The Hat-Trick Project was established in 2005 through a unique partnership between The Football Association and Newcastle New Deal for Communities. Originally based exclusively in the West End of Newcastle, Hat-Trick has now evolved to working across the North East of England, as well as delivering unique sessions across the country.

Hat-Trick uses football and sport for development, as a hook to engage young people and aid the development of transferable life skills. This includes raising the confidence and aspirations of the young people they work with.

**The Hat-Trick Philosophy**

'We make quality football and multi-sport activities accessible to young people of all abilities and backgrounds.'

**The Hat-Trick Strategy**

'To create a pathway from schools into sustainable activities based in local communities and sports clubs.'

**Women and Girls’ Sport (W.A.G.S)**

WAGS was formed in 2009 and originally stood for Women and Girls Soccer which was designed to engage ‘hard to reach’ women and girls into football. The name is an intentional spin on a well-known acronym, so rather than associating WAGS with ‘wives and girlfriends’ of famous footballers -which isn’t always positive- the term now has a meaning that its participants and their families are proud to associate themselves with.
WAGS is one of Hat-Trick’s most successful activities and much of this is down to the innovative nature of the programme. It has been designed specifically to capture the attention of all women and girls, including those who would not traditionally take part in organised sport. It has a tried and tested model and has already had great success in engaging ‘non-sporty’ women and girls from all backgrounds and abilities. The WAGS programme is FA approved and has won a National award from Street Games Us Girls Programme as its most innovative programme in January 2013. It has several key elements that contribute to the successful engagement of ‘non-sporty’ women and girls within the programme:

• Coaches and ‘Motivators’ attend the local school and initially deliver WAGS taster sessions within PE lessons in curriculum time.

• The taster sessions are targeted on engaging the ‘non-sporty’ girls, focusing on fun skill development and challenges, played with pink balls and including music and social time within the session.

• The Coaches and Motivators develop relationships and build trust with participants within the taster session. For example, coaches and motivators have fun, bubbly personalities which enables them to build up rapport with participants, creating a fun and relaxed atmosphere within the session

• This style of delivery aims to break down negative perceptions of football and multi-sport, and build up the confidence of girls who don’t normally participate in sports activities.

• Following the taster sessions, the ‘non-sporty’ girls are then targeted and invited to attend the 8 week block of extra-curricular after school WAGS sessions

• These sessions are delivered in the same style, with the same coaches. This progression pathway has been successful in engaging a number of non-sporty girls within the extra-curricular WAGS sessions - engaging a large proportion of participants who have never stayed behind for an after-school sports club before.

• Within these sessions the women and girls aren’t coached - instead they take part in ‘skills challenges’. Social skills will be developed and friendships will be encouraged through the nature and environment of the sessions.

• The participants enjoy and feel comfortable within the session as they realise they don’t necessarily have to be ‘good’ at sports to join in. They are participating with peers who are on the same ability level as themselves.

• As an exit route for the 8 week block of after-school WAGS sessions, participants are invited to attend community WAGS sessions delivered within their locality.

• Other sports are included, offering an opportunity for the women and girls to sample a supplementary activity and another potential exit route if desired.

• Female Coaches are used to inspire the players as positive role models, providing an example of somebody living an active, healthy lifestyle. There are also opportunities for women to volunteer and gain sports qualifications and become local female role models in their community.

• Incentives are key in the retention of players and are based on attendance and commitment. These include WAGS branded t-shirts, hoodies and joggers - which encourage that sense of belonging and feeling part of a group.
Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

‘The emphasis is on the activity being fun, sociable and accessible to women and girls of any ability and background. Providing an opportunity to increase fitness in an informal, sociable, female only environment appeals to what girls are looking for in an activity.’ Emma, Project Manager, Hat-Trick.

Hat-Trick Us Girls Alive Programme

The Us Girls Alive programme engages women and girls aged 16 to 25 with a combination of healthy eating and physical activity. Each session consists of cooking a simple, healthy meal, alongside the provision of multi-sport activities to music that will raise self-confidence and self-esteem, whilst promoting the ‘eat well and move well’ message.

The Us Girls Alive programme has done a fantastic job of engaging ‘non-sporty’ women and girls, using the cooking sessions as a hook to attract them to the session. Subliminal health, nutrition and fitness messages will be delivered through the cooking session, educating the girls on the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. The Us Girls Alive programme has successfully engaged a new target group of young females whom Hat-Trick have never had contact with before. These new participants will often build up their confidence and motivation to exercise through the Us Girls Alive Club. The Community WAGS sessions are then a natural progression for participants who want to participate in additional sport and fitness between the Alive Club sessions.

Becky Hendry - Participant to employment pathway

Becky Hendry has been involved in WAGS since it began in 2009. Becky initially began as a participant, with her passion for football resulting in her quickly progressing and taking on a volunteer role within the programme.

Aged 16 Becky completed her FA Level 1 coaching qualification and continued to volunteer within the WAGS Programme. On top of Becky’s regular volunteering within the WAGS programme, over the next four years she achieved a huge amount in terms of volunteering, qualifications and awards.

The next huge milestone happened for Becky in 2011, when (through Hat-Trick) she was awarded Sport Unlimited funding of £10,000 to deliver the WAGS programme across primary schools in the West End of Newcastle. Becky was then employed by Hat-Trick and became one of the key coaches in the delivery of the programme.

Becky’s commitment to volunteering with Hat-Trick was recognised when she won the StreetGames Us Girls Volunteer of the Year Award in 2013.
Becky continued with her professional development, and soon after gained her Level 2 Doorstep Sport Coaching Award.

Becky has volunteered as a Motivator within the Us Girls Alive programme at Hat-trick since September 2013. As an US Girls motivator Becky is a female role model for participants to look up to. Becky’s role also includes:

- Promotion of the session within her local community - for example via social media using THIS GIRL CAN and https://twitter.com/UsGirlsHubNew
- Encouraging the participants during the session
- Organising social events such as bowling
- Gathering feedback from the participants about the sessions.

Becky is currently mentoring a participant within the UsGirls Alive programme who she has known since 2010, when she coached her within primary school WAGS sessions. The participant is experiencing a variety of personal and family issues which have resulted in her turning to alcohol. Becky is working within her role as an UsGirls Alive Motivator to support the participant through this difficult time in her life. Using sport and cooking sessions within the UsGirls Alive Club as an engagement tool, Becky is a fantastic young female mentor and role model for the participant.

As a result of her work, the participant’s teacher at school emailed Becky: ‘Hi Becky, (Participant X) is really enjoying her work with you. She seems a lot more positive overall so I think it really helping raise her self-esteem, and giving her ‘leisure time’ a real focus. Thanks for your help,

Frances Tiffin Excelsior Academy PE Teacher’
The Future

The future is looking bright for Becky. Becky went on to study Sport Development at Sunderland University, completing her degree with a 2:1 in 2014.

In January 2015 she was employed by Hat-Trick as a full time community sports coach. Within the role Becky is responsible for delivering WAGS and Us Girls sessions across Newcastle - programmes she first attended as a participant over five years ago.

Becky is currently completing her Level 3 Award in Education and Training (QCF) at college and aspires to be a Part time tutor for Street Games when she is qualified.

‘Who better to deliver Doorstep Sport or Us Girls workshops than a girl who really knows what activities work, and more importantly the impact Street Games activities can have on young people from areas of deprivation.’ Project Manager, Hat-trick.

StreetGames

StreetGames is a national partner of Sport England and a centre of expertise for developing doorstep sport in disadvantaged communities.

The charity supports community based sports projects that deliver sport and volunteering opportunities to young people living in the 20% most deprived wards in the UK.

StreetGames works with National Governing Bodies of Sport to establish and develop links between community and mainstream sport. Recognised by the London 2012 Olympic & Paralympic Games Inspire Mark, StreetGames is creating a lasting legacy of doorstep sport in the UK.