

St Basils and Blues

Stop Press! BBC TV Midlands Today from St Andrews 8th August, 6.30pm.

ENGLAND STARS LAUNCH OUR CITY, OUR VISION

Blues will unveil four international players at St. Andrew's when the Championship season kicks off against Sheffield United on Saturday (9 August, kick-off 12.45pm).



However, whilst manager Alex McLeish continues to look to strengthen his squad with top quality players, this quartet of England stars will be at the stadium for a different reason.

The young men, all members of Birmingham-based youth homelessness project St. Basils' football team, will help launch Blues' new community drive Our City, Our Vision.

The four, recently selected to represent England at the Homeless World Cup in Australia this November, will be joined by fellow St. Basils players to parade an Our City, Our Vision banner around the pitch before the game against the Blades.

At half-time they will take on a team from Blues' community department in a half-time four-a-side match on the hallowed St. Andrew's turf.

Birmingham City's day of activity to launch Our City, Our Vision will also see the involvement of youngsters from Sunfield - a national charity specialising in the care of children with severe and complex learning needs, based in Clent near Stourbridge, that recently received the go ahead for a new purpose-built school designed to meet the special needs of children with severe autistic spectrum disorders.

Both St. Basils and Sunfield are great examples of the types of charity or community initiative Blues will be teaming up with to help and inspire through Our City, Our Vision.

Blues have always done excellent and widespread community work across Birmingham and further afield, but want to extend further our involvement in the lives of people across the city.

Our City, Our Vision is about breaking down barriers and opening up football to people who may previously not have had access to the beautiful game - to use the profile the sport carries to enhance the lives of people in the community who need it the most.

Birmingham City will show its commitment to a number of initiatives, with a pledge to support local projects additional to all the great work the club's community department already gets involved in.

These will include the following areas...

- The club's five nominated charities
- Schools
- Grassroots football
- Local community initiatives and social inclusion projects
- Supporters
- Government schemes
- The environment
- Diversity
- Services and the armed forces

Projects supported will receive a number of benefits including player/ex-player visits, discounted tickets to games at St. Andrew's and press and PR profile through the club's official website and matchday programme and through local and national media.

Anyone interested in being part of Our City, Our Vision can write – with an explanation of their project's work and photographs or dvd footage where appropriate – to Our City, Our Vision, c/o Chris Kershaw, PR and Communications Officer, Birmingham City Football Club, St. Andrew's, B9 4NH or can email media@bcfc.com.

The club expects to be inundated with requests and so, unfortunately, not all of them will be successful immediately, but will be kept on file as Our City, Our Vision is an ongoing project.

The ongoing working relationship between Blues and St.Basils will be documented in the matchday programme and at bcfc.com in the coming weeks and months. Amongst other things, our community department are working with St. Basils to try and gain FA Charter status for their football team.

For more information on St. Basils visit their website at www.stbasils.org.uk and to find out more about Sunfield log on to www.sunfield.org.uk. To contribute to the Sunfield cause please feel free to make a donation via the bucket collection being held at today's game.

Ahead of today's game the Blues first team squad will show their support for Our City, Our Vision by warming up in specially designed t-shirts.

Our City, Our Vision updates, news and views can be read in every issue of official matchday programme Blues News and can be seen at bcfc.com.

NOTE TO MEDIA

For further information please contact Blues' PR and Communications Officer Chris Kershaw on 07794 364414 or chris.kershaw@bcfc.com.

Pic caption: The picture shows the four talented St. Basils players who will be representing England at the Homeless World Cup. They are: Tyrone Coleman, 23; Abdi Gaal, 20; Romain Coleman, 23 and Ryan Nash, 20.