



## Media Release

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### **LINEUP FOR ENGLAND'S HOMELESS WORLD CUP TEAM ANNOUNCED**

This year's England Homeless World Cup squad has been unveiled with players from across the country.

The team of eight young men - made up of players from Crewe, Manchester, Liverpool, London and Birmingham - will head to Paris on 19 August to represent England in the 9<sup>th</sup> annual Homeless World Cup tournament.

The Homeless World Cup takes place from 21 - 28 August with 48 nations competing for the Trophy. Throughout the tournament the team will play a number of seven minute, four a side games of football against countries including Brazil, Spain, Germany and Italy.

The England team, which is led by The Big Issue in the North Trust and supported by the Manchester United Foundation, Homeless Link and the England Homeless Football Network, have been selected from hundreds of young men, through a series of trials which have taken place across the country.

Reds' Manager Sir Alex Ferguson has spoken in support of the team, ahead of their challenge: "The England Homeless World Cup Team have been working with our Community Coaches in the run up to the tournament so I know they will be well prepared for the task ahead. I've heard they've been training hard.

"The players have done well to make the team, being selected from hundreds of people and it's a fantastic opportunity for them. I wish them the best of luck.

"If Scotland don't win then I hope the England team will bring the trophy home."

England's Manager Simon Kweeday from The Big Issue in the North said: "We're really excited to be taking part in the Homeless World Cup in Paris. Each year the players benefit greatly, whether it's boosting confidence, gaining training and employment or even getting signed to football clubs.

"The people who have been selected for the team this year have already achieved a huge amount and we're looking forward to competing against teams from across the world, giving the players an experience that they will never forget."

Keep up-to-date with how the England Homeless World Cup Team is doing at [www.facebook.com/HomelessWorldCupEngland](http://www.facebook.com/HomelessWorldCupEngland).

To arrange an interview with players from the England Homeless World Cup Team please contact Group Communications Officer Christian Lisseman on 0161 848 2425, mobile 07920 824 758 or email [christian.lisseman@thebiglifegroup.com](mailto:christian.lisseman@thebiglifegroup.com)

**Editors Notes:**

All players in this year's England Homeless World Cup team were classed as homeless at some point since the end of the last Homeless World Cup. This might mean they have lived in a hostel, in supported accommodation or stayed in insecure accommodation - such as sleeping on a friend's floor.

Previous England team members have gone on to do coaching courses, play for non-league football teams such as Stafford Rangers, find full time employment and have been re-united with family members.

**Homeless World Cup**

The Homeless World Cup ([www.homelessworldcup.org](http://www.homelessworldcup.org)) is a unique, pioneering social enterprise which exists to end homelessness. It uses football to energise homeless people to change their own lives.

The Homeless World Cup operates through a network of over 70 national partners to support grass roots football programmes and social enterprise development. It works closely with Local Organizing Committees in host cities to run a world-class, annual, international football tournament, uniting teams of homeless people from around the globe.

The first Homeless World Cup annual football tournament took place in Graz in 2003 and welcomed 18 nations. Now it's grown to include 64 teams from 53 countries - including 16 women's teams, for the ninth edition that will take place between the 21st and the 28th of August at Champ de Mars, Paris, France.

Over 70% of players change their lives for the better: they build their self-esteem; come off drugs and alcohol; move into homes, jobs, education, training; repair relationships; become social entrepreneurs, coaches and players with pro or semi-pro football teams. The Homeless World Cup project involves over 50,000 homeless people throughout the year.

**Manchester United Foundation** was formed to celebrate 50 years of the Club playing in Europe. It aims to use the passion for Manchester United to educate, motivate and inspire young people to build a better life for themselves and improve the communities they live in. The Foundation delivers football coaching, skills training, personal development and life changing experiences, providing young people with opportunities to change their lives for the better. Through football, it encourages them to develop as players and more importantly as people.

**The Big Issue in the North Trust** provides support to vendors of The Big Issue in the North magazine and signposts them to services to help them improve their lives. The Big Issue in the North Trust has managed England's Homeless World Cup Team since 200x when the Homeless World Cup launched.

**About Homeless Link**

Homeless Link is the national charity representing over 500 organisations working directly with homeless people in England, and works with local and national government. As the national hub for information and debate on homelessness, Homeless Link seeks to improve services and advocate policy change that will end homelessness in England.

[www.homeless.org.uk](http://www.homeless.org.uk)      [www.twitter.com/homelesslink](https://www.twitter.com/homelesslink)