



(Pic credit - June Niles)

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Charity cycle across London builds relationships between young people and police

A cycle ride past the sites of London to raise funds for charitable causes also formed part of an initiative to engage and build relationships between police and young people.

KickOff@3's spin off project, SpinOff@3, not only works alongside youth but raises money for multiple charities nationally. This time the group raised funds for Arya Lloyd who is currently suffering with Aplastic Anaemia and needs a blood stem cell match.

On Sunday, 6 December the group met outside West Hampstead station and cycled 41km through London, finishing outside the London Eye at 14:00hrs.

In total 10 cyclists joined the event with additional people deciding to walk the distance. At the finish line, representatives from the Met's local Safer Neighbourhoods teams, young people living in Southwark, youth engagement officers and teams from North Area BCU all showed up to offer their support and build relationships.

KickOff@3 was founded in 2016 by Met officer PC Michael Wallace and Ashley Levien, a London bus driver. Both give their free time to run the initiative which aims to help establish long lasting relationships between young people and their local police. The team provide access to mentoring and support programmes which extend far beyond the time spent on sports activities. One child, 13-year-old Amiri Simpson and his mother, joined the group outside the London Eye following mentorship from Michael Wallace.

The pair have previously hosted football tournaments which were created as a youth diversion scheme and to build trust and positive affiliations between the two groups.

A/Inspector Abs Haque, who works within crime prevention, inclusion and engagement, said: "SpinOff@3 is a fantastic initiative, bringing young people, the wider community and the police together, breaking down barriers and celebrating young people and their achievements. It is changing the narrative around the challenges our young people are facing within our communities and giving them opportunities to showcase their talents, especially in sport.

"Raising money for worthy charities has been an integral part of the KickOff@3 ethos and the spin off event cycle ride was an empowering engagement opportunity for everyone who attended.

"We know building trust and good relationships within all our communities is vital to keep the public safe and bear down on violent crime - initiatives such as this go a long way to achieving that."

PC Michael Wallace said: "I am humbled at seeing the support SpinOff@3 has received. It is so important that the police work alongside our partners

directly with the community. We have been working on our KickOff@3 initiative for almost four years now and it's been great to see the relationships we have made with young people so far.

"I'd like to thank Sportside who sponsored us and funded the T-shirts and June Niles who gave her time to take the lovely images to remember the day. The cycle ride was in aid of a worthy charity, DKMS UK and Arya who still needs a stem cell match.

"I look forward to our future events and continuing to build strong relationships with our communities."

For more information about the initiative, dates of future events/tournaments and how to participate then please visit: www.kickoffat3.co.uk or on Twitter: @KickOff@3.