



# GALS FC

*IMPACT*

**REPORT  
2024**

**WE EXIST TO GIVE GALS A GOOD  
TIME ON AND OFF THE PITCH**



# AT A GLANCE



**11  
GAMES**

**ACROSS LONDON,  
BRIGHTON & IPSWICH**

**91%**

**SAY GALS FC HAS HAD A  
POSITIVE IMPACT ON  
THEIR MENTAL HEALTH**

**70%**

**WOULDN'T BE PLAYING  
FOOTBALL WITHOUT  
GALS FC**

**236**

**MEMBERS  
& GROWING FAST!**

**244**

**HOURS OF  
FOOTBALL PLAYED**

**99%**

**FEEL HAPPIER AFTER A  
GALS FC SESSION ALL OR  
MOST OF THE TIME**



# FOUNDERS FOREWORD



We started Gals FC in 2022 because we wanted something different - an activity that wasn't just eating or drinking. More than anything, we were craving community. So we set up Gals FC to meet new people, get active, and most importantly, have FUN. Football was our vehicle, and from that first kickabout, it took off.

Gals FC isn't about leagues or keeping score, so our impact survey is how we measure success. Are gals having fun? Are we building a strong community? Are we getting women into football? This is the second year we have run this, and reading the results has been hugely inspiring, giving us real insight into the difference Gals FC makes in people's lives.

## Some of our favourite stats

☐ **91%** of our gals say their mental health has improved since joining Gals FC.

♥ **70%** of gals believe they wouldn't be playing football without Gals FC.

☐ **2/3** gals say they feel more confident in who they are as a person

These numbers matter because too many women grow up thinking football isn't for them, or that team sports are intimidating. Gals FC is changing that, not just by getting more women playing but by creating a space where they feel welcome, confident, and part of something bigger. Better mental health, new friendships, and a stronger sense of belonging are just as important as what happens on the pitch. This is about redefining what football can be.

As we take Gals FC across the country this year, we can't wait to bring even more gals together—on and off the pitch. A massive thank you to Hannah and Jenny, two of our Whitechapel gals, who have designed and led this survey, and to our incredible community; the funnest, most welcoming footie gals around!

*Lorne and Nora xxx*

The background is a solid pink color. There are four stylized soccer balls, one in each corner. Each ball is dark blue with two curved white lines. The balls are positioned such that they appear to be floating or rolling towards the center.

**GALS FC HAS CHANGED MY LIFE COMPLETELY.**

**I NEVER THOUGHT I WOULD ENJOY EXERCISE AND  
NOW I'M DOING LOADS. I FOUND IT REALLY HARD  
TO MAKE FRIENDS AND NOW I FEEL LIKE I KEEP  
MAKING MORE. IT HAS HELPED WITH MY  
CONFIDENCE AND MY FOOTBALL SKILLS.**

*-Brighton gal xxx*



# VISION

**TO BECOME A  
HOUSEHOLD  
NAME IN  
WOMEN'S  
RECREATIONAL  
FOOTBALL.**



# MISSION

**TO GET 150,000  
WOMEN PLAYING  
FOOTBALL EVERY  
WEEK WITH  
GALS FC.**







# OUR *IMPACT*

**GALS FC BRINGS WOMEN TOGETHER TO ENJOY NON-COMPETITIVE FOOTBALL.**

**A WEEKLY SESSION, ALONGSIDE SOCIAL ACTIVITIES, BUILDS A SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY.**

**THIS HELPS MORE WOMEN GET ACTIVE, HAVE FUN, AND BOOST THEIR OVERALL WELLBEING.**





# THE STATE OF PLAY

## UNDERSTANDING THE BARRIERS TO WOMEN PLAYING FOOTBALL

Lots of research shows that women don't feel able to participate in team sports in the same way as men.

Women want to play more sports, but there are significant barriers for them to overcome. These include:

- Self-consciousness about appearance or fitness level and fear of judgement when exercising.
- Time, energy, and motivation constraints, often linked to caregiving and work responsibilities.
- Inexperience, leading to uncertainty about how to get started and fear of making mistakes.

**2.4M**

**FEWER WOMEN  
ENJOY SPORT THAN  
MEN**

\*Sport England

**42%**

**WOMEN AGED 25-39  
HAVE NEVER PLAYED A  
SPORT**

\*YouGov

**38%**

**WOMEN REPORT  
FEELING JUDGED  
WHEN EXERCISING**

\*Sport England

**ADULTS WITH LOW  
FITNESS HAVE A 98%  
HIGHER RISK OF  
DEPRESSION  
COMPARED TO  
THOSE WITH HIGH  
FITNESS.**

\*UCL study

# THE STATE OF PLAY

**BEFORE JOINING GALS FC, OVER HALF OF OUR GALS FOUND TEAM SPORTS**

**1**

**INTIMIDATING**

**2**

**TOO  
COMPETITIVE**

**3**

**TOO MUCH  
COMMITMENT**

**I HAD BEEN LOOKING TO JOIN A GIRLS' FOOTBALL CLUB FOR SO LONG BUT ALWAYS FELT TOO INTIMIDATED OR SOCIALLY ANXIOUS ABOUT TAKING THE FIRST STEP. JOINING GALS FC FELT DIFFERENT FROM THE START AND IT HAS ALLOWED ME TO TICK OFF A MAJOR ITEM ON MY TO DO LIST AND WITH IT BROUGHT SUCH AN AMAZING GROUP OF GALS AND SENSE OF COMMUNITY.**

*- Whitechapel gal xxx*



# HOW WE GET GALS ON THE PITCH

Gals FC is a football club that provides access to weekly football sessions run by volunteer Vibe Protectors, events (football and non-football) and an online community.

## FUN OVER FORMALITY

The focus is on fun, not competition, meaning the games are flexible and don't adhere strictly to typical 5-a-side rules. There's no coach, no referee and no score. Vibe Protectors facilitate the session. This removes the intimidating aspects of organised sport and makes it easy for anyone to join, regardless of prior experience or level of skill.

## COMMUNITY OVER COMPETITION

Connection and community are the priority as women come together to form friendships and enjoy the game. There's no pressure to perform and skill progression happens naturally over time. Gals find a supportive, confidence-boosting environment to play in and increased connection to their city or town.

## FLEXIBILITY OVER FIXED PARTICIPATION

Gals can attend as often as they like, but there is no commitment to a rigid schedule or formal league timetable. This flexibility allows gals to play football without it taking over their lives. Perfect for those who juggle work, family, and other priorities.

**I LOVE LEARNING A NEW SPORT THAT I PREVIOUSLY FELT WASN'T ACCESSIBLE TO ME AND IT'S SOO FUN TO RUN AROUND WITH MY NEW FRIENDS AND BE SILLY. I REALLY FEEL PART OF A COMMUNITY AND IT'S BOOSTED MY CONFIDENCE**

*-Brixton gal xxx*

# OUR IMPACT ON THE PITCH

Gals FC makes football accessible to gals who might not have the opportunity or confidence to participate otherwise, with 70% of gals noting they wouldn't be playing without Gals FC. By creating a positive environment for all, Gals FC fosters skills, confidence, and a love for the sport.

**90%**

**OF GALS FEEL MORE  
CONFIDENT PLAYING  
FOOTBALL**

**71%**

**HAVE BECOME MORE  
INTERESTED IN  
FOOTBALL IN  
GENERAL SINCE  
JOINING GALS FC**

**9 IN 10**

**GALS THINK  
SESSIONS ARE FUN  
AND WELCOMING**

**99%**

**OF GALS FEEL  
HAPPIER AFTER A  
GALS FC SESSION**



# OUR IMPACT OFF THE PITCH

Young women are more likely to experience anxiety-related conditions than any other group.\* Gals FC provides a supportive space for connection, friendship and personal growth as well as physical activity, all proven to improve our emotional well-being. An hour of football each week may seem small, but its impact on our gals' mental health has been profound.

\*Mental Health Foundation

## IMPROVED MENTAL HEALTH

**91%** SAY GALS FC HAS HAD A  
POSITIVE IMPACT ON THEIR  
MENTAL HEALTH

**82%** RETURN EVERY WEEK  
BECAUSE IT'S GOOD FOR  
THEIR MENTAL HEALTH

**83%** OF GALS REPORT  
FEELING HAPPIER SINCE  
JOINING GALS FC

# FINDING JOY IN FOOTBALL AGAIN



**MEET  
RACHEL**



*Rachel started Gals FC in September 2024 and became a Vibe Protector at our game in Greenwich in November 2024.*

I played football in high school for 6 years and won or was a finalist in the local school division 2-3 times. I really enjoyed it and it was my main form of fitness in high school!

I had hopes to try out for the university teams when I moved to the UK. However shortly after high school I got into a car accident and broke both my legs. This led to a long recovery process of learning how to walk again. By the time I started university 8 months later, I was still on crutches.

**“EVEN THOUGH I RECOVERED, I WAS PRETTY DOWN BY IT ALL AND NOT CONFIDENT IN STARTING SPORT AGAIN LET ALONE MUCH PHYSICAL CONTACT SPORT.”**

Part of it was also knowing I wouldn't be on top form anymore and feeling nostalgic for my past self, and wanting to preserve that memory. I took up spin classes (felt safe strapped on to a bike) but I'd close my eyes and feel the music and imagine I was on the pitch again, running and cheering on my teammates.

My friend Noa told me about Gals FC about a year after we finished university, she was playing in Brighton and I signed up to Whitechapel.

**“IT WAS EVERYTHING I DIDN'T KNOW I COULD FIND BUT FIT EXACTLY WHAT I WAS LOOKING FOR.”**

No competition, no pressure, just being myself and playing for the fun and social. I absolutely loved the feeling of being in a safe space.

Gals FC has improved my confidence. What I thought was just a lack of physical confidence was also an emotional and mental one. Joining Gals FC has helped me to learn to love this mental part of the recovery journey, enjoy sport again, and helped me meet new people in London. It breaks up my week and is something I look forward to, which improves my overall wellbeing.

**“IF YOU'VE HAD A SET BACK, WHETHER PHYSICALLY OR MENTALLY, GALS FC IS A SAFE SPACE TO EASE BACK INTO IT.”**

*Rachel xoxo*



# OUR IMPACT OFF THE PITCH

Nearly a third of women (32%) have felt judged or self-conscious while playing sports.\* Given this, the positive impact Gals FC has on confidence in physical activity is exceptionally important. Our impact data highlights how this newfound confidence extends beyond sports, transforming other aspects of gals lives too.

\*YouGov

## INCREASED CONFIDENCE

**64% FEEL MORE CONFIDENT  
BEING PHYSICALLY ACTIVE  
SINCE JOINING GALS FC**

**TWO THIRDS OF GALS FEEL  
MORE CONFIDENT IN OTHER  
AREAS OF THEIR LIVES BECAUSE  
OF GALS FC**

**56% HAVE TRIED SOMETHING  
ELSE NEW IN THEIR LIFE SINCE  
JOINING GALS FC**

# EMBRACING TEAM SPORT FOR THE FIRST TIME



## MEET JESS



Jess joined Gals FC in May 2024 as a founding member of our North East London community.

Growing up in Australia, there was a strong emphasis on being 'sporty,' but I never felt that team sports were for me. I believed I was 'bad' at them, so I avoided participating once I reached puberty. Although I wasn't diagnosed with dyspraxia until I was 21, my uncoordinated movements and slow reaction times made traditional team sports challenging.

**"THE COMPETITIVE NATURE OF MOST SPORTS LEFT ME FEELING LIKE I DIDN'T BELONG."**

I decided to try football with Gals FC because my friend Elizabeth invited me, and, my growing interest in moving my body in the right environment. From the very first session, I was met with warmth and inclusivity—I felt like I was meeting people who truly understood me.

**"GALS FC HAS COMPLETELY CHANGED MY RELATIONSHIP WITH SPORT."**

I've gained confidence in my ability to participate in a team setting without the pressure of being the best. The focus is on enjoyment and support rather than competition, which makes all the difference.

The welcoming atmosphere and emphasis on personal growth make Gals FC a space where everyone can feel comfortable, regardless of skill level. Through drills and team-building activities, I've learned to manage my challenges with coordination and reaction time while discovering my strengths in communication and teamwork.

Since joining, I've felt a noticeable improvement in my confidence, both on and off the pitch. Being part of this team has shown me that I do belong in team sports and that my contributions matter, regardless of my physical abilities.

*Jess xxx*

**WHAT WOULD JESS SAY TO SOMEONE WHO IS INTERESTED IN TRYING GALS FC?**

Not every team sport has to be competitive or exclusive. You don't need to 'feel' ready to be sporty—just getting involved can help you find your own strengths.

Being part of Gals FC has had a positive impact on my life beyond just playing football. The sense of belonging, the friendships, and the newfound confidence I've gained extend into all areas of my life. You never regret a session!



# OUR IMPACT OFF THE PITCH

Making friends as an adult can be tough, especially with work and family commitments. Gals FC makes it easier with a welcoming environment that extends beyond football—offering book clubs, film clubs, run clubs, and social events, all led by our members.

## OUR COMMUNITY IS REAL

**96% OF GALS  
FEEL  
ACCEPTED  
AT GALS FC**

**4 IN 5 HAVE  
MADE  
FRIENDS  
THROUGH  
GALS FC**

**51% FEEL  
MORE  
SUPPORTED  
IN THEIR  
LIVES**





# FINDING COMMUNITY IN THE CITY I GREW UP IN



**MEET  
ALICIA**



*Alicia joined Gals FC in November 2023 and went on to become our founding Vibe Protector of the South East London community.*

I've always had a strong sense of community growing up on an estate in London, but when I moved south of the river a few years ago, I really felt the absence of that connection.

**“FOOTBALL HAS ALWAYS BEEN IN THE BACKGROUND OF MY LIFE.”**

Whether it was playing in PE, watching people on my estate play, or being surrounded by others who loved the sport. Even if I wasn't directly involved, it was always there.

I had started watching loads of football and was getting really into it. I wanted to play to understand the game better, but I didn't want anything too serious or the pressure of committing to a league. That's when I found Gals FC.

At Gals FC, everyone cares about what we're doing, but nothing is taken too seriously.

**“I'VE MADE GENUINE FRIENDS—SOMETHING THAT'S NOT ALWAYS EASY—AND WE NOW SPEND TIME TOGETHER OFF THE PITCH TOO.”**

The club brings like-minded people together, and it's easy to bond over all being a bit terrible at football, wanting to improve, and just having fun with it. It's amazing to now have a group of women south of the river I can hang out with.

**“BEING IN THE AREA AND BUMPING INTO FAMILIAR FACES HAS MADE THIS PART OF LONDON FEEL LIKE HOME, WHICH IS SUCH A LOVELY FEELING.”**

In a way, being part of Gals FC has also widened my experience of the city, which has been really nice.

One of my favourite moments playing with Gals FC was our recent friendly against Southwark Stars Disability FC. It was so great to play both against and alongside another team. The Gals showed up and played the way we always do—having fun, not worrying about the score, and sharing laughs with the other team.

If you're thinking about playing football but aren't sure, you will find community at Gals FC.

*Alicia xxx*



# OUR IMPACT IN THE GALS' WORDS

Gals FC is all about giving gals a good time on and off the pitch, and our impact data proves we're doing just that. But really, the gals say it best themselves.

And the real win? We're expanding Gals FC across the UK, bringing even more gals together to be a part of this amazing, growing community!



**"IT MAKES ME FEEL ALIVE!"**

*- Whitechapel gal xxx*

**"LOVE DOING A TEAM SPORTS WHICH I HAVE NEVER DONE, MADE FRIENDS AS AN ADULT (HARD!), HAVE SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO EVERY WEEK WHICH I KNOW I WON'T BAIL ON"**

*- Ipswich gal xxx*

**"ITS IMPROVED MY HAPPINESS, CONFIDENCE AND MOTIVATION!"**

*- Streatham gal xxx*



**"IT'S HAD A VERY MOTIVATING IMPACT ON MY HEALTH AND FITNESS AND IT'S REALLY LOVELY MAKING FRIENDS WITH THE GALS"**

*- South East London gal xxx*

**"MADE ME REALISE I CAN REALLY TRY ANYTHING"**

*- North East London gal xxx*

**"IT'S HELPED ME GROW MY CONFIDENCE PLAYING FOOTBALL, MAKE FRIENDS AND HAVE A COMMUNITY. IT'S BEEN GREAT FOR MY MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH AND I JUST HAVE A GOOD TIME."**

*- Brighton gal xxx*



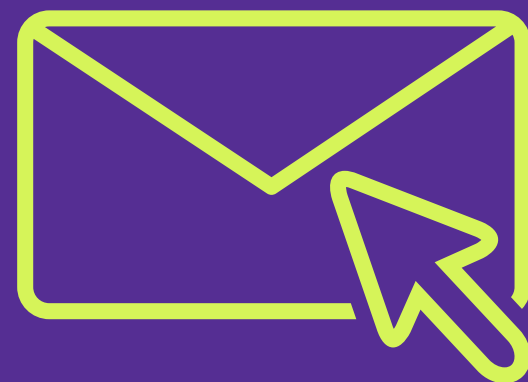


# JOIN *US*

**GALS FC ARE OPENING  
50 GAMES ACROSS THE UK  
THIS YEAR. GET INVOLVED!**



Become a Vibe Protector or  
sign up to play with us at  
[www.galsfc.com](http://www.galsfc.com)



Sign up to our newsletter  
to hear our updates at  
[www.galsfc.com](http://www.galsfc.com)



Follow our journey on  
Instagram [@gals.fc](https://www.instagram.com/gals.fc)





# METHODOLOGY

We surveyed gals from across our community to learn how being part of Gals FC had affected them.

This report reflects data from 116 gals across 11 pitches, collected in November 2024. All data was finalised in December 2024, including number of games, members and hours played.

Gals who had been involved anywhere from two weeks to two years participated, and delivered unanimous results about the positive experience of Gals FC - which was consistent across pitches, demographics, and all levels of football experience.

# REFERENCES

Throughout the report we have referenced external research from:

- Sport England (2023) [This Girl Can With You](#)
- YouGov (2024) [The Big Survey on Sports](#)
- UCL (2020) [Low fitness linked to higher depression and anxiety risk](#)
- Mental Health Foundation (2025) [Mental Health Statistics](#)

# SPECIAL THANKS


This report is made possible by two of our gals, Jenny Steele & Hannah Gregory. We can't thank them enough for their commitment to shining a light on the magic of Gals FC.

We are also thankful for the gals who shared their stories in this report, they truly bring our impact to life; our Vibe Protectors, who are building such incredible communities within Gals FC; and every gal who took the time to do our survey, you're the best!



*Jenny & Hannah xxx*

# THANK YOU



**MY CONFIDENCE IS SO MUCH BETTER , BOTH  
WHEN IT COMES TO PLAYING FOOTBALL AND IN  
MYSELF. AS A COMPETITIVE PERSON WHO HATED  
SPORTS GROWING UP AS I FELT I WAS NEVER  
GOOD ENOUGH, I AM SO HAPPY TO HAVE FOUND  
MY LOVE FOR FOOTBALL THROUGH GALS FC, IT  
HAS REFRAMED HOW I APPROACH IT!**

*- Whitechapel gal xxx*