



2024-2027 Strategy

# Project 1500

**Empowering Apprentices,  
Enriching Communities**

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## Welcome to Project 1500

***Our Vision:*** "Every young person can access meaningful education and employment opportunities without barriers and discrimination."

"Thank you for taking time to read our exciting new strategy. Coach Core has made incredible strides since our first programme was launched in 2012, particularly since establishing as an independent charity in April 2020. In the true spirit of Coach Core, we have learnt so much from the successes of our last strategy (2021-24), but we have taken just as much from the things we know we can do better. When we wrote the last strategy, the UK was coming out of the pandemic restrictions, and we were very cognisant of the health implications it caused for many, along with the wider, lasting impacts experienced by so many others linked to this life changing moment. Since 2021, the rise in reported mental health cases, school children absence and exclusions, disparity in who can access meaningful physical activity [and who can't], the cost of living, and youth unemployment all continue to affect an entire generation of young people.

As a result, we were transparent in how we adjusted some of our initial targets to meet the needs of our young people and published this in our annual reports. Yet despite these heightened challenges, we are extremely proud of the achievements made during that time, most notably 329 apprentices supported, taking us to 950 in total since 2012. We are excited to celebrate our 1000th apprentice this Summer 2024!

We will detail more about the last three years later in this document, but like our apprentices, I want to look to the future and the reasons behind our new, exciting strategic direction titled 'Project 1500'.

Still serving as that critical bridge back into employment and education for those that need the opportunity most, we understand – as you will read later - that the current climate is still increasingly tough for young people. Growing numbers of employers are also struggling in many ways but especially introducing new, diverse, young talent into their organisations. So, with our reputation and demand for our services at an all-time high, we enter the next three years knowing **the Coach Core offer is needed now more than ever.**

It's in our DNA to collaborate and work with others to drive the best possible outcomes for all parties. We want to ignite this further so that **over the next 3 years we can reach the next milestone of 1,500** apprentices supported since 2012. These incredible, relatable young role models will then **unlock sport and physical activity provision for a projected 8.5m people** in the communities that need it most during this time. If we then consider the wider benefits to society, people influenced by their journey, their impact on community events – you can see that the powerful ripple effect extends way beyond simply changing the lives of our apprentices.

**But to do this we need your help!** We need more partners and supporters than ever before, and we hope after reading this, you will feel inspired to help 'Project 1500' so that we can collectively enable the right young talent truly change their lives for the long term. Thank you!"



**Gary Laybourne**  
Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer



# Get to *know* Coach Core

The small but impactful Coach Core team has worked tirelessly for over a decade to better the future life chances of marginalised young people. Employing the highest standards of good governance, we live and breathe everything we do through the vehicle of change that apprenticeships can bring. But first, let's take you back to the basics...

## *What* is an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a paid job where anyone over the age of 16 can gain valuable employment experiences whilst working towards a nationally recognised qualification. These levels range from 2 - 7, which is GCSE equivalent right through to Higher Degree certification.

The skills, learning, and development experiences they gain create a more resilient, confident individual who is then able to take even greater ownership of their future career pathways.

## *What* is a Coach Core apprenticeship?

Coach Core works with employers and training providers that share the same vision and values as we do so that we can enable powerful, collaborative change.

We base our offer in the sport and physical activity sector to provide a career pathway that aligns with the passions of many marginalised young people but also provides critical provision back into their own communities through the coaching offer and sports projects they undertake.

We use the language 'young people' to refer to anyone 16-25, given this is our largest age demographic, but it can be a catch all term for any eligible apprentice who may be over the age of 25 too.

*Our purpose* "Coach Core Foundation enables under-represented young people to access inclusive sports apprenticeships, changing their lives and those around them."

## *What* makes Coach Core *different*?

We are not a training provider or employer, so we are here to simply instigate change where it is needed most. We fundraise to help employers with the costs of developing the right young talent and ensure we are here to provide them with opportunities and support, as well as our young people.

Our Coach Core network now spans over 300 employers, governing bodies and connected services across the UK all working together under the Coach Core mission.

We currently offer Level 2, 3, and 4 apprenticeship qualifications via our training providers. However, we feel it is critical that each Coach Core learner can undertake an unparalleled programme of additional skills, training and qualifications to better their life chances and strengthen their impact to their employer.

We also place critical focus on the mentoring and personal support each young person requires as much as seeking to enhance their professional development. We achieve this largely by not putting apprentices back into classroom settings but instead the 'Learning Coaches' will deliver the qualification in the field, alongside the employers, to ensure each young person is given the best possible chance to succeed.





## What is the *difference* between an Apprentice and an Apprentice start?

An apprentice is the individual learner. If they do one course or three courses with us, they are the unique apprentice and can only be counted as that once.

An Apprentice Start is where that apprentice accesses one or more qualifications as they progress through the Coach Core offer.

This is important as we want to celebrate each apprentice start with the importance it deserves, but also be transparent to ensure we are clear on any apprentices undertaking more than one qualification with us.

## What does *success* look like?

**For the apprentices** – the chance to graduate with an impactful CV and a set of skills and experiences that enable them to make a career choice right for them when they graduate from Coach Core. We hope they will also engage with our ever growing graduate network so that they can grow and develop beyond the life of their programme, and we can continue to provide opportunities and support long term too.

**For the employers** – a quality employee that has added true value to the organisation in a number of ways, and an understanding on the benefits of recruiting this diverse talent for the future.

**For the local area** – a powerful ripple effect of positive sport and physical activity delivered by these inspiring young role models that ultimately create happier and healthier communities.

## *James*, England Boxing

James came to the UK as a refugee at the age of 9, facing the challenges of adapting to a new environment and building a new life. At the age of 17, James found himself in trouble and ended up in prison. It was during this time that he discovered boxing programmes and realised the transformative power they held. Witnessing firsthand how boxing could positively impact individuals, James felt a strong desire to give back to his community and support young people who were on a similar path to his own troubled past.

He discovered the apprenticeship at England Boxing through his involvement in a Clink to Club programme to help prisoners integrate into communities after release. During his apprenticeship, he set up activator courses to enable others to deliver boxing in their communities and ran a large community event of his own. Outside the apprenticeship, he volunteered at the Black Prince Trust and contributed to prison radio.

James successfully graduated from Coach Core and in February 2024 was named the Level 3 Apprentice of the Year at our awards. He continues to work in boxing, helping young people find the right path.

You can find out more about about James [HERE](#)



# Our 3 year mission

**We want to develop our wider partner network to increase the quality of the apprenticeship experience, reach the young people who need the opportunity the most and bring more supporters to the cause.**

The overarching goal? To have supported an additional **500 apprentices** over the next 3 years to take us to **1,500 young people** we have worked with since our first programme back in July 2012.

As a charity that continues to grow in every sense since starting its independent journey in 2020, there are many things that we want to refine and improve as much as the things we want to introduce to take us to the next level.

**To deliver the Project 1500 mission, *we will:***

***Enable greater accessibility*** - ensure that our programmes and services are easily accessible to all young people – especially those most at risk of marginalisation - and to employers of all sizes.

***Enhance our offer*** - strengthen our current provision to ensure we are providing the best possible education, support and progression routes right for all.

***Advocate and Influence*** - further amplify the voice of our apprentices and employer partners, using their experiences to influence apprenticeship provision.

***Elevate our evidence*** - solidify our position as a 'go to' for insight and advocacy linked to youth employment, the power of sport and equality and diversity in the sector.

***Remain insight led*** - prioritise a culture of continuous learning, integrating insights from monitoring and evaluation into all sides of our organisational decision-making.

***Gain more supporters*** - inspire more people to give to Coach Core so we can continue to improve the lives of young people.

## Employer perspective

LS- Ten talk about why they brought on apprentices and what they do for the organisation. Watch [HERE](#)

**"They offer us completely new insight into young people and they are more relatable and current than some of us are"**



# Our mission in action

Our small but impactful charity team adhere to a very simple values statement:

We are *collaborative,*  
*inclusive and empowering,*  
and we challenge  
ourselves to always  
put young people at  
the heart of  
everything we do.

## Hermione, Bristol

Hermione graduated from our 2022 Bristol programme. She struggled immensely with poor mental health and low confidence, to the point she was sick when performing or speaking in public. She struggled to gain employment due to this until she found out that Coach Core were hiring in Bristol. The fact our charity supports the personal development of young people really appealed to her so she bravely decided to move from Kent to pursue the opportunity. During the programme, she delivered trampolining and gymnastics, her sport of choice, through her employer, Axis, supporting a range of groups.

She maintains a good relationship with Axis and is now pursuing her next opportunity to inspire more young people through sport whilst hosting a teenage radio show!

You can find out more about Hermione [HERE](#)





### *Enable* greater accessibility

ensure that our programmes and services are easily accessible to all young people – especially those most at risk of marginalisation - and to employers of all sizes.



### *Enhance* our offer

strengthen our current provision to ensure we are providing the best possible education, support and progression routes right for all.



### *Advocate* and *Influence*

further amplify the voice of our apprentices and employer partners, using their experiences to influence apprenticeship provision.

## 12 months

- Establish targeted partnerships and commit to direct outreach activity, to better reach marginalised young people.
- Introduce at least one test and learn project to support young people from the most vulnerable groups.
- Develop a greater understanding of the challenges faced by employers and apprentices and how Coach Core can better support them.

- Better understand the workforce needs of our employers and adapt our education offer to address these.
- Enhance the current experience through even greater strategic partnership working.

- Celebrate the 1000th apprentice and our work to date.
- Collect more case studies to build a better picture of apprentices and employers' experiences on the programme.
- Increase public awareness through better PR/our ambassadors.

## 3- year strategy period

- Positioning sport and physical activity as a viable and exciting career route for all young people.
- Invest in greater marketing and digital processes for young people to find us and apply easily.
- Reviewing our grant giving process, to incentivise employers that support the most marginalised young people.

- Grow and strengthen the wider Coach Core journey to provide even greater connections.
- Source even more opportunities for young people to have their voice heard through impactful storytelling.

- Collaborate far and wide to lobby for changes to the apprenticeship system.
- Increase Coach Core's thought leadership in the sport, apprenticeship and youth employment sectors.





### *Elevate* our evidence

Solidify our position as a 'go to' for insight and advocacy linked to youth employment, the power of sport and equality and diversity in the sector.



*Remain* insight led Prioritise a culture of continuous learning, integrating insights from monitoring and evaluation into all sides of our organisational decision-making.



### *Gain* more supporters

Inspire more people to give to Coach Core so we can continue to improve the lives of young people.

## 12 months

- Implement enhanced data and reporting practices.
- Introduce more influential individuals to our work via site visits
- Investigate more central funding opportunities that speak to the wider societal impact and outcomes of Coach Core.

- Enhance our policies and commitments to diversity, environmental, social, and governance.
- Increase and enhance our work with sector skill plans.
- Full '360' to improve and enhance internal reporting/processes.

- Drive stronger engagement and grow our income across corporate partnerships and Trusts and Foundations.
- Build on the new business strategy to further diversify income.
- Establish a Development Board to generate new opportunities.

## 3- year strategy period

- Work with external researchers to evidence our work.
- Partner with a greater number of 'non-sector' organisations working with under-represented/at risk young people.
- Highlight recommendations to key figures to support our mission.

- Greater investment into our internal systems.
- Enhance our feedback loops from stakeholders and beneficiaries to drive greater decision making as a result.
- Drive further training and development opportunities across the organisation.

- Scope and test 5-10 new fundraising events or campaigns.
- Retain and develop a strong and ambitious fundraising team.
- Ensure all consenting donors get regular communications that inspire them to provide ongoing support.



# The Coach Core *impact*

2021-2024 per annum average

	3- Year Average from previous strategy period	Strategy Stretch Target 2024-2027	Context*
<b>Number of apprenticeships (Starts)</b>	110	<b>167 starts per annum to reach 500 by 2027</b>	Based on pipeline of new and existing partnerships.
<b>% Female apprentices</b>	33%	<b>Increase to 50% by 2027</b>	Consistent with national apprenticeship starts.
<b>% Ethnically diverse apprentices</b>	21%	<b>Increase to 30% by 2027</b>	This will position the programme 16% above the national average for apprenticeships.
<b>Top 30% of Indices of multiple deprivation</b>	43%	<b>Increase to 50% by 2027</b>	This will make the programme 30% higher than the national average for apprenticeships.
<b>% With additional learning needs</b>	22%	<b>Increase to 40% by 2027</b>	This will make the programme 30% higher than apprenticeships nationally.
<b>% of Achievers</b>	70%	<b>Increase to 80% by 2027</b>	This will position the programme 27% higher than apprenticeships nationally.
<b>Number of coaching sessions (Projected)</b>	126,169 (average over 2 years)	<b>Target 203,666 per annum 611,000 by 2027</b>	Based on 500 additional learners.
<b>Number of participants (Estimate)</b>	1,766,371 (average over 2 years)	<b>Target 2.83 million per annum totalling 8.5 million by 2027</b>	Based on 500 additional learners.

Read our summary 2021 - 2024 paper here: <https://coachcore.org.uk/2021-2024-summary-strategy>

**\*Sources:**

Apprenticeship system failing people from disadvantaged backgrounds - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))  
<https://www.suttontrust.com/news-opinion/all-news-opinion/decline-in-young-people-from-low-income-backgrounds-taking-up-apprenticeships/>  
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 Apprenticeship Statistics (parliament.uk)  
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[cimspa.co.uk/globalassets/document-downloads-library-all/insight/cimspa-workforce-insight-report-2023.pdf](https://cimspa.co.uk/globalassets/document-downloads-library-all/insight/cimspa-workforce-insight-report-2023.pdf)

# Project 1500: Our commitments

## What does *success* look like?

- A diverse network of employers actively engaged with the charity, leading to a broader range of employment opportunities for young individuals.
- Employers workforce needs are better understood and addressed through tailored solutions, resulting in more effective and mutually beneficial employment relationships.
- Creation of meaningful employment opportunities, leading to higher job satisfaction and career advancement.
- Provide opportunities from reliable role models to people and communities that have traditionally been left behind, helping to remove barriers to activity.
- Demonstrable impact on the career development and success of young talent.
- Greater numbers of supporters and followers over the next 3 years that demonstrably show increased profile and growth of the charity in a number of ways.

## How we'll *report* this

Coach Core is committed to transparent reporting and a culture of continuous development. Each year, we will present our progress against our six mission goals through a variety of different means, including:

- **Our Impact Report**
- **Our Annual Report (inclusive of our audited accounts)**
- **Bi-annual Town Halls – an open forum for anyone connected with Coach Core to attend, learn more and ask questions of the team.**
- **We will commit to at least one independent evaluation over the next 3 years.**

As ever, the views of our young people will be heard and amplified to ensure we stay relevant and represent their views and needs to the best of our abilities.

## The *commitment* to ourselves

The Foundation also has an ongoing dedication to enhancing the organisation through good governance, robust safeguarding measures and a strong commitment to our people.

Aligned to our charity ethos and purpose, we want to give the right opportunities, to the right people, and ensure that they are supported and developed both personally and professionally.

We will continue to refine our recruitment policies and capture feedback from our staff, to ensure Coach Core is the most impactful organisation it can be.



# How *you* can help



Our selfless, incredible supporters have helped us change many lives over the last 12 years. Even the smallest action can create lasting change, so if you'd like to help a marginalised young person realise their potential, here's how you can support our work:

Please click each of the section titles to find out more, or you can visit [coachcore.org.uk/support-us](https://coachcore.org.uk/support-us)



## **Volunteer**

Use your time and skills to make a difference to the charity or to our apprentices.



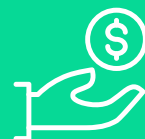
## **Sign up for a Sporting Challenge**

Ready for an adventure? Sign up for a challenge event and help us raise vital funds.



## **Attend Events**

Join us at our Sports Day and help us raise funds and awareness.



## **Donate**

Support Coach Core by making a donation today. Your contribution will make a huge difference in helping us create opportunities for more young people across the UK.



## **Fundraise**

Hold a bake sale, run a quiz, or sit in a bath full of custard! Fundraise your way in aid of Coach Core and we have the tools and the team to support you, whatever you choose to do.

# The last word

## *Ahsan*, Coach Core Leeds 2021-2022

Ahsan embodies everything Coach Core stands for. Overcoming significant disabilities, Ahsan was bullied at school and had real confidence issues. He found the Mixed Ability Rugby scheme was the perfect outlet and under the wing of coach, Phil 'Cookie' Wilson, he was persuaded to lead sessions and eventually undertake his apprenticeship with White Rose Rugby. **"I was a bit scared (when I started) and a bit shy and nervous, but I got better and better. I loved learning a different skill, having fun and being with the kids every day."**

He was progressing well but when lockdown hit again, the team were concerned about Ahsan's general health and whether he would continue on the programme. But with the support of his employers and the Coach Core team, he remained engaged and began to lead coaching sessions over Zoom for the kids in his group.

When it came to his end point assessment, the external assessor noted how inspiring he was, saying she was **"hugely impressed with the impact he has on the participants within his sessions and that he was a credit to White Rose Rugby."** He used the apprenticeship to gain an incredible amount of confidence in all areas of his role, but especially in public speaking and coaching.

In 2023, Ahsan was awarded the **Coach Core Graduate of the Year** and he continues to inspire other young people, with or without disabilities, in his local community.

You can hear from Ahsan himself in this inspiring video [HERE](#)



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Coach Core Foundation,  
registered charity in England  
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A programme of The Royal Foundation  
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charity from 1st April 2020.

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