

Thameslink provides platform to Luton Town Academy players with 300th travel pass

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Train operator [Thameslink](#) and Luton Town FC's Academy have announced that their partnership support for Academy players will continue into its 15th season.

The news means that Thameslink have now provided 300 season-long passes to the club's 16- to 18-year-old apprentices since the partnership began, allowing free travel to their places of study and training. Many could not have afforded to attend without the train company's support.

Dale Brunton, the LTFC Academy's Operation Manager, said: "Thameslink has been an excellent partner for Luton Town Football Club over the past 15 seasons, especially for the young men in our Academy, allowing them to develop both on and off the field.

"Our Academy players are from a wide range of backgrounds and many travel considerable distances to train, play and learn with us. If it wasn't for Thameslink's generosity, some would struggle to attend their sessions on a daily basis. The partnership also allows our apprentices to give back to the local community via social action days."

Tom Moran, Managing Director for Thameslink and Great Northern, said: “We work a lot with young people, providing confidence-building and upskilling opportunities that can make a huge difference to their lives.

“This long-standing partnership with the Hatters allows young sports people to develop their talents and pursue dreams they would otherwise not be able to follow. It’s one of the ways we can make a tangible difference for individuals in the communities we serve.”

Centre-back Josh Odell-Bature, 17, is in his second year at Luton. He said: “Coming from West London, I just couldn’t afford to be at the Academy without my Thameslink pass. Finding another way to get to my training and education would be very difficult. I’d have to find someone to give me a lift, so the pass is keeping traffic off the M1 too!

“Also I meet up with friends at St Pancras to come to Luton, so it’s good for friendships and a lot less boring than travelling on my own.”

Tyrell Giwa, now also 17, was among the seven 16-year-olds who started their two-year apprenticeship this summer, joining as a midfielder but now settling into a new right-back role. Tyrell, who travels to the Academy from Hertfordshire, said: “I had two months without a pass early in the season and it’s made a huge difference. I can travel a lot more without getting my mum involved, and that takes a lot of pressure off her.”

Academy graduates who have benefited from Thameslink’s travel support include Leicester City wing-back James Justin, who recently made his full England debut, and striker Cauley Woodrow, who returned to Luton this summer as one of the Championship first-team squad’s star signings.

Photo credit: Thameslink/ Danny Loo