



**free@last**

**IMPACT REPORT  
2019/20**

---

free@last, 49 Nechells Park Road, Nechells,  
Birmingham, B7 5PR



free@last have been an integral part of the Nechells community since 1999, originally starting as a support network for dad's, expanding into all areas of community development and need with youth workshops, debt management, physical activity, enrichment activities such as trips and excursions, and so much more.

The main aims of the charity is to provide support and opportunities for local people to improve their standards of living and reach their full potential. free@Last want to make lasting changes by developing and implementing a Poverty Strategy (<https://www.freetlast.st/poverty-strategy/>) to help eradicate the issues of child poverty in the area. The issue of being born into an impoverished community means that their surroundings offer no hope and no prospect at breaking the cycle. free@last have been supporting the young people in the community to break the cycle and become role models for the next generation to show that there are opportunities out there and that they too can reach their potential.

In recognition of the work and committed service to the community over the last 20 years, free@last have been awarded the medal from the High Sheriff of the West Midlands as well as the prestigious Queen's Golden Jubilee Award for improving the lives of the residents of Nechells.



Nechells is a heavily deprived inner-city ward of Birmingham whereby despite the location has a severe lack of investment from the Local Authority. Some demining local statistics include:-

- Below average rate of employment at 36%,
- Nearly half of the wards working age residents are out of work,
- 2nd lowest number of qualifications in the city (15%),
- Has the lowest average income across the city and almost half of that of the National average at just over £10,000.





# 2019 REPORT

2019 was another successful year for the charity, working with hundreds of local young people and their families through the various activities and provisions free@last provides. These included:

- Various youth clubs providing opportunities for young people between the ages of 5 and 18 across a wide range of activities including an adventurous activity club, karate, music production, a young peoples' Rotary Group, climbing lessons, photography skills and business skills.
- A Youth Mentoring Programme working with tens of individuals between the ages of 6 and 16 facing an array of challenges from issues with education, troubles at home, anger management, confidence building, violence, disputes, social barriers, and more.
- The development of Nechells Lions FC and entering the local league.
- Dads Do It Too! programme working with dads from the local area to provide the support needed to help them see their children and create excursions for invaluable family time.
- Advice & Guidance provision working with families who are struggling with debt and benefit problems. This provides a saving of £1.6 million per year and to date has helped households increase their income by over £25 million.



The positive momentum of 2019 meant that 2020 started well with the continuation of services and the demand for same increasing.

Then 23rd March came, lockdown, and with it, a change of approach from the charity was required.

By 25th March, free@last had put into action an immediate change of delivery, still providing the high quality of services but in-line with new Government guidelines. The charity also introduced new emergency services for the local residents providing food and care packages, hot meals, additional Youth Support and the oversubscribed Debt Advice Service increased it's capacity.

A café facility has now opened providing cheap, healthy, home-cooked meals to the local residents. Much of the food is donated with suggested donations being welcomed for the service.

Another huge success for the charity was the launch of BrumTing. A group of four, local, 14-16 year olds creating a business to provide products to tourists to Birmingham. These young entrepreneurs captured the imaginations of local businesses and have gained investment into their work. This has now developed into an Entrepreneurship Programme which will work with 60 young people a year in developing business skills and ideas to help them enhance their employability prospects.

Unfortunately, the Family Fun Zone; a major contributor to free@last's income was forced to shut down during the lockdown. In 2018/19, FFZ contributed nearly £175,000 of unrestricted income to free@last (46% of the charity's income). Despite a major loss of income, free@last have stepped up its Trusts & Foundations fundraising to continue the projects and pay for the additional services.

The charity are still expecting a significant loss in income for the account year ending 31 July 2020, and potentially 31 July 2021, but backed by a strong team of over 20 volunteers, continue to deliver on the provisions provided and producing high outputs and outcomes.



# HOW WE EVIDENCE

The work free@last do on a day-to-day basis does not always have a numerical value, and if it does, may not paint the entire picture. All the work carried out by the charity is evidenced via:

- Registers,
- Case Studies,
- Social Impact Values.

Social Impact Values are a way of putting a price on work, or a participant, or an outcome, to demonstrate the impact and the reach. These values are based on varying outcomes such as "financial stability", "increase in confidence", "mental health support", "joining a youth club", "employment", and many more. Each of these will have a monetary value attached to them for ranging from a few hundred pounds per person to tens of thousands of pounds per person. It can relate to a number of factors including cost to the NHS, cost to Local Authority, what it would cost for someone else to deliver this work, benefits to the local economy, etc.

free@last use the HACT Social Value Tool and all figures have been provided from same. Figures can appear high for certain projects, but that is because there may be a number of different outcomes per participant, each having their own value.

free@last believe transparency is paramount therefore can explain in greater detail or visit [www.hact.org.uk](http://www.hact.org.uk) for more information.



## 2019

Individuals: 1,109

Annual Throughput: 14,268

Youth Mentoring: 275

Youth Support: 215

Debt Service: 370

Clubs: 135

All Other Activities: 114

Estimated Social Impact Value: £9,659,904

**13%**

OF UNIQUE  
NECHELLS  
RESIDENTS USED  
THE RESPONSE  
SERVICE

**30%**

OF THE CHILD  
POPULATION OF  
NECHELLS  
BENEFITTED FROM  
THE CHARITY



**2020**

(10 months of data with final 2 months averaged and estimated.)

Individuals: 1,624

Annual Throughput: 19,032

Youth Mentoring: 189

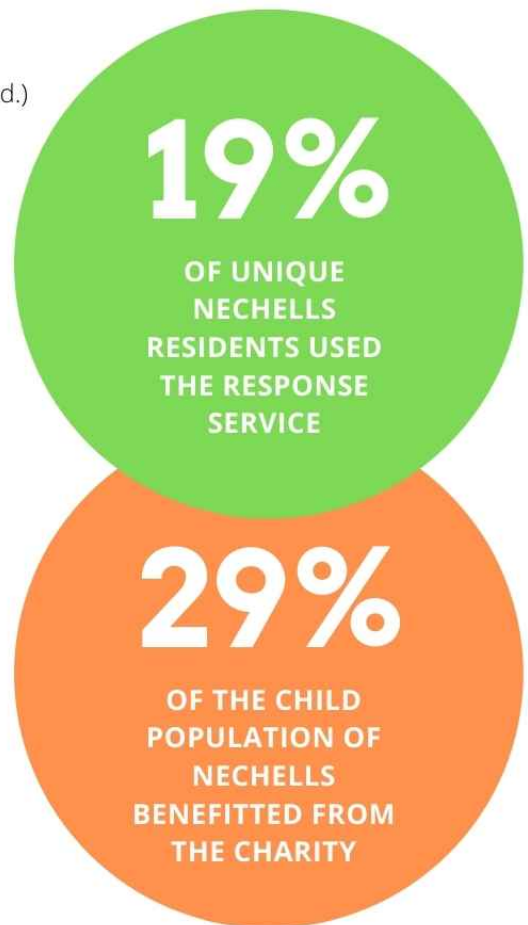
Youth Support: 359

Debt Service: 398

Clubs: 64

All Other Activities: 1,847

Estimated Social Impact Value: £12,809,395







## COVID RESPONSE

Number of people fed: 12,234

Unique Individuals: 1,409

Youth Support: 273

Debt Service: 227

Parcels Distributed: 3,799

Games Distributed: 329

Estimated Social Impact Value: £6,099,621

**17%**

OF UNIQUE  
NECHELLS  
RESIDENTS USED  
THE RESPONSE  
SERVICE

**143%**

THE PERCENTAGE  
OF NECHELLS WHO  
WERE FED ON A  
THROUGHPUT BASIS



# THE NUMBERS

## KIDS EAT FREE PROGRAMME

During October Half Term, free@last hosted a Kids Eat Free meal campaign (with adults being charged just £1) in response to the Government's lack of investment in Free School Meals during the half term holiday.

This resulted in -

Children being fed: 350

Discounted Adult meals: 42

Estimated Social Impact Value: £969,305





free@last are putting together a number of plans to cover a wide range of scenarios; business as usual, living with Covid, full lockdowns, whatever the scenario free@last are and will be prepared for it.

Time and investment has been put into identifying new methods of delivery of projects, new initiatives to support the community and ensuring the future of the charity is both viable and relevant to the local residents.

Regardless of what happens, free@last will continue to support the residents of Nechells, being in some cases the crucial lifeline to families and young people.



**free@last**

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE  
CONTACT:**

**JOHN STREET - DIRECTOR  
JSTREET@FREEATLAST.ST**

**ADAM IRVINE - FUNDRAISING MANAGER  
ADAM@FREEATLAST.ST**