

# Alicia's Story

Alicia's journey through the Fusion Community Leaders programme transformed her from a shy teenager into a confident coach, empowering her to take the next step in her career by joining our apprenticeship programme and excelling in her work with SEND children.



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**Oliver Bristow- Education & Community Sports Coach**

Alicia, a young resident of Doncaster, was a shy and reserved teenager with a passion for helping others but lacked the confidence and skills to make a tangible impact. Her community faced numerous challenges, including low physical activity engagement, poor physical and mental well-being, poverty, low educational attainment, and high unemployment levels.

To address these issues, Active Fusion launched the Fusion Community Leaders programme, funded by the Hargreaves Foundation, to empower young people like Alicia to lead change through sports and physical activities.

The Fusion Community Leaders programme is designed to equip disadvantaged young people with new skills and opportunities. It provides a pathway for young leaders to steer and develop community activities, supported by experienced coaches and local partner organisations. The programme includes: training in sports leadership, a Sports Leaders qualification, opportunities for youth-led commissioning and pathways to employment through a Community Sport Health Apprenticeship Programme.

When Alicia joined the Fusion Community Leaders programme, she was initially nervous about interacting with others and lacked the confidence to lead. However, with the support and guidance from the Community Coaches, Alicia began to transform. She learned crucial skills such as effective communication, understanding different learning styles, and coaching techniques.



Oliver, an Education and Community Sports Coach, recalls Alicia's early days in the programme: "Since I first met Alicia, she was a very shy girl. While teaching her during her Sports Leaders Level 2, Alicia had to complete some volunteering hours in her local community for her qualification. She came to a session at Bentley Youth Hub, starting off very timid. But over the weeks, she came out of her shell, and by the end, we got her to deliver on the session. Overall, Alicia has been an exemplary role model for the pupils and has significantly benefited from her volunteering opportunity."

Aleksy, also an Education and Community Sports Coach, added, "Throughout Alicia's volunteering at the youth hub, she has gained further experience in delivering a variety of games such as ball games and invasion games. During her delivery, she has been able to provide a verbal explanation of activities with confidence and a visual demonstration, always considerate of health and safety. She adapted the activities to ensure pupil engagement."

Alicia's journey through the Fusion Community Leaders programme not only transformed her personally but also had a positive impact on her community. By volunteering with Active Fusion, she helped deliver the programme to other young people, increasing the number of active hours children participated in beyond the school day. Her involvement provided critical support to keep children from low-income families safe, fit, and engaged in their communities.

Completing the Fusion Community Leader qualification was a significant milestone for Alicia. It provided her with the confidence and skills necessary to pursue a career in coaching. She now envisions a future where she can continue to work with young people, using sports and physical activities as a tool for social change.

Following the Fusion Community Leaders programme, Alicia continued her journey with Active Fusion through casual work, where she gained further experience supporting community sessions. During this time, she discovered a particular passion for working with children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This growing interest led Alicia to apply for a role at Stone Hill School, where she successfully interviewed and secured a position as a Level 2 Community Activator Coach through Active Fusion's apprenticeship programme. This opportunity has allowed Alicia to further develop her skills in a school setting while continuing to build a clear and supported pathway into employment within sport and physical activity.

Dan, Education and Apprenticeship Manager at Active Fusion says "Alicia has been an outstanding Level 2 Community Activator learner. After joining us initially on work experience following her Level 2 Leadership course, she quickly progressed into casual work and then into her apprenticeship, which speaks volumes about her commitment and potential. Alicia is dedicated to her studies and consistently transfers what she learns into her school environment, where she makes a real difference. She is enthusiastic, reliable, and passionate about supporting others, helping them to grow into confident and capable young people. Alicia is a pleasure to work with and a real asset to the program."

Alicia's story is a testament to the power of community-driven programmes and the potential of young leaders to create lasting change. Through the Fusion Community Leaders programme, Alicia not only overcame her personal challenges but also contributed to the well-being of her community. Her journey from a shy teenager to a confident coach and apprentice role model illustrates the programme's success in fostering youth leadership, employability, and community engagement.

Discover more about Fusion Communities Leaders [here](#) or read more stories just like Alicia's [here](#).



**'Before my apprenticeship, I completed a community leaders programme which kick started my coaching journey. I started out timid, but have grown into a confident individual, I believe that the coaches who helped me get to this point have really helped me grow, not just as a coach, but as a person. This experience helped me discover my passion for helping SEND children; I am learning from them by understanding their needs and helping them to flourish through support and coaching. The apprenticeship is improving my knowledge, skills and confidence. For the future I want to be a coach in any sport and help others like this experience has helped me'.**

