his university days had been simmering, and a call from a staff worker lit the fuse. Held at Cranleigh Rugby Club, the clubhouse was buzzing with a mixture of players, Rugby Tots parents, and PE teachers from nearby Cranleigh school.

The day after, Greg wrote: 'Your quizzes are my favourite evangelistic settings... I've already heard from the Christians there, that they had great conversations, and that one guest has committed to coming to church on Sunday'

At quizzes hosted by Grace Church and King's Church, we were again privileged to open the Bible with a

roomful of sportspeople.

Finally, with the support of Lois, more University of Surrey students are meeting to pray for their teams than ever before. Early in the season, staff worker Rosie came and fielded questions from interested teammates at a joint dialogue dinner hosted by the group.

But it's not all about going it alone - there's real advantage in coming together. Particularly for smaller churches who may not be able to dedicate time and manpower to in-house training for sportspeople, we recognise a need to run joint training events - what we call Clubhouses - once a year.

This year's Guildford Clubhouse will be a time for Lois, Leady, Greg and the dozens of other sportspeople we know to come together, share wisdom, pray and be encouraged. We will equip them for the season ahead and, Lord willing, we will envision more leaders to run guest events in more churches and reach even more sportspeople for Christ!

One town, thousands of sportspeople, and a small example of what we are seeing in towns and cities up throughout the British Isles.



8 new university groups in 2018 from 30 to 38



286 leaders serving the work around the British Isles and 137 in the rest of the world



408 Sports Plus Leaders and 92 trainees served young people across 6 camps

# ENABLE

OUR GOAL FOR 2020 IS TO ENABLE THE WORK TO GROW, INCLUDING RAISING OUR ANNUAL DONATIONS TO £2 MILLION.

THIS INCLUDES:

- ENABLING THE WORK THROUGH PRAYER, PARTNER COMMUNICATIONS AND A STRONG OPERATIONAL CORE
- ENABLING THE WORK TO GROW THROUGH SPECIAL PROJECTS
- ENABLING THE WORK FINANCIALLY

TO SHARE THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST IN GROWING NUMBERS OF SPORTS TEAMS AND CLUBS WITHIN 300 TO CITIES AND ELITE LEVEL SP



# EVERY COUNTRY OF THE WORLD

We've been working on a number of major projects recently, all hoping to simplify things for you and the thousands of people who access our resources. In all this outreach, it is a case of evolution not revolution. From 1976 our vision has remained the same. We pray that this simplification of our resources leads to many more sportspeople hearing and responding to the good news of Jesus.

In the last year, our resources were accessed in every single country of the world. As we look to build on that work, we are looking to make it easier for people to find exactly what they want and better serve Christians

living and speaking for Jesus in the world of sport.

This has meant we've created thousands of resources - including blogs, Bible studies, videos and podcasts - and through listening to your feedback, we have worked hard this year to make these easier to access and navigate. You'll be seeing all of this in an updated website in the Spring.

We've also worked to freshen up how we look and sound and with that you can see below an updated logo which will be rolled out alongside our new website.



Our new logo launching in the Spring



7,494 prayer partners



162,000 people visited our website to access our resources

# THANK YOU

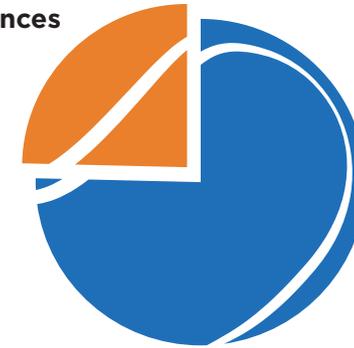
Behind every guest event, resource, and training seminar there are hundreds of partners who have prayed for and given to this work. Here is an overview of our finances.

## Income

Total income increased by 3% from £1,856 to £1,918.

### Camps and conferences

469



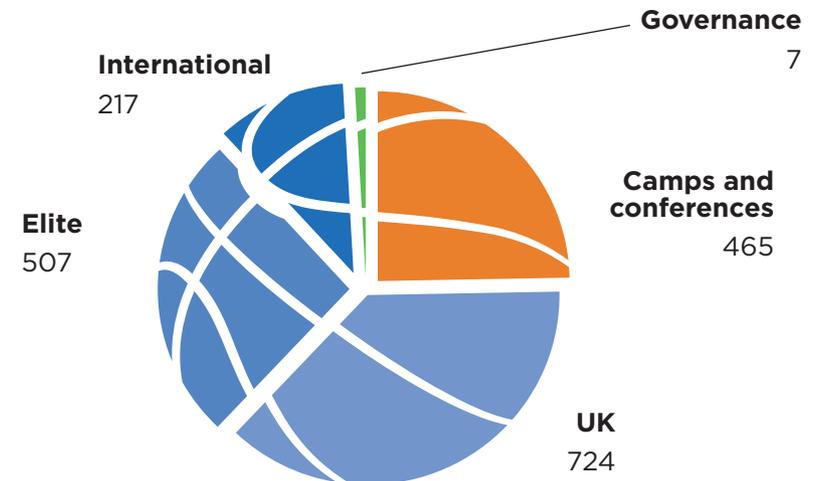
### Unrestricted Donations

1,450

(all figures in £'000's)

## Expenditure

Total expenditure was £1,920 an increase of 14% from £1,689 last year.



We continue to entrust our income and expenditure to our Heavenly Father. Thank you for standing with us; for your faithful prayers and generous gifts. The mission to reach the world of sport for Christ continues to grow and we are so encouraged by your support.



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Registered Charity number for England and Wales 1086570  
Registered Charity number for Scotland SC045299.  
Company number 4146081

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