

SPOTLIGHT: CITY IN THE COMMUNITY TURNS 30

The 2016-17 season marked City in the Community's (CITC) 30th year.

The foundation of CITC in 1986 formalised a century of commitment to social responsibility. 30 years on, with the support of passionate fans, CITC uses the power of football to promote health, confidence, safe spaces and pathways into training and jobs, working with 30,000 individuals in Greater Manchester each year.

To mark the 30-year milestone, City in the Community welcomed UK Sports Minister Tracey Crouch to a showcase of key projects at the City Football Academy.

The visit focused on two flagship programmes, 'One City' and 'Kicks', both of which have played a pivotal role in helping to bring greater access to sport for young and disabled people in the local community.

As part of the celebrations, BBC One documentary 'Sister Rita to the Rescue' featured a CITC nutrition programme in Manchester. The five-part series followed a drop-in centre in an underserved area of the city, and showed how CITC's programme is helping the community enhance their cooking skills, prepare healthy meals on a budget, and make the most out of ingredients from the food bank.

CITC also teamed up with Make a Wish Foundation for their own 30-year celebrations, granting a number of wishes throughout the year, including that of an 11-year-old amputee footballer who had a kickabout with the men's team, before leading the team out as mascot for the game against Crystal Palace.

Etihad Airways supported the 30-year celebrations with the launch of a new six-week literacy project in April 2017. City Stars is designed to build children's confidence in reading, writing and spoken language, using examples from the world of football. This is particularly important in Manchester where, according to the National Literacy Trust, children and young people spend less time reading a book than the national average. A successful pilot earlier in the season showed 73% of children felt City Stars made them more confident in their literacy skills, and 69% said the project increased the likelihood of them reading outside of school.

City also created a brand new fundraising event for the anniversary year. In March 2017, the first ever 'Blue Run' took place at the City Football Academy, with 1,200 City fans turning themselves blue for the 5-kilometre dash, raising £40,000 for City in the Community.

