



Mark Gifford is appointed as Chief Executive of National Citizen Service



National Citizen Service Trust announced today Mark Gifford has been appointed as Chief Executive Officer of the country's flagship youth programme.

Mr Gifford is currently Director for Shop and Trade at Waitrose & Partners and will lead NCS from the 2nd March 2020. He takes over from outgoing CEO, Michael Lynas, who is set to become a patron of the Trust.

Mark is responsible for the successful running of all the supermarket's shops and leads the 48,000 partners who work in them. His experience in setting strategies to deliver the Partnership's mission and goals will be invaluable to NCS as it moves into its second decade, a new delivery network and as exciting new partners come on board.

In addition to a strong operational background, Mark also has a passion for the development of young people. He is the chair of a school he has helped turn from Requires Improvement to Good in its Ofsted rating. He has also helped other schools in the same situation.

Brett Wigdortz OBE, NCS Trust, Chairman said: "This is an exciting time for NCS and I'm looking forward to welcoming Mark to our team on behalf of the young people of England and Northern Ireland. Over the last 10 years under Michael's leadership, NCS has reached almost 600,000 young people with its life-changing programme and over 14 million hours of volunteering have taken place.

“As we look to the next decade, embedding our new network of partners and continuing to transform the lives of young people across England and Northern Ireland I’m confident that Mark is the best person to take us forward.”

Mark Gifford said: "What NCS has achieved in its short history is deeply impressive. I am delighted to join and lead the next phase of the journey which will see it embedded as a key national institution. Its mission of inspiring a generation of citizens through a shared experience that develops character and bridges social divides is something I am passionate about.

“Making a difference to the lives of young people so they can be the best they can be inspires me and I am excited that my skills in the private sector combined with interests in my private life come together in a truly unique role. Our mission isn’t to leave a better world for our young people, it is to leave better young people for the world.”

Nicky Morgan, Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport said: "The National Citizen Service has now enrolled more than half a million young people across the country - teaching life skills, improving confidence and boosting their employability.

"I welcome Mark Gifford's appointment as the new Chief Executive of the NCS. I am confident that under his leadership, Mark will bring a fresh approach to how we support our young people through the organisation and help have a real, positive impact on their lives."

A central part of the recruitment process was the involvement of young people. Alongside the search committee, Youth Advisor to the NCS Trust Board Jermain Jackman worked with four NCS graduates to set a presentation task and pose a series of follow up questions to all shortlisted candidates. The young people were all former NCS National Youth Board members.

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About NCS

NCS is an experience like no other. Designed for 16-17 year olds across England and Northern Ireland, NCS is a youth programme that runs every summer and autumn, during school holidays. Teens get the opportunity to mix with a new crowd, live away from home for a while, take on new challenges and in the process build lifelong friendships.

The programme is all about emboldening young people – by giving them a taste of independence and equipping them with essential skills for life. NCSers then

get a chance to take these new-found skills for a test-run in their local community.

NCS is dedicated to providing a platform to make sure young people are heard and can engage with their community by completing passion projects, raising awareness and providing solutions to the issues they care about.

The experience might last just a few weeks, but the impact? That lasts a lot longer. Since 2009 nearly 600,000 young people have taken part in NCS, completing over 14.5 million hours of community action, and gaining priceless life experiences.

NCS costs no more than £50 - with bursaries and support for those with special educational needs or disabilities also available. NCS's mission is to give every young person the life-changing experience.

To find out more visit wearencs.com

Visit NCS social media platforms on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#)

About NCS Trust

National Citizen Service Trust is a not-for-profit organisation incorporated by Royal Charter and established to shape, support, champion and lead a thriving National Citizen Service.

National Citizen Service Trust is registered in England and Wales with Royal Charter Body number RC000894. Our registered office is at The Pembroke Building, Kensington Village, Avonmore Road, London, W14 8DG.

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