

**Harlequins Foundation wins award for using rugby to transform lives of young Londoners**



Harlequins may be most famous for the entertaining rugby they play on the pitch, but the club's official charity is now winning plaudits for the way it is using the sport to transform the lives of thousands of young people off it.

The Harlequins Foundation uses rugby to tackle inequality and remove the barriers many young people face to being active or accessing vital education and training.

It works with more than 7,000 young people each year and earlier this week the charity was presented with the Elite Sport in the Community Award at the London Sport Awards supported by the City of London Corporation. The award celebrates the organisations or professional sports clubs who use the power, reach, and influence of their sport as a force for positive change in their community and change people's lives for the better.

Previous winners have included London Pulse Netball Club, West Ham United FC, and England Athletics.

Marc Leckie, who heads up the foundation, was delighted to see the charity recognised for its work despite having only been formed relatively recently in 2015.

He said: "It was a real honour just to be nominated, especially given the age of the charity and the fact we were coming out of a pandemic which really halted a lot of our opportunity to develop.

"It reflects how much work the team has done, how much support the club has given us in such a short space of time, and how much impact we have been able to make.

"We are really the embodiment of the club in the community. We are all passionate about the fact sport can engage people who may not otherwise engage with other agencies, it can bring people together, it can break down barriers, and it can support broader outcomes like health and wellbeing.

“Our focus is on using sport, primarily rugby, to develop the essential skills which help young people to thrive and succeed in life.

“It is absolutely amazing to win this award and receive this recognition from London Sport and a really proud moment for everyone. It shows we are on the right path and demonstrates we are doing the right thing.”

For more on the London Sport Awards, visit: [www.londonsport.org](http://www.londonsport.org), or to learn more about the Harlequins Foundation, visit: [www.quins.co.uk](http://www.quins.co.uk).