



EquiLend Football Tournament: Kicking out food poverty

Securities finance firms joined forces to support vulnerable children across London in an inaugural, industry-wide football fundraiser. Daniel Tison reports

EquiLend brought together 10 client firms in its first-ever charity football tournament, raising more than £8,000 for The Felix Project — a cause which has gained support within securities finance.

The competitiveness across the three leagues on the night of 17 October was intense, the securities finance fintech firm says, with the winning trophy raised by NBC Global Finance, an indirect wholly-owned subsidiary of the National Bank of Canada.

The Felix Project was set up in July 2016, in memory of Felix Byam

Shaw, a “top-order batsman with a fierce cut shot”, who died suddenly from meningitis at the age of 14. He played for a number of Oxfordshire County age group sides including Under 10s, as well as captaining the Under 13s in the summer of 2013.

Byam Shaw’s family honoured him with this charitable initiative, which saves surplus food and redistributes it to charities. Every day, the project delivers the equivalent of 32 million meals to 1,119 community organisations and more than 170 schools across London, covering some of the most deprived areas of the capital.

The sector first engaged with The Felix Project at the Securities Finance Ball in 2022. The night inspired EquiLend attendees to take action, and around 20 London-based colleagues volunteered at the charity's Poplar depot in the summer of 2023.

Jobs ranged from preparing food in the kitchen and packing up cooked meals to helping delivery drivers on their rounds and working in the warehouse. Everyone involved was astounded by the scale of the charity's operation, says EquiLend, and had their eyes opened further to the scale of the food poverty in London.

Carmel Lock, the event organiser and one of EquiLend's project management office leads, coordinated the efforts of sales and customer relationship management to confirm the 10 client teams and three EquiLend teams at the first football tournament.

In her welcome speech at the EquiLend Football Tournament event, Lock shared that the inspiration for the project originally came from Felix's participation in a boys' football tournament and his observation that many of the 10-year-old players on the opposing team had not had anything to eat that day.

"Unfortunately, there are still many who are struggling to feed themselves and their families," she said. "EquiLend is pleased and privileged to be able to support charities like The Felix Project in events like this, the essence of which was fully embraced by those firms involved on the night — a huge thanks to ABN Amro, Brown Brothers Harriman, Barclays, BlackRock, Cantor Fitzgerald, NBC Global Finance, Northern Trust, Society General, UBS, and CIBC." ■

