Racisms and Anti-Racist Strategies in English Football

Steven Bradbury

Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD, Sociology Department, University of Leicester

November 2002
Contents

Acknowledgements

Abstract

Chapter One 1
Introduction and Literature Review

Chapter Two 55
Politics, New Labour and New Football: The Football Task Force

Chapter Three 80
National Interventions and Racism in English Football

Chapter Four 120
Professional Football Clubs and Work Against Racism: the national
response to Eliminating Racism from Football

Chapter Five 168
The Football Unites, Racism Divides (FURD) project

Chapter Six 217
The Foxes Against Racism (FAR) Initiative

Chapter Seven 260
Some Conclusions

Bibliography

Appendices
Acknowledgements

Thanks and acknowledgements are due to:

- The Economic and Social Research Council and the Professional Footballers Association for their financial support. Also, to the Sir Norman Chester Centre for Football Research and the Sociology department at Leicester University for their in-kind support.

- To John Williams, Director of Research at the SNCCFR for his supervision throughout the duration of the fieldwork and the writing up process. To Dr Ellen Annandale and Dr Chris Pole for their words of advice and support. Likewise, my former colleagues Dr Donna Woodhouse, Dr Sean Perkins and also Darren Rushin.

- To all of those people who gave up their time to be interviewed or to offer knowledge, expertise and wisdom including: at the PFA; Brendon Batson, Gordon Taylor, Roger Reade and John Hudson. At Kick It Out; Piara Powar and Ben Tegg and to Ged Grebby at Show Racism the Red Card. At FURD; Howard Holmes, Alan Rhodes, Simon Hyacinth, Mehrun Ahmed, Lisa Sultanti, Ruth Johnson, Pam Rhoddis, Luis Da Silva, Ahmed Abdi Jama, Rod Norton, Andy Pack, Abdul Rashid, the players of Sharrow United and the FURD MV’s, Shazia, Nazia, Kola, Kamran and Katie. At FAR; Steve White, Steve Humphries, Mark Laywood, Joss Johnson, Sunil Budheo, Charles Raynor, Gary Garner, Jeff Davidson. At RAFFI, Idris Salent, Ian Johnstone and Tony Scholes. Also, thanks to fan activist and academic Adam Brown, FTF administrator and MP for Leigh Andy Burnham and to Mark Sudbury at the FA.

- To all of the administrators at professional football clubs nationally and at local 'parks' football clubs in Leicestershire and Rutland who responded to questionnaires sent to them as part of my survey research.

- A big thank-you to my parents, 'Brad' and Janet, for giving their wholehearted support throughout the duration of this thesis and in everything I’ve ever done.

- Finally, thank-you to Amanda. Without your love, patience and understanding I simply wouldn’t have been able to complete this thesis. I love you and I’ll promise to earn a living from here on in!

- I would like to dedicate this thesis to my respective grand-fathers, Frank Hollister and Jack Bradbury, who ably assisted my own father in nurturing my passion for football.
Abstract

This thesis examines racisms and anti-racist strategies in English football, with particular focus on the late twentieth and early twenty first centuries. The analysis begins by considering the roots of racisms in British society and British sport. The thesis then moves on to examine in more detail the development both of racisms in English football and of campaigns to limit their effects among fans, clubs and professional bodies. A central theme of this analysis concerns the heterogeneity of racisms, and the range of sites and local contexts in which they operate, in sport and elsewhere.

The main body of the thesis is devoted to an investigation of racism in English football during the 1980s, 1990s and early 21st century. Special attention is focused on three themes. First, the development of national campaigns designed to confront racism in football. These include major political initiatives, such as the Labour government's Football Task Force, but also non-governmental campaigns such as AGARI and Kick It Out. Second, the responses of professional clubs to such nationally-driven campaigns and agendas. This issue is explored by drawing on original survey data. Third, the aims and activities of two contrasting local anti-racism football projects in the North and Midlands of England. A lengthy critical analysis of these projects is provided, utilising data generated by observational and interview techniques.

The thesis concludes by assessing the efficacy of local, national and political anti-racist campaigns. The discussion considers their conceptualisation of racism and its effects, as well as their support, or otherwise, within English football at both the local and national levels. The thesis also seeks to consider the extent to which such initiatives can effect real change at the local level whilst addressing some of the wider sources of racisms in English football and beyond.
Chapter One

Introduction and Literature Review

1. Aims of the thesis

The thesis has a number of key aims. Firstly, to consider the roots of racisms in British society and British sports and the increasingly complex ways in which racisms and patterns of racialised exclusion might impact upon the lived experiences of different minority ethnic communities in different ways across a range of sites and local contexts. More specifically, the thesis aims to offer an examination of the way in which racisms have impinged upon and have been generated by English football and football culture in both the more 'traditional' and more 'modernised' eras of the game in complex and linear ways. In doing so, the thesis aims to move away from limited conceptualisations of racism as a singular monolithic entity towards a broader understanding of the heterogeneity of racisms and patterns of racialised exclusion at play in English football and football culture which might serve to disadvantage minority ethnic communities from a full participation in the game as players, spectators and administrators.

Secondly; the thesis aims to evaluate a series of national responses to racism in the game during the period under study. These include major political initiatives such as the Labour Party's Football Task Force which was set up in 1997 as a distinctly 'third way' approach to dealing with racism and racialised exclusion in football, along with other key issues affecting the game as a result of the rapid social and cultural transformation of English football in the 1990s. A further aim here, is to monitor and evaluate the extent to which those football bodies charged with the responsibility for the implementation of key recommendations outlined in the Football Task Force report 'Eliminating racism from football' have responded openly and positively to this recommend process. The thesis is particularly concerned to evaluate the extent to which professional football clubs nationally have engaged with the Football Task Force recommendations and ideas relating to anti-racism and social
inclusion. That is, the thesis is concerned to establish the extent to which professional football clubs have actively sought to implement strategies of action designed to deal appropriately with racism and to move away from positions of relative institutional closure to 'connect' more productively with local minority ethnic communities as potential players, spectators and administrative employees. The thesis also aims to examine the efficacy of key national non-governmental anti-racist interventions, with particular respect to the national Kick It Out campaign and its predecessors. More specifically, the thesis is concerned to examine the origins, development, philosophy of Kick It Out and the practical delivery of the campaigns key activities. In particular, the thesis will focus on the successes and key problematic engendered by the work of the campaign to engage professional football clubs in locally grounded initiatives designed to combat racism and promote racialised inclusion.

Thirdly, the thesis aims to critically consider the origins, development, philosophy and practical delivery of two progressive but very different localised campaigns designed to combat racism and promote racialised inclusion in football in the North of England and in the East Midlands; the Football Unites, Racism Divides project in Sheffield and the Foxes Against Racism campaign at Leicester City FC. In particular, the thesis aims to identify the extent to which projects of this kind can engender real change and impact upon the lives of local minority ethnic communities and engender more productive relationships between these communities and local professional football clubs. The thesis will offer some critical comparison between the two projects and will also draw on knowledge of the activities of other similar projects nationally to this end.

Fourthly; it is the intention of this thesis to provide a clear theoretical framework for understanding the processes by which racisms have become manifest in British society and British sports and, more specifically, the way in which racisms and racialised exclusion impinge upon and are generated by English football and football culture. The thesis will utilise the literature review as an intellectual platform in order to establish a series of sociological arguments from a broadly racialisation perspective which posit the importance of moving beyond overly simplistic conceptualisations of racism as a singular monolithic entity to a more full understanding of the heterogeneity of racisms and the way in which patterns of
racialised exclusion might serve to disadvantage different minority ethnic populations in multiple and often inconsistent ways. In particular, the thesis will argue against essentialist understandings of 'race' and ethnicity which underpin racialised boundary constructions and the notion of the racialised 'other' at the national(istic) level and will offer an understanding of the way in which the wider discourse of closed nationalisms inter-penetrate with 'local structures of feeling' and the 'language of the community' to offer more distinctly localised patterns of racialised exclusion in English football and local football cultures. Informed by a series of key academic arguments the thesis will also enact rigorous empirical investigation to identify the ways in which the inter-penetration of old biological racism and new cultural racisms premised on notions of cultural exclusivity and 'other-ness' provide a complex and fluid framework in which exclusionary practices in society, sports and the cultural space of football continue to flourish.

Fifthly; the broad empirical evaluation of national and local responses to racisms and racialised exclusion featured in this thesis will also be informed by the key theoretical arguments identified in the literature review. In particular, the thesis will examine the way in which responses to racism have been conditioned by the extent to which national political and non-governmental anti-racist interventions in football (and the key stake-holder bodies which make-up these multi-agency groupings) have been able to move beyond limited conceptualisations of racism to a more full understanding of the heterogeneity of racisms and their complex applications. Similarly, the engagement of professional football clubs with the philosophy of anti-racism and with the practical activities encouraged by the Football Task Force and the national Kick It Out campaign will also be evaluated from this theoretical perspective. Also, the thesis will seek to identify and illustrate the extent and ways in which key club staff engage with wider ideologies of 'otherness' through the utilisation of biological and cultural stereotypification and the enactment of ideas relating to the production of racialised boundary constructions and cultural exclusivity.

These themes will also be explored with reference to the evaluation of two distinctly localised responses to racism and the thesis will also provide an intellectual space here for a discussion of the way in which a sensitivity to local structures of feeling
might inform the potential for progressive and effective work around combating racism and promoting racial inclusion at particular football clubs in distinct local settings. Finally, the thesis will critically consider the extent to which both national and local anti-racist interventions in English football have the capacity to unsettle and disrupt dominant white hegemonic practices in English football and football culture.

2. Methodology

The thesis entitled 'Racisms and Anti-Racist strategies in English Football' is a case studentship funded jointly by the Economic and Social Research Council and the Professional Footballers Association. The process of methodological investigation and the analysis and writing up of findings was undertaken by the author - Mr Steven Bradbury - between October 1998 and November 2002 with the in-kind support of the Sir Norman Chester Centre for Football Research and the Sociology Department at the University of Leicester.

The methodological approach to data collection enacted by this thesis was informed at a philosophical level by a set of epistemological arguments that draw upon and attempt to go beyond positivistic notions of objectivity and more humanistic conceptualisations of subjectivity and interpretation. In doing so, the thesis has been informed by the work of social realist understandings of the relationship between theories of knowledge and the practical application of methodologies (Bhaskar, 1979; Layder, 1990, 1993; Pawson et al, 1997) and has sought to adopt 'a scientific attitude towards social analysis at the same time as recognising the importance of actors meanings' (Layder 1993:16). In enacting both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection the thesis has adopted an approach of methodological triangulation which is informed by theoretical - epistemological and ontological - reasoning and more strategic and practical considerations. That is, the adoption of a multi-method approach to the generation and analysis of data featured in the main body of this thesis might best be understood as 'a 'bricolage', a pieced together, close knit set of practices which provide solutions to problems in concrete situations'
The utilisation of a combination of methodologies has increased the potential of the thesis to generate a degree of statistical breadth and more in-depth textual data and has enabled the researcher to cross-reference ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ data to establish a greater degree of validity and reliability to findings. The data generated by specific methodological techniques acted as a stimulus to enact different methodologies of investigation to confirm or refute findings. For example, the statistical findings generated by the national audit of professional football clubs around issues of ‘Community, Ethnicity and Social Inclusion’ (see chapter four) informed the content of more qualitative questions and prompts that formed a central feature of semi-structured interviews conducted with key football administrators at professional football clubs and with national and local anti-racist project workers. Similarly, the broad intellectual conceptualisations of ‘race’ and racism featured in Chapter One provide the intellectual grounding for the design and development of the research process and exhibit throughout the thesis a degree of both permanence and malleability with regard to the generation of research findings which confirm and contest theoretical frameworks and intellectual supposition. This is not to posit a rigidly deductive empiricist approach to the relationship between theory and method which suggests that if our hypothesis or ideas about social life are ‘true’ then they will be substantiated or refuted by the data which we produce. Rather, it is the contention of the author simply that the capacity to construct theoretical frameworks of understanding is rarely separated from the process of social research. As May (1993) suggests, in relation to the mutual interdependence between theory and research;

‘Theory informs our thinking which, in turn, assists us in making research decisions and sense of the world around us. Our experiences of doing research and its findings, in its turn, influences our theorising; there is a constant relationship that exists between theory and research’ (May 1993: 20).

The thesis utilised quantitative techniques of investigation in two key areas. Firstly; the research findings presented in Chapter Four were generated from a survey of professional football clubs on issues of ‘Community, Ethnicity and Social Inclusion’ (see Bradbury, 2001). Findings from this research was published as a separate report and was, in part, encouraged by the intention of the author to provide some practical
benefit to one of the key sponsors of the research; the Professional Footballers Association (PFA). The survey also provides the opportunity to quantify the extent to which professional football clubs have responded to key recommendations laid out in the Government Football Task Force report on racism and to evaluate the ways in which clubs perceive and have engaged with local minority ethnic communities and broader ideas around inclusion. The analysis of these findings are presented in Chapter Four and allude to some real trends across axis of club size and status and also across regional geographies. The survey was officially endorsed by the PFA, the Premier League and the Football League and this contributed to the excellent response rate from 88 (out of 92) professional football clubs.

The author remains aware, however, of the key methodological problems inherent in questionnaire-based survey work of this kind and acknowledges the involvement of an element of risk in terms of the quality of the data collected from individual respondents on a range of issues inside clubs. Survey work of this kind can never provide a wholly accurate picture of events or local processes and will always contain a degree of imperfection. The author has been concerned throughout the analysis and interpretation of data provided by club respondents to try to avoid making any overly 'mechanical' assertions about the relationship between professional footballs and their local minority ethnic communities which are based simply on responses to 'closed' survey questions. The interpretation of quantitative data provided in Chapter Four is done so in conjunction with significant knowledge of previous and ongoing research in this area and existing local practices at football clubs and with full recognition of the difficulties involved in moving from assertions from individual club staff to concrete analytical conclusions about the state of local activities and policies on racism inside professional football clubs.

A second questionnaire based survey, of local football clubs affiliated to Leicestershire and Rutland County FA on ‘Issues of racism, ethnicity and player and spectator behaviour in local football’, was conducted as part of this thesis and has also been published as a separate report (see Bradbury, 2002). The survey targeted local ‘parks’ football club secretaries in the region and elicited 152 responses, a much smaller but respectable response rate of 21%. The survey was designed to evaluate the perceptions of local club secretaries in the region as to the extent of
racism and racist behaviour at games locally and measure the satisfaction with existing structures to deal with behaviour of this kind, with particular reference to the effectiveness of the Leicester Equality Through Sports (LETS) ‘Sports Charter’. The findings from this survey form a part of the wider evaluation of the Foxes Against Racism initiative (see chapter six) and have also contributed directly to the work of the campaign. The sensitivity to the methodological problematic inherent in survey work of this kind expressed above are also apparent with respect to this local survey and are probably accentuated by the smaller sample of respondents in this study. Nonetheless, the analysis of findings elicited from this methodological approach allude to distinctive patterns and trends with regard to the issues of racism and efforts to combat racism in the local game in Leicester and contribute to the evaluation of the Foxes Against Racism campaign presented in Chapter Six.

The thesis also utilised ethnographic methodologies of observation and interviewing to examine in greater detail the philosophy and practices of those individuals and organisations involved in the design and delivery of anti-racism in football at the national and local level. The author conducted interviews with key administrators at football’s governing bodies, key contributors to the Football Task Force, key workers at national anti-racist campaigns and workers and volunteers at local anti-racist initiatives in Sheffield and Leicester and their client group of young minority ethnic populations. The author accessed these interviewees with the support of key ‘gatekeepers’ at the PFA (the commercial sponsor of the thesis) and at the national Kick It Out campaign and the author was also well placed to generate further contacts through the previous and ongoing research work of the SNCCFR. The author was also commissioned by FURD to conduct an evaluation of the project for its funders and took the ‘minutes’ of FAR steering group meetings. This ‘hands-on’ approach to conducting research at the local level engendered a significant degree of trust and rapport with key ‘informants’ and enabled the author to successfully arrange and conduct interviews with respondents. All interviews were conducted openly and with the full co-operation of respondents and took place ‘in the field’ in the work-spaces and homes of respondents and in public spaces that offered a practical environment for recording the discourse and dialogue which characterised the interview process. Similarly, observational work was conducted across a range of venues in which the practical delivery of anti-racist activities were formulated and administered.
The author utilised semi-structured interviewing techniques in which the use of a thematic guide and the capacity of the author to probe and invite elaborate responses generated some degree of comparability but also encouraged interviewees to provide naturalistic, in-depth and personalised accounts of their own subjective experiences in their own terms of reference. The flexibility of this 'conversation with purpose' (Burgess, 1984, 1988; Hammersley et al, 1993) approach often challenged the preconceptions of the author and encouraged a degree of reflexivity towards the design and direction of the research. This distinct interviewing technique also provided a powerful and often alternative insight into the philosophy, practice and real experiences of those interviewees involved in the delivery of work of this kind, since 'a phenomenon like rambling can be viewed as providing information because it reveals something about the interviewees concerns' (Bryman 1988:47). Also, the tentative expression of empathetic understanding generated by the authors 'hands on' involvement in localised initiatives probably provided some 'disenfranchised' interviewees with the opportunity to 'give voice' to their concerns and anxieties in a safe and supportive environment and thus increase the potential for greater 'representation' of perceptions and experience.

Throughout the enactment of qualitative methodologies of data collection the author was intellectually informed of arguments which allude to theories of knowledge and methodological approaches that suggest racialised symmetry and shared experiences of racism and structural disadvantage between the researcher and the researched might circumvent inherent power imbalances in the interview situation and the tendency for white researchers to 'study down' and better contribute to the production of 'authentic' data and more 'truthful' representation. Throughout the main body of the thesis the author has argued strongly against the essentialisation of 'race' and ethnicity in a societal and sporting context, in favour of a broader conceptualisation of racial and cultural identities in late modern Britain as being characterised much more by processes of hybridity, syncretism and a multiplicity of subject positionings. Accordingly, the author has embarked upon the qualitative aspects of this social research with the knowledge that essentialist conceptions of qualitative differences in data production rely heavily on 'homogenising tendencies, over generalisations and totalising principles' (Troyna 1998:101) and rest upon
deeply flawed assumptions regarding the ‘authenticity’ of personal experience on the basis of ethnicity. Further, the key focus of the thesis was to evaluate the efficacy of anti-racist interventions rather than to record the experiences of racism amongst minority ethnic populations.

Throughout the duration of this thesis the author has interviewed a broad range of individuals representative of the games governing bodies, national and local anti-racist projects and local minority ethnic communities involved in the delivery of anti-racism in football. These interviewees are characterised by their diversity across axis of age, gender, social class and ethnicity and differential levels of access to socio-economic and cultural resources. Accordingly, the author has expressed a great deal of reflexivity with respect to his own socio-cultural positioning as a white, male, social researcher in his early thirties and has noted that mutual perceptions of commonalities and difference emergent from the inter-actional processes and the negotiation of internal dynamics in the interview situation have probably shaped the nature of qualitative information elicited from this methodological approach. In this respect, the author would argue that the multiple accounts of ‘truth’ offered by interviewees as a product of qualitative techniques of semi-structured interviewing maintain a significant degree of validity since they represent ‘situated and contingent creative multiple mappings of a complex and multi-faceted reality of realities’ (Rhodes 1997:148).

The utilisation of a combination of quantitative survey based techniques of investigation and more ethnographic qualitative methods of observation and semi-structured interviewing has enabled the author to conduct a broad ranging and holistic methodological approach to the study of ‘Racism and Anti-Racist Strategies in English Football’. This approach has enabled the author to conduct a comprehensive national overview of the subject under study and to offer a detailed comparative understanding of the philosophy and practice of two localised initiatives designed to combat racism and promote the greater inclusion of minority ethnic communities in football in Sheffield and Leicester. Finally, the theoretical understanding and practical implementation of key methodologies in social research has enabled the author to develop conceptual frameworks of understanding the way
in which racisms impinge upon and are generated by English football and football culture and offer an original contribution to sociological knowledge in this area.

3. Minority ethnic groups in Britain: some introductory comments

The history of Britain has been characterised by the in-migration of successive waves of new populations from other countries and continents through a variety of means including: ‘foreign’ invasion; slavery; the settlement of traders; economic and political refugees; and, most notably, in the post second world war period, the settlement of in-migrants from the former British Commonwealth in Africa, the West Indies and South Asia (CRE, 2001). Indeed, this last wave of ‘settlers’ - and two generations of their families - now form the overwhelming majority of Britain’s minority ethnic communities.

According to the 1991 Census, just over three million (5.5%) of the estimated 55 million people living in Britain classify themselves as coming from a (non-white) minority ethnic background. More recent estimates (Office of National Statistics: 2001) have suggested that (non-white) minority ethnic communities might now account for closer to four million (7.1%) of the total population of Britain. This slight disparity in figures might, in part, be explained by different methodologies of data collection and analysis. But, also, these latter figures may point to the faster growing youth population amongst some minority ethnic communities, alongside the small, but significant, rise in displaced black, Somali and other African refugee communities which has taken place over the last decade. Further, this latter estimate most certainly includes an estimated quarter of a million people of ‘dual heritage’ for whom the category ‘mixed-race’ was not available in the 1991 census.

According to data provided by the Office for National Statistics (2001), over half of Britain’s minority ethnic population classify themselves as Asian (53%), although this category is unevenly divided between Indian (24%), Pakistani (17%) Bangladeshi (6%) and Asian-other (6%) in terms of ethnic origin. Similarly, whilst black communities account for around 31% of the total minority ethnic population of
Britain, there are distinct differences in self-classification between categories of African-Caribbean (13%), Black-African (11%) and Black-Other (7%). Amongst the plethora of numerically smaller (non-white) minority ethnic groups there is a distinct and long-standing British-Chinese community (4%). It is estimated that around half of the minority ethnic population of Great Britain was born in Britain, including 90% of those under the age of fifteen. Around 7% of all Britain’s minority ethnic and white communities were born overseas.

There is also a very specific spatial distribution of those from minority ethnic backgrounds in Britain, with around 97% of all of them being resident in England. More specifically, the overwhelming majority of people from minority ethnic backgrounds in England are clustered around the country’s large, once heavily industrialised, urban centres and historically significant seaports. Different minority ethnic groups tend to be concentrated in different regions, largely reflecting the areas where the first ‘settlers’ from these groups found work or were otherwise ‘allocated’ on their arrival in Britain. Almost half live in London, with over half of Britain’s Bangladeshi communities and over half of Britain’s (combined) black communities resident here, alongside a range of other minority ethnic groups, including a number of Indian origin (CRE, 1999).

In England’s provincial regions, there are significant African-Caribbean communities located across the West Midlands and smaller African-Caribbean communities in the Metropolitan cities of Northern England, including Manchester and Leeds, as well as longer-standing black communities in the historic sea-ports of Cardiff, Bristol and Liverpool. There are significant Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities in the West Midlands and also significant numbers of Pakistani communities resident in the urban centres and ‘mill towns’ of the North West and Yorkshire, alongside Indian and African-Asian communities in the Midlands, the latter grouping being particularly prominent in the East Midlands city of Leicester (CRE, 1999).

Partly corresponding to the different in-migration patterns and spatial distribution of Britain’s minority ethnic communities, the British minority ethnic experience is also characterised by differing levels and types of economic activity and educational attainment within and between different minority ethnic groups (Modood, 1997;
Iganski and Payne, 1996; CRE, 1999). Here, the effects of axes of generation, gender, class, ethnicity and history have intersected with those of local ‘neighbourhood nationalisms’ (Back, 1996) and regional identities, fluctuations in local economies and the potential for multiple racisms and discrimination to impinge upon different minority ethnic groups in different ways (Cohen et al, 1988; Hall, 1991, 1992; Anthias and Yural-Davis, 1992; Rattansi, 1992; Modood, 1997).

Towards the close of 2001 the Observer (25th November 2001) published a ‘special edition pullout’ entitled ‘Race in Britain: Inside our changing land’, a feature that alluded to late-modern Britain as a nation characterised by racial contradiction, inconsistency and flux. The banner headlines and the articles featured here generated more questions than definitive answers as to how relatively high minority ethnic ‘visibility’ and success in the popular cultural domains of music, fashion and sport in Britain could sit in such stark contrast to tales of ongoing structural racial disadvantage and the associated unrest and disorder which had taken place over the summer of 2001 in the post-industrial cities and ‘mill-towns’ of Northern England.

How a Britain in which the day to day ‘lived experiences’ of people in urban locales could, at one at the same time, generate multi-ethnic friendships, relationships and community networks but yet also play host to the racist murders of Steven Lawrence and many other young minority ethnic men and women (Macpherson, 1999). Further, the Observer posed the question: how can a Britain, which defines itself proudly as a nation rooted in democracy and a sense of ‘fair play’ continue to turn a blind-eye to ongoing institutional racism and discrimination within the very core structures of British society? It is against this specifically British backdrop of racial contradiction and complexity that we now turn to available sociological explanations and understandings of some of these issues.

4. Racisms and identity constructions in late-modern Britain

Racism in Western thought has a long and ignominious past. The increasing articulation of biological distinctions around issues of ‘race’ and ethnicity from the
seventeenth century onwards can be seen as part of the wider process of European colonisation and expansion into the Pacific, the Americas and Africa and as part of the growing awareness of human diversity in respect of physical characteristics and cultural practices. The desire to construct human classificatory systems based on perceived notions of superiority and inferiority on the basis of ‘race’ gathered some considerable pace in the nineteenth century against the backdrop of intellectual opposition to religious orthodoxy (see, Banton, 1999). The publication of Charles Darwin’s *Origin of the species* in 1859 and its central theme of ‘natural selection’ allowed the popularisation of the view that ‘races’ could be seen as part of an ongoing evolutionary framework.

These ideas gave rise to a number of intellectual movements, such as eugenics, and later led, in part, to scientific legitimacy being granted to political programmes including the national socialist project in Germany in the 1930s and even the associated crimes committed as part of the Holocaust. Partly in response to the events of World War Two, biological explanations of ‘race’ were increasingly discredited in academic discourses, culminating in the ‘Moscow Declaration’ in 1964 that concluded that whilst variations in biological traits that do exist within and between human populations can be explained by the inheritance of genes, they do not constitute discrete ‘racial’ categories. Nonetheless, the idea of ‘race’ as an explanatory scientific category continues to hold some fascination on the margins of academic thought and much more strongly, of course, in popular discourse.

Despite the intellectual discrediting of crude notions of biological racism, populist forms of racist ideology and practice continue to exist in many ‘modernised’ societies. In Britain, elements central to old biological racism have mutated and become incorporated into newer, more subtle, forms of cultural racism that subscribe to essentialist conceptions of ‘race’ and ethnicity (Back et al, 2001). From this perspective, ‘racial’ and ‘ethnic’ identity is presented as homogeneous, static and discrete, and such unitary notions of identity production allow the formulation of ideas to do with the cultural exclusivity of social groups which in turn sets out the parameters of belonging and entitlement. As Werbner (1997:228) points out:
'To essentialise is to impute a fundamental, basic, absolutely necessary constitutive quality to a person or social category, ethnic group, religious community or nation. It is to posit a falsely timeless continuity, a discreteness or boundedness in space and an organic unity. It is to imply internal sameness and external difference or otherness.'

Such claims to essential 'sameness' and therefore difference – one only knows who one is by who one is not (Cohen 1994:198) – are based upon systems of cultural representation in which the production of meanings serve to help formulate and cement the idea of collective identity. At this level of 'imagined community' (Anderson, 1991) - through sporting contests, for example - ideas of race and/or nation can be reproduced via the production of symbolic forms that serve to generate a sense of allegiance and belonging.

The selective processes by which a common history is recreated might offer only a partial representation of actual history but, nonetheless, it can provide a de-historicised and naturalised account of cultural inclusiveness to which subscription is easily accessible (Hall, 1991; Gilroy, 2000). Whilst these constructions of shared groupings most often take place amongst the dominant populations of the modern nation state - most notably in opposition to a perceived inferior 'other' - this essentialist collective identity construction can also take the form of resistance and contestation amongst marginalized groups within societies, in order to garner a sense of perceived unity and empowerment. In this sense, essentialist thought provides an intellectual space in which the 'romanticising visions of 'race' espoused by black nationalists' (Dyson, 1994:217) and the separatist politics of far-right neo-fascist political organisations can share an uneasy alliance, since they:

'may share parallel ways of understanding their own meaning of their own particularity, of responding to the ideas of transgressive contacts between groups and of conceptualising ethnicity and 'race' as general, even necessary principles of human differentiation' (Gilroy, 2000:72)

In the British context, the political and ideological machinations of new right thinkers and intellectuals from the 1970s and 1980s onwards incorporated essentialist modes of thought into the production of a distinctly racialised national identity formation, which sought to reconstruct a unified British culture across axis of nation, citizenship and patriotism. Proposing a notion of fixed British identity 'stripped of its
Celtic and regional components and dominated by a cultural aesthetic of Englishness' (Back 1998:9), this new 'cultural racism' was used to celebrate a mythical and mythologised national identity which became intertwined with the reconstruction of ethnic exclusivity. Within these imagined and distinctly racialised boundary constructions, this new 'cultural racism' appealed not 'to racial supremacy but to cultural uniformity, parading under the politics of nationalism and patriotism' (Bulmer & Solomos 1998: 829). Within this race/nation nexus, cultural difference becomes incompatible with an imagined Britishness, which is perceived as white and homogeneous and serves to render blackness and Britishness as mutually exclusive identities. The following words of Paul Gilroy are worth quoting at length because they instruct on how new forms of cultural racism set up an insider/outsider binary, subscription to which is based upon an imagined cultural uniformity in the face of wider national decline:

'We increasingly face a racism which avoids being recognised as such because it is able to link 'race' with nationhood, patriotism and nationalism, a racism which has taken a necessary distance from crude ideas of biological inferiority and superiority and now seeks to present an imaginary definition of the nation as a unified cultural community. It constructs and defends an image of national culture – homogeneous in its whiteness yet precarious and perpetually vulnerable to attacks from within and without. This is a racism that answers the social and political turbulence of crisis and crisis management by the recovery of national greatness in the imagination. Its dream-like construction of our sceptred isle is an ethnically purified one provides a special comfort against the ravages of decline. It has been a key component in the ideological and political processes which have put the "Great" back into Britain' (Gilroy 1999: 245).

The political and ideological processes to which Gilroy refers have been particularly manifest in spheres of new right thinking which provided intellectual support for the Conservative government of the 1980s and became highly visible through the output of writers associated with the radical right wing journal the Salisbury Review and their counterparts in the British popular press. Here the construction of insider/outsider binaries was consistently articulated at the level of 'race' and nation, such that distinct national outsider groups could be rendered clearly visible, through military conflict (notably the Falklands dispute), through sporting encounters (most
usually with a Germanic ‘other’, especially in football) and as part of a more general anti-European sentiment dressed up as an opposition to bureaucracy and ‘meddling’.

The construction of the nation as a unified cultural community was also, in part, based on the construction and popular vilification of ‘enemies within’, especially ‘left wing’ Labour Councils, and proponents of trade union activism and municipal anti-racism (Gordon 1990; Bonnett 2000). Central to the political and ideological project of ‘cultural racism’ here was the articulation of ideas which linked ‘race’ to a social structural phenomena such as inequality and crime and the concomitant implicit presentation of minority ethnic groups as ‘constituting an alien wedge whose very presence erodes the unity of national sentiment’ (Macey, 1996: 129). One key area in which the articulation of ‘cultural racism’ can be seen to have a significant degree of continued resonance is in the re-articulation of the British working class into a racialised ‘deserving’ and ‘undeserving’ poor based, in part, on notions of fixed identities and cultural exclusivity as measured by language, religion, and the idea of tradition and ethnic origin. These ideological modes of thought, coded and popularised by sections of the popular media, become adopted at the local level within the language of ‘community’, whereby local white residents ‘blame’ a perceived loss of community on the arrival of minority ethnic groups, which are invariably portrayed as having family problems, criminal histories or as simply ‘not wanting to mix’ (Back, 1996).

This is not to suggest, of course, that white working class communities are passive in their acceptance of these forms of ‘cultural racism’ and these essentialist modes of differentiation based on popular depictions of ‘race’ and ethnicity. Indeed, the lived experience within many multi-ethnic working class communities offers an ideological and practical resistance to such ideas. However, it is the broad themes of insider/outsider binaries, the reification of cultural difference and the castigation of the ‘other’ embodied in the thought and practice of ‘cultural racism’ that has served, implicitly and explicitly, to encourage the adoption of strategies of racism as a way of ‘making sense’ of the world in socially and economically deprived communities characterised by exclusion, poverty and frustration (Vasaager, 2001; Ward, 2001). The highly localised (and somewhat Islamophobic-specific) successes of the far-right British National Party in South East London in 1993 and in Oldham and Burnley in
the North West in 2001 provide an extreme, but nonetheless important, example of the way in which forms of 'cultural racism' can manifest themselves at the local level of community

Although the development of new forms of 'cultural racism' in late modern Britain can be seen to be underpinned by essentialist modes of thought, it is important to recognise that its manifestations are rarely monolithic in their application. Indeed, a number of sociologists (Anthias, 1990; 1992; 2002; Hall, 1992; Gilroy, 1999; Solomos & Back, 1996; Back, 1996) have, in recent years, sought to move away from an understanding of racism as a unitary phenomenon towards a broader conceptualisation that recognises the complexity and diversity of racisms and their often contradictory character. From this racialisation perspective, late-modern Britain can be read as a society in which different minority ethnic groups might experience different forms of racism in different ways, since racism is both partial and complex and its expressions are flexible and diffuse.

The conceptual space provided by this 'racialisation' approach to understanding racisms and how they might work in practice allows for a greater understanding of the plurality and heterogeneity of racisms and the ways in which older biological forms of racism can co-exist and inter-penetrate with new cultural racisms and are experienced in different ways by different minority ethnic groups across a range of social, economic, cultural and spatial indices, prompting Back (1999:9) – among others - to suggest: 'there is no one monolithic racism but numerous historical situated racisms'.

Some authors operating within this 'racialisation' approach to understanding racisms and their effects have also alluded to the conceptual normalisation of 'whiteness' in both dominant cultural discourse and also in some strategic anti-racist responses to racism and discrimination (Bonnett, 1997). That is, the ways in which whiteness assumes a centrality and permanence as a static, ahistorical, aspatial objective 'thing', which exists outside the social and political forces which shape the definitions of the racialised minority ethnic 'other'. Further, the invisible centredness of whiteness contributes to the measurement of other cultural formations against its own white 'taken for grantedness', as Dyer (1997:46) notes:
A fuller understanding of the way in which dominant cultural formations of late-modern Britain might work to disguise the normative codes of whiteness might also contribute towards more knowledge of how institutional forms of racial exclusion and discrimination might work to exclude minority ethnic communities from a fuller participation in civil society, for as Miles (1989:77) has argued, 'the racialisation of human beings entails the racialisation of processes in which they participate and the structures and institutions that result'.

Alongside this broad racialisation approach to understanding the linkage between issues of 'race' and nation and how the resultant manifestations of cultural racism can work in subtle and complex ways is also a re-conceptualisation of the idea of how identities are socially constructed and racialised within this particular social milieu (Hall, 1991, 1992; Werbner, 1997; Phoenix, 1998). From this broadly anti-essentialist standpoint, identities are not seen as fixed, discrete and timeless entities, but, rather, identities are understood to be characterised by change, invention and fluidity and subject to intersection at relationships across indices of class, gender and regional and national identity constructions. In this sense, it is the kinds of accounts and narratives that individuals and groups produce which defines themselves and others as specific types of people with particular characteristics and it is at this level of discourse that often diverse and heterogeneous individuals can be forged into a collectivity. This is not to suggest that for some groups a sense of shared historical continuity does not exist in any real sense, but, rather, that the social construction of such groupings can be, 'productive of diverse subjectivities and potentially contradictory' (Phoenix 1998:861). Stuart Hall, writing reflexively, of course, comments:

'We always reconstructed the great collectivities of class, race and nation, more essentially, more homogeneously, more unified, less contradictorily than they ever were, once you got to know anything about them' (Hall 1991:46)
Further, the social construction of collective identity groupings does not take place in some kind of political vacuum, devoid of wider limits and pressures. Rather, identity construction is subject to a range of competing forces of power and domination and resistance and subversion. Here the production of meanings which allude to racialised groupings of 'blackness' and 'whiteness' are constantly shaped and reshaped through a process of negotiation and contestation and should be seen, 'not as categories of essence but (as) defined by historical and political struggle over their meaning' (Bulmer & Solomos, 1999:823). From this broad perspective, the social construction of identities can be seen as being subject to competing global, national and local forces which create spaces in which identities can be transformed and recomposed (Back, 1996).

Given that 'race-relations' in late modern Britain can be characterised as generating - and as being subject to - a multiplicity of racisms and hybrid and syncretic identities (Modood, 1997), then how might these racisms and racialised identities interact and impinge upon the everyday lived experience of the British urban multi-culture? An important contribution here is the work of Back (1996) undertaken with youth groups in multi-ethnic locations of South East London. Back identifies the existence of a kind of 'neighbourhood nationalism' in these urban settings that incorporates a sense of racial inclusiveness around notions of local territory and the shared experience of local black and white male youth groups.

Back suggests these inter-racial solidarities, are to some significant extent, premised on normative and restrictive codes of working class masculinity to which subscription is largely contingent on displays of unreconstructed 'manliness', 'street-toughness' and 'cool' by youth groups. In this distinctly urban, classed and gendered context, the accommodation of black youth into white youth networks is premised upon formulations of stereotypical and racialised constructions of the black male body as a site of dangerous criminality and hyper-sexualised-masculinity. In this sense, racial inclusion into local multi-ethnic youth groups is both contingent and contextual and premised on the acquisition and display of perceived attributes of hyper-masculinity which are often projected onto the black male body and to which local urban white youth may themselves aspire and value. However, the
constructions of distinctly racialised and gendered formulations of insider/outsider status at the local level can also serve to exclude individuals from minority ethnic communities to whom such attributes are not wholly afforded in the same way.

This is not to suggest that different minority ethnic youth groups exist - in any real sense - as if at various points on some hierarchical scale of 'performance masculinity'. Rather, the racialisation process inherent in the constructions of minority ethnic masculine identities amongst white youth, which incorporates elements of essentialist thought and invisible and incomprehensible processes of cultural racism, can serve to include one racialised (black) group whilst simultaneously excluding another racialised (Asian) group, as Cohen, writing in the 1980s, comments:

'Many white working class boys discriminate positively in favour of African-Caribbean subcultures as exhibiting a macho proletarian style...whilst continuing to assert that 'Paki's stink'" (Cohen 1988:83).

For Back, there exists a continuous tension amongst white youths in multi-ethnic urban settings between the actual lived experience and social knowledge of black friends and the diversity of ideologies and racialised discourse that is imposed upon and engaged with at the wider national(istic) level, especially those popular and nationalistic discourses which define Britishness and, more specifically, Englishness, in terms of racial and ethnic exclusivity. It is within this context of the complex interplay and tension between the personal (subjective) and the national (objective) in the production of a single identity construction that we might better understand how it is possible for the individual to hold an idealised racist construction that has no meaning outside of its own logic and simultaneously maintain friendships with black people in an immediate social location. As Back suggests:

'It is important, on the one hand, to view cultural meanings as in a constant state of negotiation and evolution and, on the other, to be sensitive to the political, historical and ideological context in which this process takes place' (Back1996:11)

It is within this broad conceptual framework that academic thinking has moved away from understanding racism as a unitary phenomenon towards a broader
understanding of the way in which racisms can work in a plural, inconsistent and often contradictory manner. This approach to racisms informs much of the theoretical emphasis of this thesis. In particular, this thesis examines the ways in which biological and cultural racisms might both impinge upon and be generated by sport but, more specifically, how football and football culture, in a multiplicity of ways mark out distinct parameters for the contingent inclusion and exclusion of minority ethnic communities. Further, this work recognises that the push and pull of often contradictory racialised identity constructions within sporting and football culture might serve to include and exclude distinct minority ethnic groups in different ways across a range of locally grounded contexts and sites. In this sense, it is important to emphasise the fact that:

'racist identities are decentred, fragmented by contradictory discourses and the pull of other identities....(they are) not necessarily consistent in their operation across different contexts and sites' (Rattansi 1995:75).

5. Sport, ethnicity, identity and racism

Despite the centrality of sport to popular culture and social and political life the study of sport and sporting practice has historically been an under-researched and marginalized area of academic focus (Jarvie & Maguire, 1994). The traditional neglect of sport as an area of critical academic focus may be explained by the tendency in much academic and popular thought to view the world of sport as a distinctly apolitical domain characterised by games, contests, physicality and 'naturalness' (Rowe, 1995). From this perspective sport is placed into a privileged space above and beyond political life and is marked out as a separate sphere of social relations from the 'real' everyday workings of modern societies. However, to posit a singular notion of sport as a leisure pursuit personified only by an ethos of pleasure and entertainment is to present sport and sporting practice as taking place in some kind of social and political vacuum. Such an approach ignores the complex and interrelated ways in which sport is central to the complex social formations that make up modern industrialised societies. Indeed, the 'veneer of political neutrality' (Blain et al 1993: 15) under which the banner of sport is so often paraded affords sport a
certain ideological potency that permeates and interacts with other aspects of social and political life. For example, the complex interplay between the ethos of competitive capitalism and the idea of sport as a meritocracy unfettered by social, economic and cultural constraints offers a shared philosophy of ‘progress’ as a natural and unhindered human condition. More explicitly, the political appropriation of sporting success most notably at the international level of major sporting encounters has, under certain social and historical conditions, served to legitimise political regimes and provided politicians with the opportunity symbolically to elaborate political and economic benefits from the collective euphoria and ‘feel-good factor’ that often accompanies success in national sporting endeavours (Nauright, 1997).

Sport is very much part of the cultural fabric of society and plays a central role in its constitution, since it can be seen to be both reflective of, and to reflect upon, the society in which its practice takes place (Jarvie, 1991). Sport is also a site that contributes to the production of symbolic and cultural meanings that help social groups make sense of the world around them and make a space for themselves in it. In this sense, ‘what is important about sport is not so much its content, but the category supplied by its creation’ (McClancy, 1995: 4). Within this conceptual framework, sport can be seen as a social construction which is intrinsically connected to societal structures and dynamics and which serves to fulfil a range of functions for its participants and spectators.

However, the meanings generated by sporting encounters are subject to wider patterns of power and domination in society and these meanings are also generated and appropriated in different ways across specific social formations and at specific historical junctures. Further, the meanings generated by sport are always subject to negotiation and contestation since the politics of sport, ‘become manifest in the ways in which they are deployed, often unconsciously, to support or undermine structures of power that are deeply embedded in our popular consciousness’ (Rowe 1995:142).

In a distinctly British context, sport and sporting encounters have provided a dramatised arena in which issues of ‘race’ and nation have been articulated and have become embedded in the popular national consciousness (Whannel, 1992). The
production of national sporting identities speaks back to the nation about what it is to
British, and, more specifically, what it is to be English. These themes are often
articulated against the backdrop of national sporting participation in international
sporting competition, for example, at the Olympic games and at the football World
Cup finals. Here, the construction of ‘sport as a metaphor for nation’ (Wagg, 1991: 213)
is developed through popular identification with national sporting representatives by establishing an ideological link between the individual and nation through the notion of ‘citizen-supporter’ (Rowe, 1995).

In this context, sport becomes a potentially compelling means by which the nation
can be seen as positive and dynamic and, ‘constitutes a cultural apparatus that can be
specifically and regularly mobilised in the symbolic reconstruction of the nation’
(Rowe, 1995:123). This nation-building project is often supported and perpetuated by
the national media (see Blain et al, 1993; Goldlust, 1987), which utilises symbolic
national iconography and nationalistic narratives around sporting events to construct
a sense of national sporting consciousness through its role as the primary definer of
modern culture (Thompson, 1990).

Within this neat formulation of the ‘nation’ through sport, many localised and
regional enmities and class and gender divisions become submerged in order to
present the national ‘imagined community’ as a single, sentient, unified force
(Whannel, 1992; Rowe, 1995). However, this ideological ‘one-ness’ is often
garnered through a process of nostalgia, mythology and invented and selective
traditions that draw on essentialist notions of identity construction. These distinctive
and racialised boundary constructions to do with national belonging are often
homogeneous in their whiteness and allude to notions of cultural exclusivity. Beyond
patterns of mediated discourse, the socially constructed parameters of national
belonging through sporting identification have been explicitly articulated, for
example, by former Conservative party chairman Norman Tebbit in his famous
‘cricket test’ of national allegiance. Also, it is clear that some England football
supporters offer support to the idea of English cultural exclusivity and national
boundary construction through their renditions of a selection of racist and
xenophobic songs and chants performed ritually at England games at home and
abroad (see, Perryman, 1999).
The highly competitive nature of national sporting encounters affords a range of social groups the opportunity to construct a sense of cultural nationalism in opposition to a significant 'other' and sections of the English tabloid media have rarely missed an opportunity to utilise an impressive repertoire of national and racialised mythologies descriptive of strangeness, difference and peculiarities to this end (see Blain et al, 1993, Garland and Rowe, 1996). This totemic reductionism of 'foreign' cultures to single, usually inferior, perceived personality traits, serves not only to demean oppositional sporting achievements but also to further reinforce the construction of distinct insider/outsider binaries based on notions of cultural exclusivity and the perceived moral and political superiority of Britishness and/or Englishness within this political/cultural framework.

The production of British and, more specifically, English identity formations in sport which rely on notions of cultural exclusivity and distinct racialised boundary constructions are not all-encompassing and have not gone uncontested. As Blain et al have argued:

'contradictions, tensions and struggles exist within all national cultures and past and present resentments, hostilities and conflicts can become symbolically re-articulated within the cultural arena of sport' (Blain et al 1993:14).

The work of C.L.R James is particularly instructive here (James, 1963) in its reading of competitive cricket matches between England and the West Indies as part of a wider struggle for independence and post-colonial autonomy. In this sense, cricket competition becomes 'an international platform to contest the dominance of its former colonial rulers' (Blain et al, 1993:14). The superiority of West Indian cricket from the 1960s –1980s has become a powerful expression of Caribbean 'progress' and nationhood and also illustrates how the most imperial of English sports has been transformed into a positive expression of pride and identity for Caribbean people in the West Indies and those of African/Caribbean heritage in Britain. Indeed the development of black community sports clubs in Britain such as the Caribbean Cricket club in Leeds, (see Carrington, 1999) and Highfield Rangers football club in Leicester (see Williams, 1994), offer a discursively constructed black (male) social
space, which, in addition to performing a key function for increasing participation in
sport for black communities, also serve as a challenge to national and local white
sporting identities.

These important black social and cultural institutions have been developed, in part, as
a response to very real racisms and discriminations in sports and in the wider society.
But – and in contrast to accounts which stress the alleged complicity of blacks with
racism through their success in sport (Hoberman, 1997) – they can also be read as a
site in which contestation and resistance to white sporting hegemony and identity
production takes place. Whilst these challenges represent a visible way in which
minority ethnic communities have negotiated an oppositional position to ‘closed’
national sporting hegemony it is also important to examine the ways in which British
and English cultural nationalisms have been challenged and disrupted in more
complex and subtle ways. As Carrington and McDonald suggest:

'Sport is a particularly useful site for examining the changing context
and content of contemporary British racisms, as it articulates the
complex interplay of race, nation, culture and identity' (Carrington and
McDonald 2001:2).

In particular, it is important to examine the ways in which old biological and new
cultural racisms are generated by and impinge upon sporting practice and sporting
encounters in a distinctly British context. More specifically, it is also important to
locate the meanings engendered by the production and interpenetration of these
racisms within a specific social and historical context, namely, the era of post-war to
late modern Britain and the in-migration and settlement patterns that have
characterised this period. That is, the visibility of minority ethnic communities in
social and sporting life in Britain from the 1950s to the present day represents an era
in which challenges to white sporting hegemonies and culturally exclusive notions of
Britishness and Englishness have arguably become more accentuated and acute than
at any other moment in British sporting history (Whannel, 1992). Yet despite the
challenges to and subversions of the established British race/nation sporting nexus
brought to bear by the participation and success of minority ethnic sportspeople,
sport has continued to be a site in which the reconfiguration of biological and cultural
racisms become manifest in both explicit and more coded forms. These
manifestations of racisms also work in complex and contradictory ways, defining the parameters of inclusion and exclusion in different ways amongst different minority ethnic groups along distinctly racialised lines. It is to a fuller investigation of how these enduring biological and new cultural racisms are mobilised in the British sporting arena to which we now turn.

6. Sporting racisms in Britain

The pre World War Two history of sport in Britain is one that has been peppered with the achievements of black sportspeople (see Polley, 1998) including the prize fighting and boxing prowess of Bill Richmond and Andrew Jeptha respectively, the Olympic medal winning sprinter Jack London and the footballing achievements of Arthur Wharton, Walter Tull and Jack Leslie (see Vasili, 1998; 2000). The steady increase of in-migration from the former British Commonwealth in the immediate post World War Two period was mirrored by a small, but significant, rise in the levels of black sporting participation in Britain. In football, players such as Lindbergh ‘Lindy’ Delaphena and Albert Johanneson played competitively at the highest levels of the league game, whilst in boxing Randolph Turpin, achieved international acclaim in 1951 by beating Sugar Ray Robinson for the World Middleweight Title.

In Britain’s more recent sporting history, the high visibility and achievements of black and, to a lesser extent, Asian sportspeople has almost taken on a sense of everydayness to the point where there are simply too many successful black sporting icons to mention in the space provided here. Put briefly, Linford Christie and Denise Lewis in athletics, Frank Bruno, Lennox Lewis and ‘Prince’ Naseem Hamed in boxing, Ian Wright and Sol Campbell in football, Tariq Butt in Rugby League and Jeremy Guscott in Rugby Union and England cricket captain Nassar Hussein are testimony some of the key black and Asian British sports ‘stars’ who have framed a space for themselves in the national sporting imagination.
In one sense, the recent achievements and successes of Black British and British Asian sporting elite offer an explicit challenge to the culturally exclusive constructions of British and English identities that have been articulated as a marker for national belonging. The appropriation of national symbols and iconography - such as the Union Flag - in celebrations of minority ethnic British sporting success further disrupts static and essentialist notions of nationhood and offers a clear challenge to the racial ideologies which posit the idea that ‘there ain’t no black in the Union Jack’ (Gilroy, 1987). However, Carrington (1998) has argued that membership to the ‘True Brit sporting club’ for black British male sports athletes is conditional on their adherence to specific assimilationist modes of black masculinity which endorse a conservative conceptualisation of the nation and which are complicit with the denial of racisms and discriminations in sport.

Carrington cites the British public’s sporting acceptance of the all smiling, docile and ‘child-like’, former World Heavyweight Champion, Frank Bruno, as an example of the way in which the passage into the national sporting consciousness is, to some significant degree, dependent on the presentation of the black self as subservient, deferential and without reference to an alternative cultural history or identity. In contrast, to this racist sporting construction Carrington also cites the much more uneasy relationship between British Olympic sprint champion Linford Christie and the British media, which he attributes to Christie’s articulate challenge to the coded racism and overtly sexualised media presentation of Christie, a challenge which served to disrupt the normative codes of how ‘blacks’ are supposed to act when in the national sporting spotlight. Christie’s subsequent passage into the national sporting imagination has been more problematic since he has been routinely labelled as paranoid, over-sensitive, ungrateful and bitter by certain sections of the English media.

These successes and challenges to the culturally exclusive sporting hegemony of the (white) British might also serve to disguise a complex set of social relations and the heterogeneous nature of racisms and exclusionary practices in sport, by offering both implicit and explicit support to common-sense notions of sport that centre around ideas of meritocracy, mobility, integration and harmonious race-relations. The idea that sport is a meritocracy, free from social, economic and cultural limits and
pressures, is born out of the idea that sport represents a separate sphere of social relations typified by its physicality and 'naturalness'. Within this conceptual framework sport is viewed as a site that offers minority ethnic - more commonly black - communities, opportunities for personal advancement in a way in which might be denied in other areas of social life. This 'way out of the ghetto' perspective is often supported and offered some validation in the narratives of popular media constructions of black sportspeople and by black sportspeople themselves, with reference to the racisms and discriminations they may have faced in the 'real' world of the wider society (see Cashmore, 1982). Further, this orthodoxy posits the notion that sport is a natural integrator (Allison, 1997) and that minority ethnic participation and success in sports encourage - and are reflective of - the, supposedly, inevitable push towards greater levels of 'racial' integration.

This unproblematic appraisal of sports as a site for harmonious 'race relations', as personified by high levels of 'racial mixing' and the benefits of 'multi-ethnic teamwork', is a persuasive argument and one that has on occasion, also been utilised by those seeking to combat racism and racist ideologies in sports at specific spatial and historical junctures. This functionally optimistic, integrationist approach to understanding issues of 'race' and sport is also routinely utilised in common-sense discourse by those institutions that are charged with the responsibility of organising sport and sporting practice. It is useful here, of course, to suggest that sport is largely free of racism, or, at least, that if racism in sports does exist then it is the property of individuals and can be best overcome by changes in attitude and behaviour.

These voluntarist and integrationist approaches to understanding issues of 'race', ethnicity and sport, which point to the successful contributions of elite minority ethnic sportspeople and their, sometimes, affectionate place within the popular national sporting imagination, make a number of misplaced assumptions about the extent to which levels of sporting participation are comparable across different minority ethnic and white groups and in all sports. For Carrington and McDonald (2001) the traditional focus on the over-representation of elite black sportspeople in sports such as athletics, boxing and football largely underplays the inherent inequalities evident in access to political, social and cultural resources at grassroots levels of participation for urban black communities. That elite black sportspeople
have attained sporting equity as 'performers', largely in spite of differential levels of access and resources, is glossed over within voluntarist conceptions of sport which continue to maintain the idea of sport as a meritocracy and as a site of potential social mobility for minority ethnic sportspeople.

However, it is important to recognise that, despite the probable over-representation of black (African and African/Caribbean heritage) sportspeople in some specific sports as 'performers' alongside the prominent position of a handful of British Asian sports 'stars' in a much more limited range of sports, British Asian groups as a whole are arguably under-represented in most professional sports including athletics, football, boxing, cricket and codes of Rugby. This continues to be the case despite high levels of interest and participation in many sports amongst British Asian communities at the grass-roots level (Fleming, 1995; 2001). Voluntarist perceptions of sport also ignore the effects of deeply embedded class relations intrinsic in sports that, in no small measure, account for the virtual invisibility of minority ethnic sportspeople from poorer communities in traditionally suburban middle class sports, such as golf and tennis, in which participation is substantially defined in terms of class, space and cost.

Also, levels of sporting participation amongst minority ethnic communities at grassroots level do not necessarily reflect their representation at elite level. The work of Verma and Derby (1994) and Fleming (1995) and more recent policy orientated studies (e.g., Sport England, 2001) all allude to the differential levels of minority ethnic participation in grassroots sporting activity across axis of intra-ethnicity and gender. These studies illustrate, too, how issues of differential levels of access and resources amongst minority ethnic communities in some ways dictate the extent to which sports participation is premised upon issues of 'race', ethnicity, class and also gender (see, Jarvie 1994).
7. ‘Race’ Sport and the Body

Whilst the minority ethnic experience of sports in Britain has, to some extent, been partly conditioned by social, cultural and economic issues to do with access to participation in sports it is important to avoid locating an understanding of issues of racialised inclusion and exclusion solely in these terms. In particular, it is important to conceptualise issues of racialised inclusion and exclusion in sports within a wider framework which considers the ways in which biological and cultural racisms intersect and endure and where, ‘the history of racial thinking is being piled up in the present’ (Back et al, 2001:5) in this distinctly sporting context. That is, it is important to understand sport as a site where old biological and imperial racisms combine with new cultural racisms to posit notions of the ‘naturalness of race’ and where ideas about physiological and racial difference are articulated most consistently at the site of the black male body.

Indeed, representations of the black male body in white discourse have considerable historical antecedents, and ideas about the natural physicality of black males formed the ‘scientific’ basis on which the ideological and practical execution of systems of slavery and colonialism were situated. In sport, more than a century of mediated representations and popular narratives around black boxers, from the first black world heavyweight champion Jack Johnson to former world heavyweight champions Charles ‘Sonny’ Liston and ‘Iron’ Mike Tyson have articulated themes of the animalistic, savage, dangerous and criminal black ‘other’ which place black masculinities outside of the realms of humanity (Mead, 1993; Marquesee, 1995; Sloop, 1997; Tosches, 2000). Utilising explicit and more coded narrative and imagery reflective of interpretations of social Darwinist ideologies that allude to the ‘negro-ape’ metaphor (Lott, 1999) the black male sporting body has become a site onto which white society’s racialised angst and fears have become projected.

For Gilroy (2000) the white gaze and the fetishisation of the black male body in sports has served to ‘reify race through icons of black physicality’ (Gilroy 2000:228). For Hoberman (1997: xxii), far from being an integrator, ‘the world of sport has become an image factory that disseminates and even intensifies our racial pre-
occupations’. These suppositions allude to the fact that despite the scientific discrediting of ‘race’ as a discrete, biological category, there continues to be an enduring fascination with racial physiology and its apparent consequence for sporting performance within some areas of sports studies and the popular imagination.

Put simply, the work of Entine (2000) and numerous other ‘sports scientists’ continue to posit the notion that there exists distinct physical and physiological differences between ethnic populations which affords particular black groups of West African origin a biological advantage in particular athletic events, such as sprinting. This strand of physiological thinking, which has its antecedent in the theories of racial science and Eugenics movement of the early twentieth century, has produced a series of highly selective research ‘findings’ which fit neatly with those commonsense notions of difference and otherness articulated within new forms of cultural racism. These racialised formulations, which focus almost exclusively on the black male body, continue to be popularised through mediated representations and increasingly commercialised imagery of black sportsmen and have also been made explicit in the claims of some retired white athletes such as Sir Roger Bannister and here, the British sprinter Alan Wells, who suggests:

‘You do not need to be on a running track to realise what tremendous movers black people are. The local disco will do. They are fantastic athletes – and you can find that out by seeing them dance. In sport its all about genetics. All the top power sports are dominated by black people, regardless of their origin. It comes from birth as it is to do with the anatomy. It is natural ability which makes you succeed. Blacks tend to be stronger, more athletic and are made, to a certain extent, for athletics and sport in general’. (Quoted in Daily Express 7/11/98)

One of the consequences of the way in which ideas that draw on the supposed ‘natural’ physicality of black sportsmen permeate into British sporting practice has been evaluated in the work of Maguire (1991) and Malcolm (1999). These authors have drawn on ideas first developed in US studies of sport on ‘centrality’ and ‘stacking’ in British team sports, with particular reference to rugby football and association football. Black sportsmen in team sports tend to be disproportionately allocated to more peripheral positional roles that demand perceived ‘natural’ attributes of speed and athleticism, while white athletes tend to dominate in positions
which are more central to sports play that, arguably, require a greater degree of cerebral and organisational qualities.

It is suggested that these distributional practices are, to some significant degree, premised on pseudo-biological assumptions about the 'naturalness of race' and the perception that the 'race' of sportspersons is an indication as to their positional appropriateness in team sports. Whilst these authors largely concentrate on participation in professional elite team sports, more recent research on 'race' and racism in amateur football in England (Long et al 2001; Bradbury, 2002) might suggest that assumptions about the perceived natural attributes of players across axes of 'race' and ethnicity also have a common currency amongst players and administrators at local grassroots levels of sporting - more specifically football - participation.

The focus on the 'body' in sport as a site for ideas about the 'naturalness of race' also has consequences for the way in which the parameters of inclusion and exclusion are constructed differently with reference to different minority ethnic groups in terms of sports participation in Britain. That is, the notion of athletic 'performance physicality' often afforded to the black male sporting body has, perhaps, contributed in part to the over-representation of black sportspersons in particular sports to which such perceived physical characteristics are deemed appropriate. By way of contrast, young men of South Asian heritage have suffered from the projection of a series of bio-cultural stereotypes of 'otherness' to do with frailty, weakness and physical and cultural inappropriateness for sports which might, in part, go some way to explaining the continued under-representation of Asians in elite physical contact sports in Britain (Bains, 1995; Fleming, 1995; 2001; Maguire et al, 2001; Bradbury, 2001).

That such biological and culturally based stereotypes have become embedded in popular ways of understanding issues of 'race' and sport might also have some consequence for the trajectories into sports for minority ethnic youth and also create a wider problematic for pathways to social mobility for minority ethnic communities outside of sports. Qualitative studies of black British sportspersons in the 1980s (e.g., Cashmore, 1982) offer anecdotal evidence to illustrate the processes by which many young black men found themselves propelled towards sport by teachers and
educators, who themselves subscribed to notions of black performance physicality. According to Vince Hilaire, a black former professional footballer, interviewed by Cashmore (1982:98): 'I was pushed into certain sports at school, like athletics. The teachers naturally thought because you are black you must have some sort of athletic ability in you'.

However, whilst arguing against the perceived existence of innately superior performance physicality of black sportsmen in favour of materialist explanations for black sporting success and over-representation in some sports, Cashmore posits the suggestion that black sportspeople are themselves complicit in this process of racialisation. Hoberman (1997) also argues that black communities in America display what he calls a social pathological 'addiction' to athleticism to the detriment of the drive for intellectual fulfilment and educational qualifications and performance. In particular, Hoberman argues that the centrality of sport to black American culture has contributed to the reproduction of racialised conditions of subordination in other areas of social and economic life. From this perspective, the lack of social mobility outside of sports is seen as the result of an abnormal and insular sports fixation within black family life and the structures of black communities. Allison (1997) goes further in suggesting that the passive acceptance by black communities of classifications of 'innate' sporting physicality generates a sense of 'physical' self as opposed to the generation of definitions of self which are premised on the capacity for intelligence and intellect.

To some extent, all human agents can actively adopt or reject categories of identity since identity formation is a product of subjective positionings and the resulting fusions (Bhabha, 1990; Phoenix, 1998). To adopt a particular sporting identity which premises physical strength and performance over intellectual ability might be particularly alluring as a distinct expression of physical masculinity, particularly for young males. However, to position the expression of this form of sporting masculinity over the acquisition of educational success and employment status as some kind of distinct lifestyle choice picked from an egalitarian canvas is to ignore the social and economic limits and pressures which disproportionately effect black communities (Carrington and McDonald, 2001). To argue that black communities are complicit in their own social and economic subjugation due to the passive acceptance
of labels of physicality is to ignore the wider structural constraints and racisms within society that might limit the opportunities for educational attainment and self improvement. As Carrington and McDonald point out:

'To argue that it is black peoples own failure to see themselves as human agents that is the main cause of racial inequality, is a failure to understand the evidence from other disciplines that racism is actually about socially (and historically) inscribed power relationships, embedded within structural constraints that often lie beyond the scope of the individual to change' (Carrington and McDonald 2001: 12).

It is at this conceptual juncture, where biological and cultural racisms can be seen as reflective of - and underpinned by - a series of wider historically inscribed power relations, that we might move towards understanding some of the key relational aspects of sporting inequalities with particular reference to issues of structural and institutional racism and discrimination. That is, the continued role of biological racism in establishing and maintaining the idea of 'racial' physiological sporting difference and the re-articulation of these ideas within a broader framework of cultural conceptions of 'otherness' and 'difference', might have important consequences for the potential upwardly mobile career trajectories of minority ethnic sports performers. Expressing concerns about the disproportionately low numbers of black former sports performers in senior positions in sports management and administration; Back et al, for example, has suggested that: 'the assimilation of black people within the national imagination as sporting heroes need not in any way be congruent with access to the centres of decision making and institutional power' (Back et al 2001:4).

These comments are reflective of recent debates in sport - and football in particular - on the apparent lack of representation of minority ethnic sportspeople in sports governing bodies, even in those sports in which black sportspeople have historically and contemporaneously been over-represented as performers. The suspicion here is that black sportspeople might be viewed by key administrators within the institutional hierarchies of sports governing bodies largely in terms of their physical performance abilities and as lacking in the analytical, motivational and organisation capacities required to govern sports and sports practice. Similarly, the tendency within sporting hierarchies to view Asians as culturally different and 'not interested'
in sports might serve to deny the very real history of Asian sporting endeavour and inform the continuance of distinctly racialised exclusionary practices (Bains, 1995).

What is a little more clear is that the lack of black and Asian representation within the core structures of sports governing bodies and sporting practice serve to deny minority ethnic sportspeople a key stake in the way in which the sports in which they participate are actually governed. In this sense, issues of representation are reflective of a site where racial ideologies of the ‘body’ and ‘culture’ interact with more institutional forms of racism and discrimination, which, together, serve to maintain white hegemonic practice in the power base of sports governance.

8. English football and racism

The centrality of football to popular culture in Britain is rooted in the specific social and cultural formations from which the game first developed in its professional form towards the end of the nineteenth century (Walvin, 1975; Holt, 1989). Since this period the game has extended its mass appeal beyond the industrial heartlands of the North of England and the Midlands to attain wider national and global appeal. In the late-modern – Post Taylor report – era of the game in England, the appeal of football has spread beyond its traditional, heavily masculine, working class supporter base towards the recruitment of more ‘middle class’ fans, and also followers who are female and who are drawn from professional backgrounds (Williams, 2000).

Changing demographic patterns of spectatorship and more general changes in the promotion and marketing of football in the modern era and its appeal to ‘post fans’ and sections of the metropolitan ‘soccer literati’ (Giulianotti, 1999) is also reflective of the significant social and cultural transformation of football in England in the 1990s. Although such changes have been heavily contested (see, Bale 1991) changes in stadium facilities have contributed to a very different environment and atmosphere at many football clubs. The ‘modernisation’ of football in the 1990s has largely been underpinned by neo-liberal market ideologies and a new entrepreneurial elite (King, 1998) and the massive influx of monies from Satellite TV into football that prompted
the formation of the FA Premier League and ensured its competitive viability in attracting some of the world's best known players to English clubs. This shift has enabled some of these clubs to successfully challenge for top European honours. Increasingly, football in England is truly a global affair (see, Williams, 1999).

However, the increasingly corporate and modernising impulses that characterise top football in the modern era in England have yet to render football as an inclusive environment for minority ethnic fans as residual patterns of racism and racialised exclusion continue to be firmly rooted within English football culture at a number of different levels. We now move towards an examination of the way in issues of racism and patterns of racialised exclusion have impinged upon and have been generated by football and football culture in both the more 'traditional' and 'modernised' eras of the game in complex and linear ways. In doing so we draw on ideas outlined previously but, in particular, we seek to examine the ways in which complex and often inconsistent expressions of racism converge with old biological racisms in football to exclude or disadvantage minority ethnic groups. In doing so we will evaluate some of the early academic explanations and social policy responses to more overt and crude forms of racism which dominated debates about football and racism in the 1980s, before broadening out this assessment in order to incorporate a fuller understanding of the increasingly complex patterns of racisms in football and football culture in the late-modern era.

9. English football and racism in the late-modern era

Football racism in England first became the subject of public concern in the late 1970s and 1980s as a response to overt forms of racist abuse and racist chanting from supporters aimed at the growing number of black players within the game (Williams 1984, 1992). Whilst individual black players had been present in the game in England from the late nineteenth century onwards (Vasili 1998, 2000) it was not until the emergence of a new generation of younger black, mainly African/Caribbean, players in the English game in the late 1970s and 1980s that orchestrated forms of racist crowd abuse became commonplace. During this period, black players became routinely subjected to openly hostile forms of racist abuse that largely made
reference to their skin colour. Anecdotal evidence from this period and also the work of academic researchers (Cashmore, 1982; Williams, 1984; 1992; Holland, 1992) have recorded the kinds of terms commonly and openly used by fans to describe and 'unsettle' black players who were referred to as 'coons', 'wogs', 'niggers' and 'black bastards'.

These expressions of racism were not confined to the professional football environment during this period: they were also commonplace in local parks football (Williams, 1994). They seemed largely accepted within the culture of football: racist abuse as a supporter strategy was simply 'part and parcel' of the game. The use of 'monkey noises' and 'gorilla grunts' by football crowds and the throwing of bananas and peanuts at some players clearly had a distinct biological referent that marked out black players as not only different but also infinitely inferior, akin to Darwinian notions of the evolution of man and the 'negro/ape' metaphor (Lott, 1999). The use of missiles and the racist songs and chants utilised by some supporters also alludes to the pre-meditated nature of much of the racism at football which occurred during this period. As Dave Hill, in his eponymous account of racism and Liverpool football culture (Hill, 1989) recalls in reference to John Barnes's first appearances for Liverpool Football Club:

'We could see quite clearly as the teams warmed up before the kick off that banana after banana was being hurled from the away supporters enclosure. The bananas were designed to announce, for those unversed in codified terrace abuse, that there was a monkey on the pitch' (Hill 1989:76)

Early academic explanations of the relationship between racism and football were produced from the work of sociologists seeking to understand and explain the patterns of hooliganism and disorder that took place in and around English football grounds with increasing frequency during the 1970s and 1980s. The important work of the 'Leicester School' (Williams et al, 1984; Dunning et al 1988; Murphy et al 1990) on football hooliganism during this period offered a descriptive account of racism at football which suggested that spectator racism could be viewed as an extension of the kinds of anti-social behaviour perpetuated by the lower working
class males who, the Leicester researchers claimed, made up prominent hooligan formations.

From this rather limited Eliasian perspective (see Giulianotti, 1999), racism at football is presented as a kind of ‘by-product’ of the forms of aggressive masculinity that supposedly characterise specific cohorts of young males from poorer working class backgrounds. The work of Ian Taylor (1972; 1981) and others (Robins and Cohen 1978) also seemed to locate racism at football primarily within distinctive ‘lumpen-proletariat’ spectator formations. These specific structural perspectives framed explanations of the racist abuse of black players within the context of responses of white working class young men to their perceived disenfranchisement from the game and the consequent vulnerability of such groups to infiltration and exploitation by politically organised fascist organisations. Similar conclusions were drawn in the work of the Centre for Contemporary Studies in their publication ‘Football and the Fascists’ (1981). Indeed the link between the far right and football has been explored by a number of authors (Williams, 1984; 1992; Holland, 1996; Garland and Rowe, 1996; 2001). Williams, in particular, has suggested that the return to styles of street politics by such groups as the National Front and the British Movement in the late 1970s and 1980s was precipitated by the Conservative Party’s incorporation of more traditional right wing ideologies on ‘race’ and immigration during this period.

Increasingly marginalized from mainstream politics, these far right groups targeted venues such as music concerts and football grounds as a means of relaying messages of racist ideologies to often socially and economically disengaged, young whites. Indeed, at a number of high profile professional football venues around the country - most notably Leeds United, Newcastle United, Chelsea and West Ham United - local far right activists regularly distributed racist ‘political’ literature at this time which attempted to draw connections between football, the activities of hooligan ‘crews’ and the allure of racist politics and agendas. The National Front’s youth publication ‘Bulldog’ regularly featured articles entitled ‘On the Football Front’, which exhorted fans to ‘join the fight for race and nation’ and which offered support for the racist activities and mass racist chanting perpetuated by some hooligan groups and by more ‘respectable’ groups of fans (Williams, 1992).
These activities of the far right at football did not go uncontested at the local level, drawing responses from the Anti-Nazi League and Anti Fascist Action and also from local groups of anti-racist fans, such as those from ‘Leeds United Against Racism and Fascism’ (Holland, 1996). More recently, the internal wrangling and splintering of some hard-core far right organisations and their quest for more political respectability in a concerted bid to gain a selective foothold in local political structures—e.g. the British National Party—has meant that the organised campaigning of far right groups at football grounds is no longer such a prominent feature. However, a recent intra-hooligan ‘firm’ meeting of far right activists and Combat 18 members in the ‘racially troubled’ town of Oldham (BBC Panorama, 2002) and disturbances involving racist hooligan firms, the police and local Asian youths in the area, might suggest that such organised groups still exist, if only on the fringes of football and football hooligan formations at the domestic level.

A much more natural ‘home’ for the activities of members of far right organisations has been around support for the English national team (see Perryman, 1999) where strong strands of nationalism, xenophobia and racism have consistently been expressed by national supporter formations over the last few decades. The work of Williams (1984, 1992) revealed a hard-core of far right political activists travelling to England games played in South America and across Europe during the 1980s. More recently, the alleged infiltration by Combat 18 members of English support at the Ireland-England game in Dublin in 1995 was implicated in serious disturbances and resulted in the match being abandoned.

Within these ‘racist’ hooligan formations there is some evidence (Back et al, 2001) of the link between English nationalist far right politics and violent expressions of Ulster Unionism. ‘No surrender to the IRA’ has become part of the staple repertoire of the England football fans formation for the past decade. However, the question as to whether there is an institutional link between the activities of the far right and the expressions of racism and xenophobia by some sections of England supporters is a moot point. It is much more likely that the views articulated by some neo-fascist organisations are ‘endorsed’ by sections of England’s support in ways in which provide a simplistic racialised, cognitive map onto which some fans can trace their own partial experiences.
Indeed, explicitly jingoistic and nationalistic formulations of English identity have achieved a common currency in dominant political discourse in England’s past and more recent history and these themes of ‘closed’ Englishness have also routinely been perpetuated by the British tabloid print media with particular reference to national sporting, more specifically, football encounters (Blain, 1993; Garland and Rowe, 1996). In this sense, the kinds of overtly racist and xenophobic behaviour exhibited by some England supporters is probably less to do with organised forms of political racism and perhaps more to do with vocal and sometimes violent expressions of deeply rooted ideas to do with ‘race’, nation and belonging that allude to common-sense racialised boundary constructions and notions of cultural exclusivity.

Such views are, of course, deeply embedded in the national popular consciousness, rooted as they are in social, historical and cultural formations that relate to insular notions of Englishness (Cohen, 1994). It is also important to point out that this ‘racialised’ support for the English national football team has also been challenged by the formation of ‘activist’ fan groups, such as the Football Supporters Association, which has organised ‘Fan Embassies’ at major international tournaments offering England fans opportunities for affiliation with largely non-violent – and more consciously inclusive - forms of spectatorship at the national level.

Further, a significant body of academic work has been produced in recent years that examines the complex nature of England spectator identities (Williams, 1999; Carrington, 1998; Perryman, 1999; Back et al, 2001) and which has offered theoretical and practical challenges to the forms of ‘closed’ nationalism often exhibited by fans at England games. More recently, more conscious and formal attempts have even been framed to try to shape support for the England team in a way in which is more inclusive of minority ethnic England fans – and seems ideal for the new marketing and promotion of Team England (see, Perryman, 2002)

These new ‘alternative’ fan movements have emerged, in part, as a response to issues of racism and hooliganism that characterised the English game in the 1970s and 1980s and have their roots in the emergence of football fanzine cultures (Haynes
1995) and their often explicitly anti-racist and irreverent style. The rise of 'alternative' fan movements has also signalled the emergence of the 'post-fan' (Giulianotti 1999). For Giulianotti, the 'post-fan' is more reflexive than his working class counterparts and is more likely to offer detached and ironic critical contributions to the cultural politics of football and such fans play a central role in the production and consumption of mainstream and independent football media.

The new claims to the game of some 'post-fans' and their alleged bourgeois sensibilities have given rise to a defensive – sometimes racially distinctive – expression of territorial and cultural exclusivity at football among 'traditional fans' (Nash, 2000; Robson, 2000). However, what is clear is that many fans now do 'connect' with their local clubs in more diffuse ways through patterns of active spectatorship and new mediated forms of consumption including the acquisition of club merchandise as 'badges of affiliation'.

The increasingly global appeal of some of England's major football clubs has, perhaps, further disrupted traditional forms of highly localised patterns of identification and support for clubs, since these global 'super-clubs' are now positively marketed in ways which aim to transcend local, regional and nation-state boundaries (Williams, 1999). Here, the attraction to clubs might work with the relative disembedding in late modernity of potential fans from the established structural sources of identity. These more reflective 'cultural citizens' (Rowe, 1999) are likely to identify more with post modernising impulses and neo-tribal forms of sociability (Maffesoli, 1996) than they are with the historically-rooted local affilations which have traditionally underpinned football attachments in Britain, although patterns of continuity and change suggest change occurs more slowly here than some commentators might suggest.

The intimation here is that the increasing globalisation and commodification of football will, consequently, lead to a reduction in the kinds of expressions of locally rooted, tribalistic racisms that have characterised football support in its earlier periods, and that football will, necessarily, become more attractive to fans from minority ethnic communities who are presently excluded from supporter formations (Masouri, in Back et al, 2001).
However, such assumptions are speculative, and largely underplay the strength and relevance of local affiliations and are largely based on a limited focus on the dramatic changes that have taken place at the elite levels of the English game. At smaller and medium sized clubs in the lower echelons of the Football League, clubs are still likely to have little - or less - appeal beyond their own spatially limited local attachments. Here, more traditional forms of fandom remain relatively untouched, we would argue, by recent globalising trends and by the commercial markets, which dominate the game at elite levels in the late-modern era. Many clubs at this level probably remain physically and psychologically rooted in supporter cultures which generate meanings to do with ideas of tradition, history, place and belonging. For many of these more ‘traditional’ football fans, football clubs and their stadia continue to engender a sense of pleasurable ‘sporting topophilia’: the generation of cultural ideas about self and communality based on a sense of historical and cultural attachment to a particular organisation, area or district (Bale, 2000).

This celebration of birthplace localism has traditionally been homogenous in its whiteness and is rooted in specific social and cultural formations of working class masculinities that often transcend the new geographical locations of active white fans. Indeed, negative externalities and the consequent cheap housing and accommodation in locales adjacent to football stadiums and broader changing demographic trends, including patterns of ‘white flight’, have meant that many ‘stadium communities’ now include significant and often economically disadvantaged minority ethnic communities (Bradbury, 2001).

The match-day experiences of these minority ethnic communities living nearby to professional football club stadiums have differed markedly from their earlier white peers. More typically they have suffered racist abuse, harassment and victimisation at the hands of some sections of white footballing support travelling to and from matches (Holland, 1993; Pinto et al, 1997; Bains and Johal, 1998). The frequency of these incidents has led, in some cases, to the adoption of something of a ‘siege mentality’ amongst minority ethnic residents stadium communities, who are fearful of the threat of racially motivated abuse and violence. It has also given rise, on occasion, to ‘turf’ conflicts between local minority ethnic youths and young white males attracted to specific club localities on match-days.
10. English football in the late-modern era and processes of racialisation

It might be argued that recent changes within English football have affected different football clubs and their associated spectator cultures in very different ways depending upon local cultural and economic trajectories, sites and social locations. In this sense, modern football in England is a site where the combination of competing local and global forces are producing new forms of fan 'connections' across a wider range of social groups probably than ever before, whilst simultaneously maintaining some of the core features of more 'traditional' spectatorship patterns and expressions of fandom in specific social, cultural and regional formations (Giulianotti, 1999). In this sense:

'What distinguishes football as a form of popular culture is that it can provide one of the key vehicles for the ritual articulation of identity, be it through the expression of regional pride, local patriotism or national belonging' (Back et al, 2001)

Consequently, in the late-modern era of the game in England there is a tendency for common-sense approaches to racism in football to suggest that racist abuse of players – and thus racism itself - has all but been eradicated from the game. Certainly there has been a reduction in the kinds of pre-meditated and orchestrated forms of racist abuse outlined previously in this chapter, although such incidents do still occur – if more irregularly – at specific moments and football locations. However, such assumptions are also based on a misplaced conception that places expressions of racism at football in a broader framework of anti-social behaviour and as part of the 'racist/hooligan couplet' (Back et al, 1998; 2001; Garland and Rowe, 1999; 2001).

Here 'football racism' often seems to be contained by its depiction as a single unitary phenomenon and as a form of behaviour which is perpetrated by a readily identifiable racist skinhead 'folk devil', who can be positioned outside – as merely parasitical to – mainstream football culture. The construction of the morally degenerate racist fan and a restricted focus on his perceived behaviour ignores the kinds of banal 'respectable' racism expressed by a range of fans across axis of age, gender and social class (Back et al, 1998).
However, primarily, the tendency in media and in some academic discourse publicly to equate racism with such hooligan related activity has undoubtedly helped garner support for the mobilisation of popular new anti-racist initiatives from amongst a wide variety of official bodies within the game. In the following chapters we will seek to evaluate the efficacy of national and anti-racist campaigns in football that have differentially conceptualised aspects of racism at football in these rather limited and narrow terms. Ethnographic work conducted at football grounds by Back et al (2001) suggests also that expressions of racist abuse by fans might be both premeditated and occur more spontaneously in response to incidents on the field of play, and their occurrence and form vary unevenly throughout different sections of the football stadium. These researchers found that racist abuse inside stadiums very rarely escalated into physical violence. In this sense, the conflation of racism with hooliganism provides an unsatisfactory explanatory account of the complex and often inconsistent ways in which expressions of racism become manifest in football spectator culture. Back et al have suggested that:

'Racist abuse in grounds occurs in an intermittent fashion, racist epithets and slogans are invoked in specific contexts and serve particular functions such that a series of fixtures may pass without any racist activity whilst a fixture with a heightened atmosphere or the appropriate circumstances can produce an explosion of racist activity' (Back et al 1998:84)

The ethnographic findings of Back et al (2001) offer support to approaches which stress the plurality and heterogeneity of racisms and the partial and diffuse ways in which such racisms are commonly expressed at football and elsewhere. Work undertaken by the Sir Norman Chester Centre for Football Research as part of regular fan surveys at all FA Premier league and Football League clubs also alludes to the continuance of spectator racism at matches at all clubs. Almost one-third (31%) of fans at FA Premier League clubs had witnessed racism aimed towards players during the 1999/2000 season and around one in eleven fans (9%) had witnessed racist abuse aimed at spectators (Williams, 2000). Similar findings with regard to racism aimed at players (27%) and at spectators (7%) were evident amongst fans from Football League clubs during the 2000/01 season (Williams 2001).
Findings from fan surveys of this kind (Williams, 2000; 2001) have also shown that Black British and British Asian football fans are far more aware of the incidence of spectator racism at football than are white fans, many of whom might underestimate or even fail to register to 'banal' racist abuse aimed at players and other fans. Recent survey research by Bradbury (2001) indicates that more than half (52%) of all professional clubs had received reports from fans of stadium racism during the 1999/2000 season, despite many clubs operating without any clear mechanism for reporting incidents of this kind.

Having established that racism at football continues to be manifest in spectator culture and that expressions of racism are often inconsistent and diffuse across local and national supporter formations it is also important to understand the social and cultural context in which such expressions of racism are generated. On the basis of detailed ethnographic work inside supporter cultures at clubs in the North West of England and in South East London, Back et al have argued that:

‘In order to understand the range of racist activity [at football] one needs to examine the relationship between processes of racialisation and the collective ritual and symbolic practices that give any particular fan culture meaning. In this sense differences with regard to the level and intensity of racism need to be understood in terms of the way racist practices are nested within the ritual and collective symbolism of each fan culture’ (Back et al 2001: 43).

In this sense, these authors seek to locate the production of spectator racism within the meanings and normative codes generated by participation in specific fan cultures that may differ markedly across spatial locations and in terms of ritualised styles of fandom. At some clubs in more ‘traditional’ working class football areas, patterns and styles of spectatorship may be more reflective of forms of spectator partisanship that allude to strongly exclusivist and local and regional identity formations. The changing ethnic demographics of some locales in which football clubs are situated might do relatively little to disrupt the extent to which white fans celebrate these relatively ‘closed’ forms of belonging and partisanship in and around football stadiums. Indeed, in some places, they may strengthen this defence of prized cultural space against wider social change.
The work of Back et al (2001) and Robson (2000) identify a particular kind of collective symbolism around support for Millwall Football Club that draws strongly on notions of locality, masculinity and social class. More specifically, they draw attention to the ways in which the fan culture of ‘Millwallism’ is explicitly marked out in terms of notions of historical belonging to the particular spatial location of South East London and through the celebration of a specific variant of localistic working class masculinity and its concomitant virtues of ‘toughness’ and ‘hardness’. For Robson, the symbolic and collective imagery of ‘Millwallism’ is also constructed - and best understood - ‘as an expression of defensive but culturally entrenched opposition to (the) bourgeois hegemony’ (Robson 2000: 121) of the increasing commercialism and sanitisation of spectator culture in the modern game. From this perspective, the expression of racism by Millwall fans can be viewed as a consciously transgressive affront to the perceived liberal sensibilities and political correctness of the wider football establishment.

Racist expression here is rooted in locally embedded forms of white working class masculine social formations and a sense of the ‘dark carnivalesque’ that is expressed rhetorically through humour and play in the form of the popular use of racialised songs, chants and more individualised comments. To some extent, the existence of these forms of ‘playful’ racisms are dependent upon the surety amongst the perpetrators that such comments will not be overtly challenged within specific spectator formations that are premised on a shared set of normative values and white authenticity. However, Robson argues that racist abuse might also form a kind of strategic mechanism as part of a wider framework of hostile, threatening and intimidatory behaviour by some fans designed primarily to unsettle opposing players and offend personal dignity and liberal sensitivities alike.

Beyond the locally grounded structures of feeling (Williams, 1977; Taylor, 1996) which might positively encourage – or at least engender the potential for – racist expression within specific fan cultures, Back et al (2001) have also alluded to the importance of understanding the way in which expressions of racism at football might emerge from the discursive interaction between different spectator groups in the match-day stadium environment, thus moving beyond seeing the fan culture of

46
individual clubs as just the product of particular local conditions, to considering patterns of cultural interchange and syncretism within fan culture nationally.

In this sense, Back et al alludes to the expression of forms of 'connative' racism which are implicit in the shared antipathies and normative structures of white spectator formations and which are generated through songs and chants which make reference to perceived racialised hierarchies. Songs and chants such as 'Town full of Pakis' for example, mobilised by fan collectivities in order to 'shame' (white) fans whose club is situated in locales with significant Asian communities, whilst 'denotive' in the use of the racial epithet 'Paki' is more 'connative' in the sense that it refers to a shared set of meanings which posit the understood notion that Asians (Pakis) are considered inferior to white communities. This form of coded racialised insult takes place in the context of white fan discourse often in the absence of any significant numbers of Asian fans and is intended to elicit a response from opposition fans. Its power as an insult lies in the normative structure of whiteness replete in spectator formations that, firstly, share an understanding of the perceived racial inferiority of Asians in everyday social life and, secondly, is premised on the mutually understanding that spectator formations are preferably white, or at least, anti-Asian. At specific spatial and temporal moments these anti-Asian sentiments are made more explicit by both sets of opposing fans as evident in the scenes at Boundary Park at a match between Oldham Athletic and Stoke City in the 2000/2001 season where sections of both sets of fans sang in unison 'Stand up, if you hate Pakis' (FARE, 2001).

The historical legacy and continued existence of multiple expressions of racism at football has undoubtedly served to discourage many minority ethnic fans from attending games at their local clubs. The increased cost of 'live' attendance at games has probably further excluded many fans from poorer communities from active support and this has perhaps had a disproportionate effect on fans from economically disadvantaged minority ethnic backgrounds. According to fan survey research at Leicester (Williams, 2000; 2001) levels of Black British and British Asian 'active' support at FA Premier League Clubs (0.9%) and at Football League clubs (0.3%) remains disproportionately low.
However, it might also be that the white normative structures of fan cultures locally and nationally have specific consequence for defining the parameters of inclusion and exclusion for attendance at games for minority ethnic fans. If fan cultures at some clubs are rooted in highly localistic and heavily masculinised expressions of (white) fandom - and ‘Millwallism’ may well contribute to this - then the boundaries of incorporation for fans from minority ethnic backgrounds might be premised on their own performance of specific gendered and class inflected forms of hegemonic white working class masculinities.

Drawing on the idea of ‘neighbourhood nationalism’ Back et al argue it might be possible to understand how the perceived attributes of hyper-masculinity afforded to black males which underpin many inter-racial friendships and alliances in urban working class communities might contribute to the assimilation of black fans as ‘contingent insiders’ (Back et al, 2001) into specific fan cultures rooted in locally defined highly gendered and strictly working class formations. Conversely, the tendency in working class male cultural matrix to view Asians as ‘feeble’ and ‘weak’ might occlude Asian fans from a full participation in specific fan cultures, suggesting that the boundaries of racial inclusion and exclusion are inconsistent and issues of belonging and entitlement are negotiated through the complex interplay of gender, class and local ‘structures of feeling’ resonant within spectator formations. The idea that incorporation into predominantly white spectator formations, is partly premised on black fans successfully obtaining ‘cultural passports’ (Back et al, 2001:85).

The authors also explain how some black players at clubs might receive great adulation from fans whilst others continue to be subject to racist abuse. Commenting on the great affection afforded to black Millwall player Tony Witter by fans who might continue to racially abuse other ‘home’ and opposition players, Back et al (2001:83) suggests,

‘The inclusion of players like Tony Witter is engendered through the embodiment of a set of highly localised working class values and cultural capital. The shared experience of class and masculinity offer a terrain in which contingent forms of inclusiveness can be established across the colour line.’
In this sense, players the style of play of Witter is seen to reflect those values that are held in high esteem amongst specific fan cultures. The ‘adulation’ of black players by fans does not necessarily occlude their ‘blackness’; indeed songs and chants in support of black players might make specific reference to their skin colour but these structures of adulation might be premised on strictly codified ways of behaviour to which black players have to adhere.

The experience of black former professional footballer Robbie Earle as a player at his home-town club, Port Vale FC, from 1983 to 1992, is illustrative of the way in which indices of class, locality, masculinity and ethnicity shape the boundaries of racialised inclusion and exclusion for black players within specific football spectator formations. Port Vale FC is situated in the working class Burslem district of Stoke-on-Trent, a medium sized city in the North Midlands and the club draws its support from the heavily masculinised local pottery and mining industries that, in part, inform the ‘local cultural structure’ (Taylor et al, 1996). Robbie Earle’s hard-working and highly effective style of play coupled with his apparently unassuming manner and ‘local’ status, enamoured the player to ‘Vale’ fans who created and regularly utilised the following chant in adulation of their ‘hero’.

'Robby Earle, Robby Earle, Robby, Robby Earle,
He's black as coal, he scores the goals,
Robby, Robby Earle'.

The phrase ‘black as coal’ is of common usage in local industrial parlance to describe the ingrained dirt and grime on the faces and bodies of ‘workers’ engendered by labouring in local industries, but is here allocated by fans ‘unproblematically’ to describe the skin colour of a footballer of African/Caribbean origin. Whilst the chant forms part of an adulatory repertoire enacted by Vale fans it also clearly marks out Earle as a racial ‘other’ that is simultaneously accepted - but yet also different to - the local white spectator formations.

Whilst the above chant was sometimes mobilised by Vale fans in response to the specific targeting of Earle by opposition fans for more obvious forms of racist abuse, Earle’s tenure at the club did little to disrupt the wider racist ideologies of many Vale
fans nor did it negate the extent to which these fans racially abused other 'opposition' and 'home' black players. The conditional acceptance of Earle as a 'local hero' by Vale fans and the player's continued popularity locally might have also been influenced by Earle's apparent adherence to a specific assimilationist mode of black masculinity (Carrington, 1999) and his public proclamations (Observer, 28th September, 1997) that racist spectator abuse could be equated with the kinds of 'physical feature' abuse afforded to white players by fans. That is, the behaviour of Earle and his public 'presentation of self' (Goffman, 1969) helped the player to attain acceptance into the normative (white) structures of local spectator formations.

Rather more critically, for King (2000), professional football culture is a place in which processes of interaction, dialogue and non-verbal communication inform the rituals and performances upon which racialised boundaries of inclusion and exclusion are constructed and where the normative presence of white, working class, masculine identity formations underpin and inform a series of specific cultural arrangements. Within this culturally homogenous setting, black players are forced to 'play the white man' in order to attain 'cultural passports' that will aid their progression as professional players. King argues:

'The metaphor 'play the white man' is a useful analytical tool in examining the complex, contradictory and transient ways in which identity and representation is negotiated and acted out. The racial identities here are about playing roles, expectations and performances, whether it be on the playing field, in the coaching area, or the administration office. These are all the places where dialogue between black and white people will lead to forms of inclusion and exclusion and where cultural barriers are being constructed' (King 2000:4).

For those black players who openly challenge racism and the racialising processes inherent within white football structures and who are perceived to be 'troublesome' by white fans, coaches and administrators the pathways to longer professional careers in the game might be more problematic (Moran, 2000).

The apparent lack of upward mobility for black former professional players into coaching, management and also in football administration (see Bradbury, 2001) alludes to the presence of a 'glass ceiling' whereby the career trajectories of black
footballers seem limited to roles as 'physical performers'. Also, the apparent 'invisibility' of Asian workers throughout the playing and non-playing football industry might also allude to the continuation of exclusionary practices that serve to deny opportunities for individuals whose cultural background might be perceived by other white administrators to 'fit' less easily within the distinctly (white) hegemonic structures of football governance.

Here, biological and cultural racisms and discriminations that rely on racialised boundary constructions and notions of 'other-ness' and 'difference' and which might be consciously enacted by key individuals within the game arguably serve to render the full inclusion of minority ethnic communities in football as problematic. The process by which the issuing of 'cultural passports' to minority ethnic fans and players can be seen as one 'named' element by which a wider institutionalised process of racisms, discriminations and contingent inclusions might be enacted within the football industry. Macpherson defines institutional racism as:

'The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance and thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people' (Stephen Lawrence Inquiry report 1999: para 6.34)

This definition of institutional racism provides a useful starting point from which to begin to evaluate the more concrete and specific ways in which the historically inscribed power relations embedded within relatively 'closed' processes and practices of football governance might serve to limit opportunities for minority ethnic communities.

11. Conclusion and the main body of the thesis

This chapter has provided the intellectual platform upon which the main body of the thesis is built and the analysis and interpretation of empirical findings featured in the following chapters are informed by the key academic arguments laid out in the literature review. In particular, this opening chapter has illustrated the ways in which
the essentialisation of ‘race’ and ethnicity and the production of racialised boundary constructions and notions of cultural exclusivity and the racialised ‘other’ at the national and local level have served to exclude minority ethnic populations from a full participation in British civil society and in British sports. Further, this chapter has argued strongly that the inter-penetration of old biological racism and new cultural racisms offer up multiple and diffuse patterns of racialised exclusionary practices which disadvantage different minority ethnic communities in different ways across a range of sites and local settings. In short, the opening chapter clearly posits the importance of moving beyond overly simplistic conceptions of racism as a singular monolithic entity towards a more full understanding of the heterogeneity of racisms and multiple and often contradictory patterns of racialised exclusion.

The opening chapter has utilised and built upon the work of key sports sociologists to illustrate the way in which racisms and racialised exclusion impinge upon and are generated by English football and football culture in both the more ‘traditional’ and more ‘modernised’ era of the game. A key aim of this chapter has been to offer a significant contextualising background upon which the main body of the thesis will progress, with particular reference to an evaluation of the emergence in the 1990s in football in England of anti-racist strategies designed to combat racism and promote greater participation in the game amongst minority ethnic communities. The theoretical ideas laid out in this chapter regarding the shift in understanding from singular to heterogeneous racisms and their multiple applications at the individual and institutional level, alongside ideas pertaining to the contingency of inclusion and exclusion of minority ethnic fans based on issues to do with class, masculinity and local structures of feeling, pose particular problems for the efficacy of moral anti-racism which is often narrowly structured to oppose more obvious and straightforward ‘blanket’ forms of racist abuse. The extent to which the philosophy and practice of national and local anti-racist campaigns has been conditioned by limited conceptualisations of racism or whether these campaigns have broadened to encompass these wider theoretical understandings of racisms and patterns of racialised exclusion in football will evaluated in the following chapters.

**Chapter Two** considers the origins and role of the national Football Task Force as a New Labour initiative designed to address some of the central problems facing late-
modern football in England. Its work on racism, of course, is specially featured here mainly through interviews and the observations of some of the key figures involved in the Task Force intervention.

**Chapter Three** looks at more ‘popular’ national anti-racism campaigns in football before addressing in some detail the origins and work of the Kick it Out campaign, which is currently operational in the English game and in networks across Europe. The key emphasis here is Kick it Out’s work directly with football clubs in England. Again, this research is undertaken, mainly via interviews with key figures involved in the work of Kick it Out and those involved in a range of Kick it Out ‘support’ organisations.

**Chapter Four** moves on to look at the response of professional clubs themselves to the issue of dealing with racism and racialised exclusions. The main body of this chapter deals with data produced from a postal questionnaire survey covering 88 of the 92 professional clubs in England & Wales. more details on the methods involved here can be found in Bradbury (2001). This chapter draws on interview material and also on written comments from club administrators on their perceptions of racism, their relations with local minority ethnic populations and on ways of addressing such issues in football.

**Chapter Five** now turns to examine a local initiative designed to address racism in football in the north of England. The Football Unites Racism Divides project is explored in some detail using methods of observation, interview and documentary analysis over a 12 months period in the middle of the fieldwork. FURD is one of a very small number of projects of this kind and is regarded as both dynamic and successful in its work aimed at engaging local minority ethnic youth in a range of activities and across a number of broadly anti-racist agendas in the south end of Sheffield.

**Chapter Six** considers a very different sort of local project, the Foxes Against Racism scheme in Leicester. FAR works without the resources and the formally established structures of an organisation such as FURD, but it has gained a reputation for its activities in partnership with Leicester City FC aimed at
addressing racism both in the professional game in Leicester and in local parks football. Research here was conducted via participant observation – the author took minutes at FAR meetings over an extended period – and also via interviews with members of FAR and observers from within and outside the professional game. A postal survey was also conducted in relation to the work with FAR aimed at local football clubs in Leicestershire.

Chapter Seven draws together some of the central themes of the research and offers some observations on the operations of the various sorts of national and local football anti-racism schemes and projects examined in this thesis.

Let us move on now to consider, in Chapter Two, the Labour Party’s Football Task Force initiative of the late-1990s
Chapter Two

Politics, New Labour and New Football: The Football Task Force

1. New Labour and English football in the late-modern era

The social and historical development of professional football in Britain and also the Labour party share significant parallels in that they are both rooted in mythologised ways in working class formations and experience. In particular, both football and the (old) Labour party emerged as prominent social institutions towards the end of the nineteenth century and as Matthew Brown notes, they both:

'Promised some kind of escape from working class drudgery, they each relied on mass support for their existence and success and despite their ups and downs both have remained intimately associated with the whims and wishes of 'the people'” (Brown 1999:59).

Given the historical tendency for the Labour party to draw its electoral support from working class communities (Butler and Stokes, 1974) and for football clubs historically to be situated in and draw heavily on such communities for patterns of active support, it is perhaps unsurprising that the term ‘the Labour party at prayer’ was coined to describe football crowds during the ‘early modern’ era of the game (Mason, 1980; Walvin, 1975). However, beyond drawing on similar cohorts of working class communities for football and electoral support, the traditional cultural links between football and the Labour party had rarely been expressed in terms of direct policy intervention until the 1990s when, ironically, dramatic changes to both institutions meant that their paths became intertwined.

More specifically, during the mid-1990s and whilst in opposition ‘New Labour’ began to express public concern with regard to the apparent lack of regulation of football in the face of its increasing commercialism and the emergent wider inequalities within the sport which were judged to have stemmed from the game’s
rapid transformation from the troubled, hooligan-riddled sport of the 1970s and 1980s to the ‘newly modernised’ version of the game in England in the early 1990s. The ‘marketised’ version of new football clearly chimed with many aspects of the new Labour project for politics. Thus, as the new football entrepreneurs who were leading the cultural and economic transformation of football in England in the early 1990s sought to dissemble the sport from the cultural and psychological baggage which, in the words of the FA’s own *Blueprint for Football* in 1991 had typically characterised its heavily masculinised ties of class, place and tradition (Bale, 1991), so the Labour Party was assiduously ‘updating’ its own image and approach – especially to the concepts of markets and governance - in the wake of successive electoral defeats, by adopting a rhetoric more consistent with new post-Fordist times.

In the words of and quoting from a speech by Tony Blair in 1996:

‘New Labour embraces the market: it will “accept and welcome the new global economy” while rejecting “market infallibility”. Its distinctive message is that “it does not seek to limit markets”, but “recognises that they need to operate within a fair framework of rules”. At the national level it “expands” the ideal of social co-operation “into a more dynamic view of the need for a strong society and an active community, where rights and responsibilities go hand in hand”. The embedded market and the strong society of New Labour replace the free market and the strong state of Thatcherism (Levitas 1998: 113).

Just as elite professional football in England would seek to disengage, to an extent, from its strong focus on established fan constituencies and from its troubled recent past so the Labour Party, it was argued, would need to escape its own troubles by dumping old alliances, among them its close relations with the trade unions, its traditional reliance on a strong base of working class support, and its claims to represent such interests in the name of a more egalitarian social order. Instead, in their pragmatic appeal to ‘accessible classness’ or the ‘new sociology of aspirations’ (Hall, 1992) both football and New Labour would eschew their old supporter bases in search of new ‘customers.’

These rapid changes in the game came about, in part, due to the establishment of the breakaway FA Premier League in 1992 and the negotiation of more than £300 million of BSkyB satellite TV money for broadcasting rights for top-level matches, six times larger than an previous TV deal for British football (King, 1998; Williams,
1994). This breakaway, in turn, emerged out of a power struggle between the Football League and the FA, with the latter sanctioning, and through the FA Blueprint shaping, the formation of the new FA Premier League (FA, 1991). For some commentators (Conn, 1997; 1999; Taylor, 2000) this move, in effect, signalled the negation by the FA of its traditional responsibility for the 'national guardianship' of the whole of the game as it regulatory systems inevitably failed to contain the commercial and increasingly post-national ambitions of larger clubs. These changes established the new FA Premier League and its more successful 'super-clubs' as the major power brokers within the game, culminating, for example in the forced resignation of the FA Chief Executive Adam Crozier in 2002 following FA Premier League complaint's about Crozier's aggressive, commercial policies at the FA. A case of the 'regulator' forced out by the 'regulated'.

The resultant restructuring of professional football in England ushered in a new commercial age for English football that had significant consequences for the way in which individual clubs were controlled, marketed and managed and for long-standing patterns of cross-subsidisation which had typically ensured a modest redistribution of wealth in football in England (Morrow, 1999; Williams, 1999). For some top-level clubs deregulated football in the mid 1990s in England produced: increased attendances at games; the influx of foreign 'star players'; new, profitable TV deals; and new sources of revenue flows, including new merchandising streams, internet commerce and returns on stadium usage. However, for many more clubs outside the top echelons of the domestic game these changes served to increase competitive pressures and to widen inequalities and limit opportunities (see, Conn, 1997).

For fans at almost all major clubs, ticket price escalation and the new commercialised and disciplinary cultures of modernised clubs, which focused increasingly on recruiting 'family' or 'consumer' fans (Giulianotti, 1999; King, 1998) offered also the prospects of the exclusion of groups of male working class teenagers and of lower earners (Williams, 1999). Further, the 'globalised' game from the mid-1990s suddenly became plagued with accusations of financial irregularities and bribery and bung scandals (Conn, 1997; 1999). The re-emergence, too, of concerns about spectator misbehaviour at international and domestic levels and a perception that the game lacked effective leadership beyond the narrow commercial ambitions of its
most powerful members, accelerated public and political anxiety about the direction of the sport. To draw a political parallel:

'A game which appeared to be mired in sleaze and bad behaviour, to which its ruling bodies appeared incapable of responding, yet where the rich were reaping untold riches and the poor flirting with oblivion, seemed a neat metaphor for a nation still in the grip of a dying Conservative party leadership also tainted fatally with sleaze' (Brown, 1999:57).

Ostensibly seeking more stakeholder regulation for the newly marketised football product, and following a series of meetings with representatives from within football, including the game’s governing bodies and supporter organisations, the then shadow sports minister, Tom Pendry, produced Labour’s Charter for Football (1996). With ‘new’ football increasingly being regarded by Labour as a vote winner rather than the political millstone it had clearly been during the hooliganism era, this document was also born out of concerns that the regulation of football had failed to keep pace with the rapid commercial development of the game, as well as wider concerns about the perceived failure of the game’s administrators to run the sport in a manner suited to the guardianship and protection of the sport as a whole (Burnham, 2000). Within this document, New Labour promised to establish a Football Task Force (hereafter referred to as the FTF) once elected to government that would:

'Threaten a new framework to introduce much needed change into the structure of our national game. In tandem with this new development Labour will set an example, ensuring that its own responsibilities are met once in government. We will implement a range of specific measures aimed at improving all aspects of football' (Labour Charter for Football: 1996)

The Charter for Football promised that a new national FTF would address issues including: the further restructuring of the FA; the launch of an investigation into the sport’s new links with television; the general treatment of fans; and football’s increasingly polarised finances. The document also outlined a programme of proposed legislation aimed at addressing issues of: football hooliganism; racism; ground development and ground safety; the ‘rights’ of football fans; policing; and improving the development of football at grass roots level. The willingness of New Labour to engage with football in this way arguably marked a new era in the
relationship between politics and football in England. Previous, successive Conservative governments had exhibited all the signs of a public cultural alienation from the sport - an almost phobic relationship to football - and had only engaged with football 're-actively' largely with reference to public order issues and, for example, draconian proposals around football identity card schemes in the late 1980s (McArdle, 2000). In contrast, New Labour seemed more willing to recognise football as a central feature of national sporting and cultural life and, to some extent at least, some of the aims outlined in the *Charter for Football* seemed, to 'activist' fans, to be reflective of this new approach:

'It was the first time a government had been talking about these issues. It was looking at football supporter issues that weren’t to do with law and order. Or that was certainly the dominant strand - which was what had always been in government interventions before. It was a long way from Colin Moynihan! [Ex Tory Minister for Sport].' (Interview with Adam Brown, Football Supporters’ Association and FTF member 5/4/02)

However, beyond the recognition that New Labour’s approach to football marked a distinct shift in emphasis from previous (Conservative) political interventions, there remained some scepticism about the Labour party’s apparent eagerness to take a more interventionist stance with respect to football. By the mid-1990s, despite the existence of deep-seated administrative and ‘equity’ problems in the game, English football had certainly achieved a fashionable commodification and a new cultural prominence in ‘post-fan’ literary, celebrity and political circles (Giullanotti, 1999). The successful Euro 96 tournament held in England, along with a more general rejuvenation of the British popular culture triumvirate of sport, music and fashion, led to 1996 being labelled the year of ‘Cool Britannia’ (Davey, 1999). New Labour was quick to seize on this new cultural agenda as part of the re-branding of the party as youthful, multi-cultural, modern and progressive.

Ideas about the ‘national popular’ run the risk, of course, of offering a conservative spatially confined, non-relational approach to the process of identification which dissociates politics from a society involved in global cultural transactions (Davey, 1999:17). So-called ‘inclusive’ cultural events, such as Euro ’96, also offered their own forms of localised and racialised exclusion (Carrington, 1998). Nevertheless, Labour seemed determined to try to mobilise its public appeal through the
mechanism of popular culture in ways in which the Conservative party was, all too palpably, limited. So, New Labour's newly-found commitment to the game was also tempered with a realist concern among those fans involved that political expediency might be closer to the heart of Labour's football agenda:

'I think New Labour saw an opportunity to do something in a populist context. The other thing was that compared to five, ten years earlier, football was fantastically fashionable by the mid 1990s, particularly with the metropolitan elite and all that getting into it. It was for pop stars and politicians and TV presenters. Having a football team as a badge was a sign of credibility, and so on.' (Interview with Adam Brown, FSA and FTF member 5/4/02)

2. New Labour and the Football Task Force

New Labour was elected to Government in May 1997 with an overwhelming electoral majority. Within three months the new Sports Minister, Tony Banks, fulfilled the pledge made in the Charter for Football and established the new FTF, made up of the key 'stakeholders' within the game, including representatives from the FA, the FA Premier League and the Football League as well as representatives from supporters' organisations, such as the Football Supporters Association (FSA) and the National Federation of Football Supporters Clubs (NFFSC). In total, fifteen different football-related organisations were involved and other interested parties were added to the group at various points during the project.

In line with the 'Big Tent' or third sector (Levitas, 1998: 125) consensus politics of Blairism, former Conservative MP and Cabinet Minister, David Mellor, was chosen to chair the FTF. Mellor's appointment would also 'mask' any possible perception that the FTF's role was to signify state intervention in football and, of course, would distance government in the event of the perceived failure of the FTF to deliver on any of its stated aims. It was hard to deflect accusations that it might end up to be a high profile, if argumentative, 'talking shop' (Marsden, 1997). Mellor himself seemed relatively unimpressed by the way in which the FTF remit had been established, describing it as the outcome of 'throwing a handful of pieces of paper
with issues on them into the air and seeing which ones landed first’ (Brown, 1999: 69).

The Football Trust acted as the FTF secretariat and dealt with its administration, whilst central government belatedly awarded £100,000 towards the maintenance of the FTF, which later rose to around £130,000 following some financial difficulties in the extended running of the project. The establishment of this broad collective of football-related bodies under one multi-agency umbrella had its precedent in the recently formed AGARI group and the associated ‘Lets Kick Racism/Respect All Fans’ campaigns. Nonetheless, the coming together of these different, and often diametrically opposed, groups under one banner to look at mainstream structural tensions within the sport offered a new development in football and the opportunity to address a number of pressing issues within the game.

However, the FTF was poorly resourced and its status was unclear. Could it make policy? What commitment would government and other agencies make to put into effect is recommendations? Further, the establishment of this broad-ranging group alluded strongly to the centrist political philosophy – the so-called ‘Third Way’ approach (see Blair, 1998; Giddens, 1998) - to dealing with social issues, one favoured by the New Labour government. Critics argued that securing ‘consensus’ between groups with such polarised access to resources within the sport offered a recipe for merely fiddling with the status quo. The FTF would not signal a more interventionist, prescriptive approach to government.

The FTF identified seven key areas in need of immediate investigation and aimed to produce a number of reports, including recommendations that were to be submitted to the Department for Culture, Media and Sports (DCMS). Broadly speaking, these areas of remit were focused upon: issues of racism and exclusion; disability access; community issues and players as role models; greater supporter involvement; ticketing and pricing policies; merchandising policies; and the need to reconcile the legitimate needs of shareholders, players and supporters where clubs had been floated on the stock exchange. The identification of these specific issues and government preference for consensus over prescription marked a considerable shift in emphasis from the more bullish agenda laid out in the Charter for Football that
had promised wholesale administrative reform in English football and a review of arrangements for broadcasting rights. According to academic researcher and football activist Adam Brown: 'It seemed that Labours commitment to grasp the football nettle had certainly diminished since coming to power' (Brown 1999:62).

Such concerns seemed confirmed when the final FTF report on Commercial Issues combined a number of issues to do with ticketing, merchandising and supporters rights. This final submission to the DCMS was split into two separate reports within a report following a philosophical, and often acrimonious, split between two separate factions within the Football Task Force which had failed to reach a consensus on the issues featured therein. Broadly speaking, those Task Force members who favoured a stronger voice for fans in the sport’s new future, favoured an independent regulator. Those who argued that the new commercial vitality and market-driven successes of football required protection favoured self-regulating. The latter won out.

It is not the intention here to enter into these debates about the wider issue of regulation in football in any great detail. These debates have been covered in great detail elsewhere (Brown, 1999; 2000; Conn, 1999; Sutcliffe, 2000; Taylor, 2000). However, it is important to note that the disagreements over the proposed role of an independent regulator versus self-regulation administered by the football authorities impinged upon the production of each of the four FTF reports to a greater or lesser degree. This issue has also had some significant consequence, I would argue, for the way in which the recommendations featured in the Task Force reports have been regarded by those bodies charged with responsibility for their implementation (Hamil et al, 2000; Bradbury, 2001). It seems clear that government was keen to avoid an interventionist approach (although this was arguably not the case in terms of setting the parameters of the debate) and for the FTF to adopt a consensus approach to dealing with the issues outlined in its restructured remit. To this end, the preference of government at the outset was for the football authorities to develop modern and efficient structures of self-regulation on the basis of consultation with all of the game’s key stakeholders. As Andy Burnham, the former FTF administrator and now Labour MP for Leigh commented:
'In essence it was' third way'. It was recognition from the outset that we are not going to legislate on football, that's why you have a stakeholder FTF because you are saying to that sector, "Come together with your own solution". They had failed to tackle these seven problems hence, the government pulling them around a table saying, "There are seven problems you have failed to tackle; we bring you into a FTF to ask you to tackle them now. By its very nature it was a self-regulatory measure. So when people talk about the FTF recommending an OFF-FOOT or a regulator, quite honestly, that was never going to happen. They (the football authorities) were not going to vote for it, they were not going to recommend something that the vast majority of them didn't want'. (Interview with Andy Burnham, 12/4/02).

Having established the full FTF in 1997, it quickly became apparent that, notwithstanding the concern for democratic consultation - the FTF soon began a series of public consultations around the country - the FTF and its hefty membership was struggling to make progress, given its unwieldy structure (Coward, 2000; Brown 1999). Accordingly, David Mellor soon established a FTF 'core working group' made up of ten members from a range of football-related backgrounds, some of which were part of representative organisations that were already positioned within the main FTF group. The key aim of this smaller working group was to undertake the bulk of evidence gathering and to organise and host the regional meetings with football industry stakeholders and the general public. The idea was that the working group would then report back these findings to the main FTF group for consultation, whereupon the Football Trust administrators would draft the reports and their associated recommendations ready for submission to the DCMS. As the former FTF administrator Andy Burnham recalls:

'If it was left to the main FTF it would have taken a while to pull the reports together, so the idea with the working group was to give the time to take proper evidence from people, take their views, hear their views, discuss issues and, from that start, to develop in shadow form the main proposals that would then go to the main FTF. So it was a body that was meant to be advisory, but also oil the wheels, bring in the information and keep the process going' (Interview with Andy Burnham, 12/4/02)

However, the progress of the working group became increasingly bogged down in a series of organisational and administrative problems that included issues of cost and some conflict over whether members of the working group were there as independent individuals or as representatives of particular organisations (Brown, 1999). There
also developed a series of tensions between working group members and organisational representatives on the main FTF, as well as some intra-organisational tensions with specific reference to ongoing power struggles within the FA and between the main football bodies. Despite these divisions and strains, the FTF eventually produced four separate reports, respectively entitled: *Eliminating Racism from Football* (1998); *Improving Facilities for Football Supporters* (1998); *Investing in the Community* (1999); and *Commercial Issues* (2000). For Andy Burnham the difficult process of evidence gathering, holding wide-ranging consultation and the need to seek consensus across contentious boundaries and involving groups to whom dialogue and exchange was hardly normal practice, was a dynamic process which was ultimately rewarded with the production of a series of reports that offered new and fresh challenges and questions for the English football industry:

> 'The consensus was extremely difficult to reach. Going from the extreme, normally from the FSA - who I had most sympathy with - to the most reactionary - and they won't thank me for saying this, but it was probably the FA. And it was great to see that clash of perspectives and ideologies; it was a clash of ideologies all the time. Football supporters' groups, as you would expect, gave full vent to their feelings all the time and that was great. In a way, the FTF began dialogues that simply were not happening in football. The authorities needed to hear this stuff first hand and be confronted with it because, in many ways, it was just too remote from them. I think as far as Tony Banks, [Minister for Sport], was concerned he was very keen to just let it all hang out and let the flak happen because that was a creative thing. Going back to how we agreed the reports: very painful, very difficult, [a] fractious process, because everyone realised they had to come up with something. You know, that's what made it great'. (Interview with Andy Burnham 12/4/02)

However, for supporters' representatives the processes by which the FTF came to the final production of its reports and recommendations was less to do with consensus and the benefits of 'third way' communitarianism than it was reflective of the distinct power imbalances rooted in the make-up of the FTF group. As supporter advocate Adam Brown comments:

> 'From reasonably early on, it was clear it was something of a political battleground. The supporters' organisations, the voluntary organisations, the people who represented them, they had to take days off work to go to FTF meetings. They don't have the resources or administrative staff, so even on that practical level they were at a clear disadvantage. Most
supporter representatives have jobs entirely unconnected with football, whereas those who are running the FA Premier League and the FA ... are getting paid for that. So, clearly, there was this kind of practical issue, in terms of time and the nature of the organisations. One is voluntary, and one is corporate. But there was also a sense in which, I think, there were lines of communication between the Premier League and those running the FTF, and between the FA and those running the FTF, that put them at an advantage, without doubt' (Interview with Adam Brown 5/4/02)

Observations like these - effectively, that the football bodies and the FTF administration were colluding in the production of outcomes acceptable to the sport's administrators - meant that the work of the FTF produced, at best, only a mixed public response (Ridley, 1999). Broadly speaking, however, the FTF work around racism and disability was relatively well received within the FTF itself and in public circles, perhaps suggesting no major financial questions or important issues of power and control were perceived to be at stake in these areas. The third FTF report on issues of 'community' resulted in an acrimonious and very public war of words between the chair of the FTF David Mellor and Chief Executive of the PFA Gordon Taylor which resulted in the PFA withdrawing its support for this particular report. The final FTF report on 'commercial issues' defied agreement. (Choudhary, 1999)

To some extent, the problematic final report soured the entire FTF process for a number of group members and the underlying issue of regulation and the perceived inadequacy of central government's willingness to tackle 'big business' still wrangles with a number of former FTF members (see Brown, 1999). Thus, for former FTF administrator and now Labour MP, Andy Burnham, the FTF represents, 'progressive change, not a big bang, but a steady process' (Burnham in interview, 12/4/02), whilst for PFA Chief Executive Gordon Taylor the FTF represented a 'missed opportunity for government' (Taylor, in interview 8/5/02). The latter view was also expressed by fans' representative Adam Brown, who contends that government failure to act positively here lies at the heart of the relative failure of the Task Force initiative:

'The real tragedy is that the government was toothless, not that the FTF was toothless. Because the FTF made recommendations to the Minister for Sport and the Secretary of State and it was their responsibility to act upon them. They steadfastly refused to do anything that offended the football authorities' (Interview with Adam Brown 5/4/02).
3. The Football Task Force Report: *Eliminating Racism From Football*

The first area of focus for the FTF was to address issues of racism and racialised exclusion from the game, and the FTF was specifically asked: *to make recommendations on appropriate measures to eliminate racism from football and encourage wider participation by ethnic minorities, both in playing and spectating* (FTF 1998:7). In doing so, the FTF ‘core working group’ embarked upon a series of regional visits to talk with fans, officials and those involved in local football and extensive consultation with a range of bodies including: the Football Association (FA); County Football Associations (CFAs); the FA Premier League and Football League; the Professional Footballers Association (PFA); professional football clubs; amateur football clubs; organisations involved in crowd stewarding and football safety; national and community based anti-racism schemes; supporters groups; Football in the Community programmes; Local Authorities; leading academics; and schools.

That the FTF chose *racism* as its first area of focus is perhaps instructive. Following the mixed reception to the launch of the FTF and the publicly expressed concerns about the extent to which any sort of ‘consensus’ might be achieved by representative organisations with often diametrically opposed agendas, the initial FTF focus on racism was, in part, precisely a result of the determination to try to build consensus within the group at the first opportunity. As former FTF administrator, Andy Burnham, recalls:

>'No-one is ‘for’ racism in football. The idea was to build a consensus and move on from there. Get people working around an issue where, in theory, at least there is common ground. That was the idea. To build a way of working that developed trust and got people together, then finally to tackle the thorny issues. That was the theory’ (Interview with Andy Burnham 12/4/02).

Much is clear from this early justification. There are clear underlying assumptions here: firstly, that those involved in the FTF are *obviously* not ‘for’ racism; secondly, that consensus might be quite easily achieved on the nature of the racism ‘problem’ within the sport and how to address it; thirdly, that dealing with racism is unlikely to
involve the disruption of structural features of the sport or its power relations; fourthly, that addressing racism is unlikely to involve much in the way of expenditure.

In one sense, some 'common ground' had also already been established around dealing with issues of racism through the prior establishment of the multi-agency AGARI 'Lets Kick Racism/Respect All Fans' campaign (AGARI, 1996) and the newly formed independent 'Kick It Out' campaign, to which all of the major stakeholders of football had subscribed and to which some football bodies were by now contributing some significant funding. Thus, racism might represent an 'easy hit' since the FTF could 'tap into' an already established framework of ongoing processes and practices engendered in national anti-racist campaigns and some more localised initiatives that had begun to develop at this time. For Piara Powar at Kick it Out:

'The terms of racism I think they [the FTF] felt the key issue there was, in many ways, an issue that there is an easy answer to. You know, "There has been a lot of progress made already, so we can get the FTF up and running through some easy hits, good media publicity, and there is widespread cross party, multi-national support for the idea that we need to tackle some of the problems of racism in the game"' (Interview with Piara Powar, 'Kick It Out' Campaign Co-ordinator, 9/5/02).

That dealing with racism was seen by some members of the FTF as a relatively uncontentious issue around which a degree of consensus could easily be established was, perhaps, indicative of the narrow focus of by some FTF members in this area. Perhaps it reveals a sense that racism could be viewed as part of a broader framework of anti-social behaviour perpetrated by fan groups and that racism was a 'social' - rather than an economic or a 'football' - problem and one which really impinged on the sport from 'outside' (Back et al, 2001; Garland and Rowe, 2001). Indeed, academic interviewees for the FTF argue that attempts by themselves or by other parties to broaden conceptualisations of racism and allude to the heterogeneity of racisms in football were treated with some enmity and hostility by a significant section of the FTF membership (Back et al, 2001). Similarly, at the evidence gathering stage undertaken primarily by the FTF working group and in discussions within the main FTF, attempts to explore how issues of institutional racism might
serve to limit opportunities for a fuller participation in the game for members of minority ethnic communities were often rebuffed or played down.

In one sense, this ‘colour-blind’ approach to issues of racism and racial exclusion in football are likely to be rooted in the normative ‘whiteness’ of the core structures of the football industry which account for patterns of racialised exclusion from playing, spectating, administrative employment and wider issues of ‘representation’ within football clubs and the game’s governing bodies. The sense of unconscious ‘denial’ expressed by some members of the FTF towards these issues further contributed to limiting the parameters of the FTF debate around racism, thus avoiding any possibility of a more reflexive gaze turned within the game’s administrative core. As Andy Burnham recollects:

‘There was a strong feeling, well, many times it was said “This is society’s problem this is not our problem”. There was that “Why does everyone focus on this as if it its football’s making?”’. That was often the line that came from the football authorities. Clubs, yeah, I think they think racism is a problem which arrives at the ground on a Saturday afternoon. Its not a problem they should be dealing with Monday to Friday, in how they recruit staff and what goes on in the dressing room as well’. (Interview with Andy Burnham 12/4/02)

This dual tendency: to locate racism and its causes beyond the parameters of the sport (and therefore beyond any remedial work within football) and to ‘contain’ it within the behavioural confines of the actions of a small minority of fans, needs to be set against, however, the very real opportunities offered to community orientated groups and grassroots organisations to relay their experiences of football racism to the FTF. In these sessions, contributors clearly raised concerns about lack of effective action to deal with racism in local football. These concerns were particularly apparent in the regional visit to Leicester, where a number of representatives from a successful local ‘black’ amateur club, Highfield Rangers, offered forthright accounts of their experiences of racism in local football and alluded to the apparent inaction of the local County Football Association in dealing ‘appropriately’ with these issues (see also Williams, 1994). For Joss Johnson of Highfield Rangers, for example, the FTF visit offered a welcome chance to step
outside of local systems of accountability which often penalised signs of black resistance and complaint. For Johnson, the FTF:

‘Gave the opportunity to stand up and say how it was. We never had an opportunity before, prior to the FTF. If you stood up and challenged the FA you were singled out as a troublemaker. You would suddenly find that your organisation started to experience difficulty in the most simplistic of environments, such as match officialdom. So the FTF broke down that initial barrier and made the football authorities sit up and take notice. More importantly, people were, for the first time, in the arena where you couldn’t be penalised for their views’. (Interview with Joss Johnson 5/2/02)

Views like these may not be replicated everywhere the FTF went, but they do indicate the perception that channels simply did not exist for such expressions, as well as a deep mistrust of the capacity of local structures to deal fairly and comprehensively with issues of racism at the local level. The local County FA in question was not present at the FTF regional meeting and played no part in the local consultation and, interestingly, still claims never to have seen a copy of the resultant FTF report (personal correspondence). Other County FAs contacted as part of the FTF process displayed a considerable lack of knowledge about the extent of racism on local parks pitches and, in some cases, showed little concern to be involved in the FTF consultation process designed to address these ongoing problems (FTF, 1998; Garland and Rowe, 2001).

Opinions sought through the FTF consultation process, then, did seem to offer some opportunity for a number of institutionally peripheral groups to engage with official bodies - perhaps for the first time - around issues of racism in the game, and especially those experienced at the local, grass roots, level. The strength of feeling expressed in these contributions meant that, as discussion points at least, many of these issues were raised to the foreground. In particular, Kick It Out, made a wide-ranging submission to the FTF on these matters. Also of particular concern to Kick It Out (1998) was the necessity, in their view, to dispel the popularly held view that patterns of racist chanting and individual abuse from fans at matches had largely been eliminated from the game. Kick It Out also thought it important to remain sensitive to the different ways in which spectator racism might impinge upon the general football environment. But it was also keen to broaden the FTF debate to
include issues of institutional racism which, according to *Kick It Out*, was among the root causes of the exclusion of Asians from the game and also impeded the progression of black players into coaching and management positions in the professional game (*Kick it Out*, 1998).

Changes to existing legislation with regard to penalising individualised acts of racism among fans, as well as those involving collective racist chanting, was also a key issue for *Kick It Out*. This particular concern would later help produce new legislation, which was implemented with relative speed. Reflecting upon his own feelings about the FTF at the time of these submissions, *Kick It Out* campaign co-ordinator, Piara Powar, probably articulates the feeling of a number of other ‘community orientated’ representatives and organisations who had contact with the FTF when he recalls:

'It was our first opportunity to engage with government, if you like. I think there was this sense that it was an interesting development and we wanted to seize the option of engagement. Nevertheless, like many things related to government it would inevitably be a process which in some way could be accused of a fudge or being a very broad generalised approach to the issue that wouldn’t necessarily make any core or productive recommendations. There was that sort of positive looking forward to it tinged with some scepticism.' (Interview with Piara Powar, 9/05/02).

In March 1998, *Eliminating Racism from Football* was published and featured 28 recommendations (see appendix) to encompassing all areas of football, ranging from the grassroots level right up to the higher reaches of the national game. The report marked a unique intervention into the domain of amateur football and re-articulated some of the concerns raised in the FTF regional visits and consultation regarding ongoing problems of racism at this level. More specifically, the report offers a targeted series of recommendations aimed at the national FA and at County FAs with regard to the implementation of a number of specific directives designed to deal more appropriately and transparently with incidents of racism on local parks pitches. The FTF also encouraged the establishment of partnership work with local authorities to this end.

The FA was also ‘encouraged’ by the FTF to support schemes in partnership with other local agencies, such as professional club Football in the Community
programmes, and local authorities and other localised initiatives aimed at increasing participation in football amongst minority ethnic communities. In terms of playing the game, most prominently, the FTF report recommended that on-field racism be reclassified as an immediate red card offence (despite some consternation over this issue during discussion within the main FTF group), and that professional football clubs should review their scouting procedures better to incorporate minority ethnic communities within this framework of young player recruitment.

In terms of watching the game, the FTF was keen to recommend an immediate change to legislation regarding racist chanting in order to incorporate more individualised expressions of abuse and to call for a wholesale review of stewarding procedures, including more training on awareness of what constitutes racism and the better monitoring and enactment of legislation regarding racist activity in football stadia. In particular, the FTF recommended a series of proposals to help professional football clubs better 'connect' with their local minority ethnic communities and to open up the core structures of the club in ways which are more in accordance with the principle of equal opportunities. Much of this work with professional clubs was to be centred on the activities of Kick It Out and to be achieved through the development of multi-agency partnerships at the local level.

The FTF report on racism and its associated recommendations received a cautious welcome from amongst the media, fans and other bodies from within the game (Lindsey, 1998; Brown, 1998). There was a broad consensus of approval for the recommendations regarding the re-classification of racism as a red card offence on the field of play and for changes to legislation regarding racialised chanting and a more general tightening up of ground regulations regarding spectator behaviour. There was a swift response by the FA in consultation with FIFA, the Government, and the FA Premier League and Football League with regard to the implementation of these respective changes. However, player-to-player racial abuse still exists and seems largely to go unpunished by referees of the authorities (FARE, 2001). Prosecutions for individual acts of spectator racism remain very low indeed, and are at odds with other reports on likely levels of fan-on-fan racism (NCIS, 2002). This latter point also alludes to issues of stewarding and policing racism at football grounds and the efficacy of recent changes made within the stewarding industry on
this score (Football League et al, 1998; 1999). The way in which racism is policed at football grounds will be examined in greater detail in chapter four.

In general, however, the FTF report and recommendations provided a broad framework for more local action against racism. A small number of local projects - the Foxes Against Racism scheme in Leicester, for example (see chapter 6) - also used the findings of the report and its recommendations as a template for monitoring and addressing racism in football locally, at both the professional and amateur level. In this sense, the FTF report did provide a stimulus for a limited number of new local partnerships and campaigns to begin to take these issues forward. As Kick It Out campaign co-ordinator, Piara Powar, reflects:

‘In the end, the report was fairly good in some areas and a little weaker in others. I suppose people might accuse us of being pedantic for saying so, but it could have been tighter in general, but it was out there I suppose, and was interesting and ultimately I think the process was such that it was positive’ (Interview with Piara Powar 9/5/02)

Piara Powar’s review of the FTF report on racism here is in itself instructive and perhaps reflective of what we might describe as the ‘weary pragmatism’ of long term anti-racist campaigners in this area in that it implicitly alludes to the constant round of negotiation and renegotiation with the football authorities and also here with Government, firstly: to, get the issue of racism on the agenda at all at these levels; and secondly, to try to achieve an ongoing commitment from the governing bodies to investigate and offer ‘solutions’ for dealing with football racism. Further, Powar’s comments also suggest that, the coming together of different football bodies to agree an FTF report on racism has to be seen in a positive light, almost irrespective of the amount of real commitment change it managed to produce. Others might disagree. However, his grudging pragmatism does not preclude, of course, more ‘constructive criticism’ of the report and of the whole FTF initiative:

‘I think, unquestionably, the whole process was one where, inevitably, some of the starker recommendations and some of the starker observations were going to be watered down. Generally, the way we [Kick It Out] saw it was that the report covered, very well, some of the basic problems and offered some of the basic solutions to those problems. But in terms of addressing institutionalised problems of racism - in terms of addressing things like the
lack of Asian players, black managers and so on - it had very little to say on those issues' (Interview with Piara Powar 9/5/02).

Powar’s comments, here, clearly reflect wider concerns that whilst issues of institutional practices of exclusion were raised vehemently by some groups at the FTF regional meetings, in written submissions to the FTF and by some FTF members themselves, the FTF final report on racism and its associated recommendations did not reflect fully the strength of feelings articulated in these key areas (Brown, 1999; Back et al, 2001; Garland and Rowe, 2001). For Back et al (2001) it is the lack of specificity in many of the recommendations with respect to issues of ‘representation’ and ‘equity’ that rendered such proposals relatively meaningless in the context of the non-recognition of institutional barriers to exclusion by the games’ governing bodies and by professional football clubs. Further, the ignorance of and resistance to a broader understanding of the way in which the normalisation of whiteness lies at the centre of the structural make-up of football institutions and the concomitant problematisation of ‘other-ness’ within these rigid mono-cultural frameworks, serves to define the intervention of the FTF in monolithic terms and therefore limits its scope as a tool for radical structural change in the game (Back et al, 2001: 201).

For Joss Johnson of Leicester-based ‘black’ amateur club, Highfield Rangers, the FTF report and its recommendations rendered relatively benign the expressions of real concerns about racism raised during the FTF consultation process:

‘They were noted [concerns about racism] by sheer nature of the fact that the whole issue itself meant that they couldn’t go unnoticed. But in hindsight, to look back in the context in which they were noted, the way clever linguists are able to dilute the depth of feeling about the report and highlight a number of main issues to do with access, opportunities, feelings of belonging and being a part of the football fraternity as an ethnic minority, as black and Asian people. However, [they do so by] not saying enough about the draconian, institutionally discriminatory, covert practices that were going on’ (Interview with Joss Johnson 5/2/02).

To some extent, the very generality of many of the recommendations featured within the FTF report are likely to be a reflection of the constant demand to broker consensus between often diametrically opposed groups within the FTF – and to produce programmes and policies which, above all else, were acceptable to the
institutions within the sport. As has been suggested previously, the FTF in many ways reflected the centrist political philosophy of Blair’s ‘Third Way’ an approach that requires that all bodies to come together to seek out mutually agreeable solutions to perceived social problems. This kind of ‘Blairite communitarianism’ has its roots in the theorising of social and political theorists such as Anthony Giddens (1994; 1998; 2000) and has, during the present period of New Labour government, also been manifest in the growth in the number of government-directed ‘quangos’, the general favouring of approaches to ‘governance at a distance’, the promotion of ‘stakeholder’ agendas, and in the encouragement of processes of self-regulation in the banking industry, in the finance markets and in the media with regard to codes of practice drawn up by the Press Complaints Commission. It is explicitly not about government interventionism at all, or about corporatism or legislative change, but is premised on a kind of social osmosis, which, ‘does not rely on new rules or regulations or new acts of Parliament’, but is ‘about creating a change in culture in the country’ (Levitas, 1998: 117).

However, the lack of real specificity in the wording of the FTF recommendations on racism (which, arguably, only occurred with reference to those recommendations directed at the football authorities and which mask real accountability) also reflect the distinct power imbalance within the main FTF and the alleged lines of direct communication outside of FTF systems between the football authorities, the FTF Chair and Government of the kind alluded to earlier in this chapter. These general views are succinctly summarised by former FTF member and fans’ representative Adam Brown, who comments:

'I think it is a weakness of all the FTF reports that it is often worded generally and in a tone that doesn’t really bite the bullet. I think that was again a product of how the thing was set up and the philosophy behind running it which was trying to achieve consensus. It wasn’t going to say the FA is institutionally racist. There was no way the FTF was going to say that, even though some of us might have wanted to say that. Certainly I think it could have been a lot stronger' (Interview with Adam Brown 5/4/02)

For FTF member and Observer journalist, Emma Lindsey, the FTF report on racism was:
‘A palliative document, so bland as to be innocuous. So innocuous as not to bother too much the brows of the people who really matter: those who sit in football’s boardrooms, shuffle along the corridors of Lancaster Gate and, ultimately, control the way the nation’s game is played, on and off the pitch’ (The Observer 29/3/98).

Findings from an evaluative research report on the FTF recommendations (Bradbury, 2001) suggest that many professional football clubs have offered a limited response at best to the implementation of anti-racism measures outlined in the 1998 Football Task Force recommendations (see chapter 4). Concerns also remain about the extent to which local County FAs deal with incidents of player and fan racism with the appropriate force and transparency and that there has been little impetus from the national FA since 1998 to help to this end. The way in which one local project in Leicester has struggled to engender support from either the local County FA or the national FA to help implement recommendations laid out in the national FTF with respect to the development of an anti-racist ‘sports charter’ to cover local authority owned pitches will be examined in greater detail in chapter 6.

The relative lack of progress in producing new approaches to dealing with racism at local, grass roots, levels is, in part, a consequence of the ‘federated’ structure of the Football Association, which offers a high level of autonomy and independence to its representatives at the local level. New equity strategies emanating at national FA levels may offer a new direction in this regard, though implementation at regional levels remains a difficult issue.

Given the relatively ‘closed’ structures of the selection processes onto local County FA committees and then onto the national FA Council – and also the generally diminishing interest in voluntary activity of this sort - it is hardly surprising that few of the present national FA Council is young and none is drawn from a minority ethnic background. ‘Positive action’ to make more representative the administrative structures of the FA at local and national levels is also part of the new equity agenda at Soho square. How such strategies are actually operationalised remains very much to be seen.
4. Conclusion

The, at best, uneven, implementation of the recommendations laid out in the FTF report on racism in football has, perhaps, offered an interesting insight into the forms of governance which operate within and around the national game. That, on the one hand, a small number of groups at the local and national level have taken the opportunity to develop strategies within the framework of the FTF recommendations through legislative practice, or through less prescriptive partnership approaches to dealing with issues of racism in the game, offers some potential positive outcomes. So, too, does the extent to which the FTF processes placed the issue of racism more centrally on the national and local football agendas, albeit only briefly. On the other hand, the FTF conception and approach also continues to proffer simplistic and overly-narrow conceptions of racism and the 'racist fan' (see Back et al, 1998; 2001; Garland and Rowe, 2001). These simplistic and narrow conceptions of racism as a product of individual spectator misbehaviour sit in stark contrast to key sociological arguments laid out in Chapter One and which can be categorised as emanating from a broad racialisation perspective. Namely, that the limited understanding of racism as a unitary phenomenon negates any broader conceptualisation that recognises the complexity and diversity of racisms and their often contradictory character.

The lack of any meaningful engagement here post-1998 by the football authorities and football clubs in particular might, in part, be due to the historical insularity of the football industry and the strictures of defensive public relations that tends, comfortingly, to define racism as 'out-there' (with fans) but not 'in-here' (with football institutions) in terms of the everyday processes and practices that might unconsciously or otherwise exclude minority ethnic communities from a more equitable role in the football industry. Further, the lack of meaningful engagement with the FTF and its key recommendations by the football authorities and professional football clubs might also suggest this process has engendered little disruption to the centrality and permanence of white hegemonic structures of English football governance identified in Chapter One. However, for some commentators, the problematic responses of the game with regard to the implementation of the FTF recommendations lies in the way in which the FTF was very consciously structured.
It lacked statutory powers and favoured self-regulation, which inevitably meant a preference for a ‘Third Way’ approach to issues of governance rather than the sort of direct government intervention favoured by some supporters’ groups:

'I think the over-riding problem with it was that I couldn’t see any means of enforcement and that was the problem all the way through the first three reports. It was suggesting some good things that clubs, for example, could do but without any compunction on them to do it, or without any real belief that they should be doing it. I would say its not been effective. The reason it has not been effective has been partly because of the nature of the body itself, which affected the nature of the report, but partly because there is no enforcing authority and without that football clubs are not going to change’ (Interview with Adam Brown 5/4/02)

The FTF seems to exemplify the elusive ‘third way’ approach to shaping policy. Included in this bulging and rather discomforting ‘Big Tent’ were an ex-Tory Cabinet Minister, a left wing Labour Minister, a range of football bodies, a high media profile and an apparent determination that ‘the community’ - in this case the football community - comes up with its own solutions without the necessity to call directly upon government (Brown, 1999:75). The concept of ‘community’ here is designed to bridge the gap between the anti-social individualism of the Tories and the ‘strong state’ approaches of the old Left. As Tony Blair himself told the Guardian (23 March, 1995):

'People don’t want an overbearing state. But they do not want to live in a social vacuum either. It is in the search for this different reconstructed, relationship between individual and society that ideas about community are to be found. Community implies a recognition of inter-dependence but not overwhelming government power. It accepts that we are better equipped to meet the forces of change and insecurity through working together.’

In the case of the ‘community’ in football was as if the institutional conflicts between football bodies and between fans and administrators and also the institutional inequalities between such groups might be magically transcended through debate. It was doomed to fail.

The issue of the lack of enforcement of the FTF recommendations applies not just to the FTF report on racism but also, arguably, to the subsequent reports on disability,
community and commercialism and relate to the way in which the FTF was set up as a ‘recommendatory’ rather than as a regulatory body, and to its disappearance as soon as the final report was complete. The debates as to the efficacy of these contrasting approaches continue to rage in the popular and academic literature on football and governance (Hamil et al 1999; 2000).

In 2002, the Government, with the approval of the football authorities, set up the Independent Football Commission (IFC) to monitor and evaluate the way in which football bodies exercise their jurisdiction over the football industry, tellingly, with specific reference to issues of ‘customer care’. The IFC sees itself as an independent self-regulatory body that can monitor, evaluate and make recommendations to the football authorities with regard to improvements and performance. However, like the FTF, the IFC has no statutory power to enforce its own proposals or even to pick up on the recommendations laid out some four years prior with regard to the various FTF reports. At the time of writing, the IFC seems to have engendered little confidence amongst many members of the original FTF membership (outside of the football authorities) or with national and local ‘anti-racist’ campaigners. Its main function seems to be to ensure that complainants to the football bodies have their complaints dealt with efficiently and with courtesy. The focus here is determinedly on customer service rather than policy and strategy.

Finally, it is perhaps worth reiterating that the FTF recommendations were made with no administrative or legislative structures planned to ensure the implementation or the effective policing of its proposals. In short, the FTF was encouraged to make recommendations that the government refused to impose upon those bodies charged with the responsibility for their implementation. Piara Powar, for one, alludes to the frustration Kick It Out felt for government for not taking a stronger and clearer role in defining the processes by which the FTF report on racism and its associated recommendations might be taken forward and delivered at the national and the local level:

'I suppose one can understand that the body that makes the recommendations isn't necessarily the body that is then tasked with driving forward the implementation. I think that's the experience of a lot of reports whether, for example, it's to do with social disorder or social
cohesion, or whatever. What was clear is that where there is very little clarity in terms of how the report was going to driven forward and that should have been set out at the beginning of the process or somewhere along the process so that it was clearer to people. We don’t always need a report that’s full in its analysis. If those things alone are implemented it takes us down the road of tackling some of these problems quite significantly. But that didn’t happen. It seems to us that the report sat on the shelf for a long time. There was no continuing government drive to make sure it was implemented. Engaging with government on it was very difficult’ (Interview with Piara Powar 9/5/02)

After the publication of its four reports the FTF was disbanded and no replacement body was charged with monitoring the introduction or affects of its recommendations. Government may have commissioned the FTF to ‘think the unthinkable’ (Brown, 1999) but little attention seems to have been given to converting such thoughts into practical action. Perhaps more pointedly, for other FTF members the lack of government intervention and its apparent lack of practical interest in helping enforce the FTF recommendations was a disappointing consequence of the tendency for New Labour to seek consensus at every turn and to ‘back down’ in the face of market solutions and the power of business. The final comment of this section goes to the PFA Chairman Gordon Taylor, who offers a typically forthright and summary view on the issue:

‘It is not right that the Government can say: “That’s sport, we can’t interfere” because there is so many areas where they can. It was a real opportunity to make sure that the clubs were transparent and monitored. It was supposed to be an independent Football Task Force with Government. It was a chance, because the Government does have the authority to govern. I don’t believe they grasped the nettle, they opted out from grasping the nettle.’ (Interview with Gordon Taylor 8/5/02).

In the next chapter we move on to look at the national campaigns designed to address racism in football in England and analyse their structures and philosophies and evaluate their problems and also their successes.
Chapter Three

National Interventions and Racism in English Football

1. Early fan-based and political interventions against racism in English football.

Popular collectivist interventions against racism in football in England probably began in the 1970s as football stadia began to be marked as sites for incidents of mass racist chanting and more individualised forms of racist abuse from spectators that targeted black players, usually by reference to their skin colour (Vasili, 2000; Garland and Rowe, 1999; 2001; Back et al, 2001). At some football venues in England at this time, the National Front and the British Movement were actively engaged in the dissemination of racist literature and the recruitment of young, white, working class males (Williams, 1992). The early mobilisation of leftist political organisations at football in the late 1970s offered the first direct challenge to these twin themes of orchestrated racism and the activities of far right groups at English football. By 1979 the Anti-Nazi League for example, was encouraging local activists to show their presence at football grounds where the National Front and British Movement were known to be leafleting in a bid to combat the dissemination of right wing literature and provide a direct affront to these politically orientated activities (Williams, 1992).

Initially, professional football clubs were openly hostile to ANL - backed groups such as ‘Spurs Against the Nazis’ and ‘Orient Against the Nazis’. Also, many local club supporters probably agreed that such groups were, themselves, political agitators and ‘outsiders’ with no real understanding of the game and its social context. In the short term, these early political interventions at the local level may have had little meaningful impact beyond offering sport an opportunity to re-assert its a-political philosophies and by providing a direct physical challenge to far right activists.
However, the influence of political groups such as the Anti-Nazi League (ANL) and Anti-Fascist Action (AFA) may have had a more subtle, lasting consequence since many of the ideals of anti-racism and anti-fascism which were prominent in these early 'street level' interventions were also to be found later in the activism of 'alternative fan movements' that came to the fore in England from the mid-1980s onwards (Garland and Rowe, 2001). These local fan-based interventions had the advantage of contextualising opposition to racism in the game using strongly localised cultural understandings and discourses and through the broadly critical and largely irreverent style of the emerging supporter fanzine culture (Jary et al, 1991; Haynes, 1995). In many ways the emergence of local music and football fanzines and the anti-racist messages which featured in some of them — though see Moorhouse (1994) for another, very different view of fanzine culture — were reflective of earlier popular mobilisations against racism that had taken place at music venues from the late 1970s onwards. Jeff Davidson, one of the founders in the 1980s of the anti-racist Leicester City fan group ‘Foxes Against Racism’ (FAR) and editor of an ‘anti-racist’ fanzine of the time Filbo Fever, remembers the early influence of supporter fanzines:

‘The fanzine thing was familiar to us. We’d been involved in that kind of thing through punk and the whole alternative music scene. It was something that came relatively easy to us. It wasn’t just anti-racism, there was a load of other stuff about Leicester City. The kind of things that fanzines do. A bit critical, a bit supportive, hopefully a bit humorous as well. It’s a good way to get the message across. In with all the normal stuff was messages about anti-racism and getting supporters to say we don’t want this here at Filbert Street’ (Interview with Jeff Davidson 11/10/2000)

Further north, the Leeds United Fans Against Racism and Fascism (LUFARF) campaign developed from a collective of volunteers from Leeds Trade Union Council, Leeds Anti-Fascist Action and other broadly left-orientated Leeds United fans in response to rising levels of racist abuse at the Elland Road stadium and the presence of far-right groups in and around this venue on match-days in the 1980s (see, Holland, 1996). This activist group, through leafletting and the production of an early local report on football racism Terror on our Terraces (1987), and also through more directly confrontational methods, sought to disrupt the presence of far-right groups at football in Leeds and thus contribute to the reduction in overt racism among Leeds United fans. LUFARF also produced the explicitly anti-racist fanzine
Marching Altogether that featured narratives and imagery advocating both the ridicule of - and violence towards - racist fans and fascist groups, as evident in the regular cartoon strip ‘101 things to do with a Nazi Skin’.

A total of eighteen free fanzines were produced at Leeds between 1988 and 1993 and the general campaigning of the LUFARF group was probably a feature in the reduction of overt racist expression amongst Leeds fans at that time, although the sometimes ‘strident’ nature of their campaigning also engendered a problematic relationship between LUFARF and rather conservative Leeds United Football Club (Holland, 1996). The activities and philosophy of LUFARF drew significantly on the leftist political ideologies of a significant section of its membership, some of whom had also been active in Anti-Fascist Action (AFA), a ‘far left’ organisation which ‘is committed to fighting fascism both physically and ideologically’ (AFA Fighting Talk, 2000). AFA nationally has tended to recruit from predominantly white working class cohorts of young men, some of whom were already actively engaged within football hooligan subcultures, as one AFA activist explains:

‘The thing is you get people ready made. If they come from football they know how to deal with the police, they understand the gang mentality, they know how to fight and understand the psychology of the other mob’. (‘Jo’ an AFA activist, quoted in the Guardian 25/11/94)

Around this time, too, the Manchester United fanzine Red Attitude (see Back et al, 2001) also featured text and imagery that advocated a ‘no-nonsense’ approach to dealing with fans with racist and possibly even fascist sympathies, and drew its ideological and financial support from a section of the AFA membership. Whilst, for some activist fan groups of this kind, the engagement with direct action approaches advocated by AFA had real resonance, in terms of its effectiveness in challenging far right groups ‘on the ground’, for some fan-based anti-racist groupings at other clubs, campaigning against racism required a greater sensitivity to the nature of local fan cultures, and were also much less overtly political in their orientation. At Leicester City, for example, it was football affiliation, rather than political commitment which was the key to popular campaigning against supporter racism:
'I'd been around AFA and that kind of stuff, although it [Foxes Against Racism] wasn't politically motivated. I mean, a bit later on some SWP [Socialist Workers Party] tried to get involved but we didn't want that, it was just to do with football for us. Most people have been supportive. You get the odd comment but no-one has ever been attacked or anything. I mean we are all young men in our twenties and thirties and although we don't want any trouble, that probably helps' (Jeff Davidson, FAR activist and fanzine editor)

The activities of these locally based fan initiatives in campaigning against racism at a number of football venues was increasingly played out in the 1980s and early 1990s against the backdrop of national campaigning at a rather lower level by fans as part of the independent national Football Supporters Association (FSA). The FSA was formed in 1985 from a loose coalition of more reflexive local fan groups that had expressed a general dissatisfaction with the traditionally more conservative organised fan groupings and official supporters clubs at the local and national level (see, Taylor, 1992, on football supporters' clubs). The emergence of the FSA can also be viewed, in part, as a popular fan-based response to a perceived lack of direction and leadership in football which, it was alleged, had been complicit in failing to challenge the conditions which gave rise to fan hooliganism and stadium disasters, culminating in the Heysel Stadium disaster of 1985 and Hillborough in 1989 (R. Taylor, 1992; I. Taylor, 1991).

The FSA actively campaigned on a range of 'fan' issues and against what it claimed were the often misinformed and draconian responses of central government to problems of spectator misbehaviour at football in the 1980s. In doing so, the FSA sought to represent the concerns and the 'missing voice' of fans in debates about the governance of the sport and to promote the idea of an alternative and peaceful, but passionate, fan culture (Taylor, 1992). Importantly, the FSA was rhetorically and, to a limited extent at least, pro-actively opposed to racism in the game and this broad anti-racist stance has continued as a staple part of the activities of the organisation to the present day. The FSA had actively campaigned, for example, for an amendment to the 1991 Football (Offences) Act with regard to racist chanting and has had consistent representation on national anti-racist campaign management groups since 1996. The FSA was also a member of the Football Task Force group which produced Eliminating Racism from Football in 1998.
The FSA continues to campaign against racism in football domestically and with regard to support for the England national team, and in 1999 the FSA held an ‘anti-racist’ football event at the House of Commons along with support from the MSF trade union and with the patronage of Labour MPs. In 1994, the FSA was instrumental in producing the first (of three) national anti-racist fanzines, entitled ‘United Colours of Football’ and in distributing these free fanzines to fans at football venues nationally. This national fanzine featured articles from fans about the contribution of black footballers to the English game, the lack of Asians within the game as players and fans and a range of features produced by fans articulating their experiences and concerns with regard to racism in the game. The idea and execution of the ‘United Colours of Football’ fanzine came out of prior work in club fanzines designed to address issues of racism in the game at the local level.

Despite their limited success in mobilising popular fan resistance to overt forms of racism at football, local interventions against racism of these kinds might also have unconsciously contributed to limiting the parameters of debates around racism in football by focusing too exclusively on the ‘racist/hooligan couplet’, characterised by an overly-strong emphasis on the racist ‘folk-demon’ of the ‘nazi-skinhead’ (Back et al, 1998; 2001; Garland and Rowe, 2001). Back et al (1998; 2001) further suggest that the emphasis on racist caricature represented in fanzine-style publications and leftist political campaigning in football has led to the underplaying of the more banal, inconsistent ‘respectable’ racism committed by those fans – older supporters, middle class fans, women and children - who do not fit the familiar typology of the racist archetype. Whilst the limited focus of ‘activist’ fans might have served to generate some popular mobilisation and tacit support for fan activities against racism, amongst the wider formations of local club support it has probably also served to provide ‘ordinary’ fans with a degree of comfort about the phenomenon, since racism becomes displaced onto a familiar fan type without challenging or disrupting ideas about the everyday ‘routine’ racism that might form an integral - if largely unacknowledged - feature of normative fan culture.

For some activist fan groups there has also been a lack of clear separation between ‘anti-racism’ and ‘anti-fascism’ agendas, the latter of which, whilst a credible political struggle in its own right, ultimately suffers from a misconceptualisation of
the multifarious nature of racisms in British society (Bonnett, 2000). More specifically, this limited approach to understanding the heterogeneity of racisms and their expressions in English football presents racism in singular and monolithic terms. The tactics of physical confrontation advocated by groups such as AFA and in the narratives of some explicitly anti-racist and anti-fascist football fanzines has often mirrored the tactics of the former 'street level' political orienteering formerly most commonly associated with the National Front and British Movement and, more recently, in the paramilitary presentational style of extreme far right groups such as Combat 18 (see Back et al, 2001). The macho and bullish approach to dealing with issues of racism at football and elsewhere and personified by some anti-racist and anti-fascist groups has probably also served to alienate many, more non-violent, supporters from participation in activities designed to oppose racism in the game.

The philosophy of direct action advocated by some fan groups are often rooted in ideological proclamations and the psychological predispositions of leftist splinter politics that are explicitly opposed to the establishment of productive relationships between fans and clubs in the form of participatory multi-agency groupings designed to engender common approaches to dealing with issues of racism (AFA Fighting Talk 2000). This isolationist approach is rooted in a distinctly anti-capitalist political agenda and, given the inevitability of commercialism and the highly corporate nature of football in the late-modern era, it is also ultimately self-defeating in this arena.

We are ready now to move, in a broadly chronological way, towards an analysis of the emergence of national multi-agency interventions against racism in football in England and to offer some evaluation of the philosophy and action of these national programmes.

2. The CRE/PFA ‘Kick It’ and the AGARI ‘Lets Kick Racism/Respect All Fans’ Campaign

In 1993 the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), in association with the Professional Footballers Association (PFA), launched the first national ‘Lets Kick
Racism Out of Football' campaign. The CRE had, for some time, been concerned about the levels of racial harassment and racial violence targeted at minority ethnic communities in the wider society and the ongoing problem of racism and racialised exclusion in sport and, more specifically, racism in English football. For the CRE, the prospect of working closely with the PFA on the development of a national anti-racist campaign afforded the opportunity to directly address young people on issues of racism through the PFA’s Football in the Community scheme that had first developed, regionally, at six clubs in the North West in 1986, but which, by 1992, was a feature at over 80 professional football clubs (see Williams and Taylor, 1994). The ‘Football in the Community’ (FIC) scheme was, and continues to be, managed by the PFA’s Footballers Further Education and Vocational Training Society (FFE/VTS) and was argued to be perfectly positioned for such work as a conduit to young people through its staple activity of community ‘out-reach’ football coaching work. Further, two of the five original aims and objectives of the FIC scheme were to 'promote closer links between professional football clubs and the community' and 'to involve minority and ethnic groups in social and recreational activities' and there had been some early successes in this respect at some specific FIC projects in Leeds and Leicester and at Manchester City and Millwall (Williams and Taylor, 1994).

For the PFA, the development of their own role in a national ‘anti-racist’ campaign was primarily rooted in the organisation’s concerns about the levels of racist abuse from fans aimed at the growing number of black players in the game. By the early 1990s it was argued that black players accounted for around 20% of the PFA membership at that time (SNCCFR, 2001). Interestingly, these PFA concerns and grievances about the racist abuse of black players did not typically emanate from black players themselves, probably because of the overtly masculine modes of presentation and image management within football's normative occupational culture and the concern among black players to avoid the 'troublemaker' label in a football industry largely characterised by it's mono-cultural whiteness at the level of coaching, management and administrative governance (see Hill, 1989).

Anecdotal evidence, from a number of black former players, contained in popular and academic texts (Cashmore, 1982; Hill, 1989; WSC, 2000; King, 2000; Back et al, 2001) certainly alludes to the presence of racial 'banter' and racial abuse across a
range of football environments, from the terraces to the training fields as black players began to make their mark in significant numbers in the professional game in England. By the early 1990s the PFA, with a number of black former players by now in senior administrative positions within the association, had begun to express public frustration about the response of the sport’s governing bodies to the issue of racism in the game or to take appropriate action to address the problem. This position probably reflects, in part, power struggles in the sport between the PFA and other bodies, the less ‘corporatist’ ideologies of the PFA, and the role of the PFA in funding, supporting and delivering grass roots ‘community’ initiatives at club level—though few workers employed on PFA schemes were, themselves, black (Williams and Taylor, 1994; PFA, 2001). The opportunity to work closely with the CRE in order to begin to both highlight and address issues of racism within the game was duly accepted by the PFA, as its Chief Executive, Gordon Taylor, recalls:

‘The police had a view that if you didn’t put what had happened in the papers then no-one felt it was happening. I felt it needed more than that. It needed highlighting and facing up. With anti-racism we felt we shouldn’t hide it under the carpet as though it doesn’t exist and it will go away. So we wanted to face it up front and we felt more comfortable being with the CRE because that was what they were about’ (Interview with Gordon Taylor, Chief Executive of the PFA, 8/5/02).

At the beginning of the 1993/94 season the CRE/PFA ‘Let’s Kick Racism Out of Football’ campaign was officially launched with additional financial support from the Football Trust and with the rhetorical support, at least, of around forty professional football clubs. The campaign set out a nine-point action plan (see appendix) aimed at professional clubs. This was largely symbolic in nature ‘requiring’ clubs, for example, to: make pro-active statements in match-day programmes, over PA systems and on advertising hoardings outlining their opposition to racism; inform fans of the disciplinary measures (usually ejection) that would be enacted by the clubs against the perpetrators of racist abuse. The nine-point plan was supported by high profile poster campaigns and the production of a free educational ‘Kick-It’ magazine that was targeted at a youth audience.

The awareness raising success of the CRE/PFA ‘Let’s Kick Racism Out of Football’ campaign soon attracted interest from the governing bodies of football and other
football related agencies and by the beginning of the 1995/96 season a broad multi-agency grouping had been established to take the campaign forward under the moniker the 'Advisory Group Against Racism and Intimidation' (AGARI). This multi-agency group emerged partly as a response to a number of high profile incidents of racism-related disorder that had taken place in 1995, including the forced abandonment of an Ireland -v- England 'friendly' in Dublin when alleged England 'loyalists' and right-wing agitators fought and threw missiles, and Eric Cantona's violent response to alleged racial abuse at a game between Manchester United and Crystal Palace at Selhurst Park. In particular, these incidents prompted the disciplinary arm of the English game, the FA, to become involved in what was, at that time, a near unique example of multi-agency co-operation in football. As Mark Sudbury, now head of FA Public Affairs and original AGARI steering group member, recalls, perhaps a little idealistically:

'It was clear that the FA needed to be involved. But it wasn't just a case of the FA needing to be involved, the whole of football needed to be involved. I think the driving principle was to make this thing work, to get the real focus on it that was required we had to get everybody around the table. It was a unique process at that time because all those different parts of football weren't talking about anything. They certainly weren't sitting around a table agreeing with each other about anything. Those first few meetings that I went to were, in some ways, quite amazing, because you had people from the highest levels of the game coming together and agreeing on a way forward on this issue in a really unprecedented way' (Interview with Mark Sudbury, Head of Public Affairs at the FA 9/5/02).

At the explicit request of the Football League and with rather more tacit approval from other key members of the newly formed AGARI steering group, the campaign's remit was also broadened to incorporate opposition to other forms of 'anti-social' behaviour. So the new campaign was actually launched at the beginning of the 1995/96 season not with an explicit focus on racism but rather under the twin themes of 'Lets Kick Racism' and 'Respect All Fans'. With additional funding from the FA and the FA Premier League alongside that of the CRE, PFA and Football Trust and public support from 91 out of 92 professional clubs - York City declined to be involved - the 'Lets Kick Racism/Respect All Fans' campaign set about raising awareness and dealing with racism and discrimination and also its stated aim of creating a 'welcoming' environment at games for supporters from all backgrounds.
The new campaign proceeded over the following twelve months to maintain a high profile media presence through the staging of a number of regional and national launches and events and was occasionally supported by players - PFA members, of course - who showed an increased willingness to speak out publicly against racism and to offer backing for the campaign in this new era of the marketing and promotion of ‘new’ football (King, 1998). Occasionally in these public events black players themselves would connect racism with other forms of abuse – about hair colour or weight – as Ian Wright did in one of the London launches. The campaign produced youth orientated magazines and posters and also sponsored an Arc Theatre Company production ‘Kicking Out’ a drama based on racism in football which played to an audience of around 130,000 young people nationally.

Further, this new national campaigning provided the catalyst for a number of local initiatives aimed at addressing issues of racism in the game at the local level. For Gordon Taylor of the PFA, the measurable success of these early national campaigns was to be evaluated less in terms of its immediate impact on racism and more in terms of slowly raising awareness and reshaping attitudes among fans. Did the ‘Kick It’ and AGARI campaigns have a major effect?

*I don’t think it was strong, I think it was more like a tide coming in to the beach. That suddenly, almost imperceptibly, racism started to go out of the game to that extent. It had been, if you imagine, like some roaring breakers out there, it was horrendous. And suddenly it calmed and there started to be a different atmosphere in the games*. (Interview with Gordon Taylor, Chief Executive of the PFA, (8/5/02).

Taylor, of course, almost certainly overstates the longer-term impact of the new campaigns. Back et al (1996; 2001) offer some useful, critical evaluation with regard to the development and focus of these early national ‘anti-racist’ interventions and expresses some concerns over the problematic tendency of these campaigns to equate racism solely within a wider framework of anti-social behaviour. Again, the familiar ‘racist/hooligan couplet seems prominent here – ignoring, for example, the role of young black men in some hooligan gangs (Giulianotti, 1999: 161) - and its imaging helped mobilise popular support in opposition to a universally identifiable ‘out-
group' that was most commonly associated with far right political organisations (Back et al, 2001:101).

These presumed sources and associations for football racism had led, of course, to the broadening of the AGARI campaign to deal, also, with issues of anti-social behaviour, and the problematic lack of separation between issues of 'racism and intimidation'. Again, these early national interventions seemed to remain conceptually blinded to the heterogeneity of racisms and the forms of discriminations that affected the game, both inside clubs as well as among football crowds.

This rather limited understanding of the complex and diffuse ways in which racisms become manifest within football culture — and, indeed, also inform the cultural properties of supporter rivalries (Giulianotti, 1999: 162) - and the focus in the new campaign on wider anti-social behaviour may have partly emanated from the concern of the sport's administrators to be seen to be busily 'cleansing' football of the social ills connected with spectator misbehaviour which were perceived to have dogged the sport's development — and the market potential of football - in the 1970s and 1980s. This wider focus on the regulation of spectatorship and the attempt to 'police-out' more unruly aspects of spectator behaviour might also be viewed as part of a broader commercial imperative to 'sanitise' the game in the late-modern era, as the sport explored new spectator markets at home and abroad. The sharper distinctions drawn here between 'traditional' supporter styles and so-called 'new fandoms' were also supplemented by new legislation for managing and regulating stadium space (Nash, 2000; Giulianotti, 1999).

The 1991 Football (Offences) Act and the amended 1999 Football (Offences and Disorder) Act criminalized, respectively at football, 'chanting of an indecent and racialist nature' and more individual acts of spectator racism. For some organised fan groups - such as the libertarian LIBERO (see, Brick, 2000) - these new regulatory practices were reflective of the emergent tensions between new forms of social regulation of mass spectatorship and the autonomy of spectator formations to express their fandom in more traditionally robust and 'authentic' ways. As Allijarah (2001) suggests:
'Over the past decade football has become the most regulated leisure activity in Britain. The government should appeal all legislation that criminalizes football fans for expressing their passion. Football fans should be free to shout what they want, drink what they want, and stand if they want' (Allijarah in ‘Spiked-online’ 7/6/01)

For LIBERO – as for Ian Wright – apparently racialised abuse directed at players by fans is seen as a staple part of fan culture and is akin to other kinds of abuse which draws attention to specific physical characteristics, such as player with ginger hair or players who are perceived by fans to be overweight (LIBERO, 1997). The development of legislation designed to eradicate – or at least challenge - forms of racially orientated abuse is viewed from this perspective as a denial of free speech and is an integral part of a broader discourse of anti-racist ‘do-goodery’ that leads ‘to the erosion of the civil liberties of football fans’ (Brick and Allijarah, 1997; Allijarah 2001).

This approach to ‘reading’ racism at football arguably also shares some parallels with aspects of Robson’s (2000) detailed and sociological ‘resistance thesis’ whereby elements of spectator racism among Millwall fans are coded as strategic tools of opposition and partisanship aimed at both rival fans and bourgeois sensibilities produced out of a durable core of practices, sensibilities and orientations in working class communities. This performative manliness of ‘Millwallism’ is a particular and historically grounded form of social awareness built around concerns for masculinist authenticity and the ridicule of outsiders for their lack of toughness and/or metropolitan London-ness. At football, these expressive forms –including racism - are also mobilised in opposition to the new, more disciplined, family and consumption-oriented audiences and practices which are now increasingly favoured by the sport’s new marketing elites.

It can be argued of course that the approaches of both LIBERO and Robson to issues of spectator racism and its interpretation offer a too limited and a rather static conception of ‘authentic’ fan culture that fails to take into account the complexity of spectator formations and fails, too, to draw a sufficient distinction between the ‘passion’ of spectatorship and the active mobilisation of racist expression. Does regulation against racist expression in itself pacify football crowds and offer up the
new disciplinary regimes which ‘reduce’ football crowds to audiences, and football supporter to more ‘customers’? We can agree with Giulianotti (1999: 164) that seeking technical solutions to racism, via the penal code, for example, should always be subordinate to a ‘full, moral and intersubjective debate involving all football people on the social principles of the game’, but we should also not be surprised that Piara Powar of the national Kick It Out campaign argues differently on the issue of the policing of racism and spectator culture:

'I don't subscribe to that view that club's implementing anti-racist policies have a less a vociferous crowd. There is a very clear line to be drawn between standing on seats and singing for ninety minutes and standing on seats and singing and chanting racist abuse’ (Interview with Piara Powar 13/10/99)

Further, for LIBERO to argue that it is patronising to minority ethnic fans to try to ‘protect’ them from forms of racial abuse, yet, simultaneously, to define such abuse as merely ‘singing the wrong song’ does some considerable disservice to those fans and players from minority ethnic backgrounds for whom targeted abuse of this kind might have deeply harmful emotional and psychological effects and which might even lead to their racialised exclusion from football cultures (Moran, 2000). This last point is made in a wide range of research findings (Holland, 1992; Pinto et al, 1997; Bains et al, 1995) that alludes to the experiences of minority ethnic football fans, who cite the incidence of racist abuse in crowds as one of the reasons they do not attend games at professional football clubs. More recently, an FA-sponsored survey on the State of the Nation, suggested that over 80% of Asians questioned highlighted fear of racism as a key reason why they do not attend football matches (FA, 2002).

Nonetheless, that such opposition to regulatory and legislative anti-racist practice has emerged from some fan groups alludes further to the problematic nature of early national anti-racist initiatives. That is, these campaigns did tend to adopt perhaps an overly moralistic approach and a profoundly national emphasis to dealing with racist fan behaviour that largely ignored the specificities of local fan cultures and negated any sense direct ownership of such campaigns by clubs and fans themselves (see AGARI, 1996). The tendency to conceptualise racism at football within very narrow terms of reference with respect to racist caricature also, probably, led to an under-
recording and under-reporting of fan racism at football – in crowds, in dressing rooms, on the field. This combination of narrow terms of reference, a widely held perception that dealing with racism was also about ‘taming’ football crowds, especially young, male fans, and a relative neglect of ‘banal’ racism probably contributed to a sense that anti-racism campaigns at football were overplayed and were an attack on certain sorts of fan cultures rather than on racism per se (Guilianotti 1999; Garland and Rowe, 2001). This might also account for the lack of focus for signs of racism on the internal structures of football clubs and football administration, where more institutionalised barriers are likely to persist. This overall effect further encourages a kind of ‘colour-blind’ perception inside the sport, whereby racism at football is attributed solely to the individual behaviour of specific kinds of spectators and is identified rather less with more embedded practices and histories of exclusion that might emanate from structural barriers within football clubs and the sport’s administrative bodies (see Bradbury, 2001).

The inadequacy of early national campaigning in addressing these broader structural issues of exclusion forms part of a wider discourse often utilised by football clubs and by the game’s administration, that denies the centrality of racism to the everyday processes of football culture, and it is this apparent denial of the racism within football institutions which can also lead to the commonly expressed view that anti-racism campaigns in sport are counter-productive: The logic of this position also asserts, in extremis, that focusing on racism among fans may actually stimulate racist behaviour in crowds, as an FA Premier League Club secretary told Garland and Rowe, 1999:47):

‘One of the thing that worries me about them (anti-racist campaigns) is that if you are not careful you can cause a problem that wasn’t always there...if you start talking and banging on about racism, which we don’t suffer from, we may then find that we’ve actually caused the problem’

These sorts of sensibilities might also account, in part, for the tendency of many clubs to offer only rhetorical and tokenistic support for the work of these early national ‘anti-racist’ campaigns. A survey of professional football clubs undertaken by McArdle and Lewis (1997) sought to ascertain the extent to which clubs had implemented three of the most basic measures entailed in the CRE/PFA ‘Let’s Kick
Racism Out of Football’ nine point plan, to which all clubs had previously proffered their support. With respect to strategies of inserting anti-racism messages in match-day programmes, the broadcasting of similar messages over the public address system and the use of perimeter advertising to indicate clubs support for the national campaign, McArdle and Lewis found that fewer than one in six (15%) clubs had implemented all three of these strategies; less than one third (32%) of clubs had implemented two of these strategies together and that less than half (45%) of all clubs surveyed had implemented only one of the above strategies. Five clubs (8%) had not enacted any of these three recommendations.

These findings suggest that many clubs were offering only rhetorical support and effectively paying ‘lip service’ to the nationally-driven campaigns to tackle football racism. In part, these club responses might also have been due to the restrictive philosophy and practices of these early national campaigns, which were largely limited to the symbolic promotion of nationally-driven messages of anti-racism, with little real understanding of the disparate local contexts in which such messages were disseminated. By 1997, these nationally co-ordinated interventions were to enter into a new phase with the establishment of *Kick It Out* a new body that aimed to deliver, *at the local level*, a national programme of anti-racism ‘on behalf of football’. It is towards an evaluation of the philosophy and practices of *Kick It Out* that we now turn.

3. *Kick It Out: the national campaign to ‘kick racism out of football’*

By the close of 1996 the AGARI campaign had arguably run its course in terms of its ability to achieve its (restricted) stated aim of raising awareness about issues of racism in the game. Also, the efficacy of its limited approach to addressing issues of racism in football was increasingly under scrutiny (AGARI, 1996). For some more key AGARI members the campaign needed to move on from the largely symbolic publicity-driven agenda of national campaigning to the establishment of a more intensive, focused and locally sensitive, action-orientated campaign that involved a much stronger working relationship with individual professional clubs and a remit to broaden the campaign beyond the most obvious focus on issues of spectator
misbehaviour. Accordingly, *Kick It Out* was established in 1997, with a broad remit to co-ordinate an ongoing national campaign against racism ‘on behalf of the football’. Its three full-time workers were charged with the responsibility of undertaking a broad-ranging programme of work in the following six key areas:

- **Professional Clubs** – To ensure the campaign maintains its profile amongst professional football clubs.

- **Young People** - Developing educational resources for public education campaigning amongst young people in schools, colleges and youth organisations.

- **Amateur Football** – Working with grassroots amateur football to raise awareness of, and develop programmes to eradicate, the problem of racism in parks football.

- **Asians in Football** – Promoting solutions to the marginalisation of Asians within the game.

- **Black communities** – Increasing the participation of local ethnic minority communities within professional football clubs.

- **European Football** – Highlighting the problem within European football and developing European anti-racist networks

(Source: *Kick It Out Annual Report, 1997/98*)

The establishment of *Kick It Out* was, to some considerable extent, premised on the allocation of funding for the new body from the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), the Professional Footballers Association (PFA), the Football Association (FA), the Football Trust and the FA Premier League. Initial funding amounted to around £50,000 per annum from each of these bodies with the exception of the Football Trust, which committed a first year sum of £25,000 before contributing £50,000 per annum from the second year of funding onwards. The funding of the project was initially to run for three years from 1997 to 2000, but the key funding bodies have since extended their commitment beyond this point and at the time of writing (August 2002) they all continue to fund *Kick It Out* on an annual rolling basis.
Since 1997 *Kick It Out* has also had some success in seeking out smaller pots of commercial funding and funding from the European Commission (EC) with regard to the Football Against Racism Europe (FARE) campaign and has helped a number of local projects obtain financial resources through its patronage. More recently, *Kick It Out*, in conjunction with the Football Foundation (formerly the Football Trust), has offered a number of smaller community chest grants to community based organisations to support their participation in the *Kick It Out* ‘National Anti-Racism Week of Action’. In August, 2002 *Kick It Out* was also working on an extensive business and development plan with the key intention of setting out clearly the intentions of the project both financially and in terms of its more practical aims and objectives for the forthcoming period. It was also investigating the benefits of assuming charitable status in order to seek funding for an extensive programme of educational work around racism in football.

### 3.1 The management structure of *Kick It Out*

*Kick It Out* is a multi-agency partnership made up of those organisations that had been a part of the earlier AGARI ‘Lets Kick Racism/Respect All Fans’ campaign. These include its funding bodies, the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), the Professional Footballers Association (PFA), the Football Association (FA), the Football Trust and the FA Premier League, alongside the other key partner organisations, the Football League, the Football Supporters Association (FSA), the League Managers Association (LMA), the National Federation of Supporters’ Clubs (NatFed), the Football Conference, the Association of Premier League and Football League Match Officials and the Football Safety Officers Association. *Kick It Out* has also sought expertise from outside the boundaries of the game through the involvement of the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Metropolitan Police in KIO policy making.

The ability of any working project to meet its stated aims and objectives is to some degree dependent upon the establishment of a clear and cohesive management structure in which the implementation and adherence to mechanisms designed to give support and supervision are necessary for the benefit of good working practice. To
this end, the *Kick It Out* management group is made up of all the project’s key stakeholders and has met regularly on a quarterly basis since the project’s inception, chiefly, to monitor the progress of the campaign and to make suggestions with regard to policy development of the project. In one sense, these meetings provide a forum for discussion around issues of racism for the key stakeholders and they allow the *Kick It Out* campaign co-ordinator to report back to the wider group on the problems and progress incurred as part of the day to day activities of the project. This management structure has had the advantage of affording the *Kick It Out* campaign co-ordinator the opportunity to present the philosophical aims and practical outcomes of the project to the management group in a clear, step-by-step, way that is intended to allay the residual fears - and the no small amount of defensiveness present amongst representatives of the game’s governing bodies and other agencies - with regard to dealing openly with issues of racism.

The levels of engagement with the central processes and practices of the *Kick It Out* project differ considerably across the range of representative organisations on the management group. It was clear from my own experience of attending one such management group meeting that whilst some representatives seemed strongly committed to utilising the forum as a sounding board or policy making body for the implementation of action-orientated initiatives, other members of the management group could, perhaps, best be described as ‘silent partners’.

At the same meeting I was asked to present research findings that suggested that professional football clubs had been slow to respond to the FTF 1998 recommendations regarding racism in the game (Bradbury, 2001). The response from the management group was illuminating and oddly reflective of the seating arrangements in the meeting room. At one end of the table, fan’s representatives, the PFA (who co-sponsored the research in question) and representatives of the CRE all appeared supportive of the findings and were keen to use the report as a springboard for further action by *Kick It Out* and its management group. In stark contrast there was defensiveness, denial, and even some open hostility from representatives of the sport’s statutory management bodies, the FA, the FA Premier League, the Football League, the League Managers Association and the Football Trust, at the opposite end of the meeting room table. This had clearly been a division that had been rehearsed
here on previous occasions. The remaining members of the management group said little and looked keen to move on to the next item on the agenda.

This personal reflection is useful if possibly unrepresentative gauged, as it is, from the perspective of an ‘outsider’s’ single snapshot of the affiliations, power struggles and loose coalitions that mark out the consultation process within football bodies in relation to dealing with issues of racism. Perhaps more importantly, this observation also alludes to the almost inevitable tensions which are likely to exist in a body such as Kick It Out given the interests at stake here and likely disputes about the most appropriate way to understand and deal with racism in the game allied to the determination of Kick It Out’s staff and a section of the management group to broaden the campaign, in order to move beyond the limited focus on spectator behaviour that characterised much of the work of earlier national interventions. Of course, the establishment of consensus amongst the different and opposed official bodies that make up the game – and, here, the Kick It Out management group - is much more easily mobilised against the construction of the usual racist ‘pariahs’.

Alternately, this sought out state of consensus becomes much more fragile and rather more likely to break down when questions are asked about funding and structural issues to do with the internal make up and practices of the organisations that make up the Kick It Out management group. The processes by which these tensions are routinely managed within Kick It Out are explained below in this frank appraisal by Kick It Out campaign co-ordinator, Piara Powar:

'I think the tensions with funders is part and parcel of the landscape really. I think if you are an active organisation that is pushing some of the issues that we are, inevitably you are going to come into conflict when you are criticising some of the funding organisations. When you have a relationship with an anti-racist organisation and have a relationship with those people who, politically speaking, may be part of the problem and, themselves, need to be addressing some key issues, that tension will always exist. Of course, part of that tension is the threat of the withdrawal of cash, the withdrawal of co-operation and so on. But generally, I think it works quite positively. We try and take people with us, as far as possible. Where that is not possible we do try and address that with them. Where that doesn’t happen we try to manage those conflicts as best we can. Some organisations, I think, recognise the fact that we are independent and need to be independent - politically
independent - more than others. Some representatives recognise that; some representatives of those organisations recognise that more than others'(Interview with Piara Powar 9/5/02).

It is perhaps worth looking a little more closely at some of the activities of Kick It Out and evaluating the extent to which the project has been able to address some of these management tensions in this respect

3.2 Kick It Out and educational practice and resources

As part of its ongoing focus on young people and education Kick It Out has produced a series of educational resources in the form of magazines, fact-sheets and a website facility. These have featured articles on: the exclusion of Asians in football; problems of racism in amateur football; the history of black footballers; and information about the Kick It Out campaign. They have largely been targeted at a youth audience. Importantly, these resources also highlight the work of a number of local campaigns and models of best practice designed to combat racism and exclusion from the game and offer the reader a clear insight of how issues of racism might impinge upon, and be generated by, football culture. This approach is aimed at generating an understanding of football racism that goes beyond simplistic and monolithic assumptions of racism as spectator misbehaviour, towards engendering a more critical and reflexive knowledge of the various manifestations of racism in the game and, accordingly, in the wider society.

These free magazines and fact-sheets have been produced in large numbers by the Kick It Out campaign and have been distributed to young people, nationally, through an established network of contacts in schools, colleges, youth centres, Football in the Community schemes, local anti-racist project and by some of the networks established by key members of the Kick It Out’s stakeholder group, including the Commission for Racial Equality and the Professional Footballers Association. Further, the dissemination of these resources has also been undertaken more directly by Kick It Out workers and volunteers at a number of high profile events and launches, such as at the promotion of the sponsored tour of the ‘Remember the Titans’ film about the integration of black and white young people in the civil rights
era of America. Over twenty different screenings of the film were supported by the presence of a number of professional players, suggestive of the close and co-operative working relationship between *Kick It Out* and the Professional Footballers Association.

The concept of 'role model', of course, rests upon an outdated and largely discredited functionalist model of socialisation which has been superseded by other modes of theorising social and cultural reproduction (Whannel, 2002). The process of identity formation today is more likely to focus on the relation between representations that 'speak to us all' and the processes which produce subjects which construct us subjects which can be 'spoken' (Hall & Du Gay, 1996: 6). Whannel (2002) has, thus, cautioned on the limited uses of sports stars as role models. The efficacy of utilising specifically *black* footballers as positive role models in relation to anti-racism has also been questioned by Garland and Rowe (2001), who argue that the acceptance and idolatry of black players by some white youth and the 'reverence' with which young people listen and learn from black players on anti-racism might not be transferred beyond the narrow arena of football.

As Back et al (1996) has argued, the subjective experiences and local knowledge of white youth in urban multi-cultures that generate inter-racial friendships and territorial solidarities might do little to disrupt their engagement with wider nationalistic ideologies at the macro-level of understanding that pertain to issues of cultural exclusivity and racialised boundary constructions. The engagement of white youth by black footballing 'heroes' who make very public anti-racist statements might not engender a consistent approach to challenging embedded racist pre-conceptions and the enactment of racialised beliefs and practices in other areas of social life in which white youth participate.

These concerns become much more apparent when the statements of players of all ethnicities are framed within a moralistic vernacular and are located in the discourse confined by the normative masculine framework of football playing culture that defines racism in simplistic terms and even as something that can be ignored. To some extent, the more sophisticated *Kick It Out* campaigns, by virtue of the production of a broad range of educational resources, have been able to move away
from singularly moralistic presentations of ‘anti-racism’ and also beyond the monolithic understanding and projection of messages that define and challenge racism of the sort that typically underpinned previous national campaigns. The north-east based *Show Racism the Red Card* campaign, that facilitates football-based anti-racist educational campaigning in schools and at youth venues in support of its use of a video carrying statements against racism from top players and managers, arguably offers a more limited, a more ‘moralistic’ approach, of this sort.

The value of the resources produced and distributed by *Kick It Out* is probably best illustrated by the imaginative and broad-ranging approach to anti-racist education utilised by local projects such as *Football Unites Racism Divides* in Sheffield, where local youth workers have incorporated *Kick It Out* resources into their mainstream activities in this area (see chapter 5). Findings from an evaluation of this Sheffield based project (Bradbury, 2001) suggest that the use of resources that feature positive images of professional footballers can, actually, be highly effective in engaging young people in programmes of anti-racist education and can provide educationalists and teachers with a useful avenue via which they can address issues that are often experienced as problematic by educators who might lack training and resources to help them instigate work of this kind. Speaking more generally on the issues of players as role models and on the benefit to young people - and to the PFA and its membership - in framing players in this way with regard to anti-racist strategies, the PFA chief executive, Gordon Taylor, offers some insightful comments:

'I often criticise the fact that the press say all players are role models, but there are times when they really can be. You don't expect players to be men of the church or whatever. I mean, where would you get a role model these days? But footballers are cast in that role. In such a thing as anti-racism it is something we've tagged onto, because footballers are seen as role models and they can speak out against it and school-teachers have said it can have a much better initial effect than anything that they can do' (Interview with Gordon Taylor 8/5/02)

More recently, *Kick It Out* has expanded its educational activities and has successfully established links with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Association for Citizenship Teaching to host a one-day conference at Old Trafford in 2002 for educationalists and those involved in anti-racist work. This
conference and its workshops brought together a range of educationalists, youth workers and representatives of local projects in football and other sports with a view towards seeking out ways of using football as a means of addressing anti-racism in an educational context. This has a particular resonance today, given that many educationalists are actively seeking to establish work against racism as a core activity within the broader ‘citizenship’ module now established as part of the national curriculum. Ways in which opposition to racism might be imaginatively and positively addressed in schools and colleges are also being encouraged now by central government.

*Kick It Out* has also forged closer links with many of the newly established ‘Study Support Centres’ now located at over forty professional football clubs in England. A key aim of these centres is to utilise the popularity of the football environment to deliver lessons on numeracy, literacy and ICT through professional, on-site, teaching. At some clubs these classroom facilities have been used successfully to engage ‘socially excluded’ young people and have incorporated anti-racist learning into lesson modules. The recent employment by *Kick It Out* of a key worker with experience of educational work that links issues of football, citizenship and anti-racism and the recent applications for education-specific funding by *Kick It Out* would suggest that this area of work is one which is likely to expand greatly in the future.

### 3.3 Kick It Out and efforts to combat racism in local football

*Kick It Out* has made a point of moving beyond the relatively narrow focus of previous national anti-racist campaigns with regard to issues of spectator behaviour in the professional game and to broaden its remit to include issues of racism in the local parks and amateur game. This shift in emphasis has been welcomed by the former Deputy Chief Executive of the PFA, Brendon Batson, who comments:

> ‘You are never going to advance the campaign if you keep it within a very narrow basis. Its all very well looking at the professional game, but there are forty thousand amateur teams out there. What are we going to do about that? We do know, in terms of racist abuse and incidents, it’s a lot
The Kick It Out campaign had becoming increasingly aware of incidents of racial abuse, racial harassment and racial violence that occur on local parks pitches around Britain including Manchester (Kick It Out, 1999) and Leicester (Williams, 1994) and West Yorkshire (Long, et al, 2000) and had raised these issues in forthright submissions to the Football Task Force (FTF) in 1997 (Kick It Out, 1998). Further submissions on this score from local 'multi-ethnic' amateur clubs in Leicester and Manchester, and the perceived inaction of local County Football Associations in dealing effectively with these issues, culminated in the FTF making a series of recommendations to the FA and to local County FAs on addressing racism at this level of the game.

Kick It Out has since pro-actively sought to engage local County Football Associations and local authority departments in local partnerships designed to implement the FTF recommendations, for example, via the establishment of anti-racist 'sports charters' to cover local authority owned parks pitches (FTF, 1998: pp. 20-21). In particular, Kick It Out has sought to assist and publicise two London-based partnerships as models of best practice. The London Borough of Hounslow, in conjunction with Middlesex County FA, initiated the first scheme of this kind under the moniker the ‘Level Playing Fields Initiative’ involving the signing by local clubs of an anti-racism declaration that is displayed across local council facilities and in Middlesex FA handbooks. The scheme also enables the local authority to withdraw pitches and to ban teams from local leagues if those teams are in breach of the regulations laid out in the charter.

This London scheme provided the blueprint for a similar one established later in Leicester through the auspices of the Foxes Against Racism project and this specific attempt to address issues of racism in the local game will be evaluated in greater detail in chapter 6. A similar but more comprehensive scheme has also been established in the London Borough of Greenwich entitled the ‘Sports Charter on Racial Equality’ (SCORE) scheme, that is focused more widely on all sports that utilise local authority leisure facilities.
In 1999 Kick It Out commissioned the Centre for Leisure and Sports Research at Leeds Metropolitan University to undertake a broad ranging research project to ‘explore people’s experiences of grassroots football and appraise the nature and extent of racism at this level’ (Long et al, 2000:5). In undertaking this study, researchers worked closely with the West Riding County FA on local football in the districts of Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield. The study involved survey research and qualitative interviews with a range of individuals and organisations in local football in the area, including: local County FA administrators; secretaries of the district associations and leagues; local authority development officers; coach trainers, referees, referee trainers; the secretaries of the referees societies; and local club secretaries. It also featured case studies of individual clubs, players and spectators.

The final report ‘Part of the Game? An examination of racism in grassroots football’ (Long et al 2000), revealed clear differences in the perceptions of the nature and extent of racism in grass roots football comparing players in West Yorkshire from different ethnic backgrounds. The research findings also indicated some very different experiences of racism among players of different ethnic backgrounds, which, in part, helped better explain some of the continued tensions which exist between ethnic minority players and local football authorities, within ethnic minority groups and between ethnic minority players and white players and spectators. The research alludes to the ‘non-recognition’ of the existence of racism amongst many white players and officials and also indicates the low levels of awareness of racism in local football amongst referees and administrators, despite some considerable evidence that racism remains a considerable problem in football in this area. The report concludes that: ‘Despite some confusion as to what constitutes racist behaviour, the research team were left in no doubt that it does occur (and) consequently, stronger measures are needed to address it’ (Long et al, 2000:9).

A similar, but smaller, more focused study of local club secretaries’ perceptions of racism in local football in Leicester (Bradbury 2002) offers broadly similar findings with regard to the perceived incidence of racism and levels of dissatisfaction amongst ‘multi-ethnic’ local football clubs, and the perceived apparent lack of enforcement of
existing disciplinary procedures designed to deal with racism in local football. These academic studies, along with a range of more anecdotal evidence from local football clubs that feature black and Asian players nationally (Williams, 1994; FTF, 1998; Kick It Out, 2000), allude to the extent of racism in amateur football and the perceived inadequacy of governance structures and practices at this level of the game for dealing with these issues. The scarcity of partnership approaches between local authorities and local County Football Associations designed to address racism at this level also illustrates some of the ongoing problems faced by Kick It Out in its work in this area.

An evaluation of one local partnership scheme – the Leicester Equality Through Sports (LETS) 'sports charter' - (Bradbury 2002) concludes that the local scheme, 'has been framed by respondents as a less than adequate response in dealing with these important issues' (Bradbury 2002:36). These locally specific findings also confirm the tendency of individuals working within County FA structures to understate or even deny the existence of racism in local football (FTF, 1998; Long et al, 2000) or to be slow in responding to the calls of the national campaign, other local partners or amateur clubs to review their existing practices and procedures.

The adoption of 'colour-blind' approaches to dealing with racism at this level and the sometimes near siege mentality displayed by some local County FAs when questioned on their policies and procedures by perceived 'outsiders' is compounded by the difficulties of intervention at the local level from the national FA H.Q. This is particularly significant given the FA’s lead role nationally in Kick It Out and its high public profile in promising to address ‘racialised exclusion’ within the FA core structures at national and regional level. As a result, Kick It Out agrees it has yet to make significant inroads into challenging racism in amateur football, beyond some significant awareness raising and its assistance in establishing local partnerships that have offered only a mixed response to dealing with issues of racism and racial exclusion at this level. Importantly, local research findings (Bradbury, 2002) would suggest that Kick It Out certainly has a mandate from local club secretaries to continue to extend the national campaign into the local parks football and Kick It Out’s own commitment to this area of work remains strong, despite the problematic and relatively ‘closed’ structures of the local governance of sport at this level and the
lack of any real resources and access points to effectively tackle the problem of racism in parks football.

3.4 Kick It Out and FARE: Tackling racism in football in Europe

The public focus on the rise of racism and xenophobia in Europe in recent years (see Merkel & Tokarski, 1996), often supported by the powerful electoral presence of right wing political parties, has in turn stimulated a significant mobilisation of anti-racist groups across Europe in order to help combat the rise of racism at the local, regional and national level. The sources and nature of racism at football in Europe is complex and varied, ranging from the rise of new nationalisms in the post-Soviet era, the hostility to migrants and asylum seekers and the longer established links between racism and the 'political' identities of supporter groups in parts of Western Europe (see Merkel & Tokarski, 1996; FARE, 2001).

In some European countries such as Italy, fan groups or 'ultras' have longstanding, overt 'political' affiliations to either left wing or right wing groupings and the incidence of physical confrontation between these fan groups has been a commonplace feature in the European football environment for some time (Roversi, 1994). In other countries, left wing fan groups and anti-racists have mobilised and sought to combat the extremes of racism and nationalism through a variety of street level and fan-based interventions (Podaleri & Balestri, 1998). The arguments for pan-European collaboration against racism in football led, in 1999, to a loose coalition of disparate European fan groups receiving EU funds to stage a three day event in Vienna, designed to develop a common strategy and policy against racism in football throughout Europe.

The conference was attended by over forty fan groups and anti-racist campaigns from thirteen European countries and one significant outcome of this event was the formation of the Football Against Racism in Europe (FARE) project. Kick It Out played a key role in the establishment of FARE and is currently placed as one of the seven key partner organisations of the FARE project alongside two other more
regional English projects, Show Racism the Red Card (Newcastle) and Football Unites Racism Divides (Sheffield) alongside the Austrian Different Colours, One Game (Vienna), the Italian Unione Italiana Per Tutti (Rome) and Progretta Ultra (Bologna), and the German Bundnis Aktiver Fessballfans (Berlin). The FARE project adopted an action plan, which, broadly speaking, calls for football governing bodies to recognise the seriousness of the problem of racism in football and to take greater responsibility for enacting ‘effective’ policies to eliminate racist behaviour from the game.

FARE has been active in the promotion of a series of international and more localised initiatives designed to raise awareness of, and take pro-active measures against, racism across Europe including, most prominently, the FARE ‘Week of Action’ in April 2001 which foregrounded the participation of club-based anti-racist projects and fan groups across Europe. The involvement of Kick It Out in the FARE project has engendered cross-European networking on the theme of addressing football racism as well as the dissemination and cross-fertilisation of ideas about models of good anti-racist practice undertaken by local projects and fan groups across Europe. This was particularly evident at the annual FARE conference hosted by FURD in Sheffield in February 2002. Further, Kick It Out has lobbied the European (UEFA) and world (FIFA) governing bodies of football on the issue of racism at the FIFA Congress in Buenos Aires in 2001 and at the United Nations World Conference Against Racism in Durban South Africa in 2001.

The most recent outcome of these new pan-European alliances have been the high profile adoption by the world and European governing bodies of ‘action plans’ and ‘new agendas’, which actually bear the hallmarks of some of the early national anti-racism campaigns in England. Such European-wide campaigns also tend to underplay national differences and national contexts and to understate the range and complexities of the agendas for the operation of xenophobia and racism when different cultures meet: the racist abuse levelled at England players in Slovakia, for example, against the routine abuse aimed by sections of England’s travelling support against rival national anthems and other representations of different national cultures. Adopting a position of public ‘opposition’ to racism at a cost of a few hundred thousand Euros is clearly also good symbolic ‘business’ for the global football
bodies. It helps evade ‘difficult’ questions, for example, about the lack of any reasonably funded community programme at major national football championships which might have as one of their aims work with minority ethnic communities. It might also deflect questions about employment policies in sport and the role of major sponsors in marketing the game to multi-racial audiences and also dominating stadium space.

3.5 Kick It Out and local partnership approaches to combating racism in professional football

A key element of the Kick It Out campaign is its new approach to working more closely with professional football clubs on local campaigns designed to address issues of racism. This much more intensive and grounded working process comes from the beliefs of the key workers at Kick It Out and from members of the management group of the requirement to move beyond the more symbolic national campaigning and promotion of ‘moralistic’ modes of address employed by earlier national interventions. There was a recognition here, too, that many professional football clubs, whilst offering rhetorical support for earlier campaigns had, in reality, done little to implement some of the most basic measures outlined, for example, even in the ‘Kick It’ nine point plan.

Kick It Out has helped establish localised anti-racist groups at professional football clubs that also feature key local agencies, such as local authorities, Racial Equality Councils and, importantly, representatives from minority ethnic community organisations and communities. Indeed, the establishment of these multi-agency groupings is a key mechanism via which Kick It Out has sought to engage local minority ethnic communities and begin to move to fulfil one of the campaign’s stated aims of ‘increasing the participation of local ethnic minority communities within professional football clubs’ (Kick It Out Annual Report, 1997/98). The premise here is that minority ethnic involvement produces dialogue between local black and Asian communities and clubs and (limited) opportunities for minority ethnic communities
to help set the agenda of such local campaigns, as Kick It Out campaign co-ordinator Piara Powar notes:

'If we don't have communities working with professional football clubs then it's almost like a self-referencing campaign. Clubs might feel good about it, supporters might feel good about it, but you are still not seeing more black or Asian people in the stadiums, you are still not reaching out to potential players in black communities and we still have the same situation as we've had historically' (Interview with Piara Powar 13/10/99)

The focal concern here is the local pooling of skills, knowledge and resources, using local authorities as 'enablers' and local Racial Equality Councils as important 'contact points' with experience and knowledge of working with local minority ethnic communities, to work at 'opening up' professional football clubs from their positions of relative cultural isolation to ones in which club resources and stadia might serve the diverse range of local communities that are often situated in the locales where professional football clubs are based. Quality and success here is likely to vary – as it does in addressing more general 'equity' issues with clubs. In theory, at least, working together with professional football clubs might assist all parties to engender a better understanding of the key issues of racism and exclusion in sport that Kick It Out is keen to address.

Further, for Kick It Out, the establishment of locally-grounded partnerships of this kind might go some way towards overcoming some of the problems centred around the psychological and material 'ownership' of anti-racist campaigns in football and the need to address the problematic of the specificities of racism that might be embedded within distinct local fan cultures by contextualising local responses under the auspices of the identity of the local professional football club (Back et al 2001, Robson; 2000). The benefits of such locally grounded approaches compared to prior national anti-racist interventions are commented upon here by former Kick It Out assistant co-ordinator Ben Tegg. For Tegg:

'You need it to work locally. The key difference between Kick It Out and AGARI is that they ran a national campaign whereas we support local campaigns. We use the benefits of a national campaign, that is, a national identity and a coherent and consistent message but deliver it on a local basis, partly, because people locally look at national campaigns
and think “Yeah, there’s a message but how does it affect me?” In one way, it’s better for one hundred people to be doing something locally than one million just noticing a message’. (Interview with Ben Tegg 13/11/00)

The pursuit of this approach of establishing locally grounded multi-agency partnerships designed, both to address racism and to encourage wider participation in the activities of local professional football clubs amongst local minority ethnic communities has, however, been a difficult and time-consuming challenge for Kick It Out and its workers. Following on from the knowledge that few professional football clubs had actually engaged with ‘anti-racism’ in any meaningful way, as illustrated in the findings of McArdle & Lewis (1997), Kick It Out wrote in 1997 to all 92 professional football clubs in England and Wales offering to set up local anti-racist working groups. From this initial mail-out Kick It Out received six replies, four of which declined the offer of help in this, or any other, respect. In many ways, this illustrates the prevailing agendas of most clubs where the financial and the corporate inevitably supercede other considerations, but also the enormity of the task faced by Kick It Out in effectively translating the rhetorical support of the professional game into real and meaningful local action initiatives - in which the clubs themselves would have to play a leading role. Nevertheless, in the period from 1997 to 2001 Kick It Out did manage to build a rapport with some clubs and it is presently helping to co-ordinate around twenty-five local ‘partnerships.’ Some of these have a reasonable local profile and have active campaigns (see chapter 6). Most seem low key or even barely existing.

The slow and painful process of stimulating ‘local action’ might, in part, be illustrative of the historical and insular tendency of professional football clubs and of some local agencies to try to address issues of racism and exclusion only in terms of prevailing local traditions and agendas and not in terms of sharing models of best practice, where such models exist at all. Clubs in larger white locales also see little need for anti-racist work (see chapter 4). Further, the often fractious relationships at the local level which exist between professional football clubs and their corporate agendas, and local authorities with their focus on delivering public services in specific locales, is also likely to work against partnerships around issues of racism and exclusion in football (Perkins, 2000).
The historical and cultural distance which still exists between most professional football clubs and local minority ethnic communities has meant *Kick It Out* has had to work hard to broker new partnerships and the campaign and its workers have spent some considerable time and effort in trying to ‘connect’ these various disengaged parties within local multi-agency partnerships. In many ways, *Kick It Out* has often been forced to walk carefully the tightrope of local political and community agenda in order, firstly, to establish and, secondly, to try to maintain these local partnership approaches to dealing with racism at football and in doing so has emphasised the importance of educating professional football clubs, local agencies and community organisations in the mutual benefits of dealing with football racism using this approach.

In particular, *Kick It Out* admits to having faced a difficult task in engaging many professional football clubs in even a cursory understanding of issues of racism and exclusion that goes beyond a monolithic conception of racism involving fans, or the ‘community’ focus of work with minority communities, to one in which the central message is about access and dealing with institutional closure. Almost all professional football clubs have shown a marked reluctance or inability to engage with issues of institutionalised barriers to inclusion that are likely to be embedded in the core structures and everyday processes of working practices at clubs. Such barriers are also likely of course to be preventing clubs from ‘connecting’ with local minority ethnic communities in a more general sense. *Kick It Out* campaign co-ordinator Piara Powar comments:

> 'There's a very limited analysis of issues of racism at football clubs. It is seen as supporter misbehaviour or supporter attitudes. It's not, in any, way seen as something that could in fact be just sitting there intrinsically as part of the organisation. Much of that echoes patterns of institutional racism and institutional indifference in many other organisations of a comparable size, and larger. What is more disappointing is that many football clubs don't see the positive engagement that they can have through the game with different sorts of communities. Or to address different sorts of problems that are there as part of the community, problems that you would kind of expect them to be reconsidering how they might play a role as significant, economic, institutional cultural beacons in those communities'. (Interview with Piara Powar 9/5/02)
The rather 'one-dimensional' view of racism held by many football administrators at professional football clubs which tends to displace racism onto 'demonised fans' or else which locates the 'problem' of relationships with minority ethnic communities to the domain of the club's own community department (Watson, 1997; 2000) serves to underplay the heterogeneity of racisms in football and wrongly positions clubs as 'neutral arbiters' in the fight against racism. Accordingly, the perception of racism as 'out-there' held by many club administrators serves to negate the importance of locally grounded campaigns since it justifies inaction on the much quoted premise that 'We don't have a problem with racism here'. That the majority of professional football clubs maintain that they do not need to be involved in local partnerships designed to tackle racism on this basis illustrates the difficulties faced by Kick It Out in their attempts to engage clubs at all. These difficulties are further compounded by the tendency of some clubs to blame anti-racism itself for instigating racist practice, in an echo of articulations of new right philosophies expressed regularly in the mass media in the 1980s (Lewis, 1998; Gordon, 1990; Bonnet, 2000). The following quotation from one club secretary at a professional football club in the South East indicates the preferred position adopted at many clubs:

'We are fortunate enough not to have any racist problems. I do feel that when organisations such as Kick It Out look to clubs such as ours to participate it has to be seriously looked at because it could cause problems by drawing attention and highlighting a problem we wouldn't have had' (Quoted in Bradbury, 2001).

In this context, locating individual administrators within professional football clubs who might have a sufficient understanding of issues of racism and a willingness to openly engage with other agencies around such issues becomes a fundamental – and sometime a negating - problem. Piara Powar comments, once more:

'Ultimately, the key issue, I think, probably many of the attitudes, the ingrained attitudes, the racist attitudes of football administrators also has a lot to do with this. Many football administrators, if you engage them on a one to one level, clearly do not have an understanding of the issues. You engage them in a process of dialogue to try and get them to understand the issues. They are not really that interested and really don't want to give you the intellectual and emotional space. That's a problem I think’ (Interview with Piara Powar 9/5/02).
Whilst progress at some clubs is slow, the closure elsewhere is more complete. Some administrators ‘naturally’ revert to overt racist discourses, which ultimately serve to drive a further wedge between local communities and the football club, as former Kick It Out assistant co-ordinator Ben Tegg recalls:

‘Their [clubs’] understanding is not generally on a level that you can start an anti-racist campaign. In one case, I had invited a load of community groups to a meeting at a Northern club, whereupon the Chairman began to refer to the local Asian community as Pakis’ (Interview with Ben Tegg 13/11/00)

For some clubs having no useful point of contact at all for Kick it Out is likely to be based on the nature of the local catchment areas and the supporter base. Why allocate such responsibilities if there is no sizeable minority ethnic community or if fans from such communities are scarce? This issue also has to be considered against the backdrop of the wider context of the rapid commercialisation of the game and its concomitant fiscal inequalities. For many lower division clubs day-to-day survival is increasingly shaped by the massive structural inequalities within the game which have been accentuated by the new marketisation of football. Such trends tend to limit the resourcing of anti-racist work, even at the more ‘progressive’ clubs that have welcomed the influence of Kick It Out and have actively sought to engage local minority ethnic communities.

Whilst the genuine, long-term commitment to the implementation of a programme does not usually require significant financial outlay on the part of clubs, such programmes can depend on a degree of ‘in-kind’ support from clubs including the time and support of club staff and the use of club facilities. This implications of this new economic agenda in football is realistically appraised here by former Kick It Out assistant co-ordinator Ben Tegg:

‘Its not under any-one’s remit [dealing with racism]. It doesn’t appear anywhere at all. There’s no club in the country which isn’t losing money. Football clubs are desperately trying to keep their heads above water. What do you do when you are running a business? Where do you put training and putting together proper [equity] policies? If you have got £10,000 spare are you going to spend it on training on diversity issues? Probably not’. (Interview with Ben Tegg 13/11/00)
Unlike club administrators, many Football in the Community (FIC) officers have been keen to engage with Kick It Out and with other local agencies around issues to do with racism and with specific reference to encouraging greater numbers of minority ethnic youngsters to participate in football through the use of targeted football coaching schemes. Working with minority ethnic young people as part of focused coaching programmes forms a central feature of the aims and objectives of FIC coaches and some FIC programmes have claimed small amounts of targeted funding for coaching Asian youngsters from the FA ‘Asians in Football’ initiative that has distributed in the region of £30,000 per annum to local projects since 1997. £30,000 for a national programme of this end, even by the parsimonious standards of the FA seems an incredibly low level of funding support for this sort of intensive work. One local project, at West Ham United, has also been able to access funding from Sport England to deliver focused coaching schemes to Asian boys and girls in the East End of London and has utilised the experience of its FIC coaches to this end. However, the largely self-financing structure of FIC schemes nationally does necessitate a significant degree of coaching delivered, for fees, in more affluent areas by FIC coaches in order to finance coaching schemes in inner city areas in which there are more likely to be black and Asian communities (Williams and Taylor, 1994).

FIC schemes (with a few notable exceptions) tend to be poorly resourced, have low status and hoover up the ‘cultural’ issues to which clubs are pressed to respond. That FIC officers are often offered by clubs as the only potential option available to Kick It Out is also problematic. Most FIC officers are primarily hired as football coaches, have generally low status in clubs, are not represented at executive levels within the organisation and have little experience in wider racial awareness or ‘race’ & educational issues. Further, not all FIC officers are typically even employed by professional football clubs and so have little access to the central decision making processes of clubs and, therefore, can have little influence over the implementation of initiatives designed to ‘open-up’ clubs at a structural or institutional level.
4. Conclusion

That *Kick It Out* has been able to set up and manage – no matter their quality or likely longevity - around twenty-five local anti-racist ‘partnerships’ at football clubs that at least assume the club identity and feature a range of relevant local agencies and minority ethnic community organisations is testament both to the patience and flexibility of the campaigns’ key workers and the commitment of the campaign. *Kick It Out* approach clubs with ideas for anti-racist practice based on their national knowledge of models of best practice at other localised projects and suggests ways in which these initiatives might be implemented and adopted at the local level.

From prompts and support to hands on management, *Kick It Out* has utilised a number of approaches for driving forward local partnerships, whilst also attempting to remain sensitive to the local context. At a few professional football clubs these local partnerships have actually become a reasonably valued asset in the process of helping build bridges between clubs and their local minority ethnic communities and have helped clubs move away from their established position as relatively insular institutions, closed off from new local networks, to institutions which are actively seeking to ‘re-brand’ and engage with local groups in ways that better reflect the diverse communities which they often serve.

At a rather larger number of clubs local partnership work has moved much more slowly – if at all - and has yet to go beyond the implementation of the most basic anti-racist strategies of occasional ‘action days’ and stadium banners. During the period of the tenure of *Kick It Out* the successes and problems experienced in working closely with professional football clubs have to some extent been dependent upon a range of locally specific, economic and institutional and personnel factors that have defined the willingness of clubs to engage with ideas of anti-racism. Quite often *Kick It Out* contend that the understanding and the commitment to dealing with racism held by key football administrators has been integral to the progress of localised partnerships of this kind and has been the defining factor in the ability to move beyond strategies of a more symbolic nature to the enactment of more meaningful strategies that strike more directly at the structural and institutional core.
of professional football clubs. The following quote from *Kick It Out*’s Piara Powar is worth presenting in its entirety since it provides a reflective and honest appraisal of successes and ongoing problematic of *Kick It Out*’s work with professional football clubs:

‘There’s a couple of different ways of looking at this. For me, I think we have failed in that we have not been able to get clubs to have a holistic analysis of what the problems are and how they can deal with them. To look at every area of that activity and to see what interventions they can make that are positive. I have to admit that when I came in I was naive enough to think that we would be able to do that, to start getting clubs thinking about some of those issues and encouraging local people to start a debate with them that they can carry on, but that hasn’t happened in that way. I think that’s a failure. To be honest, I think what we have been able to do is raise the debate, partly, by simply being here, consistently getting out to clubs, where there is an opportunity to criticise, then criticise, where there is an opportunity to raise good practice, to do that. I think, in that way, we have begun to see a very significant, very tangible cultural shift, in the way that clubs realise that racism is a problem they need to deal with; racism is a problem they can deal with positively. I think you can, literally, get a sense of that through attitudes now at clubs. I think many clubs are defensive but will be less defensive now. Its rarer to find a club that will absolutely deny the fact that they ever had a problem, that they ever will have a problem and saying they shouldn’t engage with it. So I think that’s very positive - but its on a broad level’ (Interview with Piara Powar, 9/5/02).

After four years of concerted effort at the local partnerships level in 2001 *Kick It Out* reverted to more explicit national campaigning with the launch of its national anti-racist week of action. Also, *Kick It Out*, in conjunction with the Football Foundation, made a number of ‘community chest’ grants available to community organisations to run sports participatory and educational events around the theme of the action week. In total over 150 organisations from schools through to the global ‘super-clubs’ held events of this kind and generated a great deal of publicity. Further, the timing of the action week was positioned to link into ‘Black History Month’ and over 50 copies of the History of Black Footballers Exhibition were printed and distributed to support these events.

In one sense, the return to highly symbolic ‘flag waving’ events of this nature might signify a return to the limited national interventions of the past. Further, the danger here is also one that has characterised some local partnerships production of anti-
racist days at some clubs that have fallen into patterns of 'disguised essentialism' and
the rationalist pedagogical approach to overcoming individual prejudice by
introducing to mainstream culture facets of minority ethnic culture in a bid to
familiarise those who might be perpetrators of racism with those who might be
regularly subjected to racism (see Taylor, 1992; Wiervorka, 1997; Phoenix, 1998).

The involvement of minority ethnic groups at such ‘anti-racist’ events has often
taken the form of simplistic modes of racial and cultural representation that display a
distinctly reductive element by selecting historically static ‘snapshots’ from minority
ethnic cultures for wider consumption. The celebration of the diversity of local
communities that is a central feature of some anti-racist match-day events has often
drawn on unitary and clichéd elements of complex minority ethnic cultures, that,
whilst in one sense are important physical representations of tradition and belonging,
might also serve to present Britain’s minority ethnic groups as exotic, strange,
inadequate and separate from mainstream culture (Phoenix, 1998). That is, whilst the
use of steel bands or bhangra bands at such events might contribute towards the
generation of a carnival atmosphere at games and visibly illustrate the extent to
which minority ethnic communities are present within the football environment it is a
little less clear that such presentations of self contribute to any meaningful change in
fan culture or at the level of the institutional culture of the club.

Indeed, whilst anti-racist events that draw on elements that promote the idea of
multiculturalism in this way might feel, temporarily at least, more vibrant and
‘reflective’ of local multi-ethnic diversity there is, too, the sense that the dominant
white spectator majority take the role of passive observers of ‘alien’ cultures at such
events, the presentation of which contributes less towards familiarity (and implicitly,
inclusiveness) and more towards reinforcing perceptions of difference and the
negative reproduction of racialised notions of the ‘other’. This is not to suggest that
the minority ethnic communities must give up aspects of culture and tradition in
order to obtain ‘cultural passports’ based on the key elements of class, masculinity
and whiteness that make up normative fan culture. Rather, it is to suggest that
national and local anti-racist interventions must seek to go beyond often well
meaning but static perceptions and representations of minority ethnic cultures to
understand the culturally hybrid forms of racialised identities that make up urban
multi-culture and to cease to separate out the ‘cultural’ from the ‘social’ (Gilroy, 1987; Macey, 1996; Phoenix, 1998) in addressing minority ethnic communities and white fan groups.

Nonetheless, it is also important to recognise that the *Kick It Out* national anti-racist week was designed not to usurp, but to compliment, existing localised partnership approaches to challenging racism and the promotion of social inclusion and a great deal of positive feedback was received from these activities and events. The week of action was also recognition on the part of *Kick It Out* that the pursuit of localised answers to localised questions can still benefit from an injection of high profile national activity and create an atmosphere of surety for clubs that might be embarking upon locally-grounded initiatives for the first time. In particular, *Kick It Out* was able to forge many new contacts and engage with some professional clubs that had previously shown some reluctance to address the focus on anti-racism and minority ethnic inclusion that informs the national campaign. This was a key to the idea behind the week of action as Piara Powar comments:

'It was done in the context of recognising that for a lot of clubs we need to be drip feeding in terms of what they are doing. There’s often a good level of anti-racism activities towards the end of the season, around 20 clubs have anti-racist days. We thought: “What’s the next step to make sure that we are getting a lot of people involved?” There’s a lot of focus and that focus can kick start some of the localised work, we can reach out to clubs that we wouldn’t otherwise be able to do. (Interview with Piara Powar, 9/05/02)

This chapter has offered a full and broadly chronological evaluation of the origins, development, philosophy and practical delivery of national anti-racist campaigns in English football and illustrated some of the key successes and difficulties apparent in delivering work of this kind. In doing so, the chapter has met the key aims outlined at the outset of this thesis with regard to conducting an empirical investigation of the work of *Kick It Out* to engage the football authorities and professional football clubs in the philosophy of anti-racism and in a series of locally grounded initiatives designed to combat racism and promote racialised inclusion at clubs. The interpretation and analysis of mainly observational and interview data featured in this chapter has been informed by the key sociological knowledge and understandings of
the way in which racism impinges upon and is generated by English football and football culture outlined in Chapter One. The theoretical evaluation of national anti-racist campaigns featured in this chapter also draws on key intellectual concepts outlined in Chapter One with particular reference to conceptualisations of the heterogeneity of racisms and multiple patterns of racialised exclusion and a broader understanding of the way in which white hegemonic practices in football governance continue to define and manage anti-racism in terms that does little to disrupt existing institutional practices. The extent to which professional football clubs have engaged with the philosophy of anti-racism and enacted strategies to deal with racism and better ‘connect’ with local minority ethnic communities will be evaluated in the following chapter.
Chapter Four

Professional Football Clubs and Work Against Racism: the national response to *Eliminating Racism From Football*

1. Introduction

This chapter works well with Chapters Two and Three in that offers an evaluation of the way in which professional football clubs in England & Wales have engaged with the philosophy and practices of anti-racism through their implementation of strategies designed to combat more obvious forms of spectator racism and through the use of recommended mechanisms designed to encourage more participation in the activities of clubs from local minority ethnic communities. This chapter deals with club responses on issues of ethnic minorities and playing and spectating, as well as matters of club coaching, scouting and administrative employment policies. The analysis of the findings presented in this chapter also utilises key intellectual concepts outlined in Chapter One and relates directly to the key aims of the thesis.

The data presented here are taken from a more extensive version of the survey findings, which has been published separately (Bradbury, 2001). A critical appraisal of the methodology along with an executive summary of the report's key findings can be found there (Bradbury, 2001, pp.1-15). The research was conducted using a postal questionnaire mailed to all 92 clubs. With support from the main football bodies and the PFA, 88 clubs eventually responded, an excellent response rate of 96%.

For purpose of some simple comparisons in this research, clubs have been categorised along the axes of league status, Football League divisions, club size, region and size of local minority ethnic populations (based on 1991 Census data for district populations in which professional football clubs were situated). The aim here is to present an account of the report's key findings with respect to the following areas:
• Football club identity and club support
• Football clubs and their local minority ethnic communities
• Football clubs and levels of minority ethnic support
• Football clubs and their policies for attracting minority ethnic fans
• Football clubs and the implementation of mechanisms designed to deal with racism
• Football clubs and the recruitment of players, scouts and coaches from minority ethnic backgrounds
• Football clubs and minority ethnic administrative staff
• Football clubs and policies for the recruitment of minority ethnic administrative staff

These findings presented here offer a unique audit of the implementation of strategies designed to combat racism at professional clubs and, more specifically, they offer an evaluation of the extent to which professional football clubs have responded to the Football Task Force recommendations contained in Eliminating Racism From Football (1998). In one sense, the findings featured in this chapter are illustrative of some of the key themes touched upon in previous chapters, but from the perspective of football clubs. They also draw upon the comments and perceptions of football administrators with respect to issues of racism and minority ethnic communities in ways in which that offer some, small insight into the core institutional cultures of professional football clubs. In short, the summarised findings presented here offer an overview of continuity and change in approaches taken by clubs in dealing with racism, promoting equity policies and engaging with local ethnic minority communities. Let us now turn to the findings.

2. Club identity and club support

As has been argued in Chapter One, a small number of larger national or even global ‘super-clubs’ are now positively marketed in ways that transcend local, regional and even nation state boundaries. (King 1998) However, most football clubs in England
& Wales and certainly most smaller and medium sized clubs in the Football League have little or less appeal beyond their own relatively limited local and regional catchment areas. Here, it is a little less clear that any significant demographic changes in the make-up of spectators have taken place and here strongly localised patterns of ‘active’ support and expressions of more traditional ‘robust’ fandom might be expected to remain a key feature of the game at this level (Nash, 2000). For these more locally rooted clubs and more ‘traditional’ spectator formations, the projection and understanding of club and fan identities might be expected to be shaped by rather more ‘closed’ cultural attachments which are associated strongly with issues of locality, ethnicity and specific variants of working class masculinities that can be implicitly or explicitly celebrated at football (Robson, 2000; Back et al 2001). It is against this backdrop of patterns of continuity and change in local football supporter culture that we might best offer the initial findings of this research.

2.1 How would you describe this club’s active support?

More than half (52%) of all clubs surveyed identify their active fan support as having a strong local core, whilst slight fewer than half (47%) of all clubs identified their support as a mix of local and non-local fans. It is important to recognise that definitions of ‘local’ may vary from club to club, of course, variant upon factors such as the club’s catchment areas and the proximity of rival clubs. For example, whilst many geographically isolated clubs in the South West may consider their support to be mainly ‘local’, even if people travel some distance to home games, so, too, do a number of clubs in the North of England that have a range of local rivals within a radius of just a few miles. In contrast, the close geographical proximity of London clubs, the densely populated areas in which such clubs are based, and patterns of movement of many formerly-local fans, now uprooted to more affluent and more distant suburbs, partly explains why nine London clubs are much more likely to define their active support as a mix of local and non-local club followers. More successful clubs, defined here by FA Premier League status and club size, were also more likely to consider themselves to have a broader appeal beyond their immediate locality, offering some tentative support for the assertions made above regarding the way in which more high profile clubs are perhaps now positively
marketed in a way that transcends more traditional local and regional boundaries and that fan ‘connections’ are to some extent defined accordingly.

2.2 What do you feel are the main attractions of this club to its supporters?

Table 2.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main attractions of the club</th>
<th>No of clubs</th>
<th>% of clubs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friendly club</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good matchday atmosphere</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appeal to all members of the community</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good stadium facilities</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly local club</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful club</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interestingly, even in an era when many top clubs are now quite large businesses, most club respondents thought that the ‘friendliness’ of the club was a main reason why fans were attracted to them (Table 2.1). Although this point consistently featured across all axes, slightly more Football League clubs (90%) than FA Premier League clubs (79%) consider themselves to be a *friendly club*. This mirrors data from national fan surveys which show that ‘friendliness’, as a factor in influencing club support, it is seen to be rather more important to fans of Football League clubs than it is to fans of FA Premier League clubs (Williams, 2000; 2001).

Around three-quarters (73%) of all club respondents felt that they also offered supporters a *good matchday atmosphere*, including ten out of eleven London clubs (91%) in the sample. Interestingly, *all* FA Premier League clubs, as opposed to around two-thirds (65%) of Football League clubs, felt they could offer a *good matchday atmosphere*, a disparity that widens when club *size* is taken account. This perhaps indicates that club responses on this score are informed less by issues, for example, to do with ‘inclusion’ or diversity in support and more by their capacity to attract large numbers of supporters to the stadium.

All clubs with a ‘very large’ support thought their *good stadium facilities* to be an important feature in attracting supporters, as did 16 FA Premier League clubs (84%).
In contrast, only nine clubs (38%) with a ‘small’ active supporter base and 38 Football League clubs in all (55%) felt that ‘good stadium facilities’ attracted supporters to the club. Clearly, larger FA Premier League clubs have been better placed for stadium redevelopment and offer more modernised facilities than their smaller club counterparts, although this fact is also reflected in the higher cost of match tickets for supporters of some FA Premier League clubs and modernised facilities are not enjoyed by all fans (Duke, 1994).

Just over one-third (36%) of all club respondents suggested that one of their main attractions to supporters was their status as a successful club. Whilst all footballing success is relative, respondents defined success both historically and more contemporaneously. Interestingly, clubs seem generally to define ‘success’ almost exclusively in terms of their participation in the FA Premier League and in the higher echelons of the Football League, but also in terms of their ability to attract a large active support as a consequence.

Attributes of good matchday atmosphere, good stadium facilities and club success are considerable potential club selling points, of course, for ‘new’ fans, most notably, at those clubs based in the FA Premier League. Given that most FA Premier League clubs, other than those in the North East, have considerable potential for attracting local minority ethnic support and that there are some tentative signs in fan surveys (Williams, 2001) that at least some FA Premier League ‘new’ fans are of British Asian heritage, this may indicate that larger, successful clubs in areas with local Asian communities may have the greatest potential for recruiting, specifically, Asian supporters. However, it may also be the case that ‘new’ Asian fans may be less inclined actively to support even relatively successful local teams if they exhibit problem of fan racism or more ‘closed’ cultural identities, preferring instead to travel from their home base to watch and support larger successful clubs of the satellite TV age, particularly at Manchester United, Arsenal and Liverpool.

Around half of all clubs (52%) in the survey, broadly spread across the FA Premier League and Football League divisions, and also across the categories of club size and minority ethnic populations, see themselves as strongly local clubs. The attraction to
fans of *strongly local clubs* was perceived to be strongest in the ‘traditional’ football heartlands of the North East/Yorkshire (77%), and weakest in London (18%).

However, whilst some very large clubs probably cannot be considered ‘strongly local’ in terms of the audience they now attract, they do draw on ‘ex-pat’ fans who, although now *non-local* in terms of residence, might reinforce their historical sense of belonging and cultural attachment to a particular area or district through their strong identification with the club they still support from some distance (see Bale, 2000). In this sense, some football club stadiums, even in areas of high minority ethnic populations, are likely to become, for some displaced fans, an arena in which a sense of birthplace localism and its constituent white Englishness, may continue, implicitly and explicitly, to be celebrated (see, Robson, 2000). This still strong ‘local’ identity of football clubs is, thus, likely to have both historic and ethnic resonance and this may be the key to the general shape of club support today rather than the *geographical* relationship between clubs and potential fans from a wider range of backgrounds.

Whilst around two thirds (65%) of all clubs, evenly spread across categories of club size and FA Premier League and Football League divisional distinctions, felt that they *appealed to all members of the community* there were significant regional variations in this respect. Only two clubs (22% in that region) in the South West and five London clubs (46%) perceived themselves to *appeal to all members of the community*, in contrast to a significant number of clubs in North East/Yorkshire (65%), the North West (80%) and the Midlands (88%) who feel they do the same. What is interesting here is that many clubs, particularly in the North of England, also perceived themselves to be *strongly local* and *friendly*. This suggests that there are probably a significant core of professional clubs which are based in areas with large minority ethnic populations - but with small numbers of ‘active’ fans from such backgrounds, - which see themselves nevertheless as being characterised strongly by qualities of *friendliness, localness and open-ness*. The low levels of attendance of minority ethnic fans at matches involving these clubs might suggest that some club respondents here have offered a distinctly ‘racialised’ assessment of their own club’s perceived attractions and qualities. ‘Local-ness’ and ‘open-ness’ here seem to
function in ways which effectively exclude from consideration potential and actual support from local minority ethnic populations.

3. Football clubs and their local minority ethnic communities

3.1 Football clubs and minority ethnic demographics of local populations

The social and historical roots of football in Britain dictate that many club stadiums are still situated in once industrialised urban working class areas, some of which, due to changing demographic trends and patterns of upwardly mobile ‘white flight’, are now host to significant, very local, and often economically disadvantaged, minority ethnic communities. According to 1991 census data, for district populations in which professional football clubs are situated (see Bradbury, 2001), over half (52%) of all clubs that responded to the survey were situated in towns or cities where 5% or more (‘significant’) of the local population were from minority ethnic backgrounds and some 30% of clubs were situated in locales where more than one in ten (‘high’) local residents were from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Some clubs, such as West Ham United and Leicester City, are situated in places where one in three local residents defined in this way are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The former club has a large population of immediate neighbours from such backgrounds, the latter is still sited in a predominantly ‘white’ area of Leicester. More than two-thirds (68%) of FA Premier League clubs are situated in areas with ‘significant’ or ‘high’ minority ethnic populations, in addition to high profile clubs such as Everton and Liverpool that have smaller but long-standing local black and Chinese communities nearby.

As one moves towards the lower levels of the game, the tendency of football clubs to be situated in areas with ‘significant’ or ‘high’ local minority ethnic communities diminishes dramatically and this is largely a reflection of the wider demographic trends of smaller ‘provincial’ towns and the more ‘rural’ areas of the kind in which many smaller Division Three football clubs tend to be based. Similarly, ‘club size’ categories largely replicate the pattern of FA Premier League and Football League
divisional categories with larger football clubs being more likely to be situated in areas of 'significant' or 'high' minority ethnic residence. Conversely, smaller clubs, with the exception of those clubs based in the historical 'slavery' seaports of Bristol and Cardiff, some of the 'milltown' clubs of the North West, parts of Yorkshire and lower division London based clubs, are generally situated in areas which are much more strongly 'white' in the make-up of the local population. Representative of wider demographic trends, all 11 responding London clubs are based in areas of 'high' minority ethnic residence, as are eight clubs (47%) from the Midlands (Figure 1). Other regional categories are more varied in terms of the siting of local minority ethnic populations, with more distinctive patterns of predominantly white or multi-ethnic communities resident in districts developing around particular football clubs, depending upon local histories and traditions. That is, minority ethnic communities have developed strongly in specific areas largely relating to the particular needs of the local economy, whilst in other, usually less urbanised and less industrialised, areas minority ethnic communities have tended to remain small.

For example, substantial minority ethnic communities in the North East/Yorkshire category are largely accounted for by clubs which are based in the traditionally textiles-producing areas of West Yorkshire. In contrast, football clubs situated in the major cities and coastal towns of the North East have, generally, quite low numbers of minority ethnic residents. Similarly, whilst clubs based in the urban conurbations of Greater Manchester and the associated 'milltowns' of Lancashire account for significant minority ethnic communities, this North West category also includes clubs in the predominantly 'white' areas of North Wales, Cheshire and Cumbria. The broad South/South East club category contains many differing levels of minority ethnic residence with respect to football clubs, since this category includes clubs based in 'white' rural East Anglia and Hampshire, alongside the satellite towns of Luton and Watford that accommodate substantial black and Asian communities. Finally, 'low' minority ethnic residence is recorded around clubs based in the largely isolated and rural areas of the South West, with only the black communities of Bristol and Cardiff representing a significant proportion of the local population in areas such as these. More information on clubs and their minority ethnic neighbours can be found in Bradbury (2001).
Figure 1: Clubs and local minority ethnic communities: by region

- **London**
- **Midlands**
- **South/South East**
- **North West**
- **North East/ Yorkshire**
- **South West**

% of clubs
3.2 Would you say this football club is based in a town/city with a significant minority ethnic population?

Half of all respondents from the clubs surveyed agreed that their own club was situated in a town/city with a ‘significant’ minority ethnic community. This was broadly comparable to the actual categorisation of minority ethnic communities we had agreed on based on the 1991 census data for district populations. But this did not necessarily represent a perfect fit between individual club perceptions and their actual geographical proximity to minority ethnic communities. A number of club respondents seemed to under-estimate or to lack knowledge about the size of minority ethnic communities within their club’s immediate locality.

Of course, interpreting what is, and what is not, a ‘significant’ and ‘local’ minority ethnic population is what is at stake here, so there is likely to be some predictable lack of fit. A club may also have minority ethnic populations which are geographically close, but which the club may not consider to be ‘local’ culturally or in terms of the club’s own history and traditions. This sort of culturally racialised assessment of communities is one of the potential barriers between some clubs and specific sections of their possible local markets. For example, despite clearly being situated in an area of high Asian population (as measured by the categories specified in this research), at least one lower division club in the Football League in the South of England, did not seem to consider this obviously local minority ethnic community to be ‘significant’ in size. Perhaps in this case, as in others as this research will suggest, ‘local’ here was culturally equated largely with ‘white’ populations?

These racialised definitions of the ‘local’ are increasing subject to contestation in more multi-ethnic urban locales around football stadiums and the author’s fieldwork experience with young people at locations in East London and Sheffield bring this point sharply into focus. Whilst undertaking a small research project commissioned by West Ham Football Club in support of the ‘Asians in Football’ coaching programme, the author along with two other researchers, conducted focus groups with young people of predominantly Asian backgrounds at schools in Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest and Newham. As part of the research, which was primarily on levels of sports participation amongst local youth groups we were also keen to
explore some issues around 'identity' and one emergent theme was that young people perceived very strongly that a key distinguishing feature of East London was its 'Asian-ness' being, as it is, home to significant Bangladeshi/Asian communities.

This very real and symbolic construction of 'Asian/East London' is positioned in stark contrast to popular mediated imagery of the 'real' East End and its local sporting traditions as embodied by West Ham United FC and its supporters, many of whom, now seem to be drawn from the more affluent suburbs of Essex (Williams, 2001). Similarly, whilst conducting fieldwork with an anti-racist project situated in the Sharrow district of Sheffield, one local Asian youth powerfully articulated his own sense of local belonging in the context of his geographical and cultural positioning to his local club, Sheffield United:

'We're Sheffield born and bred, we are (Sheffield) United's community. We're more local than fans that come in from Rotherham or places like that. We live right in the city, in Sharrow' (Interview at SUFC/FURD 'community day' at Bramall Lane 21/5/2000)

Returning to the survey findings, sometimes the same local minority ethnic communities were seen in different ways by different football clubs broadly sharing the same regional location. This can partly be explained, of course, by differing local minority ethnic patterns of residence. However, 'white' football support in these areas was not always strictly segregated, by any means, along patterns of residence, which suggests there is little reason for clubs to specify self-imposed limits to then-local catchment areas on the basis, for example, of highly localised patterns of minority ethnic residence.

3.3 If there are minority ethnic communities in your catchment area, what kind of communities are they?

61 responding clubs (75%) - a rather larger number of clubs than had previously considered such communities to be of a 'significant' size - were at least aware of the presence of local minority ethnic communities in their immediate locality. Seven-out-of-ten (71%) of all football clubs identified Asian communities as being resident in their immediate locality, either on their own (29%), or together with black
communities (42%). A further three ‘seaport’ clubs (4%) identified black communities alone as being resident in the club’s immediate locality. Of course, highlighting other minority ethnic groups and breaking down different categories of Asian communities might have produced additional responses at some clubs. One South East London club, for example, alluded to a local Turkish Cypriot community. Geographically, respondents from clubs based in London (73%) and the Midlands (80%) tended to agree that their clubs are situated in multi-ethnic areas which feature both black and Asian communities, whilst a significant proportion of clubs in the North West (50%) and the North East/Yorkshire (44%) are situated near to mainly Asian communities, at least according to our respondents (Figure 2).

4. Football clubs and perceived levels of active minority ethnic support

4.1 Are you successful in attracting minority ethnic fans to matches?

Almost one-third of all clubs (32%) surveyed felt that they were, to a greater or lesser degree, successful in attracting black and Asian fans to matches, though at only one club did this seem to be unreservedly the view (see Table 4.1). Clearly, many of those clubs which are sited in larger urban areas have a greater pool of potential minority ethnic support to draw upon. However, the local presence of multi-ethnic neighbourhoods alone does not automatically suggest a higher incidence of minority ethnic support for clubs in these areas since a number of clubs also explicitly recognised their signal lack of success in this respect. Of those clubs sited in areas where 5% or more of the local population were made up of minority ethnic communities, 60% admitted they had not been successful in attracting such fans.

As previously indicated, factors such as club success, matchday atmosphere and good stadium facilities are perhaps more important to some ‘new’ fans – including minority ethnic fans – whose traditions of ‘live’ support may differ from those of more ‘traditional’ fans, for whom the appeal of locality remains significant. It is in this context that the more detailed data in Table 4.1 may need to be viewed. Here,
Figure 2: Minority ethnic communities identified by clubs as being resident in their immediate catchment area: by region

North West
- No significant minorities: 6%
- Mainly black: 17%
- Mainly Asian: 27%
- A mix of black and Asian: 50%

North East/Yorkshire
- No significant minorities: 8%
- Mainly black: 25%
- Mainly Asian: 31%
- A mix of black and Asian: 44%

Midlands
- No significant minorities: 7%
- Mainly black: 12%
- Mainly Asian: 30%
- A mix of black and Asian: 36%

South/South East
- No significant minorities: 8%
- Mainly black: 15%
- Mainly Asian: 39%
- A mix of black and Asian: 46%

London
- No significant minorities: 9%
- Mainly black: 18%
- Mainly Asian: 39%
- A mix of black and Asian: 43%

South West
- No significant minorities: 14%
- Mainly black: 14%
- Mainly Asian: 29%
- A mix of black and Asian: 41%

Minority ethnic communities:
- No significant minorities
- Mainly black
- Mainly Asian
- A mix of black and Asian
larger clubs claim more success than smaller ones in attracting minority ethnic support, a position broadly supported by fan survey data (Williams, 2000) even though the numbers involved here are very small indeed.

Table 4.1
How successful have you been in attracting black and Asian support? By League status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of success</th>
<th>FA Premier</th>
<th>Football League</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very successful</td>
<td>1 (6%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>1 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite successful</td>
<td>11 (61%)</td>
<td>16 (24%)</td>
<td>27 (31%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not successful</td>
<td>6 (33%)</td>
<td>29 (43%)</td>
<td>35 (41%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No local minorities</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>23 (33%)</td>
<td>23 (27%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17 (100%)</td>
<td>68 (100%)</td>
<td>86 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of geographical divisions, it is interesting to note that none of the nine clubs based close to significant local minority ethnic communities in the South/South East and South West areas considered themselves to be successful in attracting minority ethnic spectatorship. However, it is also true that playing success at these clubs, with one exception, has been quite limited in recent years, and this may affect, partially, their attractiveness to ‘new’ fans, including new minority ethnic fans. Whilst eight clubs in the North East/Yorkshire (47%), nine clubs in the Midlands (53%) and five London clubs (46%) perceived themselves as having had some success in this respect, only four (22%) of the eighteen clubs in the North West felt the same way.

As previously indicated, parts of the North West are home to perhaps some of the most economically disadvantaged and culturally distinctive British Asian groups in England. Both these factors may be important here. In addition, the North West area is, arguably, one of those parts of England which contain some strongly bound sets of established white working class localisms, which are based on a very strong sense of place and insider/outside binaries centred around sport, language and culture, and on deeply rooted local occupational traditions (see Hill and Williams, 1996; Taylor et al, 1996). The factors referred to here, in part, account for the recent explosive expressions of long standing simmering enmities between ghettoised white and Asian groups that escalated into serious racialised disorder in some urban locations in the
North West in the late summer of 2001. These strongly rooted localistic (white) identities have tended to be routinely reflected in the region’s fiercely disputed football, and other sporting, rivalries and in what are often historically powerful, chauvinist local ‘town’ club identities. Thus, although many clubs from the North West of England had previously strongly identified themselves in our survey as being both friendly and appealing to all members of the community, club respondents here also freely admit their relative lack of success in recruiting local minority ethnic support.

It is possible, of course, that feeling of this sort might be shared among those clubs’ regular supporters, but this interpretation of the appeal and identity of such clubs is much less likely to be shared in local, predominantly Asian, minority ethnic communities in these areas, whose relative absence from matchday football crowds in the North West area is still so striking. Despite a tacit acknowledgement from many clubs in the North West that they have had little success in attracting minority ethnic fans there also seems to be a distinct lack of interest on the part of some clubs in the region to engage with the national Kick It Out campaign with a view, perhaps, towards addressing these issues:

‘Generally, the clubs with the biggest problems don’t want to confront those problems. I think the biggest problems with racism in football is in the Lancashire area, excluding the Manchester clubs. We don’t work with many clubs in Lancashire relative to the clubs that are there. It’s not for the want of trying’ (Interview with former Kick It Out assistant co­ordinator Ben Tegg 13/11/00).

4.2 What percentage of the club’s usual matchday support is black or Asian?

The above question was posited in order to compare responses from clubs with what available fan survey data tells us about levels of black and Asian support and to compare club estimates on numbers of active black and Asian fans with their self­assessments about their success or otherwise in recruiting such fans. The findings are featured in the table below.
The majority of clubs are actually quite ‘realistic’ in their assessment of the black and Asian followings they have, no doubt, informed in their views, in some cases, by club supporter survey results. Over half (55%) of all responding clubs, agreed that less than one per cent of their usual matchday support was made up of minority ethnic fans, including 17 clubs which admitted to virtually no minority ethnic support at all. Predictably, this latter assumption was widespread at those clubs which are situated in areas of low minority ethnic residence. However, another 35 clubs (45%) believed that their minority ethnic support was considerably more substantial than one per cent, with one medium-sized Midlands club suggesting, rather implausibly, that as many in one in five (20%) of its ‘active’ support was of minority ethnic background. The largest figure for minority ethnic support attained in a national supporter survey at any one club in England is around 4% (at Arsenal), whilst the national average of minority ethnic fans at Premier League clubs is 0.9% and is even less (0.3%) at Football League clubs (Williams 1999, 2000).

The generally (realistically) low figures provided by a large proportion of clubs in this respect did not prevent many of these same clubs considering themselves as having been successful in attracting black and Asian fans. This is particularly striking since three out of ten of all the clubs surveyed are situated in areas in which between 10% and 40% of the population in the immediate locality is actually made up of minority ethnic communities. In fact, this relative realism in responses here suggests that most football clubs are actually very modest, indeed, in terms of their ambitions to attract local minority ethnic support; they report very small numbers of active fans...
of this kind, yet consider themselves to be reasonably successful in their activities in this respect, even when based in areas of 'high' minority ethnic populations. Arguably, they continue to under-estimate their own potential for attracting 'active' support from amongst the ranks of their diverse local neighbours.

4.3 What, if anything, do you think discourages black and Asian fans from attending your matches?

In view of the responses of clubs as to their perceptions of the actual levels of – and their successes in attracting – minority ethnic fans, the research was concerned to establish the reasons identified by clubs for the generally low levels of minority ethnic attendance at their stadiums on matchdays. The responses of clubs are featured in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What, if anything, do you think discourages black and Asian fans from attending your matches?</th>
<th>No of clubs</th>
<th>% of clubs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It’s costly to attend football</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They have concerns over racism</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are not interested in this club</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They like other sports e.g. cricket</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They have concerns over hooliganism</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They prefer to watch on TV</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’ve got no idea why they don’t come</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have no local minorities to draw on</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We offered these options to clubs but they could offer alternatives. One-third (33%) of all clubs identified the cost of attending live football as a major disincentive for fans of minority ethnic background, although it is unclear to what extent clubs viewed cost as a major disincentive for some fans regardless of ethnic origin. Interestingly, only five clubs in the North East/Yorkshire (29%) and four clubs in the North West (20%), where some of the most economically disadvantaged British Asian communities reside, felt that cost was a factor which discouraged minority ethnic attendance at club matches. The ‘cost factor’ was considered of greater importance for the FA Premier League clubs and of least importance at clubs in
Football League Division Three, which reflects the ‘sliding scale’ pricing structure across the two leagues and the divisions of the Football League. If, as previous research has indicated, FA Premier League clubs are attracting a slightly larger number of minority ethnic supporters to matches than are their counterparts in the Football League, it is possible they are doing so from the more affluent sections of specific minority ethnic communities (Williams, 2001). This trend towards recruiting rather more affluent fans to football is, arguably, replicated amongst all fans at top football clubs, and not just those drawn from minority ethnic communities.

Only 28 clubs (around 42% of those clubs which say they have local minority communities to draw upon) suggested that local minority ethnic fans had ‘disqualifying’ concerns over racism at football. Of course, assessing the justification for fan fears about racism and in different parts of the country is notoriously difficult. However, club perceptions that concerns over racism were not of majority significance with regard to the non-attendance of minority ethnic communities is arguably contradicted by localised research evidence with reference to incidents of racial harassment of local minority ethnic residents (Holland, 1992; Pinto et al 1996; Bains & Johal, 1998) and by findings from national fan surveys (Williams, 2000; 2001) and recent FA research suggest racism continues to be a feature of the game and that fear of racism is a major disincentive among non-attending minority ethnic fans (FA, 2002).

Further, club responses here that seem to under-estimate or underplay the extent to which minority ethnic fans might have concerns over racism at football also fly in the face of evidence presented in the Football Task Force (1998) report and the apparent ‘need’ for continuous national campaigning by Kick It Out. Only four clubs in the North West (20%) and just three in the North East/Yorkshire region (18%) expressed any awareness of the likely perceptions of minority ethnic communities on this score, despite the palpable existence of quite extreme racialised tensions in some of these locales. Interestingly, a large proportion of the sample clubs sited in overwhelmingly ‘white’ areas did not consider that local, in some cases very small, minority ethnic groups were likely to have serious concerns of this kind (Figure 3). This may reflect a wider tendency in largely ‘white’ areas for associations of anxieties about racism at football and elsewhere to be connected only with the presence of significant or
Figure 3: Clubs which agree that 'concerns over racism' may discourage black and Asian fans from attending matches: by actual size of their local minority ethnic population.
'large' local black and Asian populations. This ignores the possibility, of course, that racism as an exclusionary process can act without the physical presence of larger local minority ethnic populations at all.

Almost one-quarter of all club respondents felt local ethnic minority communities were more interested in other sports. This may be partially true, but it also probably illustrates the continued existence of powerful cultural stereotypes within the game based on a partial perception of the cultures and lifestyles of specific segments of minority ethnic communities. Such views also probably understate the real place of sports, such as football, within such cultures which themselves are dynamic and experiencing changes across the generations (see Bains & Johal, 1998). These findings share a number of similarities with previous research conducted by Bains & Patel (1995) with reference to the relative marginalisation of British Asians within professional football in England. For example, respondents from 24 professional clubs (27%), with a broadly consistent spread across FA Premier League and Football League clubs, regions and divisions of club size, suggested that members of local black and Asian communities were simply not interested in the club, and that this is a major reason for their relative lack of interest in club activities, including in attending matches.

Taking only those clubs that acknowledge the existence of local minority ethnic populations, this represents 36% of all clubs that consider themselves to be at least 'eligible' for attracting supporters of this kind. This relatively high figure might reflect some real alienation and distance between some professional football clubs and their local minority ethnic communities. A number of factors might be at play here. Some members of some minority ethnic groups may, indeed, be less interested in the game than are others. Some local minority ethnic youngsters may have little interest in their local clubs preferring instead to display their support for larger, more successful 'global' clubs via the wearing of the latter's replica shirts and other merchandise as, of course, do many white youngsters. Equally, this rather high figure might, largely, reflect the perception of administrators who have not really come to grips with 'selling' their club to youngsters and others from minority ethnic backgrounds who have grown up in Britain, playing and watching football — but not attending games of their local clubs.
In some cases, the lack of effective action in this latter respect by some clubs may be influenced by a series of cultural stereotypes that become projected onto minority ethnic communities by club administrators and this displacement may well partly explain what seems to be the limited ambitions of many clubs in attracting black and Asian fans. A further nine clubs (10%) suggested that minority ethnic groups prefer to watch football on TV. Again, this view tends to apply to officials at smaller clubs, and TV sport may well have some relevance in terms of limiting minority ethnic support, especially among those followers of the game who take an interest in the fortunes of larger clubs. But, arguably, this kind of account is also useful in deflecting responsibility from clubs for their own actions and modes of presentation and from what is arguably their wider failure to develop constructive and fruitful links with members drawn from local minority ethnic populations. This sense of clubs as 'neutral arbiters' when dealing with issues of 'race' and ethnicity was also apparent at the small number of clubs who argued that minority ethnic communities were not discouraged at all from attending their club’s matches.

Additional, more qualitative, comments provided by clubs mostly accentuated some of the cultural myths and stereotypes already identified (see Table 4.4). Probably with reference specifically to British Asian communities, ten clubs (11%) explained non-attendance of minority ethnic fans in terms of perceived restrictive cultural and religious practices. However, interestingly, neither the term ‘culture’ nor ‘religion’ was specifically defined or expanded upon here. Nor was exactly how such cultural and religious beliefs may work in practice to prevent, for example, match attendance. Seven clubs (8%), again with clear reference to Asian communities, highlighted ‘family traditions’ as a preventative mechanism regarding young Asian involvement in football, although a number of other clubs also identified the importance of generational distinctions in this respect. One suspects that had ‘family traditions’ and ‘religion/culture’ been included in the tick box section here they would have elicited a stronger response from clubs in terms of their perceptions of why minority ethnic, specifically Asian, fans do not attend matches at most clubs in significant numbers.
5. Football clubs and their approaches to attracting minority ethnic fans

5.1 How do clubs view ethnic minority communities?

Having established some basic findings about the *perceptions* of clubs in terms of their success or otherwise in attracting black and Asian fans, the research then explores, a little more, general club *approaches* to the potential pool of available local minority ethnic support. We offered our respondents a number of ways of summing up their approaches to local minority ethnic communities (see Table 5.1).

Around one-quarter (25%) of all professional football clubs recognise the explicit need to be more pro-active in terms of attracting more minority ethnic fans to matches. These ‘pro-active’ clubs tend to be situated in areas of ‘significant’ or ‘high’ minority ethnic residence and to feel they have not previously been successful in attracting black and Asian fans to club matches. These clubs are also considerably more ‘aware’ on issues of ‘race’ than are clubs where respondents felt the club to be *already open to all fans*. They were also more likely to feel that *concerns over racism* (81%), *hooliganism* (43%) and *cost* (62%) may be contributory factors in
minority ethnic non-attendance locally, for example (Figure 4). Whilst these clubs were broadly spread across divisions of club size and league status, it is interesting to note that only five (13%) of the 38 clubs in the North of England felt that they should do more specifically with black and Asian fans. Indeed, 45 clubs from the total sample (52%), 12 of which were situated in areas of ‘high’ minority ethnic residence, described their approach to black and Asian fans as being already open to all fans.

Only five clubs (11%) in this category considered concerns over racism to be a major disincentive to attendance for minority ethnic fans, whilst 32 clubs (71%) who felt they were already open to all fans also felt they already appealed to all members of the community. Whilst these clubs might feel they treat all fans in the same way, this sort of ‘colour blind’ approach also runs the risk of failing to recognise the role of embedded histories and practices of exclusion and the range of experiences and anxieties which may differently shape perceptions of clubs amongst minority ethnic communities. Clubs which adopt this perspective may effectively find themselves ‘closed off’ from the sort of local knowledge and support systems which could significantly improve the club’s understanding of, and relationship with, its local minority ethnic communities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approaches</th>
<th>No of clubs</th>
<th>% of clubs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We are already open to all fans</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We should do more specifically with black and Asian fans</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We want any new fans</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is no point trying here</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>86</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2 In what ways have clubs tried to attract more black and Asian support?

We were concerned to establish the ways in which general club approaches towards minority ethnic fans were translated into action at the local level. A number of
Figure 4: What discourages black and Asian fans from attending home matches?: by club approaches to minority ethnic fans

- Concerns over hooliganism
- Concerns over racism
- It's costly to attend
- They prefer to watch on TV
- They like other sports
- They are not interested in this club
- No local minorities

We should do more specifically with black and Asian fans
We want any new fans
We are already open to all fans
options were provided for respondents to consider, suggesting some of the more common ways in which clubs may have attempted to attract greater minority ethnic support. Additional space was also provided for clubs to tell us more about these, or other, initiatives they may have used to try to attract more minority ethnic fans.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In what ways has the club tried to attract more black and Asian support?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of clubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Established links with local ethnic minority communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publicity campaigns aimed at minorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multicultural/family events at first/reserve team fixtures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced price tickets to local black/Asian communities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In total, 53 clubs claimed to have established links with local minority ethnic communities although the nature of this ‘connection’ is less clear. We suspect that the positively responding clubs include a significant number who are currently involved, to a greater or lesser degree, in multi-agency ‘anti-racist’ campaigns, which are largely instigated and initially co-ordinated by Kick It Out. A pre-requisite for the success of such campaigns is probably the inclusion of local minority ethnic community representation. However, we also suspect that a considerable number of clubs are referring here to work done by their own Football in the Community scheme which remains, for many clubs, the first and only real point of co-ordinated and regular contact with local minority ethnic communities (see Watson, 1997). One-third of all clubs (33%) indicate the use of publicity campaigns and around one in five clubs (19%) the use of multicultural/family events to attract greater numbers of black and Asian fans to matches. We suspect that many clubs here may be referring to their ‘anti-racist’ matchdays which, supported and often co-ordinated by Kick It Out, use the club identity as a means of trying to attract minority ethnic fans and ‘educating’ existing (white) supporters about the undesirability of racism.

Beyond these ‘one-off’ annual events, we are aware of only a small cluster of clubs who have consistently sought to attract greater numbers of black and Asian fans through the use of additional ‘community’ days. Similarly, we are aware of at least one Midlands club which has consciously used reserve team football as a means of...
attracting minority ethnic fans, especially through its pre-match and half-time ‘multi-cultural’ entertainment, which, amongst other activities, has included the celebration of minority religious and cultural festivals (FAR, 2000). Recognising that many minority ethnic communities are faced with the double bind of ‘racialised’ and economic exclusion from attending matches, The Football Task Force specifically recommended that professional football clubs use ‘innovative ticketing schemes to reach sections of the community not currently attending games’. Some 18 clubs (21%) seem to have responded positively in this respect, so some progress has probably been made here. However, a much larger number of clubs had earlier specifically identified cost as a factor which discourages minority ethnic match attendance, so more work is clearly needed in this area.

Table 5.3
In what ways has the club tried to attract more black and Asian support: by club approaches to minority ethnic communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>‘We should do more’</th>
<th>‘We are already open’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Established links with local ethnic minority communities</td>
<td>19 (91%)</td>
<td>23 (51%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publicity campaigns aimed at minorities</td>
<td>11 (52%)</td>
<td>11 (24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multicultural/family events at first/reserve team fixtures</td>
<td>9 (43%)</td>
<td>3 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced price tickets to local ethnic minority communities</td>
<td>8 (38%)</td>
<td>5 (11%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Differences in the approaches of clubs to minority ethnic fans are clearly illustrated by the extent to which such initiatives are put into practice. Those clubs which felt they should do more with local minority ethnic communities were consistently already more pro-active in their attempts to recruit black and Asian fans than those which felt they were already open to all fans. It is difficult to evaluate the success of these campaigns given the relatively recent time period in which many clubs have begun to undertake such activities. However, anecdotal evidence from the small number of more ‘open’ clubs in this field, those which have consistently conducted ‘anti-racist’ campaigns over a longer period of time, suggests that some, usually small, increases in minority ethnic attendance has probably occurred.
Clearly, such pro-active approaches necessitates the gradual ‘opening up’ of professional football clubs from their positions of relative ‘cultural closure’ to one in which the club and its stadium becomes more of a central focal point for its local communities in all their diversity. These sorts of changes have already occurred at a small number of clubs. Those clubs which have minority ethnic communities to draw upon and which consider themselves to be already open and so, in some cases, seem to do very little to encourage local community participation in the club, we suspect, will continue to be viewed by local minority ethnic communities as somewhat distant from their everyday lives and will therefore continue to be characterised by extremely low levels of minority ethnic involvement and match attendance.

6. Football clubs and the implementation of mechanisms designed to deal with spectator racism

6.1 Spectator racism

Fan surveys (Williams 2000; 2001) have consistently shown that around one-quarter of fans at all clubs witness racist abuse aimed at players by fans and that minority ethnic fans at FA Premier League clubs are consistently shown to be more aware of the incidence of spectator racism at football than are their white counterparts. This is not to suggest that fan racist abuse takes place at every club, during every game. Rather, that although collective, overt racist abuse among fans may have declined during the 1990s in comparison to previous decades, there remains a residual core of overt, sometimes individualised, spectator racism that continues to manifest itself in an intermittent and often inconsistent fashion at club stadia throughout the country (see Back et al, 2001; FARE, 2001). We were concerned to try to establish here the extent to which professional football clubs are now aware of incidents of spectator racism at their own club’s home matches in recent seasons (see Table 6.1).
### Table 6.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No of clubs</th>
<th>% of clubs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>86</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from Table 6.1, whilst 35 (41%) of our respondents are aware of racist incidents at their club’s matches in recent years, 49 clubs - representing well over half of the clubs surveyed - remained oblivious to incidents of matchday spectator racism. This latter category includes responses from administrators at clubs where there had actually been some high profile incidents of reported racist chanting by fans during the 1999/2000 season. Officials at FA Premier League clubs (79%) were much more likely to be aware of spectator racism than were officials at Football League clubs (30%). Only five of the 19 responding clubs (26%) in the North West and two of the nine clubs (22%) in the South West were aware of incidents of spectator racism at their own club’s matches in recent years. Also, those clubs which felt they should do more specifically with black and Asian fans (52%) were more likely than were clubs which felt they were already open to all fans (32%) to be aware of incidents of spectator racism at club matches. This might suggest that a general awareness at clubs of the issues surrounding racism and forms of racist exclusion is likely to be reflected in both a willingness of fans to report racism and a willingness of club officials to respond to such messages.

### 6.2 Has the club recently taken action against spectator racism at home matches?

If we look here only at those clubs which had been aware of recent incidents of racism, then a high percentage of clubs (85%) had taken action against racism. However, a small number of clubs who were aware of incidents of spectator racism had not taken any action against offenders, despite having the legal powers to do so. Police figures (NCIS, 2002) suggest, of course, that a number of prosecutions and
banning orders achieved with respect to racist offences at football remain incredibly low.

Table 6.2

| Has the club taken any action against spectator racism at home games? |
|--------------------|----------------|
|                     | No of clubs | % of clubs |
| Yes                 | 34          | 41%        |
| No                  | 48          | 59%        |
| Don’t know           | 1           | 1%         |
| Total               | 83          | 100%       |

Interestingly, those clubs where there was awareness of spectator racism (49%) were more than twice as likely as those clubs which were not aware (20%), to have previously explained minority ethnic non-attendance at matches in terms of fans’ concerns over racism. Similarly, those clubs (57%) who felt they should do more to attract minority ethnic fans were also much more likely than clubs (28%) which feel they are already open, to be aware of, and to have taken action against, perpetrators of racist abuse. This set of relationships strongly suggests that clubs which have developed a greater openness and understanding of issues surrounding racism and exclusion also have much greater confidence to tackle racism where it actually occurs. That is, it is an open approach to such issues which actually seems to help to reveal football racism and which encourages clubs to try to deal effectively with it.

Conversely, those clubs which remain relatively ‘closed’ to, and uninformed about, incidents of racism at their club’s matches are more likely, it seems to us, to use this fact as a justification both for a relative lack of activity with respect to recruiting minority ethnic fans, and for their relative inactivity in tackling racism at this level. This more ‘closed’ approach is likely, we would contend, simply, to conceal the problem and some of its real and damaging effects.
6.3 Do clubs inform fans of the ‘anti-racist’ content of ground regulations and the Kick It Out ten point plan?

The FA Premier League, in conjunction with the Football League, provide all their member professional football clubs with a standardised set of ground regulations that, since the beginning of the 2000/2001 season, have been amended to include the following statement:

- *The use of threatening behaviour, foul, abusive or racist language is strictly forbidden and will result in either arrest or ejection from the ground*

Did professional clubs inform supporters of this important ‘anti-racist’ aspect of ground regulations, for example, through mechanisms of matchday programmes, prominent hoardings and the clubs PA system? The implementation of these simple, low cost measures is also advocated by the Kick It Out ten point plan to which 91 of the 92 professional football clubs in England and Wales have, rhetorically, at least, offered their support in principle.

McArdle and Lewis’s (1997) study of football club responses to racism had tried to measure the extent to which professional clubs made ‘anti-racist’ statements in matchday programmes and over the PA system. This allows for some direct comparison on whether such activities have increased, or decreased, at football grounds during the, roughly, three year period which followed their research.

Table 6.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does this club inform supporters of the contents of ground regulations, especially concerning acts of racist abuse?</th>
<th>No of clubs</th>
<th>% of clubs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, a statement is displayed permanently and prominently around the stadium</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, a statement is displayed in matchday programmes</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, a statement is broadcast on the PA prior to games</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, we don’t usually make any statements of this kind</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In total, 54 clubs (61%) said they informed supporters of the ‘anti-racist’ aspect of ground regulations in their matchday programme. This compares rather unfavourably with the 58 clubs (89%) of the McArdle and Lewis sample which claimed to make ‘anti-racist’ statements in matchday programmes during the 1996/97 season. This disparity may dissolve, however, when taking into consideration the much larger sample of the present survey. We would suggest that McArdle and Lewis’s 27 non-responding clubs were rather more likely to be inactive in terms of making anti-racist statements than were those responding clubs. Comparisons, therefore, are difficult. Nonetheless, broadly speaking, it might seem that clubs are not markedly more likely to inform supporters of ground regulation ‘anti-racism’ policy in the matchday programmes in the 2000/2001 season than they were in the 1996/97 season.

Whilst more than three-quarters (77%) of football clubs, nationally, have now erected hoardings to promote the ‘anti-racist’ aspect of ground regulations, there is a greater likelihood of such statements being permanently and prominently displayed at FA Premier League grounds than at the grounds of Football League clubs. During the 1996/97 season covered by McArdle and Lewis, twenty-nine clubs (45%), in all, broadcast statements over the PA system explaining the club’s stance on racism. Once again, more recent findings compare slightly unfavourably. Only 23 clubs from our more representative sample (26%), predominantly clubs outside of the Premiership, were using PA systems to inform supporters of ‘anti-racist’ ground regulations policy in the year 2000. Seven clubs (8%) make no statements at all of these kinds.

All football clubs were first asked by the supporters and sponsors of Kick it Out to implement these basic low cost anti-racism strategies at football back in 1993 and this request was re-iterated by the Football Task Force in 1998. However, club responses to the issue of implementation remain patchy. That is, whilst most clubs have consistently informed their supporters and visitors of matchday regulations regarding racism through the variety of mediums at their disposal, at a residual core of clubs there has been little movement in terms of adopting some specific elements of Kick It Out’s ‘ten point plan’.
This marked reluctance might allude to the general unwillingness of some clubs to deal openly with issues of racism, preferring instead to adopt a defensive attitude to the issue that largely justifies a degree of inaction on the basis of the perception that 'racism simply isn't a problem here'. Even at some clubs which have actively engaged in local partnerships designed to challenge fan racism and 'build bridges' with local minority ethnic communities – such as Preston North End, which manage jointly with the local Racial Equality Council one funded key worker under the auspices of the 'Respect All Fans Football Initiative (RAFFI) – there also seems to be a marked reluctance to implement some of the most basic measures outlined in the Kick It Out ten point plan. These assertions are illustrated by the remarks of the Chief Executive of Preston North End FC, who comments:

'Generally, we don't do anything like that. I would say, that if we felt there was a real issue we would. But, I do feel that unless there is a real issue there, and I've not been made aware of it, then I wouldn't be wanting to make PA announcements on something that isn't an issue at that point. I think announcing to the crowd how racist activity will be dealt with, I think, I would like to assume that they would know that already without announcing it to them'. (Interview with Chief Executive at a medium sized North West club 21/5/02).

6.4 Action taken against supporters who express racism

How did clubs enact the legislative framework enshrined in ground regulations and the law in order to 'police' incidents of spectator racism at their home games? That is, given the measures at their disposal, what specific punishments are administered by clubs to spectators found guilty of using racist language, either individually or as part of a wider group? We provided clubs with a number of options here, which covered a range of possible measures. We also provided further space for respondents to expand upon their initial answers or to add other preferred or utilised options. Club responses to the closed options are presented in Table 6.4.
Table 6.4

What action, if any, is usually taken by the club against supporters who have been identified as being racist at home games?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>No of clubs</th>
<th>% of clubs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbal warning from police/steward</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ejection from stadium on that day</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written warning from the club</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawal of season ticket</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary ban from further fixtures</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life ban from further fixtures</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have never had to take action</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A full analysis of the findings presented in Table 6.4 can be found in Bradbury (2001). What follows is a summary of the key findings and some analysis of emergent themes. One finding here was that the strategies we presented were rarely used by clubs in a mutually exclusive manner. Rather, strategies were used in combination, dependent upon the perceived severity of the offence and whether the offence was a repeated one. A small but significant number of clubs also tended to employ strategies of arresting and prosecuting offenders, most often in conjunction with other approaches and we suspect that had arrest/prosecution been included as a ‘closed’ option then more club respondents might have indicated this specific strategy of policing racism.

Broadly speaking, larger FA Premier League clubs situated in multi-ethnic locales were more likely than their lower division Football League counterparts in more ‘white’ locales to implement a stronger approach to policing racism at games. This ‘strong approach’ was also in evidence at all London clubs. The tendency of larger, high profile clubs to act more forcefully when dealing with racism might, in part, reflect a greater will here to ‘police out’ forms of spectator misbehaviour that impinge upon a more ‘sanitised’, family friendly, environment at matches at this level (Giulianotti, 1999).

At a practical level, the mandatory nature of all-seater stadiums and the extensive use of CCTV at clubs at the highest reaches of the game might also offer a better capacity for identifying and dealing with perpetrators of racism. Conversely, the greater difficulty in detecting and acting against individual acts of racist abuse at
those clubs whose stadiums still contain terracing, along with the lack of resources to employ appropriate numbers of security staff and police and the unwillingness of such staff to prioritise dealing with racism over other, more general, match-day duties to do with issues of safety and maintaining public order might, in part, account for the less pro-active approach to dealing with racism at clubs in the lower echelons of the Football League (see Gardiner, 1998; 2001; Garland and Rowe, 2001). Again, a full analysis of ‘stewarding issues’ to do with the present restructuring of the industry and the efficacy of the implementation of a nationally monitored and accredited programme of training for stewards and the consequences for dealing better with racism are included in Bradbury (2001, pp 53-57).

6.5 Reporting racism and the establishment of anti-racist hotlines

Beyond the more immediate strategies of dealing with spectator racism employed by police and stewards at some clubs, the ability of clubs to take action against fans that commit acts of racism at matches is, to a large degree, dependent upon racism being reported to the club by other fans. The Football Task Force recognised that for those fans who are perhaps reluctant or afraid to complain about racist abuse at a match for fear of confrontation and involvement in potentially aggressive situations, the establishment of a ‘anti-racist’ confidential telephone hotline would provide fans with an appropriate avenue via which they might air their complaints.

Only eight clubs have responded positively to this specific Football Task Force recommendation and three club ‘hotlines’ were available for use only during office hours, which suggests that these ‘hotlines’ may not, actually, have been dedicated to the reporting of racism but may also have been used as part of the day to day workings of a specific club department. Whilst there might be no real problem with this, it does mean, however, that supporters may not be able to report incidents immediately after they occur and when they are still strongly in the minds of fans that actually want to help their own clubs combat racism. More recently, a national, anti-racist hotline, was established by Kick It Out at the beginning of the 2000/2001 season and some clubs, of course, may now prefer to endorse and support this national reporting procedure rather than establish an anti-racist hotline of their own. We suspect that relative club inactivity in this respect, centres around issues of the
availability of resources, particularly at smaller clubs, perceptions that racism is simply 'not a problem here' or the perception that adequate reporting mechanisms already exist at clubs, although such reporting procedures are not always explicitly defined.

6.6 How often does the club receive reports of racism?

Beyond directly witnessing incidents of racist abuse themselves, we were concerned to discover the extent and rate at which clubs received reports of racism from their own supporters – or indeed from visiting fans. The results of this inquiry can be found in Table 6.5. Of those responding clubs, 41 (52%) had received reports of racism at least once or twice per season, including close to one-in-ten clubs which received such complaints more often.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How often does the club receive reports of fan racism?</th>
<th>No of clubs</th>
<th>% of clubs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After some games</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once or twice per season</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the majority of clubs surveyed, arguably, had less than perfect reporting mechanisms, the figure of 38 clubs (48%) which had had no incidents of fan racism reported to them is, perhaps, hardly surprising. Conversely, that fans at 41 clubs (52%) had taken the time and deemed it necessary to report incidents of racist abuse to clubs may indicate both a positive change in fan culture and some success in the publicity campaigns encouraging reporting, as well as a continuing problem of racist incidents in football. This pro-active approach by fans is most apparent in the Premiership where all but two clubs had received complaints from supporters about racism, in contrast to less than half of Football League clubs where the same thing had occurred (Figure 5). This may demonstrate an increased sensitivity to racism amongst Premiership football crowds these days, which is perhaps reflective of a greater responsiveness of clubs and national bodies to this issue and a slightly
Figure 5: Does the club receive telephone calls or other reports on racist abuse at home matches?: by FA Premier League and Football League Divisions
Figure 6: Does the club receive telephone calls or other reports of racist abuse at home matches:
by actual size of local minority ethnic population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minority Ethnic Population Size</th>
<th>% of Clubs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
changing audience at Premiership and Football League matches (Giulianotti, 1999; Williams, 2000; 2001). Also, as has been argued in previous chapters, whilst partly terraced stadiums may be better for generating the ‘old-style working class’ atmosphere and traditional football ‘banter’ this sort of climate can sometimes offer its own forms of racist exclusion.

This is not to suggest, however, that racist activity does not take place in larger grounds, or among so called ‘respectable’ supporters, as a number of high profile incidents of racist chanting during the 1999/2000 season indicates. Indeed, increased reporting at top levels may simply reflect more racism at larger clubs. We suspect the picture is more complex than this, however, and that a greater willingness to report racism is also a feature here. It is also interesting to note that clubs situated in areas of ‘high’ minority ethnic populations are more likely to receive reports of racism than clubs in areas predominantly made up of white communities (Figure 6). This trend perhaps indicates that fans who live in multi-ethnic areas may be more sensitive to incidents of racism and more willing to report such incidents, although we are aware that this sort of process can also work in reverse. That is, we are also aware that the presence of large minority ethnic communities in some towns and cities can provoke racism from visiting supporters, and thus provoke higher levels of reporting of the problem from home spectators.

7. Football clubs and the recruitment of players, scouts and coaches from minority ethnic backgrounds

7.1 How many black or Asian professional players from the UK do you have at the club?

Establishing a definitive figure for the number of UK born black and Asian players employed in English football has proved to be notoriously difficult in the past, given that there has been no ethnic monitoring of player recruitment to the game. According to our findings, based on the classifications offered by club respondents, a total of 348 UK born black or Asian players were reported to be playing at 80 of the 85 responding clubs, representing a figure of around 13% of players of all ethnicities
currently playing professionally in the English game. There were considerable regional variations in the presence and absence of UK born black players, which, interestingly, reflects population demographics more generally, with London clubs and Midlands clubs tending to employ larger numbers of black British players than clubs in the North East/Yorkshire and the North West. Four of the five clubs which had no black British or British Asian players during the 1999/2000 season were based in the North West region. A more full account of the methodological analysis of these figures and some comparison with previous data in this respect are provided in the *New Football Communities* report (Bradbury 2001, pp. 70-71).

7.2 How many young black or Asian players from the age of 14 upwards, excluding professionals, do you have at the club?

We were keen to try to measure the extent to which younger black and Asian players are currently being incorporated into the formalised youth structures of professional football clubs in England and Wales. We were already aware that during the 1999/2000 season 19 Premier League clubs and 21 Football League clubs operate ‘Youth Academies’. The majority of remaining professional clubs operate ‘Schools of Excellence’, or, at least, some other form of youth development programmes. Following consultation with the FA Premier League, the Football League and some individual clubs, we estimated that, amongst our sample group of clubs, there were likely to be around 4,250 young players attached from the age of 14 upwards, excluding professionals, who were registered with professional clubs.

According to our returns, there were around 418 young black British players registered with 65 clubs from a total of 85 clubs which responded to this question, including some players at every club in the Midlands and in London. Of course, non-responding clubs may have fewer black and Asian youngsters, on average. However, if our, tentative, estimates are correct, young black British players account for around 10% of the overall sample of registered young players at English football clubs. There were 71 young Asian players in this ‘young player’ category, and they were spread, unevenly, between some 35 clubs. According to our, admittedly rough, calculations, some 1.6% of all young players at English clubs, from the age of 14 upwards and excluding professionals, are now likely to be of British Asian origin.
This figure is still very small and the spread of young Asian players around professional clubs is still very patchy, as revealed by the fact that 16 young Asian players - 23% of all our young Asian players - could be accounted for by just two Football League lower division London-based clubs. Each of these London clubs has large Asian communities living nearby.

Very few young Asian players could be found at clubs based in the Midlands or in the North West, despite the presence of significant and varied Asian communities in these particular regions (CRE, 1999). Whilst the national average figure of 1.6% represents a rise from the 0.2% School of Excellence Asian youngsters figure produced by the Bains & Patel (1995) study in the mid-1990s, this possible increase seems to be largely explained by the efforts in this area of a few regionally-specific smaller football clubs. In short, according to our own incomplete data at least, there probably remains a considerable under-representation of young Asian players registered with the majority of professional football clubs in England.

Having roughly calculated the numbers of UK born black players and the numbers of young black and Asian players attached to professional clubs in youth development programmes we were keen to evaluate some of the recruitment mechanisms employed by professional clubs that might target young players from minority ethnic backgrounds. We were aware that some football in the community schemes and some funded localised anti-racist projects targeted minority ethnic youth groups for participation in coaching courses as players and, in some cases, assisted minority ethnic participants to achieve FA accredited coaching badges. However, according to our responses only two professional football clubs, Leicester City and West Ham United, operated coaching schemes in direct conjunction with other agencies, that targeted, specifically, Asian communities and offered what seemed to be the potential for a clear pathway from participation to excellence within club youth training structures.

7.3 Scouting at professional football clubs

Bains & Patel (1995) identified what they described as ‘stereotypical’ attitudes directed towards Asians by those (white) officials within professional football clubs,
including those employees who were charged with the recruitment of young players. These 'racial' stereotypes, which have typically centred around a perceived lack of interest in football amongst Asians, a 'problematic' Asian diet, the alleged physical inferiority of Asians, and a range of perceived religious and cultural factors, probably serve to deny opportunities to some talented young British Asian footballers. The Football Task Force supported Bains et al's initial assertions stating that: 'Scouts acting on prejudice rather than evidence should be left in no doubt that they are failing their employers and the communities in which they are based' (1998: pp. 22-23). These concerns produced a specific Football Task Force recommendation (1998:23) which called upon professional football clubs to: 'Undertake an urgent review of current scouting activities with the aim of ensuring all local junior and schools leagues and tournaments are covered.'

7.4 Does this club take any specific measures to scout for players, for example, in all Asian leagues?

Whilst many Asian players play in all-Asian, or multi-ethnic, football teams within the formal structures of local football, a significant number of young Asian players play in all-Asian leagues which, to a certain extent, emphasise community solidarity and represent a footballing environment which is probably more free from the racist abuse and racially motivated violence which have been a consistent feature of some minority ethnic experiences in the more 'mainstream' local football environment. There are a number of Asian 11-a-side and 5-a-side leagues based in English cities such as London, Birmingham and Bradford. In total, 17 clubs in our sample (20%) claimed, currently, to scout in these sorts of all-Asian leagues. This relatively 'low' figure is, arguably, shaped by a number of factors, such as: the patchy spread of Asian leagues; the resources and capacities of individual professional club scouting networks; the extent to which club scouts have good contacts with Asian communities and clubs; and the willingness of clubs and scouts to recruit adult players from non-league football at semi-professional level and below.
7.5 Does the club ever take any specific measures to scout at matches involving prominent ‘black’ or Asian football clubs?

Some minority ethnic football clubs have grown out of black and Asian male responses to racism and exclusion and have strong cultural identities and an important role in community development (Williams, 1994). A smaller number of these clubs have a proven pedigree for producing quality football players, some of whom have gone on to play in the professional game.

24 of our sample of professional clubs (28%) claimed to scout prominent ‘black’ or Asian clubs in their area. Whilst the same factors which account for the low numbers of club scouts attending all-Asian leagues are also important here, the slightly larger number of scouts attending matches featuring prominent local black and Asian clubs can perhaps be explained in terms of the overall better quality of teams within the formalised structures of local football and also the still greater tendency for professional clubs to recruit black players, rather than Asian players, from this level of grass-roots football.

The differential recruitment patterns suggested here that, statistically, at least, favour the progression of black players over Asian players might, in part, be underpinned by a series of racialised assessments enacted by club scouts that draw on perceived biological and cultural traits and which are often utilised to define the sporting and cultural appropriateness of players from minority ethnic communities (Bains & Patel, 1995). This assertion was, perhaps unconsciously, illustrated by the response of the club secretary of a lower division club situated in the North Midlands:

‘Over the last twenty years the club have had many quality players from various backgrounds. Local lads have come through the ranks, i.e., Robbie Earle (Wimbledon and Jamaica). The Chamberlain brothers — Mark played for England. Mark Bright – Leicester and Crystal Palace. Whilst West Indian/Afro-Caribbean’s tend to come through, the local Asian groups do not appear to push the young boys towards football. We have had an Asian community close to the ground for over 25 years but the number of Asian supporters and players has been minimal or non-existent’ (Club Secretary, Midlands club).
7.6 Does this club take any specific measures to scout at national ethnic minority football festivals?

There are a number of minority ethnic football festivals held around Britain throughout the year which feature both adult and youth players of Asian origin. The Khalsa Football Federation, for example, hold annual tournaments in Gravesend, Coventry, Birmingham, Leicester and Glasgow, providing a showcase for young and young-adult Asian talent. In 1995, the Bains & Patel survey of professional football clubs revealed that twenty-two clubs were ‘aware’ of Asian football tournaments, whilst seven clubs had indicated that their scouts had observed them. Five years later, 12 clubs (14%) from a total of 88, spread evenly across the FA Premier League and across the Football League divisions, and unaffected by factors of club size and regions (Figure 7), claimed to scout at such tournaments.

Whilst many of the factors which limit the scouting of Asian leagues and prominent minority ethnic clubs are appropriate in relation to minority ethnic football tournaments, the consistency of these low figures over a five year period suggests that the majority of professional football clubs have done relatively little to ‘open-up’ their scouting procedures and take them into account. Of course, such tournaments will be ‘local’ to a relatively small number of clubs. Some clubs may also feel, of course, that with their Centres of Excellence they now operate a much more comprehensive approach than before to player selection and recruitment in the younger age ranges, and so need not visit these ‘closed’ tournaments. But this is still a small response from clubs in areas of ‘high’ minority ethnic populations for whom observing young minority ethnic talent can be achieved with not much spent in terms of cost, travel and effort (Figure 8).

7.7 Football clubs and minority ethnic coaches and scouts

A fuller analysis of the methodological approach and analysis of findings with regard to the numbers of minority ethnic scouts and coaches employed by clubs can be found in Bradbury (2001, pp. 76-78). Put briefly here, almost two-out-of-five (39%) of clubs claimed to employ black coaches and around one-out-of-five clubs (22%) clubs claimed to employ black scouts. Black coaches were most likely to be
Figure 8: Club scouting procedures: by actual size of local minority ethnic population

- High
  - Minority ethnic football festivals: 28
  - Black and Asian football clubs: 48
  - All Asian leagues: 46
- Significant
  - Minority ethnic football festivals: 16
  - Black and Asian football clubs: 32
  - All Asian leagues: 16
- Medium
  - Minority ethnic football festivals: 9
  - Black and Asian football clubs: 24
  - All Asian leagues: 9
- Low
  - Minority ethnic football festivals: 0
  - Black and Asian football clubs: 0
  - All Asian leagues: 5

% of clubs
employed at larger clubs in multi-racial areas but were primarily involved in 'community' coaching schemes with few black coaches coaching professionally at clubs outside London and the Midlands. The general pattern that emerged here was that black coaches and scouts seemed only 'relevant' to some of those clubs in racially-mixed areas. The tendency for professional football clubs to recruit appropriately qualified coaches and, to a lesser extent, scouts, from the ranks of ex-professional players, means that the opportunities for employment for Asian applicants are strictly limited. However, 12 clubs did refer to their Asian coaches, although these coaches featured primarily at the 'community' coaching level. Only one club in the Midlands and two clubs in London employed Asian coaches despite these areas being home to significant and varied Asian communities. Put simply, the findings here did little to dispel concerns that there is likely to be a 'glass ceiling' for black former professional players, in terms of their potential transition into scouting, coaching and club management. One suspects that the low levels of black coaches at professional football clubs might be premised, in part, on the tendency for black players (and black athletes more generally) to be viewed solely in terms of their physical 'performance' abilities rather than in terms of their analytical, motivational and 'organisational' capacities (Cashmore, 1982).

8. Football clubs and the levels of minority ethnic administrative staff

8.1 Black and Asian administrative staff

Large numbers of workers are employed on the non-playing side of top professional football clubs these days, many of whom are based in the administrative departments of clubs. These 'white-collar' positions include workers in public relations, commercial and marketing departments, financial departments, ticket-office, secretarial and routine clerical roles. The Football Task Force was concerned in 1998 that minority ethnic communities were under-represented in the 'shop front' positions and administrative departments of professional clubs and, accordingly, that
employment practices at some clubs may be effectively 'closed' to some applicants from minority ethnic communities.

Following on from this, we were interested to discover the extent to which staff form minority ethnic backgrounds were actually employed by professional football clubs in administrative departments. We were also interested in the recruitment procedures operated by football clubs and in their employment practices in terms of equal opportunities policies.

8.2 Does this club presently employ any black or Asian administrative staff?

In total, 28 clubs (34%) claimed to employ black or Asian administrative staff. Unsurprisingly, these football clubs tended to be situated in areas with larger minority ethnic populations, most notably, at eight Midlands clubs (47%) and at nine clubs (73%) based in London. However, there were no minority ethnic administrative workers at all clubs across the whole of provincial South England and only four clubs (21%) in the North West employed black or Asian administrative workers, including a number of clubs sited in areas with large Asian communities nearby.

16 FA Premier League clubs (84%) employed black or Asian administrative staff. In contrast, only 12 Football League clubs (17%) did the same. This disparity can, perhaps, be partially explained by the larger administrative departments at FA Premier League clubs and the tendency for clubs of this kind to be situated in areas with larger minority ethnic communities. However, that a very large number of Football League clubs - and especially those that are sited in multi-racial areas - employ no black or Asian administrative staff at all is a striking finding.

8.3 How many black and Asian administrative staff are employed by the club?

We were concerned, next, to try to establish a definitive figure for black and Asian administrative staff who were employed at our sample of professional football clubs. In total, 76 black and Asian administrative workers were identified as being currently employed amongst the total administrative workforce of just 28 clubs which had such staff, though it is worth noting that 23 minority ethnic workers - 30% of our total -
were to be found at just three London clubs. However, we were aware that some clubs may have included categories of workers who, although they may have had some administrative duties - community officers, assistant team managers, club shop managers and retail assistants - strictly speaking were not administrative staff. The inclusion of these workers suggests that some clubs included all non-playing and non-coaching staff whether or not these workers were employed by the clubs in a strictly *administrative* sense.

Following consultation with a number of different sized clubs, we, roughly, estimated there were likely to be around 2,200 administrative workers employed by our total sample of clubs. This would suggest that around 3% of the total administrative workforce at professional football clubs is black or Asian. However, because some club responses included a number of *non-administrative and non-full time* workers, we suspect this figure is slightly inflated. Also, take out the just one or two football clubs which do seem to offer real opportunities for minority ethnic staff and one is certainly down to a figure of not much above 1% for most clubs - way below what would be a *proportionate* spread of minority ethnic staff in administrative positions. We can only conclude that most football clubs are poor employers of minority ethnic staff in this respect.

**8.4 What is the most senior administrative position held by a black or Asian employee at the club?**

If clubs are not generally strong employers in terms of the *number* of minority ethnic staff they employ, what about their role in promoting opportunities for progress for such staff? According to our club responses, two professional football clubs currently employ commercial managers who are from minority ethnic backgrounds. This represents, perhaps, the most senior administrative position currently held by any minority ethnic administrative worker within a professional football club. A small number of club respondents also alluded to minority ethnic administrative workers who were employed in areas of financial services, ticket office management, and marketing. Some clubs also referred here to non-administrative occupational roles, such as assistant team manager, club shop manager and retail assistant which, as we have previously indicated, could not, strictly speaking, be considered as
administrative positions inside the club. A further eight clubs referred here to occupational roles of a 'routine clerical' nature. In short, the low numbers of minority ethnic administrative workers at football clubs is further compounded, with a few notable exceptions, by the relative lack of minority ethnic workers in senior administrative positions at football clubs. Clearly, the administrative talents of minority ethnic workers, which have been utilised successfully by other public and private sector organisations, so far, remain underused within the overwhelming majority of professional football clubs. This is the case, too, at the vast majority of those clubs which are situated in areas with what we have called a 'large' local minority ethnic population.

9. Football clubs and policies for the recruitment of minority ethnic administrative staff

9.1 Club recruitment of senior administrative staff

Following the rather low numbers of minority ethnic workers we found in the administration departments of professional football clubs, and also the lack of senior administrative positions held by minority ethnic workers, we were interested to examine the recruiting procedures employed by football clubs in relation to senior positions.

Table 9.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How would the club normally go about recruiting for senior administrative posts?</th>
<th>No of clubs</th>
<th>% of clubs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We always advertise senior positions</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We sometimes advertise senior positions</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We recruit based on personal recommendations</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We hire a company to find suitable candidates</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from Table 9.1 just over one-third (36%) of professional football clubs, nationally, *always advertise* for senior administrative posts. Although this figure was broadly comparable between FA Premier League clubs (32%) and
Football League clubs (38%), and across regional divides (Figure 9), clubs with a small active support (50%) were more likely to always advertise positions of this kind than were their larger counterparts. Only ten clubs (38%) situated in areas of high minority ethnic population conduct ‘open’ recruiting procedures of this kind for senior administrative positions, whilst eleven (42%) clubs in this category recruit based on personal recommendation. This last figure was actually slightly higher than the national figure for clubs which recruit in this way. Clubs with a ‘very large’ support (54%) were more likely than other clubs to hire a company to find suitable candidates in contrast to clubs with a small support (8%).

These findings may suggest that the recruiting procedures for senior administrative positions at the majority of professional football clubs share some similarities with player recruitment, since, particularly amongst larger clubs, it would appear that senior administrators are, to some extent, ‘headhunted’ or ‘transferred’ from other business organisations or from rival football clubs on the basis of personal recommendations. This ‘networking’ approach to recruitment arguably discriminates against women and against applicants from a minority ethnic background who are not always a part of these traditional (largely ‘white’, male) networks of football and business ‘insiders’. This also means, of course, that male and female black and Asian candidates are not always encouraged to apply for positions of this kind since they are not always made aware that such positions are available.

As only one-third (36%) of our clubs always advertise senior administrative positions, the relative ‘invisibility’ of minority ethnic workers at this level of football administration is hardly surprising. Senior administrative posts in football seem, effectively, something of a ‘closed shop’ at the majority of football clubs. In short, these recruitment procedures, which are currently practised by a large proportion of professional football clubs serve to deny equality of opportunity to potential applicants from minority ethnic communities.

9.2 Advertising for administrative positions

How, exactly, did clubs advertise available posts when they were actually advertised? Was this typically done in a way which appealed to the widest possible
Figure 9: Recruiting for senior administrative posts: by region

- **South/South East**
  - Always advertise: 14%
  - Sometimes advertise: 36%
  - Usually recruit based on personal recommendations: 43%
  - Hire a company to find suitable candidates: 43%

- **South West**
  - Always advertise: 22%
  - Sometimes advertise: 25%
  - Usually recruit based on personal recommendations: 22%
  - Hire a company to find suitable candidates: 56%

- **London**
  - Always advertise: 36%
  - Sometimes advertise: 36%
  - Usually recruit based on personal recommendations: 72%
  - Hire a company to find suitable candidates: 71%

- **Midlands**
  - Always advertise: 29%
  - Sometimes advertise: 41%
  - Usually recruit based on personal recommendations: 41%
  - Hire a company to find suitable candidates: 45%

- **North West**
  - Always advertise: 25%
  - Sometimes advertise: 25%
  - Usually recruit based on personal recommendations: 45%
  - Hire a company to find suitable candidates: 45%

- **North East/Yorkshire**
  - Always advertise: 24%
  - Sometimes advertise: 29%
  - Usually recruit based on personal recommendations: 59%
  - Hire a company to find suitable candidates: 71%
(including minority ethnic) audience? One way in which clubs could do this, beyond mainstream recruiting channels, is to advertise administrative positions in predominantly black or Asian national publications such as The Voice or the Asian Times. Only four clubs, two of which were based in the North West, had ever advertised posts in black or Asian publications. Clearly, the additional effort and cost incurred to advertise beyond the 'mainstream' recruitment channels, was deemed unnecessary or undesirable by almost all clubs and even by most clubs in areas with a significant local minority ethnic community. We suspect that clubs do not consciously limit their advertising; rather, they simply adhere to the 'traditional' mainstream mechanisms for advertising positions at the club. However, some club respondents were clearly determined not to advertise in the minority ethnic press. A Yorkshire club respondent commented:

'Neither would we advertise in 'white' publications! We look to employ the best possible people for the job irrespective of colour of skin'.

Of course, our findings suggest this mode of recruitment is simply not working in a meritocratic way in football. Unless, that is, minority ethnic candidates are simply not interested in this work, or else lack the talent to perform it. We doubt both these suggestions. Interestingly, this particular club, which only sometimes advertised senior administrative positions and which recruited based on personal recommendations currently employs no minority ethnic administrative staff.

We were also interested to discover in this respect whether clubs included a statement about equal opportunities in their advertisements for administrative positions. Statements such as this allow clubs to market themselves in a way which may appeal to potential applicants from minority ethnic communities as fair and open employers. 53 (64%) clubs of those which answered this question, claimed to include a statement about equal opportunities in advertisements for administrative positions at the club. Findings were broadly comparable between FA Premier League clubs (68%) and Football League clubs (67%). London clubs (70%) and clubs in the South East (85%) were most likely to make statements of this kind. 11 clubs (46%) which did not include statements of this kind in job advertisements were situated in areas of what we have called 'high' minority ethnic residence. Similarly, no clubs in our
sample had sought, in any meaningful way, to engage in campaigns or enact policies designed to increase the number of black and Asian staff they might employ.

9.3 Does the club have a comprehensive written equal opportunities policy to cover the recruitment and treatment of administrative staff?

Many large, high profile, employers in both the public and private sectors have now adopted equal opportunities employment policies. Typically, policy documents of this kind address issues of accountability, service provision, recruitment and employment, and feature a policy statement which declares that discrimination within the organisation on the grounds of 'race', gender, sexual orientation or disability will not be tolerated. Equal opportunity policy documents may serve a dual function. Firstly, there is an ethical dimension enshrined in the commitment to treat all staff equally and fairly and to conduct open recruitment procedures. Secondly, the adoption of an equal opportunities policy document may allow business organisations, such as football clubs, to project a positive corporate image to both potential sponsors and to the communities which they serve.

The Football Task Force (1998: 39) suggested that football clubs have a 'responsibility to demonstrate that (they are) run to the highest standards of conduct and integrity off the field as well as on', and recommended that clubs adopt and monitor 'a comprehensive written equal opportunities policy to cover the recruitment and treatment of all non-playing staff' (1998: 5). The adoption of an 'equal opportunities policy in relation to employment and service provision' is also a key feature, of course, of the Kick It Out ten point plan.

Although 39 (47%) of our responding clubs claimed to have an equal opportunities policy document, only 17 clubs, initially, provided us with copies of a document of this kind. After some direct contact with clubs we received a further 11 equal opportunities policy documents from clubs, making a total of 28 in all. One club, in the South East of England, suggested that whilst they did not have a comprehensive written equal opportunities policy 'the principles of equal opportunities are fully endorsed and operated by our club'. It is likely, in our view, that a number of other individual club respondents share the same sentiments. However, without an
institutionally recognised document of this kind it is, perhaps, difficult to fully operationalise the stated commitments of equal and fair treatment enshrined in official equal opportunities policies. Also, without examples of written policy documents from those clubs who reported to have them we can only say for sure that we know of a total of twenty-eight clubs (32%) that are currently in possession of written equal opportunities policy documents.

Generally speaking, clubs which we are sure have equal opportunities policies were to be found across our geographically defined boundaries, but were more prominent in London where seven (64%) clubs had written policy documents of this kind (Figure 10). Of those twenty-eight clubs we know have these policy documents, 17 club policies consisted of little more than a brief anti-discrimination statement. In contrast, policy documents at 11 clubs (15%) comprehensively addressed issues of accountability, service provision, recruitment and employment and featured a policy statement which outlined that discrimination will not be tolerated. However, one of these 11 clubs, a Football League club, actually referred in their own policy document to another club’s stadium. This suggests that the document has simply been ‘imported’ from another club without even basic alteration. This in turn might suggest that even amongst some clubs which claim to operate comprehensive equal opportunities policies, the implementation of such policy documents may be patchy, to say the least.

Furthermore, of those 28 clubs we could confirm had, and claim to use, policy documents of this kind, only nine clubs always advertise senior administrative positions. A further ten clubs which have equal opportunities policy documents actually recruit based on personal recommendation (Figure 11). Clearly, there are a number of clubs which, in terms of their recruitment procedures, fail to comply with the recruitment objectives laid out in the club’s own equal opportunities policy documents. The apparent lack of written equal opportunities policies at the majority of all clubs (68%) and the non-implementation of equal opportunities policies at many of those clubs which have them, shows a patchy response, at best, from football clubs to the 1998 Football Task Force recommendations regarding the implementation of those measures as part of the Kick It Out ten point plan. Accordingly, a number of clubs here may be in breach of the old Football Trust
Figure 10: Clubs with equal opportunities policies: by region

- London: 64% of clubs
- North East/Yorkshire: 33% of clubs
- South West: 33% of clubs
- Midlands: 31% of clubs
- South/South East: 21% of clubs
- North West: 20% of clubs

Legend: Clubs with equal opportunities policies
Figure 11: Clubs with equal opportunities policies: by methods of recruiting for senior administrative posts

- We always advertise senior positions: 28%
- We sometimes advertise senior positions: 39%
- We recruit by personal recommendations: 32%
- We hire a company to find us suitable candidates: 57%

% of clubs
stipulations of the need for clubs to promote an effective anti-racist policy in order to be eligible to receive public funding for stadium redevelopment.

10. Conclusion

It is hardly surprising, in the context of the employment practices and recruitment procedures identified in the findings, that workers from a minority ethnic background represent only a tiny proportion of the ‘white collar’ workforce at professional football clubs. The lack of effective equal opportunities policies at many clubs and the ‘mixed’ implementation of such policies where they exist, the reluctance to advertise senior administrative positions outside of mainstream recruitment channels, where such positions are publicly advertised at all, and the lack of active campaigns to recruit workers from local minority ethnic communities may all contribute, to a greater or lesser degree, towards maintaining the predominantly ‘white’ working environment of many football club administrations.

There may be, of course, a range of locally specific factors which contribute to the low numbers of minority ethnic workers employed by some professional clubs. For many clubs based in predominantly ‘white’ locales, there may simply be a limited pool of suitably qualified local minority ethnic workers available for employment. This is, perhaps, particularly apparent at a number of rural, lower division Football League clubs. However, over two-thirds of Premier League (68%) clubs and just under two-thirds of Football League (61%) clubs are based in areas with ‘high’ or ‘significant’ minority ethnic populations. The exceedingly small numbers of minority ethnic ‘white collar’ workers at many of these clubs may, perhaps, indicate a lack of awareness, knowledge and expertise within the core administrative structures and organisational processes of clubs. This may be reflected in the relative absence of any explicitly defined criteria which can assure equality of access and fair treatment for the administrative workforce inside professional clubs. This apparent inability to ‘open-up’ more completely a series of apparently ‘closed’ employment and recruitment procedures at many clubs may, unconsciously and inadvertently, be currently contributing to the under-representation of talented minority ethnic staff.
Nonetheless, a significant number of clubs have begun to engage in multi-agency partnerships with football based organisations such as Kick It Out and, additionally, non-football bodies such as Racial Equality Councils, local authority departments and, importantly, community organisations, to work together on a range of participatory and educational ‘anti racism’ initiatives. These organisations have considerable experience of working with and responding to the specific needs of minority ethnic communities and, increasingly, in assisting large-scale employers to establish more inclusionary employment practices. In recent years, a number of notable high profile public and private sector organisations have attempted to address the institutional practices and processes within their own industry which may, in the past, have unconsciously excluded minority ethnic communities from their workforce. By working with partner organisations and keeping pace with changes taking place within the wider employment sector, professional football clubs now have the opportunity to ‘connect’ more productively with their local minority ethnic communities in a variety of ways, not least, by openly reviewing their current employment and recruitment procedures and practices in order that their administrative workforce may potentially be better representative of the wider communities served by professional football clubs.

The findings of the New Football Communities research, a brief summary of which has been presented in this chapter, suggest that many professional football clubs – perhaps a majority - have offered only a limited a response to the implementation of ‘anti-racism’ measures outlined in the Football Task Force (1998) recommendations and covered in Chapter 2. A small number of professional clubs working directly in conjunction with other football and non-football agencies, at the local level, seem, actively, to have sought to engage with local minority ethnic communities in some sort of dialogue and to implement practical measures to challenge racism and to promote social inclusion of the sort discussed in Chapter 3. However, many more clubs seem to have struggled to try to connect with local black and Asian communities and to increase their involvement in football in terms of playing, spectating and perhaps, most notably, sporting and administrative employment opportunities, where a series of semi-institutionalised barriers to greater minority ethnic participation seem to be a feature.
The findings presented in this chapter also allude to the way in which many club administrators conceptualise racism as a singular monolithic entity that is in some way ‘out-there’ and which impinges upon – as opposed to being generated by – the everyday processes and practices enacted by football clubs and the football industry more widely. This limited approach seems to be central to the way in which many clubs here clearly conceptualise racism in football and occludes any sense of an ‘inward gaze’ with regard to addressing the power and ‘community’ relations that traditionally underpin football clubs and their relationships with minority ethnic communities. These findings support the theoretical assertions made in Chapter One in this respect.

This specific conception of football ‘local-ness’ which this thesis has alluded to also seems, effectively to exclude the ethnic minorities in many places. Rigid conceptions of ‘race’ and ethnic relations effectively enable clubs to devolve responsibility for changing local practices by placing the emphasis for the apparent lack of minority ethnic participation in the activities of clubs firmly at the door of local minority communities who are often, perhaps unconsciously, portrayed by clubs in ways which place them outside of the local cultural catchment markets of clubs.

In doing so, many club administrators have utilised racialised assessments of minority ethnic communities, which draw on popular misconceptions of biology and ‘culture’. The lack of any real sense of critical reflexivity within the white hegemonic practices of many clubs also colludes with ideas of cultural exclusivity and racialised boundary constructions apparent in ‘new right’ philosophies of ‘race’ and ethnicity. Similarly, the findings here also allude to the existence of an embedded ‘culture of resistance’ amongst some club administrators that seem to negate attempts to dissolve perceived barriers of involvement to ethnic minority communities and instead displaces blame onto ‘anti-racist’ initiatives for ‘importing’ racism into clubs and onto their cultural agendas. Again, these findings offer empirical support for the key theoretical assertions made by the author in Chapter One.

In the next two chapters the thesis will look in detail at two very different sorts of local projects which are attempting to address racism in football at the local level. We will start in Chapter 5 by looking at a very distinctive project in Sheffield.
Chapter Five

The ‘Football Unites, Racism Divides’ (FURD) Project

1. Introduction and Background

1.1 The local context of Sheffield: social, economic and ‘racial’ demographics

The city of Sheffield is situated at the heart of the Pennines in the North of England and forms part of the metropolitan borough of South Yorkshire, which, is inclusive of the medium sized cities of Barnsley (to the North of Sheffield) and Rotherham and Doncaster (to the East and North East of Sheffield respectively), and accounts for a total population of around 1.3 million people. Sheffield is the largest city in South Yorkshire and the fifth largest city in England.

The industrial development of Sheffield and its concomitant population growth from an estimated 135,000 in 1851 to around half a million inhabitants at the close of the twentieth century (ONS, 2002) has largely been premised on the demands of the local economy and the opportunities for employment in the city’s once world renowned steel industry. Historically, many local Sheffield workers have found employment in the city’s steel mills and manufacturing centres as well as in the once thriving mining industry of the broader South Yorkshire region and in the peripheral ‘mining’ towns and villages of North Nottinghamshire and North Derbyshire that dominate the broader social and economic landscape of the region. The heavily industrial nature of working conditions predicated by the factory steel working and coal-mining industries of Sheffield and its surrounding locales have helped produce a distinctive occupational culture based on overtly masculine values of strength, endurance and ‘toughness’ and have also given rise to a strong sense of political consciousness and ‘civic decency’ in the region (Taylor et al, 1996; Armstrong, 1998).

The growth of industrial Sheffield has been intertwined with the rise of the Labour movement and the region has traditionally offered strong electoral support for the
Labour party and also for a number of occupationally specific Trade Union organisations. The overtly masculinist occupational culture of Sheffield’s key industries and its rooted-ness in leftist political radicalism converged, most recently, during the distinctly ideological, and often violent, opposition locally to the policies of the right wing Tory Thatcher administration in the 1980s, where both steelworkers (1980) and miners (1984/85) became engaged in lengthy industrial disputes (see, Armstrong 1998). In recent years, the general decline in England’s heavy manufacturing base has had a particularly harsh effect on the local economies of Sheffield and of South Yorkshire more generally.

Recent cinematic representation of the region as personified in the dole-based ‘dark humour’ of the popular film releases *The Full Monty* and *Brassed Off* portray starkly this industrial decline and the concomitant crisis for locally grounded masculinities. According to the Office for National Statistics ‘Indices of social deprivation’ (ONS: 2002), ten of Sheffield’s twenty-nine local authority wards feature amongst the most deprived 10% of all wards nationally, and visible levels of social and economic deprivation are most strikingly apparent in some of the city’s multi-ethnic urban locales and its predominantly white ‘sink’ estates.

The social, economic and political history of Sheffield has generated a distinct ‘local cultural structure’ (Taylor et al, 1996) that is strongly rooted in masculinist and skilled working class (graft and craft) social formations. These structural indices provide the foundation on which ‘local structures of feeling’ (Williams 1977) are generated and reinforced locally through a process of dialogue, exchange and interaction. The productions of meanings and articulations of ‘local-ness’ in this context have informed local identity constructions of ‘Sheffield-ness’ that have become strongly embedded in the local popular consciousness. ‘Sheffield-ness’ as a distinct identity construction informed by such ‘local structures of feeling’ is partly informed through a wider engagement with structural and common-sense perceptions and ideas of ‘Yorkshire-ness’ and ‘Northern-ness’, on the basis of some real and perceived shared lived experiences and empathetic affiliations that cut across immediate regional boundaries and which are often mobilised in ideological, political and sporting opposition to the south of England.
Equally, the idea of ‘Sheffield-ness’ is constructed in opposition to a regional ‘other’ in order to cement a more strictly localised identity formation in which historical belonging and cultural attachment to a sense of place are generated much more strongly. Nonetheless, ‘Sheffield-ness’ is rooted, historically, in northern, working class social formations and is hegemonic in its male-ness and ‘white-ness’. Of course, hegemonic social formations are open to forms of classed, gendered and racialised disruption and contestation and group identity constructions are subject to processes of change, invention and fluidity (Phoenix 1998). They are also subject to a range of local, national and global forces in which identity is transformed and recomposed (Bulmer and Solomos, 1999). Nonetheless, the idea of ‘Sheffield-ness’ as an identity construction rooted in, and reflective of, local masculinist and working class labour histories, is the dominant force that informs ‘local structures of feeling’ and popular consciousness in the area, and which arguably pervades local institutions and local social interaction.

The historical trajectories and settlement patterns of in-migrant groups in the major urban centres of the north of England have differed significantly and as such there is some considerable uneven-ness in respect of the local experience of in-migration and ‘racial’ difference (Taylor et al, 1996). Some larger northern cities, such as Liverpool and Manchester, have long been exposed to ‘foreign’ cultures, due to their historical position as sea-port centres of commerce and trade and have to some degree incorporated key elements of these in-migrant cultures within the ‘local cultural structure’ with particular reference to black and Irish communities. During the post-war period of commonwealth in-migration the incorporation of visible minority ethnic communities into the ‘local cultural structure’ of the aforementioned cities has been more problematic and has led to the establishment of racialised and ghettoised urban spaces in which many of the negative features of unemployment and poverty are all too apparent.

This development has also been apparent in some of the smaller ‘mill-towns’ of the north of England where economic uncertainties have recently – and in the past - underpinned racialised tensions and disorder. In Sheffield, the dominance of the steel industry as a major provider of employment for local inhabitants has arguably led to the establishment of a kind of autonomous ‘industrial enclave culture’ (Taylor et al,
in which historical self-sufficiency has informed a rather insular local cultural identity. Further, the singularity of the industrial history of Sheffield has conditioned the relatively limited in-migration trajectories of minority ethnic groups from the British Commonwealth to the region.

From the 1950s onwards the city of Sheffield has attracted small, but significant, numbers of in-migrants from the West Indies to work as nurses, medical auxiliary staff and as steelworkers in the region. These African/Caribbean 'settlers' and their families were joined in Sheffield from the 1960s onwards by Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Indian in-migrants to support the local steel-working industry (Taylor et al, 1996). The steady trajectory and settlement of in-migrants in Sheffield in the post World War Two period has meant that by 1991 around 5% (25,200) of the overall population of Sheffield were drawn from minority ethnic backgrounds (ONS, 2002). Just over one-third of local minority ethnic populations are of Pakistani origin and just under one third are of African/Caribbean origin with the remaining one third of local minority ethnic populations being made up of smaller Indian, Bangladeshi and Chinese communities (Sheffield REC, 1996).

The tendency for larger youth cohorts present amongst some specific minority ethnic communities and the arrival in Sheffield of some new, predominantly Somali, refugee communities in recent years might suggest that this demographic figure is now a little outdated and might under-estimate the actual numerical significance of local minority ethnic communities now present in the region. Nonetheless, available data sets reveal that more than half of Sheffield’s minority ethnic communities are resident in the socially and economically deprived inner city wards of Burngreave, Darnall and Firth Park (to the immediate North and North East of the city’s central business district) and amidst the low-cost terraced housing and high rise flats of the Sharrow district of Sheffield, in which Sheffield United’s Bramall Lane stadium is situated, just half a mile to the South West of the city’s commercial epicentre.

The diverse mix of minority ethnic communities located in Sharrow are broadly reflective of minority ethnic demographics across the city as a whole, with significant African/Caribbean and Pakistani communities most numerically significant here, with smaller Bangladeshi, Indian and Somali communities also
present. According to 1991 Census data, these minority ethnic groups, together, accounted for 23% of the total population of Sharrow and almost half (44%) of the local youth population. The double bind of 'racial' and economic disadvantage with respect to adult unemployment (30%) and youth unemployment (44%) are particularly apparent for the minority ethnic communities of Sharrow, with local Pakistani and African Caribbean communities, in particular, suffering disproportionately the adverse effects of the broader downturn in the local economy.

Whilst key social and economic indices offer an account of the way in which minority ethnic communities in Sheffield are disproportionately subject to the vagaries of the local economy it also important to understand the ways in which issues of 'race' and ethnicity are 'played out' within the 'local cultural structure' of the region. That is, how dominant 'local structures of feeling' in Sheffield work to both encourage or discourage the greater inclusion of minority ethnic communities within the ideological and psychological meaning of 'Sheffield-ness' and how the presence of black and Asian group might disrupt traditional representations of the region and its hegemonic social relations?

The important work of Taylor et al (1996) indicate the racialised anxieties of white working class communities in Sheffield with regard to the growing minority ethnic population in the area and alludes to some inter-ethnic tensions articulated through the 'language of community' (Back, 1996) that are probably informed by wider, nationalistic, discourses and definitions of a racialised 'other' that also draw on specific cultural racisms. Also, Taylor et al (1996) allude to the ways in which local minority ethnic communities conceptualise particular urban spaces throughout the city of Sheffield in terms of their racialised accessibility and safety. This might suggest that the way in which Sheffield-based minority ethnic communities negotiate a place for themselves within the 'local cultural structure' of the city is premised upon the capacity of local black and Asian groups to contest and disrupt some of the relatively closed and racialised local nationalisms that inform the popular 'folk' identity of Sheffield-ness. The precise ways in which these racialised dynamics are played out in the context of the relationship between Sheffield United FC, it's fans, and its local minority ethnic communities are examined in the following sections.
1.2 A brief history of football in Sheffield

The city of Sheffield holds a unique place in the history of English football as it is claimed by some historians to be the birthplace of the modern game and is host to the world’s oldest football club, Sheffield FC which was formed in 1855 and which is still in existence today (Walvin, 1975). Whilst Sheffield FC was largely formed out of the activities of the city’s privately educated middle class, the growing popularity of the game locally in this period of growing industrialisation soon attracted members of the petit bourgeoisie and local artisans to form other local football clubs and the game was soon to gather mass appeal amongst the region’s working class proletariat.

By the 1860s there were as many as 15 organised teams playing regularly in Sheffield and members of these early Sheffield based clubs advised on the rules of the game when the Football Association was founded in 1863 (G. Williams, 1994). Many of the most important local football fixtures that took place during this formative period of the game in Sheffield were played at Bramall Lane, an eight and a half acre site owned by the Duke of Norfolk situated to the immediate south of the city’s growing central business district. The Bramall Lane site is considered to be one of the oldest sports enclosures in England and from the mid 1850s onwards was home to Sheffield United Cricket Club.

Following an FA Cup semi-final played at Bramall Lane between Preston North End and West Bromwich Albion in March 1889, members of Sheffield United Cricket Club were keen to maximise the potential for generating the kinds of revenue that hosting more regular football events at Bramall Lane might engender and, as a result, Sheffield United Football Club was formed as the venue’s ‘home’ club. In 1892 Sheffield United took their place in the newly formed Football League Division Two and began a more than century-old rivalry with local neighbours Sheffield Wednesday who were themselves formed in 1867 and who, by the turn of the century, had taken up a permanent residency at Owlerton (renamed Hillsborough in 1912) a few miles to the north of the commercial centre of Sheffield (Fishwick, 1989).
Soon after their formation, Sheffield United FC adopted the nickname the ‘Blades’ in reference to the city’s steel industry from where the club drew much of its active support. During this early period of its development, Sheffield United FC achieved some notable successes, becoming Division One champions in 1897/98 and going on to be victorious in four FA Cup finals in 1899, 1902, 1915 and 1925. Alas, 1925 was to be the last time that Sheffield United was to win a major domestic championship and in the post WW2 period the club has been forced to compete in all four domestic League divisions and, since 1993/94, has struggled in mid table in the (new) Football League Division One.

As with the ‘Blades’, the pre WW2 achievements of Sheffield Wednesday have largely been tempered by a striking lack of trophy success in the post WW2 period with the exception of a brief period in the early 1990s when the ‘Owls’ won the League Cup in 1991. Since 1945 the Wednesday have competed in all but the lowest Football League Division and, following a series of poor performances and some significant financial turmoil in recent years, the ‘Owls’ have now resumed competitive hostilities with their local neighbours in the Football League Division One.

Despite the relative lack of top-flight success of both Sheffield United FC and Sheffield Wednesday FC in the post war period, Sheffield continues to generate relatively large levels of active support for the cities two professional clubs. Although Sheffield Wednesday FC might be considered to be the city’s largest (and more successful) club regularly attracting around 25,000 fans to home matches, Sheffield United FC, despite their apparent recent lack of upward mobility, continue to play host to around 18,000 fans at games at Bramall Lane. The continued popularity of football as a spectator sport and a consuming passion for a substantial proportion of the inhabitants of Sheffield has remained largely untouched by the plethora of other ‘live’ spectator sports available for consumption in the region including both codes of Rugby, Basketball, Athletics, Boxing and perhaps, most notably, Ice Hockey. Both professional football clubs have relatively large modernised all-seated stadiums as necessitated by the regulations laid down in the Taylor report (1990) following the tragedy at Hillsborough in 1989 (see Taylor, 1991). The respective ‘Kop’ ends of both clubs continue to be populated by younger,
more vociferous, sets of fans who contribute greatly to the generation of a more
traditional ‘lively’ match atmosphere. Historically, local ‘derby’ games have been
fiercely contested affairs and in recent years these parochial passions and local
tribalisms have exploded into regular and often orchestrated bouts of football related
violence between members of rival hooligan ‘firms’. These incidents have taken
place in and around the respective club stadiums and in the pubs and clubs of the
city-centre and the surrounding districts (Armstrong 1998).

1.3 Sheffield United, its fans and its local minority ethnic communities

The dramatic changes that have taken place in the post-Taylor report era of the
English game with respect to increasing globalisation and commercialism has led to a
transformation of the game at the elite domestic level (Giulianotti, 1999; King 1998).
For clubs such as Sheffield United FC on the fringes – but seemingly, always, just
outside - of the game’s top flight, as defined by participation in the new cash-rich FA
Premier League, these globalising trends and new commercial markets have arguably
impacted upon the club in a rather more limited way. That is, a steady and pragmatic
process of stadium redevelopment has seen Bramall Lane transformed into a neat,
all-seated stadium with a capacity of 30,000, whilst, on the pitch, players drawn from
all corners of the British Isles have in recent seasons been joined by players from
Scandinavia, Southern Europe and West Africa. However, beyond the comfortable
and much improved stadium facilities that play host these days to a curious mixture
of old style fan geographies and corporate residencies and the growing
cosmopolitanism of the club’s playing staff, the club identity remains largely rooted
in the social and cultural formations which have traditionally defined its historical
development.

The historical rooted-ness of Bramall Lane in terms of its spatial location in the
Sharrow area of Sheffield might suggest that, for many of the club’s followers,
attendance at the club stadium on match-days might engender a strong sense of
‘sporting topophilia’ (Bale, 2000) whereby positive meanings of self and
communality based on a sense of historical and cultural attachment to a particular
site or district might be generated. Equally, for some displaced fans, Bramall Lane
might offer an arena in which a sense of birthplace localism and it’s constituent white
‘Sheffield-ness’ might become implicitly and explicitly celebrated. Recent fan survey data (Williams, 2001) suggests that a large percentage of ‘Blades’ fans describe their club as being ‘friendly’ (78%), ‘traditional’ (50%) and as being a ‘community club’ (69%). Similarly, one Sheffield United FC administrator, responding to a questionnaire designed to elicit responses with regard to broad issues of social inclusion (Bradbury, 2001), felt that one of the club’s key attractions to supporters was its ‘strongly local’ identity.

This sense of the club as a strong manifestation of, mainly, masculine local identity and affiliation tends to work at the level of the wider Sheffield community and might be more apparent for many displaced fans who, due to changing demographic patterns of ‘white flight’ from the 1970s and 1980s onwards, are now largely situated in locales peripheral to and beyond the immediate Sharrow district in which the Bramall Lane ground remains situated. Indeed, largely reflective of national urban demographics and the rise of ‘nuisance effects’ around football grounds from the 1970s onwards (Bale, 1991) the availability of cheap housing and accommodation in the local ‘stadium community’ of Sharrow has seen this particular locale become host to numerically significant, and often economically disadvantaged, minority ethnic communities.

Nonetheless, the strong sense of a local ‘Sheffield’ identity amongst ‘Blades’ fans is not without some broader geographical reasoning since, again, according to fan survey data (Williams 2001), more than four out of five (82%) United supporters still live within a fifteen-mile radius of Bramall Lane. Williams (2001) also suggests that almost half (46%) of ‘Blades’ fans go to a pub or club directly before matches at Bramall Lane and that only one out of ten (10%) attendees at United matches are female, a figure rather lower than the average percentage of females attending matches at other Football League clubs (13%) and at clubs in the FA Premier League (15%).

Furthermore, whilst ‘Blades’ fans have a broadly similar class profile to fans at other Football League clubs, fewer are University educated and average incomes for fans are slightly lower than is the case for comparable fan cohorts nationally (Williams, 2001). These latter findings might, in part, be reflective of the nature of the local
economy and some national geographic wage differentials that disproportionately affect workers in the North of England. With regard to the ‘racial’ and ethnic demographics of active support at Sheffield United FC, the earlier Carling Fan Survey (Williams 1994) indicated that 99.4% of the ‘Blades’ crowd make-up classified themselves as ‘white’. Later fan survey data (Williams 2001) based on the responses of 860 ‘Blades’ supporters found that only twelve respondents (1.4%) described themselves as being from minority ethnic backgrounds, including three respondents who classified themselves as ‘foreign nationals’.

All these findings, taken together, might suggest that the demographics of ‘Blades’ support are largely reflective of white working class and heavily masculinist social and cultural formations and practices that are more closely associated with more ‘traditional’ patterns of football ‘fandom’ nationally, and fan demographics here might also be reflective, in part, of the wider historical social and cultural identity of the industrial city of Sheffield. That is, Bramall Lane as a site for the generation of meanings of attachment and belonging might also be representative of the dominant ‘local structure of feeling’ in the city that is likely, in turn, to contribute, implicitly and explicitly, to processes of sports-based racialised exclusion.

The predominantly white working class and strongly masculinist fan culture of ‘Blades’ fans has found its expression in the now multi-ethnic district of Sharrow on match-days and has led to some obvious and recent tensions between a minority of white fans and many local minority ethnic residents. Research undertaken by researchers from Sheffield Hallam University in 1997 (Pinto et al, 1997) entitled *Sheffield United or Divided?* illustrates the concerns of some local minority ethnic residents about ‘unacceptable’ levels of racial abuse, harassment and intimidation perpetrated by a minority of ‘Blades’ supporters on match-days. The apparent frequency of these events had led, in some cases, to the adoption of something of a ‘siege mentality’ amongst some local minority ethnic residents who are fearful of football-related racially motivated abuse and violence. Anecdotal evidence suggested that these incidents have also given rise to turf conflicts between groups of local minority ethnic youth and young white males attracted to the locality on match-days.
Data from fan surveys (Williams 2001) suggest that more than one-quarter of Sheffield United fans (26%) during the 1993/94 season and a higher percentage of fans (29%) during the 1999/2000 season had witnessed racial abuse aimed at players at United matches, although the consistency and levels of such abuse are a little more unclear. Nonetheless, incidents of racial abuse inside and outside the Bramall Lane stadium over a significant period has probably contributed, in part, to the relative lack of engagement of local minority ethnic residents in the activities of Sheffield United, despite high levels of interest in the game amongst local minority ethnic youth groups.

According to Pinto et al (1997) many local minority ethnic residents had become contemptuous of the disruptive effects the local professional club has had on their everyday lives, and the club had come to be perceived by many local minority ethnic residents in the Sharrow area as something of a ‘white enclave’ in an otherwise multi-ethnic district. The racialised negotiation of local public space is what is at play here. This racialised dissonance has arguably contributed to the continued (self) exclusion of local minority ethnic communities from participating fully in the activities of Sheffield United FC, in terms of playing, and spectating, and also in terms of the potential for employment at the club in a non-playing context.

2. The history and development of Football Unites, Racism Divides (FURD)

2.1 The origins of FURD

Largely in response to the restructuring of English football in the post-Hillsborough phase of the game, there followed in England an increasing ‘politicisation’ of local and national fan groups that have sought to obtain more of a democratic stake in football’s decision-making processes (see for example, Brown, 1998). In the early to mid 1990s one such group, the Blades Independent Fans Association (BIFA), grew in opposition to an unpopular Board of Directors at Sheffield United FC and was enabled in its development by the self-empowering and sometimes irreverent local football fanzine movement (see Haynes, 1997). Following a long, but ultimately successful, campaign to depose the, then, United Chairman, Reg Brearley, BIFA
members widened their priorities to other areas concerning the activities of Sheffield United. A key priority of BIFA's new approach was to seek ways in which the racist abuse aimed at black players at United matches could be challenged, and to explore ways in which to attract more black and Asian supporters to Bramall Lane. Also, there was a growing recognition amongst BIFA members of the racist abuse and harassment faced by Bramall Lane's local minority ethnic residents in the immediate Sharrow locality (see, also, Bains, 1998).

Two leading BIFA members, Ray Kinsey and Howard Holmes, were, at that time, both employed by Sheffield Youth Service and were members of the Sheffield Youth Service Anti-racist Action Group (ARAG). Utilising Sheffield City Council's experience in multi-agency networking, a steering group featuring a range of statutory and non-statutory community based organisations, inclusive of SUFC and its fans, was established in 1995 to tackle issues around the football related racist harassment of Sharrow's black and Asian communities and the barriers faced by Sharrow's minority ethnic youth population in terms of their participation in football, more generally.

The original steering group featured the following organisations: Sheffield United FC; Blades Independent Fans Association (BIFA); Sheffield United Supporters Club; Football Association; South Yorkshire Police; The Hub-African Caribbean Project; Abbeydale Asian Youth Project; St Mary's Church and Community Centre; Sheffield Racial Equality Council; Abbeydale Grange School; Young People and Community Safety project (Safer Cities); Sheffield Youth Service Anti-racist Action Group; and a Multi-Agency Pilot Project on Racial Harassment.

Once these core organisations were on board and their key concerns articulated, a funding bid for a football based, anti-racist project was made to the European Cities Anti-Racism Project. The intended project, which would provide an addition to Sheffield City Council's established anti-racist policies and practices, was managed and supervised by the Council's Youth Service, which also selected and recruited a Project Co-ordinator. In January 1996, European funding was secured and the Football Unites, Racism Divides (FURD) project was officially launched in April 1996 with a broad set of aims and objectives (see appendix) centred around
developing an effective multi-agency approach to addressing issues of racialised abuse and harassment and the exclusion of local minority ethnic communities from participation in the activities of Sheffield United FC through a process of campaigning and awareness-raising activities.

Since the initial formation of FURD in 1996, the project has expanded its list of representative partner organisations to include the national Kick It Out campaign, Sheffield Wednesday FC and the Sheffield and Hallamshire County FA, in addition to building local, regional, national and international links with a range of football and community based organisations concerned with addressing issues of racialised forms of exclusion. Further, the successful acquisition of funding from a range of public bodies (see below) has meant that FURD has been able to expand the scope of the initial project beyond more immediate issues of addressing issues of racism and the exclusion of local minority ethnic communities from the activities of Sheffield United FC, to incorporate broader social inclusion issues and to use football and sport in imaginative ways to educate and empower local minority ethnic youth groups. The capacity of FURD to access funding in support of a series of wider aims that encompass broader issues of social inclusion and minority ethnic youth empowerment through sports have been paralleled, to some extent, by a similar football-based project in South East London, the Charlton Athletic Race Equality (CARE) project (see, Garland and Chakroborti, 2001).

In 1999, the FURD project updated its pre-existing development and action plan (see appendix) to incorporate the following broad areas of work; namely; increasing the participation of minority ethnic young people in football as players, spectators and employees; significantly increasing the participation and involvement of minority ethnic young women, both in sport more generally and more specifically in football; reducing racial abuse and harassment and encouraging greater participation by minority ethnic groups in the activities of SUFC and other local professional football clubs; challenging racism through anti-racist education; developing the work of the FURD Resources and Information Centre; increasing the participation of volunteers, especially young people 16-24 in FURD’s work; securing the future work of FURD (funding); and developing regional, national and international initiatives.
More recently, and largely in response to their changing financial situation, the FURD project has again reviewed and updated its development and action plan to cover the forthcoming period from 2002 to 2007 (see appendix) with the intention of further developing the aims and objectives of the broad areas of work identified above. By the close of 2000, the FURD project employed nine key workers with complimentary skills and abilities in youth work, football coaching and administration to help implement the stated aims and objectives laid out in the development and action plan, and work here has also been ably supported by a number of paid, casual staff and the voluntary efforts and commitment of long standing associates of the project and a significant number of young volunteers. The project continues to be housed at the Sheffield City Council owned 'Stables' site in the heart of Sharrow, close to Bramall Lane, as part of the package of in-kind support provided by Sheffield Youth Service.

2.2 The management and advisory structure of FURD

The capacity of any working project to meet its stated aims and objectives is, to some degree, dependent upon the establishment of a clear and cohesive management structure, within which the specific roles and responsibilities of individual workers are clearly demarcated. The implementation and adherence to mechanisms designed to give support and supervision are also necessary for the benefit of good working practice. The successful expansion of the FURD project from its small beginnings, as a multi-agency partnership with no direct funding, to it's a position as a local voluntary service provider charged with the responsibility to deliver a range of activities under the broad headings of 'anti-racism' and 'social inclusion', has meant that the day to day working practices of the FURD project increasingly function in highly flexible and inter-related ways, and there is a considerable degree of overlap between specific areas of responsibility and attempts to achieve set objectives and goals. Nonetheless, the project has established a clear and effective management and supervisory structure to assist in the process of delivering its stated aims and objectives, which draws on the strengths of key workers and, importantly, also accommodates the experience and support of the wider project steering group, as well as partner organisations.
In order to establish a series of realistic and achievable targets for key workers charged with specific roles and responsibilities relating to new and explicit funding criteria, and to assist in establishing 'in-house' sub groups where discrete patterns of work may benefit from the cross-fertilisation of ideas and some degree of collaboration, the FURD project has aimed to reflect upon its ongoing processes and practices and has, accordingly, been able to effectively update and revise its pre-existing development and action plans. In doing so, the project has exercised a considerable degree of democratisation, since all of the projects key workers play a significant part in the construction and re-articulation of new action and development plans through a designated process of conflict resolution undertaken in a broadly supportive environment. This has, seemingly, led to greater productivity and the implementation of clear mechanisms for future progress.

This broadly collaborative process has also helped, significantly in our view, to establish a greater sense of collective ownership amongst FURD workers, with regard to their designated work responsibilities and, more generally, to the wider activities and general philosophy of the broader FURD project. Under the broad headings identified in the FURD development and action plans, key workers, including the FURD Project Co-ordinator, Howard Holmes, are designated for work on specific targets and priorities, modes of action to achieve these targets, time scales for the completion of specific tasks, and performance indicators to assist in the process of self-monitoring. The successful implementation of consecutive FURD development and action plans would seem to have provided project workers with clearer roles and responsibilities and contributed, significantly, to the effectiveness of the project’s output.

The capacity of the project co-ordinator to take a wider perspective on the project’s position as a local provider and its relationship to ‘progressive’ national and international campaigns specifically designed to tackle racism in football and, more generally, promote social inclusion with specific reference to minority ethnic communities, has helped engender a clear philosophical vision and agenda for the project. Further, Holmes’s ability to successfully seek out and attract new and
relevant funding to support the ongoing activities of the project has contributed substantially to its financial viability and long-term stability.

The Project Co-ordinator is, of course, also charged with the overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of the project and its workers and this is manifest in two important ways. Firstly, each key worker charged with specific responsibilities for a designated work area is awarded regular monthly supervisions with the project co-ordinator, Howard Holmes, whose career experience in youth work delivery and management is particularly useful in this context. In turn, the project co-ordinator is responsible to a designated Sheffield City Council Youth Officer, with considerable knowledge of local statutory and non-statutory structures, financial management and project planning, and the capacity to afford consistent advice and support to the Project Co-ordinator through direct supervision. Further, these regular supervisory meetings allow the designated line manager, to review and monitor project performance. Secondly, more recently, the project has established weekly team meetings where key workers get together to report on progress and problems in relation to ongoing activities. FURD workers have been keen to recognise the value of these weekly forums in terms of significantly improving internal communication systems and contributing to better mechanisms for problem solving and sharing skills and knowledge.

Beyond the democratic ‘in-house’ support structures and mechanisms for communication which have assisted individual FURD workers to achieve stated aims and objectives and, more generally, better realise FURD’s potential as an effective voluntary service provider, the project has, since its inception, held regular bi-monthly meetings of the FURD Project Advisory Group (PAG) at the home, Stables site. This group consists of those representative organisations that make up the wider FURD partnership, along with local youth engaged with the FURD project through its ongoing activities in the community and who are encouraged to take part in and contribute to this advisory process. Formal agenda items at FURD PAG meetings regularly feature written and verbal progress reports provided by key workers charged with responsibility for specific areas of FURD’s ongoing work and financial reports are prepared by FURD administrative staff. Other agenda items focus, typically, on specific areas of work in which the project co-ordinator has taken a lead
role and this often includes issues relating to work with local professional clubs, national and international initiatives, ongoing project management issues, funding concerns and issues relating to the future direction of the project.

In this sense, the Project Advisory Group meetings function at a number of levels.

- **Firstly**, through the delivery of progress reports key workers can explain and justify their modes of action towards achieving stated targets in a supportive environment.
- **Secondly**, the delivery of progress reports allows representatives of the wider FURD partnership to regularly monitor and reflect upon the progress and direction of the project.
- **Thirdly**, key representatives can play an advisory role in the activities of FURD by contributing their knowledge and expertise for the benefit of the project.
- **Fourthly**, these regular meetings maintain stakeholders’ sense of shared ownership in the project. The Project Advisory Group meetings have consistently provided an important forum for monitoring and review and have also offered a regular means by which partner organisations can stay closely connected to the project and its activities.

In recent years, the aims of FURD have broadened significantly to incorporate the development and promotion of a distinctive programme of football based, anti-racist education. In 1999, the project established the FURD Educational (FURD-ED) Trust as a legally constituted charitable organisation to assist in the acquisition of new and substantial funding to help achieve these formalised and innovative educational objectives and to manage activities here effectively. The FURD-ED Trust operates a clear membership structure wherein individuals representative of the project’s key partner organisations act as Trustees with specific responsibilities in this respect.

Importantly, the FURD-ED Trustees offer a complementary spread of professional expertise in areas of financial management, recruitment and management of staff, project planning and fundraising skills and are also representative of the communities
they serve in terms of ethnicity and youth representation. FURD-ED Trust meetings take place alongside FURD PAG meetings on a bi-monthly basis and follow a similar format to PAG meetings. FURD-ED workers deliver written and verbal progress reports on activities relating to, for example, the development and delivery of anti-racist education and the activities of the Resource and Information Centre, and financial reports are provided by the FURD-ED administrative worker. Furthermore, issues relating to Football Against Racism in Europe (FARE), the History of Black Footballers Exhibition and the general management of the FURD-ED project are also regularly discussed at these meetings. Again, this forum allows FURD-ED Trustees and other members of the wider partnership to monitor and reflect upon ongoing work and, perhaps, offer expertise and knowledge to better improve outputs in this respect. Accordingly, the regular FURD-ED Trust meetings offer an important mechanism for monitoring and review which informs the decision making process of the FURD-ED Trustees and contributes, more generally, to the competent management of this important area of the project’s work.

2.3. The funding of FURD

The development of the FURD partnership as a voluntary sector community organisation with a broad-based philosophy of anti-racism and minority ethnic youth inclusion and a clear set of practical objectives was, in the first instance, largely underpinned by European commission funding, which amounted to around £95,000 spread over a two-year period from the project’s inception in late 1995. During this early phase in the history of FURD, the project was also able to locate additional financial contributions from the Single Regeneration Budget – ‘Regenerating Sheffield’ (£63,000 from 1997-2000), the South Yorkshire Police Community Initiatives Programme (£19,000 from 1996-99) and the Home Office Community Relations Unit (£5,000 from 1997-98).

The successful acquisition of funding during the early development of FURD enabled the project to begin to fulfil its stated aims and objectives with specific reference to engaging local minority ethnic youth in football-centred activities and establishing an improving relationship between Sheffield United and local minority ethnic communities in the Sharrow area. However, following the cessation of
European Commission funding for FURD towards the close of 1997, and until the influx of new funding streams from mid-1999 onwards, the project functioned on a smaller working budget than for the previous two years. Nonetheless, it continued to provide an effective service (as defined by SRB funding stipulations) to its client group of local minority ethnic youth communities, albeit one tempered by significant resource restrictions.

During this financially turbulent period the project remained heavily dependent upon the 'in-kind' support from the Sheffield City Council Youth Service whose support and goodwill towards the project have been vital. Further, small amounts of ad-hoc and initiative-specific funding from the Professional Footballers Association (£6,000), the Churches Commission for Racial Justice (£3,000) and the Football Association (£1,500) also contributed towards the continuation of the project during this period.

From 1999 FURD has been able to attract significant levels of funding from a number of key sources to sustain its main project work. One key funding source has been the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) which, in 1999, commissioned FURD for £183,000 over three years to manage and deliver a 'Millennium Volunteers' (MV) project designed to increase volunteering opportunities and accreditation for local young people between the ages of 16 and 24. FURD also received funding from the re-branded Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in 2002 for two more years of MV work.

The capacity of FURD to meet the stated aims and objectives laid out in specific funding criteria also led in April 2000 to a further two-year continuation of Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) funding (£52,000). These monies are largely specific to the continued focus on increasing the participation of local minority ethnic communities in the activities of Sheffield United and in football more generally in the city, and also account for the salary of the Project Co-ordinator. The capacity of local partnerships featuring professional clubs and local service providers with experience of working with minority ethnic communities to access funding from the 'single regeneration budget' (SRB) in areas suffering multiple forms of deprivation has also been realised by at least one other football-centred anti-racist project, the
Respect All Fans Football Initiative (RAFFI) at Preston North End. The RAFFI project has been managed by one funded worker on behalf of Preston North End FC and the Preston Racial Equality Council since 1996 and has worked towards aims of bringing closer together the professional football club and the minority ethnic communities of the Deepdale district in which the club is situated. RAFFI has implemented a range of marketing and educational initiatives designed to challenge racism in the game locally and to create a more inclusive environment at matches featuring Preston North End FC at Deepdale. Funding from SRB in support of both the RAFFI project and FURD is strictly location specific and is dependent upon the capacity of project workers to 'reach' pre-defined numbers of local young people within designated district boundaries.

The obvious strengths of FURD in engaging with other multi-agency partnerships at the local, national and international levels has also contributed to the financial viability of the project, producing in July 2000, £40,900 from the Home Office 'Positive Futures' initiative in support of the delivery of educational and football coaching work as part of a localised drug and crime prevention initiative in the Shirecliffe area of Sheffield. At an international level, the membership of the FURD project of the Football Against Racism in Europe (FARE) initiative has led to a small - but significant - amount of funding (£16,000) from this wider pan-European initiative for the maintenance by FURD of the FARE website facility. Funding here is guaranteed until 2004.

The establishment of the FURD Educational (FURD-ED) Charitable Trust, in 1999, as a legally constituted and formally structured organisation working in parallel to the wider project, illustrates FURD's focus on the development of the innovative educational 'pilot' work first undertaken by FURD in 1997 (see Bains, 1998). In November 1999, FURD-ED was awarded £169,000 by the National Lotteries Charities Board 'Community Fund' to be spread over a three year period until November 2002. This money has enabled the FURD-ED Trust to orchestrate a more comprehensive and varied programme of football centred anti-racist education, which has set about utilising the interest of young people in football as a means by which to challenge racism and contribute to reducing levels of racial abuse and harassment in local communities in Sheffield.
The FURD Resource and Information Centre, including a library and the FURD website facility, are also paid for out of these monies along with the salaries of three key workers here. More recently, FURD has received £100,000 from the Football Foundation to contribute towards the continuation of its football centred anti-racist educational work and some football coaching work, initially for a period of two years from 2002 onwards.

The (post-1999) influx of funding for FURD has reflected, in part, the growing maturity and ‘success’ of the project in terms of its ability to manage its finances prudently whilst continuing to deliver measurable outcomes on its stated aims and objectives in key areas. Increased funding has also allowed the project to expand these objectives to encompass, for example, more opportunities for the self-empowerment of local minority ethnic youth communities in addressing racism. Nonetheless, for a voluntary sector organisation such as FURD, the pressures involved in assuring the financial sustainability, and therefore the long-term future of the project, are particularly acute and further amplify the very real tension between the tendency to become ‘funding driven’ - that is, an organisation which articulates its aims and objectives around the availability of funding - instead of a project which identifies funds in support of a settled and a pre-determined agenda, which is dictated in the main by local needs. Although, in practice, these distinctions are not dichotomously rigid, FURD, on balance, is probably more issue than funding driven. This is especially the case with reference to the development of a distinctive programme of football-based anti-racist education as the FURD project co-ordinator, Howard Holmes notes:

'Generally speaking, we have had the idea to focus on particular areas of work first and then try to seek funding to support our ideas, for example, our educational work and the Resource (and Information) Centre.'

(Interview with FURD project co-ordinator, Howard Holmes 27/11/00)

FURD’s articulation of a clear philosophical and practical agenda and it’s funding successes for support of explicitly defined aims and objectives designed to benefit disadvantaged local minority ethnic and white communities might serve as a model
for other sports related anti-racist projects. Piara Powar of the national Kick It Out campaign comments:

"You have got a lot of people in Sheffield and beyond who have seen the way they have done things, that's given them ideas to go away and do stuff. We've certainly been keen to promote the way FURD have gone about things, to other projects, in other locations, around the country".

(Interview with Piara Powar, Kick It Out co-ordinator 9/5/02)

Drawing on the work featured in a formal evaluation of the FURD project (Bradbury, 2001) and my own observational and ethnographic work on FURD, it is important now turn to a more analytical account of the activities undertaken by FURD designed to address racism and racialised exclusion in football in Sheffield and beyond since 1995.

3. Increasing the participation of young minority ethnic males and females in football.

3.1 FURD and football coaching with minority ethnic young men from Sharrow and elsewhere in Sheffield

The delivery of structured coaching courses to, predominantly, local, young people from minority ethnic backgrounds in a safe and supportive environment, has formed a core activity for FURD since the inception of the project. FURD has been able to deliver free coaching courses to Pakistani, Indian, Bangladeshi, Turkish, African-Caribbean, Somali, Yemeni, Chinese and white youth cohorts at a variety of locations across Sheffield, but with a key focus on those areas that suffer disproportionately from indices of social and economic deprivation and with specific reference to the Sharrow district of Sheffield. The lack of appropriate local facilities for football coaching and initially some significant resource restrictions often hampered the capacity of FURD to provide a holistic programme of events in this respect.
However, the improved financial viability of the project from 2000 onwards has contributed to a significant improvement in the project’s capacity to deliver a wide-ranging and effective football coaching service. In particular, extra funding has enabled the project to appoint two local FA qualified coaches and former international footballers with Chile and Somalia, respectively, Luis Silva and Ahmed Abdi Jama, to manage the FURD coaching programme. The contributions of ‘Luis’ and ‘Jama’ to the FURD project transcends their obvious abilities as knowledgeable and capable football coaches since the life experiences and the engaging personalities of these two former political refugees have connected well with the local minority ethnic youth and asylum seeker populations resident in this area of Sheffield.

The FURD project has also been able to support local, young, minority ethnic males attain official FA coaching qualifications, a strategy which has contributed to FURD’s core theme of self-empowerment and has enabled qualified young people to provide practical support for the delivery of FURD coaching schemes. These twin themes of ‘self-empowerment’ and ‘community benefit’ are illustrated by the comments of one young volunteer with the FURD project,

‘I used to get letters and stuff when FURD started, about football coaching. I used to go along and that’s how I got to know about FURD. I’ve done my JTM [Junior Team Managers Award] through them. I used to go and help Luis [FURD coach]. I didn’t have the confidence to stand up in front of kids and coach them. It’s given me that confidence. It’s good to know that you are helping out in the local community. I used to go to do those coaching sessions and I used to really appreciate it. You do see kids later on and they say ‘When’s the next Street-kick, when’s the next coaching session?’ You know that you are doing a decent job’. (Interview with Kamran Khan, 18 year old FURD volunteer).

The FURD project has also developed what seems to be a useful working relationship with Sheffield United FC, with some FURD staff acting as coaches and scouts for the club’s youth development structure. These links have provided a few talented local youngsters, from minority ethnic and other backgrounds, with opportunities to establish potential pathways to work in the professional game and three young players who have participated in FURD coaching schemes have been passed on to the SUFC under 10’s School of Excellence squad. Two young players from FURD, including one young refugee from Burundi, have gone on to represent
the SUFC under 19's team. Whilst this collaboration offers potential opportunities, there also remain concerns amongst some members of the FURD coaching team that these links might be better formalised and that there are institutional barriers working to prevent more productive working relationships between FURD and the SUFC coaching set up.

The work of FURD to deliver coaching schemes targeting local minority ethnic communities is informed by the philosophical tendency in much anti-racist thought and practice that positions racism as a discriminatory force that works towards the marginalisation of particular groups from a full participation in the mainstream society (Bonnett, 2000). In this specific local context, the marginalisation of minority ethnic groups from access to sports facilities and training is also informed by socio-economic structural disadvantage that is location specific and which affects disproportionately poorer minority ethnic communities.

In response to these exclusionary processes, the delivery of FURD coaching schemes to disadvantaged minority ethnic communities can be seen as enabling mechanisms that take into account both racialised and economic exclusions and which are also informed by the themes as empowerment and youth inclusion that are central to the broader philosophy of the FURD project. The capacity of FURD to engage in effective local partnerships to access funding in support of this work designed to redress the racialised imbalance of football coaching for minority ethnic communities is also apparent at two other local projects in Leicester (Soccer for All) and in East London (West Ham United ‘Asians in Football’ project) where partnerships between local professional football clubs and local authorities and Sport England, respectively, have assisted in this process. However, unlike these aforementioned projects, FURD has been unable to develop any structured pathway from ‘participation’ to ‘excellence’ for young people engaged in coaching courses and has much less formalised links with the Sheffield United academy system and little contact at all with the Sheffield United Football in the Community scheme which is notable by its absence in the immediate stadium community of Sharrow.
3.2 FURD and support for local minority ethnic community based football teams

To help challenge racialised barriers to participation in local football in Sheffield, FURD has provided formal and informal support for a number of local community based youth and adult football teams that feature minority ethnic players. A key success here has been the success of Sharrow United FC, a club made-up of Pakistani, African, African-Caribbean and white British players and one consciously modelled on the successful ‘multi-cultural’ French national team that won the World Cup in 1998. Almost all of the players were known to FURD, either through their work as Millennium Volunteers, their participation at FURD coaching courses, or through their efforts to achieve FURD-sponsored coaching qualifications. Many of the team also have close links with other local youth service projects. These young people have been encouraged to develop their organisational and administrative skills in managing the club affairs and work here has offered opportunities for personal development, self-empowerment, community benefit, improved health, and the provision of a relatively safe and structured environment in which football can be used for the purposes of enhancing community cohesion especially among young males.

Work here has been driven by the broader social inclusion philosophy of FURD and is rooted in the experience of local youth workers and the everyday practices of Sheffield Youth Service. However, unlike one other local ‘anti-racist’ project, the Foxes Against Racism (FAR) initiative in Leicester, FURD has done little to attempt to address some of the more overt and institutional racisms and discriminations that have been shown to be apparent in the amateur game in Sheffield (Long, et al 2000; Bradbury, 2002), and which serve to contribute to the exclusion of minority ethnic communities from a fuller participation in the game at the local level as both players, officials and administrators.

3.3 FURD and the ‘Streetkick’ facility

The FURD ‘Streetkick’ facility is a purpose-built twelve metres by eight metres mobile three-a-side football pitch, made up of one metre high wooden perimeter
boards and fencing which can be packed away into a trailer and used at a range of indoor and outdoor venues. It is extensively used at a range of venues throughout Sheffield and at other locations nationally, to encourage greater participation in organised football amongst young males and females drawn from a range of ethnic backgrounds, in a safe and supportive environment. The ‘Streetkick’ event has imaginatively promoted messages of ‘anti-racism’ through the dissemination of directly explicit slogans and literature and, more subtly, through the use of ‘positive’ black and Asian role models in the management of the facility.

The low cost of hire of ‘Streetkick’ still enables the facility to be self-financing and also allows FURD to provide a free service to its target audience of young people in socially and economical disadvantaged locales where social problems such as racism and inter-ethnic tensions are often most apparent. The philosophy and practice of addressing issues of social and racialised exclusion through the medium of Streetkick and the messages it relays is explained by FURD youth worker and Streetkick co-ordinator, Simon Hyacinth:

‘Racism and anti-racism is an issue for everyone. As well as trying to combat disadvantage and give black and Asian youngsters the opportunity to play organised football it is important to take Streetkick to areas where there are few (people from) ethnic minority communities to get the anti-racist message across.’ (Interview with FURD Streetkick Co-ordinator, Simon Hyacinth, 23/11/00)

3.4 FURD and the participation of minority ethnic females in football

Football in England has a distinctly gendered history, one which has effectively excluded females as both spectators and as players (Williams and Woodhouse, 1991). Women from Asian backgrounds face other barriers of culture and history to sports participation (Hargreaves, 2002). The FURD project has worked hard in this particular area, with specific reference to a largely sports-inactive cohort of young Asian women. However, the combination of resource difficulties and the lack of appropriate facilities for female football coaching, coupled with some key cultural constraints, has meant that the project has, perhaps, tended to be over reliant on the contribution of specific FURD staff and female volunteers and progress has, comparatively speaking, been limited.
However, in partnership with the Sheffield and Hallamshire County FA and Sheffield Leisure Services, FURD has successfully delivered gender specific football coaching sessions at a range of events and venues throughout Sheffield since 1998, in addition to offering opportunities for female participation at ‘Streetkick’ events. FURD has also assisted a significant number of Sheffield Asian women in the completion of their FA Junior Team Managers Awards. One local partnership in South East London (CARE) has had some particular success in work designed to empower minority ethnic females through the provision of sports training qualifications (see Garland and Chakroborti, 2001) and FURD keen to learn from this other successful sport-based, social inclusion project.

More recently, funding from the Football Foundation and the employment of a key FURD worker aimed at increasing the participation of minority ethnic women in football has served to re-invigorate this area of work. As a result, women-only coaching courses are now taking place on a more frequent basis and work in this area has now developed more consistency and direction. Finally, the attendance of FURD at the Anti-Racist World Cup in Italy in 2002, featured, for the first time, an all-female FURD team and, at the close of the competition, these female players were awarded the ‘Coppa Multiculti’, a trophy awarded for the most multi-cultural team of the tournament, thereby upholding the spirit of the event and contributing significantly to the empowerment of a group of Sheffield based minority ethnic young women.

4. Reducing racial abuse and harassment and encouraging stronger links with SUFC and other local professional football clubs

4.1 Work with SUFC to combat match-day racism and to make Bramall Lane a safe and secure environment for minority ethnic fans

Since its early days, FURD has had close relations with its key local partner organisation, Sheffield United FC. One outcome of this has been to ensure the
implementation of a series of basic, practical symbolic measures, including making public statements over the club’s PA system and on pitch-side hoardings aimed at discouraging overt fan racism at Bramall Lane and creating a ‘safer’ environment for fans from minority ethnic backgrounds. FURD has also been able to deliver supplementary ‘cultural awareness’ training to match-day stewards in support of the standardised programme of training undergone by stewards as part of a national accreditation process (Football League et al, 1999).

The provision of ‘awareness’ training for stewards has its antecedent in the ‘race conscious’ policies of 1980s British municipal anti-racism and is designed to assist in an understanding of racial difference (Anthias 2002, Bonnet 2000) and, in the context of football, stewarding can be seen as equipping individuals with the practical tools better to understand and deal with racist abuse if and when it occurs. However, such supplementary training provided by FURD has been limited and infrequent (see Bradbury, 2001).

4.2 FURD and its work with SUFC supporters around issues of racism

The strong initial roots FURD has in ‘activist’ fan cultures in Sheffield is evident in the origins of the project and the continued involvement of BIFA and the SUFC Official Supporters Club at FURD PAG meetings. The strong affiliation with football fan culture which is, thus, at the core of FURD enables the project to engage ‘Blades’ fans in creative campaigns designed to address issues of spectator racism at Bramall Lane. For example, the project has established a FURD membership scheme that targets United’s supporters and provides members with literature and information about the ongoing activities of FURD. Also, the project publishes articles about racism in football and the FURD campaign in SUFC match-day programmes and local football fanzines, although heavy workloads and copy deadlines have reduced dissemination of FURD information using this route.

Nonetheless, the FURD project has played a significant part in the production of two national ‘anti-racist’ fanzines both entitled ‘United Colours of Football’ which have featured articles about the project and its work. The extent to which the specific targeting of ‘Blades’ fans by FURD has had a measurable effect on the extent and
intensity of racist abuse at Bramall Lane is, of course, difficult to evaluate. Despite
the hegemonic male-ness and 'white-ness' of local working class social formations
around football in Sheffield more generally, and the position of Sheffield United as a
specific sporting representation of the 'local cultural structure' of the area (Taylor et
al 1996), racism does not seem to be a key strategic feature of cultural resistance to
the wider changes in the sport amongst local football fan cultures at Bramall Lane as
has been argued is the case amongst football fan culture for example at Millwall
(Robson, 2001). FURD project co-ordinator, Howard Holmes, a regular attendee at
matches at Bramall Lane, feels their have been some positive results of FURD action
at SUFC:

'I think there has been a definite reduction in the levels of racist abuse
and chanting at Bramall Lane over the last couple of years. Because of
the way we've targeted fans with some of the work we do, awareness
about the project amongst Blades fans is very high. It was high three
years ago but its definitely higher now. I think that makes a difference'
(Interview with FURD project co-ordinator Howard Holmes 27/11/00)

The production of the national 'United Colours of Football' fanzines drew heavily on
the experience of fan activism amongst key members of FURD and offered the
project the opportunity to engage with adult fan groups who may, perhaps, be rather
more cynical about current 'anti-racist' messages and campaigns:

'Because much of our work is focused on a youth market, the messages
we aim to get across aren't always necessarily aimed at an older,
hardened, football supporter audience. The first (national) anti-racist
fanzine was good and it's the right conduit to get to that particular group
of people. FURD have experience of working with local fanzines and
along with Kick It Out we felt it was a good time to revisit the idea'
(Interview with Howard Holmes, FURD project co-ordinator, 27/11/00).

The match-day experiences of minority ethnic fans can be an important indicator of
how football clubs and their supporters have responded to issues of racism. The
general feelings of local black and Asian 'Blades' fans associated with FURD is that
whilst the racist abuse of opposition players continues to be a sporadic feature of
match-days at Bramall Lane, such abuse is increasingly infrequent and rarely these
days escalates into collective racial chanting. Whilst some young Sheffield people
from minority ethnic backgrounds continued to express concerns over the levels of
racism at Bramall Lane and threats to personal safety at football, for other black and Asian males and females, recent attendance at matches at Bramall Lane had been a much more positive experience:

'It felt really good to walk with the rest of the crowd. For once in our lives we felt part of the (football) community instead of looking on behind curtains' (Interview with Mehrun Ahmed 23/11/00)

4.3 FURD and the Sharrow Partnership

The FURD project has played a key role in the Sharrow Community Forum (SCF), a multi-agency partnership made up of representatives from local community groups and residents’ associations in Sharrow concerned with social and environmental issues that disproportionately affect the local ‘stadium’ community. Through the auspices of the SCF, FURD assisted SUFC in the development and implementation of a comprehensive equal opportunities policy document in 1999. This included a stated commitment to treat all staff equally and fairly, and to conduct open recruitment procedures and, importantly, it has helped project a more ‘inclusive’ image, particularly to local minority ethnic communities. As Bradbury (2001) has shown, however, the extent to which all professional football clubs adhere to equal opportunities criteria as part of their every day practice is probably questionable.

FURD has also played an important role in the work of the ‘Sharrow Partnership’ in relation to stadium redevelopment at Bramall Lane. One result has been an agreement on concessions for minority ethnic businesses situated in the new ‘Blades Enterprise Centre’ and in the building of the ‘Blades Community Centre’. Since Sharrow is subject to multiple forms of social and economic deprivation, the provision of this latter facility is of clear community benefit and may also provide FURD with an important local venue at which to hold ‘community’ events and to promote the work of the project. The work of FURD, here, can be seen as part of a wider aim to increase opportunities for employment for local minority ethnic communities at SUFC, in addition to contributing more generally to the reduction of processes of social exclusion and offering increasing community empowerment and participation.
4.4 The annual FURD/SUFC ‘Community Day’

The 1998 Football Task Force report on, Eliminating Racism from Football, recommended that professional football clubs, nationally, offer the use of club facilities for community and cultural events as part of a wider, inclusive agenda, to build goodwill and strengthen relations with their local minority ethnic communities (FTF, 1998: p. 43). One year prior to this, the Sheffield Divided or United? report (Pinto et al 1997) revealed that more than two-thirds (70%) of residents surveyed in the locality immediately adjacent to Bramall Lane favoured a SUFC hosted ‘Community Day’, aimed specifically at improving the relationship between the club and local residents, and aimed especially at local black and Asian communities. Following extensive consultation between FURD, SUFC and other relevant local community organisations, the first FURD/SUFC ‘Community Day’ was held at Bramall Lane in May 1999 and since this date a further two ‘Community Day’ events - in 2000 and 2002 - have taken place (see Bradbury 2001, for an evaluation of the ‘Community Day’ events).

The ‘Community Day’ events at Bramall Lane were advertised locally by the FURD project and by associated community organisations via local networks and also by local media. The events, typically, take place at the close of the football season in late spring/early summer. FURD has been able to locate some small financial contributions towards the cost of staging the events, from organisations including Sheffield African-Caribbean, Global Arts Millennium Project and the ‘Blades’ fan groups. The support of SUFC involves full use of the Bramall Lane pitch and changing rooms, the executive suite facilities of the John Street Stand and the funding of a number of match-day stewards to help facilitate the event. The off-pitch activities that take place in the John Street Stand Executive areas have included live PAs, DJs, MCs, live bands and dancers, a range of activities designed for young children such as face painting, clowns and a ‘bouncy castle’, and promotional and educational stalls from local minority ethnic community organisations and the FURD project, and the provision of a selection of ‘world foods’ incorporating Asian, African-Caribbean, Somali, Turkish, Chinese and Chilean cuisine.
On the pitch, there are 7-a-side competitions for young men and women from a wide range of backgrounds, in addition to the FURD ‘Streetkick’ event. FURD has utilised ‘Community Day’ events to reward, publicly, young volunteers associated with the project and the young footballers participating successfully in organised football competitions. An annual ‘Community Day’ magazine and newsletter features a range of informative articles about the nature of the FURD project and about wider issues regarding racism in the game. Further the ‘Community Day’ events have been managed and facilitated by FURD workers, young Millennium Volunteers and SUFC match-day stewards. The events have also been supported by the presence of members of the SUFC first team squad.

Around 2,500 local people from across a range of ethnicities and cultural backgrounds have attended each ‘Community Day’ event. Observational work undertaken at the 2000 ‘Community Day’ suggests that white attendees, (around one-quarter of the total number participating), were mainly local residents who had friendships or other close associations with the minority ethnic communities in attendance and they seemed to be ‘regulars’ on the local festival ‘circuit’. Attendees interviewed saw the event as an opportunity to promote a shared sense of community involvement and multi-ethnic solidarity and felt the event should become an important fixture of the local calendar of ‘community’ events, since it allowed the use of an important facility in an otherwise economically deprived area. A smaller group of white attendees had much stronger links with SUFC as supporters and, although keenly aware of the multi-ethnic character of the event, these participants seemed particularly interested in the football-centred educational and participatory activities with respect to the potentially mutually beneficial rewards of establishing a closer relationship between the club and its local minority ethnic communities,

‘From a fans’ point of view, there is a huge pool of support to be drawn on in this area, as well as potential youth players and today’s event might bring everyone a bit closer.’ (Jeff, Sheffield United fan)

Whilst the ‘Community Day’ events are primarily designed to strengthen relations between the club and its local ethnic minority communities, one unintended, but potentially positive, outcome has been the opportunity to challenge some pre-conceived ideas amongst some white SUFC fans about possible relationships
between SUFC and minority ethnic communities who live near Bramall Lane, and
who, perhaps, may not ordinarily find themselves in the company of significant
numbers of people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Observational and interview work undertaken by the author at this event revealed
that amongst local black and Asian youths and older members of these communities
there was a consistent theme of a historical sense of distance between SUFC and its
local minority ethnic communities. Here, the club’s historical detachment from its
immediate local communities was usually, generously, described in terms of a ‘lack
of awareness’ and of ‘not knowing about different cultures’ as opposed to
perceptions of conscious processes of exclusion. Interestingly, whilst these young
black and Asian men, in particular, argued that SUFC needed to recognise and better
appreciate the multi-ethnic make-up of its local communities, equally, reference was
made to the powerful local identities and sympathetic football affiliations of these
communities, particularly amongst younger sections of minority ethnic populations.
One young man commented, for example:

'We’re Sheffield born and bred, we are United’s community, we’re more
local than fans that come in from Rotherham or other places like that.
We live right in the city, in Sharrow' (Idris, Community Day attendee)

The above comment also alludes to the way in which minority ethnic groups in
Sharrow are actively engaged in negotiation with the dominant ‘local structure of
feeling’ as it is commonly expressed through the demographics of support for
Sheffield United and the club as a site for local sporting representation. That is, the
appropriation of ideas of ‘local-ness’ or ‘Sheffield-ness’ from a position of
hegemonic white-ness to one which is more multi-ethnic in composition and which
alludes much more strongly to the immediate geographical boundaries of the stadium
community.

The capacity of local minority ethnic communities make a cultural space for
themselves within the local fan cultures of Sheffield United will depend, partly, upon
the extent to which the these ‘local cultural structures’ are malleable and open to
change, fluidity and renegotiation. The political gains made by the BNP in some
northern and midlands ‘industrial enclave’ cities in recent years might suggest this
could be a difficult process. However, in Sheffield, a city rooted in rather different occupational and cultural traditions and practises, there may be greater potential for the successful disruption and contestation of white sporting hegemonies and common-sense racial knowledge, particularly if this contestation emerges from empowered local minority ethnic youth groups who have strongly local affiliations both with Sheffield and with Sheffield United.

All of the minority ethnic attendees we spoke to felt strongly that the club’s ‘Community Day’ could be a significant step towards bringing the club and local people closer together in a stronger local partnership. For many local people the event was seen as a reflection of a genuine commitment by SUFC - with the help of FURD - to connect in a pro-active way with local minority ethnic communities:

‘I think it’s really good that the football club takes the issue of racism forward. I’m impressed that the club has opened up the stadium for today’s event. I hope it encourages more people from ethnic minorities to feel part of the club like other fans do’. (Maya, Community Day attendee)

In 2001, and following personnel changes inside the club, SUFC decided the annual ‘open day’ would now incorporate the ‘Community Day’. FURD workers were dubious, highlighting a deficit of understanding about dealing with racism. Howard Holmes commented:

‘I think it’s something the club have fully yet to grasp. I’m not sure whether some people want to grasp it. There’s individuals [who do]. Political stuff. The main reason is a lack of understanding or an opposition to what we are trying to do. I think it’s as blatant as that. They don’t see why you would need to have a day for ethnic minority people in Sheffield. It’s a colour-blind approach. They don’t see any discrimination, ‘well, we let them in don’t we’. Anyone who works in this area knows we need more than that’. It will be a big blow, definitely. It’s (the Community Day) the most obvious sign of the club saying that we want to be a part of what you are doing and we want you to come into what we do’. (Interview with FURD Project Co-ordinator, Howard Holmes 27/11/00)

Despite such concerns, in 2002 the ‘Community Day’ returned. It is, perhaps, the most obvious and highly symbolic form of showing the club’s commitment to, and maintaining a positive relationship with, its local minority ethnic communities.
Certainly, for FURD, these events have provided, perhaps, the clearest statement of its philosophy and its practical intent towards achieving the goal of bringing SUFC closer to its local minority ethnic communities. But it is instructive that a change of staff inside the club can challenge the whole event, suggesting it is people, not structures, which are important for shaping the SUFC approach.

4.5 FURD and work with other local professional football clubs to challenge racism and promote social inclusion

Since 1999, and in conjunction with the national Kick It Out campaign, FURD has also worked with other professional football clubs in the South Yorkshire region on initiatives designed to combat racism and encourage greater participation in football amongst people from local black and Asian communities. FURD has been part of a Rotherham FC anti-racist steering group and has also worked with Barnsley FC on football coaching and educational work for a multi-agency ‘racial harassment’ initiative in the area. Alongside Kick It Out, FURD has also worked closely in recent years with local rivals Sheffield Wednesday FC to advise and assist in the delivery of the SWFC ‘Inclusive Communities’ annual match-day. The developing relationship between FURD and SWFC is, in part, reflective of FURD’s ambitions to expand its ongoing work beyond the immediate locality of Sharrow to incorporate the wider area of Sheffield, and is also a response to the widening geographical directives of the various funding bodies that continue to resource the FURD project. Howard Holmes comments:

'The scope of the project has broadened that much, when we first started it was about combating racist behaviour at football matches at Bramall Lane. That was my main concern then. Now there’s the whole educational and resources side to what we do. The SRB funding was originally specific to this area (Sharrow) now there are two other areas, not too far away, which are other SRB areas. We’ll work with anyone, but for SRB we have enough output that concern people in those areas’ (Interview with FURD project co-ordinator, Howard Holmes, 27/11/00).

The intention of FURD to work with other professional football clubs in the region has also been influenced by the perception, on the part of key FURD workers, that there exists an ingrained ‘culture of resistance’ amongst some senior administrators
employed by Sheffield United to the broader philosophies of the project, with particular reference to the ‘tensions’ that emerged out of the club’s decision to abort the 2001 ‘Community Day’. FURD workers and members of the project management and advisory group decided to focus the energies of the project towards working with other partners to better use available resources and person-power and this has had some effect on the recent perceived and projected identity of the project, which has now shifted from its initial position as a football club-related, location specific, anti-racist youth inclusion project, to one defined more by its capacity to work, productively, with other professional clubs across the South Yorkshire region in support of its key aims and objectives. Howard Holmes comments:

‘We’ve changed the logo from one with SUFC because there’s an issue if we’re working with other clubs. If we were working more closely with SUFC and it was more central to the work we now do then it would be an issue, but it’s not.’ (Interview with FURD project co-ordinator, Howard Holmes, 27/11/00).

4.6 FURD and Football Against Racism in Europe (FARE)

The FURD project has been at the forefront of establishing a new pan-European network of football based ‘anti-racist’ projects, through its active role in the Football Against Racism in Europe (FARE) network. This pan-European collaboration has facilitated the exchange of ideas and information that has further contributed to the development of models of good practice across Europe and has been of real benefit to FURD, especially in terms of developing its Resource and Information Centre and the dissemination of the use of ‘Streetkick.’ A core objective of the FARE project is to campaign for a common strategy for dealing with spectator racism across Europe and one of the practical contributions of FURD to the FARE project is its management of the FARE website, one that is used for research and to report instances of racism in European football, and to disseminate information about anti-racism initiatives in football throughout Europe (http://www.farenet.org/).

The FURD project has also been at the forefront of the FARE agenda in its promotion of fan-based activities at Euro 2000 and as part of the annual FARE ‘week of anti-racist action’. In February 2002, the FURD project successfully hosted the annual FARE conference in Sheffield, one that was attended by more than 70
delegates drawn from fan groups and anti-racist organisations from 11 European countries.

The successful collaboration between FURD and other football based ‘anti-racist’ projects and fan organisations across Europe, most notably here with Progretta Ultra of Bologna, Italy, has also allowed the project to enter locally recruited, minority ethnic, football teams from Sheffield into the ‘World Anti-racist Football Tournament’ which is held annually in Italy. This has afforded local black and Asian young people, often from very deprived urban areas of Sheffield, the opportunity for personal development in ways which seem to have contributed to an enhanced sense of community solidarity on their return to England. Participation in this event has, perhaps, had most clear benefits for a specific group of Sheffield-based Somali young men associated with the FURD project and for a group of black and Asian young women entered into the competition for the first time in 2002 under the moniker the ‘FURD Women All-Stars’.

5. Increasing the participation of young minority ethnic volunteers in the work of the FURD project

FURD has consistently sought to engage local, minority ethnic, young people in a range of volunteering opportunities designed to support personal development and self-empowerment while delivering the ongoing activities of the project. In 1998, a group of young Somali men in Sheffield were awarded the ‘Phillip Lawrence Award for Good Citizenship’ for their efforts towards the local integration of the Somali community and the reduction of local racial harassment as part of their ongoing contributions to the work of the FURD project.

In 1999, FURD’s Millennium Volunteers (MV) initiative began, designed to increase volunteering opportunities for young people between the ages of 16 and 24. The work here drew heavily on the previous experience of the project in working with local young people from minority ethnic backgrounds.
"We had been involving young people in the project as volunteers for some time, when we became aware of MV. We saw fairly quickly that there was real possibilities for us, because much of MV is basic youth work, an area in which we have some considerable knowledge and expertise" (Interview with Howard Holmes, FURD project co-ordinator 27/11/00)

For a full evaluation of the FURD MV scheme see Bradbury (2001). What follows here is a brief summary of the progress of the FURD MV project, how the delivery of this specific programme of work has benefited both its participants and the communities it serves.

Despite this particularly labour-intensive administrative and youth work orientated workload, between 1999-2002 the FURD MV project supported 150 young people to MV accreditation for the completion of 200 hours voluntary service. More than three-quarters (78%) of these volunteers were drawn from minority ethnic backgrounds. The project was keen to impress upon its young volunteers FURD’s philosophy of anti-racism and the promotion of social inclusion that underpins the wider FURD project and this has had some resonance for young volunteers:

'It's good what the project is doing about racism in football. If what we're doing helps, then that can only be a good thing' (Kamran, Millennium Volunteer)

'In some places there are loads of facilities, but around here, in Sharrow, there aren't any decent facilities so it's good to help people out. (Kola, Millennium Volunteer)

Beyond the capacity of the FURD MV scheme to promote the philosophy and practice of voluntary work for community and personal development, the mix of young volunteers on the project were also happy to be contributing locally to a sense of self improving public service and an increased understanding across ethnic barriers:

'I like being a volunteer. Helping people without getting paid for it. Obviously getting money is nice but it's good to help people without asking for anything back. I feel I should be doing something and I feel strongly about it. Its good that you get to meet new people from different backgrounds and I definitely believe in the work the project does. It's important to keep spreading the anti-racist message to different people and in different ways' (Katie, Millennium Volunteer)
The influx of young volunteers into the project has enabled FURD to extend its work across sporting and educational activities, designed to challenge racism and to promote social inclusion, especially through the management and delivery of 'Streetkick' and the FURD/SUFC 'Community Day' events and in respect of the production of literature in support of the promotion of the wider project. Further, the development of placement opportunities with appropriate local agencies concerned with, for example: counselling Asian women; mentoring socially excluded black youth; providing support for the homeless; and working in schools with able and special needs children; has also contributed to the positive channelling of young people's energy and dynamism for the benefit of local communities. Additionally, some FURD MVs gained other, formally recognised, qualifications through their participation in training courses, particularly football coaching and basic youth work skills.

The positive experiences reported by FURD MVs in participating in high quality volunteering activities and in the acquisition of accredited recognition, have contributed significantly to the personal development and self-empowerment of local young males and females from a range of diverse ethnicities and cultural backgrounds. Work here has also significantly benefited the FURD project and, of course, the local communities which it serves. In 2002, the FURD MV project achieved official recognition of its achievements from the national MV co-ordinator and has been rewarded with renewed funding until 2004.

6. The FURD Educational Trust (FURD-ED)

6.1 The development of the FURD Educational Trust (FURD-ED)

In 1999 FURD established the FURD Educational Trust (FURD-ED) as a legally constituted charitable organisation with the intention of seeking funding to build on the innovative educational 'pilot' work first undertaken by the project in 1997. Following a successful application for funding to the National Lotteries Board, the
FURD-ED Trust employed three salaried workers to fulfil these new aims and objectives. There have been a number of other local and national projects that through a process of multi-agency partnership working have been able to successfully access funding in support of the production and dissemination of youth orientated educational initiatives that utilise football as a means by which to challenge racism. Most notably, these initiatives include; the Show Racism the Red Card initiative based in the north-east of England which has produced a number of videos and educational resource packs for distribution in schools and which receives widespread patronage from professional footballers; the West Bromwich Albion ‘We All Stand Together/Learning Through Football Programme’, that utilises issues of football and racism as a means of engaging with local schoolchildren across a range of curriculum based studies; the Leyton Orient Football in the Community Scheme in conjunction with Waltham Forest local authority, which has worked closely with the Arc Theatre Ensemble on the production and delivery of a number of anti-racist plays aimed at young people (see Garland and Rowe, 2001); and the Foxes Against Racism (FAR) campaign in Leicester which has accessed ad-hoc funding for specific anti-racist educational initiatives including staging anti-racist plays, commissioning art-work and the production of materials and resources for use in local schools (see next chapter).

6.2 The FURD Resources and Information Centre

The idea for the FURD Resource and Information Centre (RIC) came from knowledge of a similar facility hosted by Progretta Ultra an anti-racist football fan project in Italy. The RIC was established by FURD in 1997, but funding provided by the National Lotteries Board in 1999 has enabled FURD steadily to expand the scope of this facility and the RIC features a comprehensive library of books about sport and ‘race’, anti-racist resources, a website facility (http://www.furd.org/) and the History of Black Footballers Exhibition. The library is well used and is a highly valued resource in the area and beyond and is efficiently managed by a FURD worker who regularly disseminates appropriate information in response to enquiries from local and national sources. The library has also provided useful support for the FURD-ED youth worker in terms of the delivery of anti-racist education packages to a range of youth audiences.
The official FURD website was established in 1998 and is primarily used to highlight the activities of the project and to provide links to other sites dealing with anti-racism in sport. Importantly, the website has made available to the public a range of on-line resources which deal with issues around racism and sporting and social exclusion. The importance of the website to the project is indicated by the fact that it had 25,000 visitor ‘hits’ between 1998 and 2000. However, the relative lack of ‘in-house’ technical expertise at FURD has meant that the project has not fully explored the potential of the site, for example in respect of the promotion of the Millennium Volunteers initiative. However, the combination of a recently re-designed and much improved site, and a new opportunity for FURD MVs to undertake some formalised IT training, has probably contributed to remedying some of these technical problems.

The FURD project has worked hard to promote the story of Arthur Wharton, the world’s first professional black footballer, who played for Sheffield United FC in the 1890s. FURD campaigned successfully to erect a fitting memorial at the unmarked grave of the former player at Edlington, near Doncaster. The project has collaborated closely with author and historian Phil Vasili on the production of a textual account of the players life-story (Vasili, 1998) and also on Vasili’s book Colouring Over the White Line: A History of Black Footballers (Vasili, 2000). Key elements from these works feature on the FURD ‘History of Black Footballers Exhibition’, a textual and pictorial account of the role played by black footballers in the history of British football that illustrates the ‘hidden’ contribution made by people from a wide variety of cultures and ethnicities to the fabric of sporting life in Britain. This exhibition has been viewed at a wide range of venues, locally and nationally, and has proved to be a successful educational resource that challenges stereotypes and promotes positive sporting images of black people. This self-financing exhibition has been particularly beneficial to FURD-ED in support of ongoing anti-racist educational work in schools and in other youth settings.
6.3 Challenging racism and promoting social inclusion through anti-racist education

The FURD-ED project has been keen to utilise young people’s interest in football as a means of challenging some commonly held myths and stereotypes, which inform racist, discriminatory and prejudicial behaviour. In particular, FURD-ED has actively encouraged a peer-centred approach in the delivery of anti-racist education in schools and other youth settings with particular reference to utilising minority ethnic Millennium Volunteers as peer-educators and positive role models for other young people of differing ethnicities and cultural backgrounds. A full evaluation of the work of the FURD-ED Trust in delivering anti-racist education across a range of youth orientated sites can be found in Bradbury (2001).

Until the relatively recent advent of the new ‘citizenship’ module as part of the national curriculum, the opportunities for the delivery of ‘social’ education in schools, with particular reference to issues of multiculturalism and cultural diversity, have been severely limited. The growing ethnic diversity of many urban schools in Britain and the general unwillingness or incapacity of teachers to address issues of racism with white student populations has, arguably, created something of a vacuum in terms of mainstream anti-racist education. Utilising the popularity of football as a vehicle by which to begin to address these issues, the FURD-ED youth worker has sought to network with teachers and learning mentors in Sheffield and the wider South Yorkshire region to offer the unique services of the FURD-ED project to assist in filling this vacuum.

Steadily, the FURD-ED youth worker, with the support of MV peer educators, has been able to deliver a series of short term and longer-term programmes of football-based anti-racist education across a range of school and youth settings in Sheffield and the surrounding areas dependent, largely, on the specific requirements of client organisations. To some extent, flexibility in content and style of delivery has been the key to success here. Most notably, the FURD-ED youth worker, in conjunction with the Institute of Citizenship, produced and delivered one longer-term module at a Sheffield school as part of the citizenship curriculum and this template for the
delivery of module specific football centred anti-racist education has been the basis on which further educational work has conveyed.

The FURD-ED project has also utilised arts and theatre productions as a means by which to connect with young people around issues of challenging racism. FURD-ED sponsored the delivery of the Arc Theatre Ensemble’s performance of ‘My England’ at six venues throughout Sheffield in 2000 and utilised this innovative football-based anti-racist drama to deliver preliminary and follow up educational work with a number of youth groups in different locales. The collaboration between FURD-ED and a local Sheffield based arts forum led to the performance at the National Centre for Popular Music of ‘Chant-Writers’ a poetry production. This performance illustrates the unique character of the FURD project and the cultural diversity of its workers and volunteers and afforded the opportunity for performers and audience alike to address issues of racism and exclusion in possibly new and imaginative ways. Importantly, the further development of ‘Chant-Writers’ into a series of ‘local stories’ or narratives which illustrate the contributions made to the city of Sheffield by its culturally diverse inhabitants is to form a central tenet of future educational work in schools and other youth settings for the FURD-ED project.

As a delivery partner for other local multi-agency initiatives set up to deal with problems of social exclusion, the FURD-ED project has been able to deliver flexible programmes of football based anti-racist education as part of a more integrated package that has also incorporated some sporting provision such as football coaching sessions and the participatory ‘Streetkick’ event. Two notable initiatives in this respect have been work with the Barnsley Multi-agency Panel Racial Harassment Project and work as part of the Shirecliffe Youth Inclusion Project.

In relation to the former, the FURD project orchestrated a successful ‘Streetkick’ tour of eight venues in Barnsley and was supported by the FURD-ED delivery of anti-racist education through associated performances of ‘My England’. Work here also instigated a new working relationship with Barnsley FC. The involvement of FURD and FURD-ED as partner organisations in the Shirecliffe Youth Inclusion Project enabled the project to access grants from the Home Office ‘Positive Futures’ fund for their contribution of football coaching sessions, the building of a Shirecliffe-
specific 'Streetkick' event and the delivery of anti-racist and drug awareness education. The target client group here was young people across a range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds who were deemed to be at the most risk of offending. This work also enabled the project to bring Sheffield Wednesday into the mainstream of FURD’s work.

7. Conclusion

The FURD project is a Sheffield-based multi-agency initiative that features key local statutory agencies concerned with issues of youth inclusion and racial equality and representatives from local Sharrow-based minority ethnic community groups. Key to the work of FURD are its football-related partners, that include representatives from Sheffield United, local fans groups, Sheffield Wednesday and the national Kick It Out campaign. The partner organisations that make-up FURD have played a key role in the facilitation of the project through their contribution to the establishment of an effective and relatively egalitarian management and advisory structure that strongly alludes to the benefits of democratic multi-agency working practices and capacity building partnership approaches to dealing with issues of social and racialised exclusion. The ability of the management group to effectively access funding in support of the aims and objectives of the project have further enabled FURD project workers the time and space to implement strategies and programmes designed to challenge racism and promote social inclusion in and around Sheffield.

FURD is physically situated in the socially and economically deprived multi-ethnic district of Sharrow in Sheffield close to Bramall Lane. The initial development of the project can be understood as a distinctly localised and contextualised response to issues of overt racism and other racialised and economic exclusions suffered by local, Sharrow based, minority ethnic communities. Initial funding support for FURD was also premised on the location-specific delivery of activities designed to address racism and racialised sporting exclusions in the multiply deprived district of Sharrow. Whilst the acquisition of funding in support of the increasingly broad agenda of FURD in areas of football coaching, volunteering and education has
enabled the project to expand the delivery of activities across the wider Sheffield region and beyond, the core practices of the project remain rooted in the physical locale of Sharrow and continue to engage local minority ethnic communities.

Central to the philosophy of FURD is the idea of 'empowerment' as a means by which to equip local minority ethnic communities with the skills, knowledge and confidence to actively challenge more overt forms of racism and to overcome more structural forms of racialised exclusion. The practical application of these guiding principles are also informed by the centrality of the Sheffield Youth Service to FURD and the in-kind technical and management support offered by this key local service provider. The rooted-ness of FURD as youth work project is also clearly evident in the professional make-up of the project workers and can be seen to inform the practical delivery of football coaching and support for local multi-ethnic teams, the Millennium Volunteers initiative and the projects educational work.

One of the key measurements of the capacity of FURD to deliver upon its key philosophy of youth empowerment and social inclusion has been the way in which the project has successfully engaged significant numbers of young people in Sharrow and also in the wider Sheffield area from predominantly minority ethnic backgrounds in the activities of the project. This has contributed significantly to the personal development and self-empowerment of this particular cohort of young people and has also encouraged a noticeable sense of community ownership of FURD. Piara Powar of the national Kick It Out campaign comments:

'I think, FURD, in a very holistic, very positive way, uses the game to address problems of racism and dislocation and, particularly, a dislocation amongst black youths in the area. The way it offers an opportunity for both Sheffield clubs to engage with this issue on a kind of social inclusion agenda. That's the positive. All of FURD's activities are a kind of testament to that. I think they have made a real impact and you have got a lot of young people there engaging with the game that otherwise wouldn't have been' (Interview with Piara Powar 9/5/02)

The broadly anti-racist philosophy of FURD is one which is rooted in the idea that racism is anti-egalitarian and socially unjust and that the continuance of racism is socially disruptive and has destabilising influence on good community relations and
the specific local context of Sheffield and, more specifically, in Sharrow itself. The way in which national cultural racisms have impinged upon local social life in Sheffield and become embedded and transformed within the 'local cultural structures' which operate there necessitates a flexible response to issues of racism and local identities that are rooted in the lived experience of local Sheffield communities across a range of ethnicities and histories. The positive evaluation of the work of FURD here, in respect of the broad ranging philosophy of the project and the capacity to engender meaningful impact on the lives of local minority ethnic groups and the wider Sheffield community, is informed by key intellectual concepts and understandings of racism outlined in previous chapters which allude to the potential of locally rooted anti-racist interventions that are conditioned by sensitivities to local structures of feeling and which generate a sense of local multi-ethnic ownership.

The more practical application of the broader anti-racist philosophy of FURD is evident in the delivery of the activities of the project in which the promotion of messages of anti-racism have also maintained sensitivity to local social relations. This has been particularly apparent in the way in which the FURD project has been able to engage a variety of minority ethnic and white youth audiences in creative ways to challenge racist myths and stereotypes through an eclectic mix of arts and theatre productions. More focused educational work has drawn on those techniques more commonly associated with multicultural learning in which the promotion of respect for cultural difference and diversity is key. Importantly, FURD workers have located the idea of ‘difference’ as central to the new post industrial identity of Sheffield, and has been keen to stress the contribution made by local minority ethnic communities to the social and sporting fabric of the city.

A key element of this aspect of the activities of FURD has been its work with Sheffield United, to combat more overt forms of spectator racism and to engage the club on a more ‘inclusive’ agenda designed to open up some of the core club structures and practices that might otherwise serve to exclude local minority ethnic communities. Work here as been a little more problematic for FURD, and despite some successes in dealing with overt aspects of spectator racism there is little clear evidence to suggest that FURD has been able to influence the dominant employment
practices of the club or indeed the make up of local fan cultures in identifiable sense. Whilst FURD has engaged the club at a senior administrative level on a social inclusion agenda as part of the wider remit of the work of the project with disenfranchised local black and Asian youth communities, it is much less clear that the work of FURD has contributed to any sea change of attitudes within the senior decision-making structure of the club that might begin to address the hegemonic ‘white-ness’ embodied in the everyday practices and procedures of the club. This might suggest that even at more progressive local campaigns such as FURD the ability to disrupt the white hegemonic practices of football governance at the local level is limited in ways which share parallels with other localised projects nationally.

This assertion is argued on the basis of empirical findings presented throughout the thesis and is informed by key sociological frameworks of understanding issues of ‘race’ and ‘power’ outlined in Chapter One.

The lack of stronger challenge from FURD to the embedded ‘culture of resistance’ at Sheffield United that serves to maintain a series of institutionalised exclusions and discriminations might, in part, be due to the inherent limitations of multi-agency partnerships designed to challenge racisms in football, in that many such alliances are dependant upon the conditional support of local professional clubs to raise profile and meet the basic symbolic criteria of such campaigns. For FURD, the strongly labour-intensive focus on working with local disenfranchised young people has probably also contributed to the limited focus on addressing these more institutional issues of racialised exclusion embedded within the dynamics of the local professional club.

In one sense, this key problematic in the relationship between FURD and Sheffield United FC may have allowed the club to engender a positive public profile through its stated affiliation with FURD whilst simultaneously maintaining a social distance that prevents any sense of inward gaze and which maintains the perception that racism is somehow distant and in any place – and being dealt with by organisations such as FURD. Piara Powar of Kick it Out comments in this respect:

'I think FURD, because of its origins as a youth work project, because of that focus, doesn't have the same focus on tackling racism in football'
stadiums, the same focus on changing the supporter base, and, also, raising awareness amongst white fans in the way that it could. I think it is as much to do with the fact that Sheffield United has come to be reliant on FURD's presence and their support of FURD is to say 'well, we are supporting that'. I mean, I think, FURD have made some very positive interventions, in tackling racism at overt levels but Sheffield United haven't engaged with it on an agenda that is asking them to drive forward policy initiatives that are clearly anti-racist' (Interview with Piara Powars 9/5/02).

Similarly, FURD has made little attempt to engage in dialogue with key local agencies charged with the responsibility for administering local amateur football with a view towards addressing incidents of racist abuse and racialised violence at the local level. In other locales, in West Yorkshire, Middlesex, Greenwich and Leicester, local partnerships have sought to enact new legislative structures, for example, to withhold pitch provision from teams reported for racist behaviour. The lack of work of FURD in this important area might, of course, be in part, as a result of a conscious decision to focus more on its core practical principles of work designed to empower local youth communities and to promote youth inclusion and the project may also be limited by its present work-specific funding regimes in this respect.

The steady expansion of FURD during its seven year tenure as a project committed to addressing locally relevant issues of racism and social exclusion has been premised on the enabling support mechanisms embodied in the structure of the management and advisory group and the commitment and vitality of its key workers to effectively administer sports-based and educational initiatives that are informed by the wider philosophy of the project. The extent to which the FURD model might offer the potential for transference and replication in other locales nationally will largely be dependent on the capacity of local agencies elsewhere to effectively engage with local minority ethnic communities in similarly meaningful and ‘democratic’ ways and for their to be sufficient funding support for the delivery of key activities designed to address specific localised issues of racism and racialised exclusion. The sharing and comparing of experiences with FURD might necessitate a better understanding of how projects in other parts of the north of England in particular might best approach issues of racism and exclusion and how they relate to their own ‘local structures of feeling’. Finally, what other localised projects might learn from the FURD experience is that even amongst the most successful local anti-
racist campaigns in football there can be a key problematics and tension in trying to engage the relatively ‘closed’ cultural institutions of professional football clubs in ways that go beyond common-sense articulations
Chapter Six

The ‘Foxes Against Racism’ (FAR) Initiative

1. Introduction and Background

1.1 The local context: social, economic and ‘racial’ demographics of Leicester

The city of Leicester is situated at the heart of Leicestershire in the East Midlands region, which includes the counties of Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire. According to 1991 Census data, the total population of Leicester was around 270,000, which positions the city as the largest in the region ahead of the other medium sized industrial cities of Nottingham (263,000) and Derby (218,000). The steady population growth of the city of Leicester from just 17,000 in 1801 to more than a quarter of a million by the close of the twentieth century has largely been premised on the development of the local economy as a centre for the production of textiles, manufacturing and precision engineering. More recently, the growth of opportunities for employment in finance and administration and, also, in local food processing industries, has led to a diversification of the local economy that has assisted the process of urban regeneration and helped avoid some of the wider social and economic problems associated with industrial recession that have, perhaps, been felt more strongly in other major post-industrial urban locales across the Midlands and the North of England from the 1970s onwards.

Nonetheless, the recent decline in the local textiles and hosiery industry has had a disproportionate economic effect on some of Leicester’s poorer minority ethnic communities, specifically those from Pakistani or Bangladeshi backgrounds. Despite the apparent economic stability of Leicester, thirteen of the twenty-eight district wards within the city boundaries are among the 10% most deprived wards nationally (ONS: Indices of Multiple Deprivation, 2000). This is, perhaps, most strikingly apparent in some of Leicester’s city-centre multi-ethnic locales as well as the predominantly, white, ‘sink’ estates that occupy points on the periphery of the city.
boundaries. These more deprived wards offer a stark contrast to some of the more affluent districts of the city and also to the semi-rural locales that make-up the County of Leicestershire. Leicestershire, in short, is an area of considerable economic, social and ethnic and racial contrasts.

The social and cultural landscape of the city of Leicester has, since the 1960s, undergone a dramatic transformation and has both rejected and incorporated successive waves of 'settlers' from the British Commonwealth to become, today, a relatively thriving and much publicised multi-ethnic city (Martin and Singh, 2002). In 1951 the Asian population of Leicester was just 624. Small, but significant, African-Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities began to settle in Leicester, hastened by the 1962 Commonwealth and Immigration Act. In 1966 the Indian Sports Association was formed in the city and by the late 1960s East African (Asian) migration to Leicester had begun involving communities fleeing social, economic and political persecution in Uganda and Kenya. By 1981, the New Commonwealth population of Leicester had tripled in a decade to 60,000 (Martin & Singh, 2002).

By 1991, this latter 'Indian heritage' cohort accounted for almost four-out-of-five (78%) of the total minority ethnic population of Leicester and 94% of the local Asian population, which also features smaller Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities, and represents the largest locale-specific 'Indian heritage' community nationally. Substantial African and African-Caribbean communities are also resident in Leicester and represent around one-in-eleven (9%) of all local minority ethnic communities and around 2% of the total population of Leicester (Census 1991).

The strongly multi-ethnic population of Leicester has produced a concentration of minority ethnic communities in specific locales throughout the city of Leicester. Minority ethnic communities account for between 50% and 90% of local populations in eight district wards to the immediate north and east of the city's central business district and many of these areas also feature disproportionate levels of social and economic deprivation. Minority ethnic communities account for between 10% and 50% of local residential populations in a further twelve district wards in the city, inclusive of some of the regions most affluent and sought after 'middle class'
districts situated to the south of the commercial epicentre of the city, areas where East African Asian communities feature especially strongly. To the South West and West of the city, white public housing estates suffer multiple forms of social and economic deprivation and have generally been hostile to the settlement of minority ethnic residents.

Since the 1970s, the city of Leicester has slowly developed an international public image as a thriving relatively successful 'multi-cultural’ city where ethnic diversity in commerce and social life are positively promoted and valued (Martin & Singh, 2002). The most obvious indicators of the ‘value’ placed on the ethnic diversity of the city can probably be seen in the very public celebrations of religious and cultural festivals in Leicester, but there are, too, also strong signs that Leicester has developed a strong equal opportunities culture in employment – especially in the public sector – and in terms of political representation. 14 of the city’s 30 local councillors are from Asian backgrounds and one local MP, Keith Vaz, is Asian.

The transformation of Leicester over the past twenty-five years as a so-called 'model' of multiculturalism and harmonious ‘race relations’ has been built on the efforts and skills of the local authorities and on a general tolerance of people from all communities in the city. But it has been assisted too, by the relative diversity of occupationally based identities in the city and by the relative lack of the strong versions of ‘neighbourhood nationalisms’ more common for example, in parts of the North of England (Spracken, 2001) and in parts of South East London (Back et al, 1999; Robson, 2001).

It is also true that the social class and cultural backgrounds of Leicester’s key minority groups has arguably promoted the process of integration and local acceptance rather more than has been the case in some other English towns and cities. These factors, along with the relative stability of the local economy over time in Leicester, might partially explain the ‘smoother’ process of integration for minority ethnic communities in Leicester, in contrast to the experiences of other minority ethnic groups elsewhere. The gradual social and ethnic transformation of the city in recent decades has probably contributed to a less rigidly defined ‘local structure of feeling’ amongst local populations here than in other cities in the
Midlands and the North of England, including our other case study area in Sheffield. However, it is important to recognise that behind the very positive public image of 'multicultural Leicester' there exists some very real inter-ethnic tensions within and between minority ethnic groups, and a significant continuation of openly expressed racist sentiment in largely white enclaves.

It should be remembered, too, that in the 1970s the Leicestershire area was a centre for National Front activity - and some electoral success - and that the City Council in Leicester once advertised in the African press that no new minorities should come from Uganda to Leicester to join earlier arrivals (Martin & Singh, 2002). Leicestershire is no haven of racial tolerance, not in the 1970s or today.

1.2 Some comments on the history of Leicester City FC

In 1884, sons of Leicester's privately educated, middle class elite, based at Old Wyggeston College, no doubt informed in their actions by the rugged philosophies and ideological impetuses of the 'muscular Christianity' of the late Victorian era (Holt 1989), formed a local football club, which they called Leicester Fosse FC. Initially, the endeavours of the players of Leicester Fosse FC did little to ignite the passions of the local population for football, and sporting interests at this time were much more focused on the already established local sports of cricket and rugby union. Undeterred, in 1892, the Fosse established a permanent 'home' venue at Filbert Street in Leicester, just half a mile southwest of the central business district and within 'kicking' distance of the newly built Leicester (Tigers) Rugby Football ground situated at nearby Welford Road.

In 1894 Leicester Fosse FC successfully applied for admission into the Football League and took their place in the newly formed Football League Division Two. In 1919, Leicester Fosse FC was reconstituted and re-named Leicester City FC to reflect, in part, the newly awarded 'city' status for Leicester. From this date onwards Leicester City FC have competed at or near the higher levels of the English game, latterly becoming something of the archetypal 'yo-yo' club with 11 recent promotions from the (old) Football League Division Two (including six Division Two Championship successes) and 12 relegations from the top flight. In the post
Second World War period, Leicester City appeared, unsuccessfully, in four FA Cup finals (1949, 1961, 1963 and 1969) and in two League Cup finals (1965, 1999) but also emerged victorious in the latter competition in 1964, 1997 and 2000. These more recent League Cup successes signify a wider rejuvenation of the fortunes of Leicester City FC that have even seen the club participate in European club competition and, for the first time, achieve commendable finishing positions in the FA Premier League during the period 1997 – 2001. The on-field successes of Leicester City FC in the 1990s coupled with the financial incentives involved in maintaining FA Premier League status instigated moves to vacate the by now dilapidated Filbert Street stadium in 2002 for a new 32,000 capacity Walkers stadium nearby. By October 2002, and by now relegated back to the Football League, City was in administration and struggling for survival.

This most recent, successful, period in the history of Leicester City FC (by now nicknamed the Foxes) also coincided with something of a renaissance for other professional sports clubs in the region, notably national championship successes for Leicestershire County Cricket Club (1996, 1998), for Leicester Riders Basketball Club (2001) and, perhaps, most notably, for Leicester Tigers Rugby Club (1999, 2000, 2001) which also won the European Cup in 2001 and 2002. Tigers are the largest and most successful rugby club in England and the polarisation of support for football and rugby in Leicester may account, in part, for Leicester City’s problems in cementing their own place at the sports highest levels. For some observers, Leicester’s sobriquet ‘The City of Sport’ should be read as ‘the city of Rugby’.

1.3 Leicester City FC, its fans and local minority ethnic communities

The century-old Filbert Street stadium was situated just half a mile to south west of the cities central business district in what is known, locally, as the ‘West End’ of Leicester, a socially mixed area in which low cost terraced housing and newly built ‘affordable’ housing nestle between low-rise and high-rise flats and the nearby hospital and university. The local population of the West End offers a complex mix of local Leicester residents alongside a more transient, youthful, student population. Minority ethnic, predominantly Asian, communities account for around one-in-four (25%) of the West End population. The new Walkers Stadium occupies an open
brown-field site some 200 metres away from the bustle of the tightly packed terraced housing which surround the now derelict Filbert Street. The new venue is bordered by arterial roads, industrial units and the River Soar.

Leicester City is a ‘local’ rather than a ‘national’ or even a strongly ‘regional’ football club. More than three-quarters (78%) of the ‘active’ support for Leicester City FC is drawn from within 20 miles of the central location of the club (Williams 1997). Compared to the national average the ‘active’ support of Leicester City FC features, strongly, female fans (20%) and also high levels of mixed sex groups and adult fans who take school-age children to matches at Filbert Street (Williams, 2000; 2001). These suggested patterns of strong local ‘family’ support probably reflect at least, in part, the effectiveness of targeted marketing strategies at Leicester City FC designed to engage this specific cohort in an era when all top football clubs put a premium on pursuing the ‘family audience’.

Social class demographics for ‘Foxes’ fans are broadly reflective of that of football fans nationally, although fans of Leicester City are more likely than fans at other clubs to be university educated (34%) but, are also, less well paid than fans nationally (Williams, 2001). Leicester City fans were also much more likely than fans nationally to have witnessed hooliganism (39%) at the club’s ‘home’ games. This fact probably signifies three things: Firstly, the ecology of Filbert Street that positions ‘hard core’ rival fans in adjacent areas of the stadium; secondly, that Leicester is easy to reach from other urban football areas from both North and South; thirdly, City has a small but ‘game’ hooligan following who are known to be willing to ‘perform’, especially at home. One-off high profile incidents of spectator misbehaviour in recent years in Leicester, nevertheless, probably exaggerates the real threat of hooliganism at this particular venue.

Broadly reflective of recent changes at the higher levels of the game, Leicester City has, in recent years, featured mainland European and African players as well as the more traditional core of players from the locality and beyond. Whilst a small number of locally born black players have progressed through the professional ranks at the club in recent years, - notably Emile Heskey - City has singularly failed to recruit and nurture locally born young Asian players, despite the high levels of participation and
interest in the game amongst this specific section of local minority ethnic communities (see Bains, 1996; Johal, 2001). Similarly, levels of ‘active’ support for Leicester City FC amongst local minority ethnic communities have rarely exceeded more than 1% of the total crowd at first team matches at Filbert Street, although the club claims to have attracted up to 25% of its ‘active’ support from minority ethnic communities at specific reserve team ‘Family Night Football’ events (see below).

Research conducted in Leicester in 1998, as part of local submissions to the national Football Task Force (FTF), revealed that many young Asian football fans locally cited concerns about personal safety and the continuing problems of racism as reasons for non-attendance at matches at Filbert Street although many young people here also expressed a keen interest in the activities of Leicester City FC (SNCCFR, 1998). The perceptions of local Asian groups with regard to the incidence of racist abuse at matches featuring Leicester City FC at Filbert Street, does, of course, have some basis in fact, as local City fan ‘activist’, Jeff Davidson recalls:

'It would be around the late 1980s and early 1990s that I came to be aware of it [racist abuse from fans]. It wasn’t every week, or at least, I didn’t notice it every week, but there was enough around for it to be troubling. It was aimed at players mainly, mostly the other teams players, but sometimes our own. There was some chanting but mainly a lot of individual remarks and abuse, you know, monkey noises and other racial abuse’ (Interview with Jeff Davidson, FAR fans representative and fanzine editor 5/10/01)

More recently, almost one-third (32%) of ‘Foxes’ fans had witnessed racist abuse aimed at players at their clubs matches and around one-in-eight (12%) had heard racism aimed at spectators (Williams 2001). Interestingly, almost three-quarters (74%) of Leicester fans reporting racism of this kind argued that such racist chanting emanating from opposition spectators at matches at Filbert Street (Williams 2000).

Indeed, in recent years, fans of visiting teams to Filbert Street, including Aston Villa, Birmingham City, Leeds United, Chelsea, Everton and Sunderland have all been involved in high profile incidents of racist chanting and some more individualised racist abuse, targeting both the home crowd and Leicester City’s black and ‘foreign’ players. More specifically, some opposition fans have mobilise chants aimed at inducing shame in white Leicester fans about the large Asian communities now
resident in the city of Leicester. This chant, ‘You’re just a town full of Pakis’ has been argued by Back et al (2001, p73) to form part of a process of cultural interchange and syncretism within fan culture nationally and to be representative of a specific racialised discourse that occurs within the normative structure of white working class spectator formations at football. That is, the power of the chant is resonant within the implicit acknowledgement of racialised hierarchies within white consciousness and in the concomitant shared sets of meanings and antipathies towards a significant, racialised, specifically Asian, ‘other’.

The hostile responses of some (white) ‘Foxes’ fans to these chants might indeed, in part, reflect an implicit acceptance of the shared racialised understandings inherent in white spectator formations and, accordingly, any engagement in this overt cultural interchange might represent a kind of ‘passive racism’. However, more recently, there have been increasing signs that City fans also mobilise a rather different response to the ‘Pakis’ chant by booing and jeering to drown out its content. Further, the recent engagement of Leicester City fans in orchestrated fan choreographies in support of the anti-racist activities of the club, under the auspices of the local Foxes Against Racism campaign, might indicate signs of the beginnings of an admittedly, largely symbolic, anti-racist fan culture at Leicester City FC.

2. The history and development of Foxes Against Racism (FAR)

2.1 The ‘Foxes Against Racism/Foxes With Attitude’ Fan initiative

The ‘Foxes Against Racism’ (FAR) fans initiative in Leicester emerged in the early 1990s as a fan-based response to the ongoing incidence of overt racist abuse of black players and of some minority ethnic fans at Leicester City matches at that time. Sharing similarities with less overtly political, anti-racist fan groups nationally, the FAR fans initiative was born out of a determination to offer a direct challenge to other, ‘racist’, fans and to encourage the development of a more ‘inclusive’ atmosphere at City matches as founder member and city fan Jeff Davidson, recalls:
'I thought "We've got to challenge this [racism]. I don't want to hear it". Me and a few mates got together and thought what can we do about this. Just to challenge racism, maybe give a few other people the confidence to challenge racism. We knew many people felt the same way, even if they didn't stand up and say it. You know, Leicester being the place it is, the different groups that live here, to try and make it so that if they wanted to come along to Filbert Street they wouldn't be discriminated against' (Interview with Jeff Davidson, FAR fans initiative, 5/10/01).

Since 1992, this relatively small group of anti-racist fan activists have engaged in a variety of street-level interventions designed to challenge more overt forms of spectator racism. This has included the distribution of leaflets and stickers in and around Filbert Street on match-days (sometimes, jointly, with like-minded Sunderland FC fans, when the two clubs have met in League fixtures) through to the production and distribution of copies of the explicitly anti-racist fanzines 'Filbo Fever' (1993-1995) and 'When Your Smiling' (1995-2002). The promotion of the broadly ‘anti-racist’ but also ‘masculinist’ philosophy of the FAR fans initiative has been encouraged by locating practical interventions within the vernacular of the local male fan cultures (see Back et al, 2001; Garland and Rowe, 2001; Holland, 1996) and the continued popularity amongst local fans of the fanzine(s) produced by the group. More generally, fan sympathies – if not overt support - were testimony to the capacity of FAR fans initiative to engage adult, mainly male, fans around issues of anti-racism in subtle, but powerful, ways.

It had been a key aim of the FAR fans group to press Leicester City into more dialogue in order to encourage the club to deal more ‘appropriately’ with issues of spectator racism at Filbert Street. However, initially, the FAR fans initiative had little success in this respect: senior officials at Leicester City seemed little interested in contact with ‘activist’ fan groups on issues of racism or any other fan related issues. However, following the visit of the Government Football Task Force (FTF) to Leicester in 1997 and the publication of the FTF recommendations designed to challenge racism in the game in 1998, Leicester City, in partnership with other key local agencies established a multi-agency working party, in effect, a ‘Local Task Force’ (see below), to try to implement national recommendations at the local level.
The FAR fans group, by now relatively inactive, took its place at the table. Within a year, the ‘Local Task Force’ had adopted the moniker Foxes Against Racism (FAR), with the blessing of the original FAR fans group, and aimed to build on the popular reputation already established by the group of City fans. The original FAR fans group reconstituted as ‘Foxes With Attitude’ (FWA) and continued to function independently to deliver their, by now standard activities, of the production and distribution of stickers, leaflets and fanzines. Further, the new, improved, relationship between Leicester City FC and FWA has enabled the fans’ initiative to benefit from support from the club, including the production of anti-racist banners and promotion of the FWA campaign in the official match-day programme.

2.2 The Foxes Against Racism (FAR) Multi-Agency Initiative

In January 1998, the FTF working group visited Leicester for what turned out to be a lively public meeting with as many as 300 local fans, local players, officials and community activists in attendance. Whilst the meeting was largely dominated by debates about the growing commercialisation of the game and the increasing cost of match-day tickets, Task Force members had already had private meetings with representatives of local minority ethnic football clubs to discuss problems of racism in local football. They were impressed by what they heard.

Following the Task Force visit, representatives of the Leicester Racial Equality Council, Leicester City Council, the SNCCFR at the University of Leicester and local minority ethnic football clubs came together at a local community centre venue in the city in February 1998 to discuss how, together, they might work more productively to begin to address some of the issues of racism and discrimination identified in the game locally. The agenda also included how the group might contribute to the work of the national FTF and respond in full to its anticipated recommendations for action against racism. Subsequently, the SNCCFR, Leicester City Council and the Leicester Racial Equality Council (inclusive of local minority ethnic football clubs) made written submissions to the FTF on racism in local football and, also, offered suggestions as to how to deal with racism at grass roots level. The submissions of the Leicester group actually featured in the FTF report on
racism published in March 1998, and had clearly informed some of the key recommendations on dealing with racism in the amateur game.

By the time of the official launch of the Leicester 'Local Task Force' in August 1998, the wider group membership of FAR consisted of the following organisations: Leicester City FC; Leicester City Council (Sports and Leisure, and Community Services); Leicester Racial Equality Council; Unison; 'Foxes Against Racism' Fans Initiative; SNCCFR (University of Leicester); Kick It Out; Rushey Mead Community College; Leicester Asian Youth Association; Nirvana FC; and Highfield Rangers FC. In the months after the official launch of the Leicester 'Local Task Force', the group membership expanded further to incorporate other local agencies and service providers including, the police, local minority ethnic media representatives and community-based organisations, the Local Education Authority and, after some considerable local negotiation and prompting from the national FA, the Leicestershire and Rutland County FA (LRCFA). By the spring of 1999 the new Foxes Against Racism group was beginning to establish its own identity in partnership with the 'brand' association of Leicester City. According to one original FAR member:

'Leicester City FC are the brand. They are the attraction. With the club involved people are more likely to take notice of what FAR is about. If you were to call it 'Leicester City Council Against Racism' then people might be more cynical, you know, about the local authority or public bodies. If the group can work effectively with the FAR brand, then fair play' (Interview with Steve Humphries, FAR member and Leicester City Council 29/9/01)

Having established a core, but till relatively fluid, membership the FAR multi-agency initiative also developed a broad set of aims and objectives (see appendices) incorporating the more specific recommendations outlined in the national FTF recommendations. Broadly speaking, the FAR campaign sought to challenge racism and promote a more inclusive agenda in the local professional and non-professional football environment and to establish a programme of educational activities in support of these efforts. In doing so, FAR sought to draw on the key skills, knowledge and resources of the wider group membership to help deliver these aims.
and objectives and to promote a clear agenda for the future direction of the campaign.

Throughout the duration of the FAR campaign so far (1998-2002), FAR has delivered a range of localised initiatives and events designed to promote anti-racism in sports through a variety of mechanisms in areas of the professional and non-professional game and through educational initiatives that target local young people from different ethnic backgrounds (see below). To some extent, the effectiveness of the campaign has been underpinned by the willingness of key members of the group to engage with the broadly anti-racist philosophy of FAR. Whilst this has been embraced by many of the FAR group, for others, the marked reluctance to engage in ideas beyond the most simplistic and monolithic understandings of issues of ‘race’ and ethnicity have contributed to some frustrating periods of stagnation in the development of the campaign. Similarly, the inability of FAR to attract significant levels of core funding in support of the management and delivery of the campaign and its key aims and objectives has, probably, also limited the meaningful impact of the initiative.

Nonetheless, the consistent commitment of key members of the FAR group to drive forward the key aims and objectives of the campaign have produced an extensive consultation process and re-evaluation of the direction of FAR. More recently, this has led to the production and development of the ‘Foxes Against Racism: Development and Research Plan 2002-2005’ (see appendices). Broadly speaking, this strategy document outlines a series of specific aims and outcomes in respect of designated forthcoming areas of work, which, focus on: work in professional football with Leicester City FC; work with other professional sports in Leicester; research on sports racism and social exclusion in Leicester; a continued focus on challenging racism through education; and work specifically to challenge racism in local football.

Some significant progress has already been made in respect of the work with Leicester City FC that builds on the previous efforts of the FAR fans group in this area. This has seen a renewed application from senior officials at the club to attempt to ‘open-up’ the core structures and everyday working practices of the club; to better encourage more of an ‘equality’ culture in areas of administrative and (young) player
recruitment; to improve the relationship between the club and other local agencies and local minority ethnic communities; and to change the way in which the club promotes and markets itself to previously excluded sections sports communities in Leicester (see appendices). It is also hoped that the new FAR Development and Research Plan and the comprehensive strategy for tackling racism in sports featured therein will encourage significant financial contribution from national and local funding agencies to help support this FAR in its proposed work.

2.3 The 'Foxes Against Racism' (FAR) Management and Steering Group

The capacity of the FAR campaign to deliver upon its stated aims and objectives to challenge racism and promote a more inclusive environment in professional and non-professional football in Leicester has been predicated on the establishment of a clear and cohesive management structure. The lack of funding for a FAR key worker designated to manage and deliver the core activities of the campaign has meant that FAR has been wholly dependent upon the time and commitment of its voluntary group membership to shape and deliver FAR policy. Accordingly, the campaign has been administered through the establishment of regular, bi-monthly, FAR ‘steering group’ meetings that feature representation from the key partner organisations that make-up the wider group membership. These ‘steering group’ meetings follow a written formal agenda and are supervised by an appointed FAR ‘Chair’, John Williams of the SNCCFR. They act as a forum in which ideas for tackling racism and exclusion locally are proposed and are better defined through a process of dialogue and exchange and where strategies for the implementation of key activities are formulated and formalised. Equally, the FAR ‘steering group’ meetings also offer a space in which local tensions around issues of racial exclusion in sport might be both released and managed and where key representative organisations might better address the multiplicity of overt and ‘hidden’ manifestations of racism and exclusion in football in Leicester.

Whilst the internal mechanics of the FAR ‘steering group’ have consistently adhered to the same, workable, format, the expansion of the FAR campaign, from a loose coalition of local agencies to a much larger grouping with a relatively broad focus, has necessitated the development of different models of management to help
administer some specific areas of work. These different ‘splinter’ management
groups have functioned with varying degrees of success. Initially, the FAR campaign
initiated two distinct ‘working groups’ to focus on separate, but inter-related, areas of
work. The focus of FAR Group One was on the development of initiatives to combat
match-day racism at Filbert Street, inclusive of policing and stewarding issues, the
implementation of the Kick It Out ten-point plan and other club-specific FTF
recommendations. Work here also included the promotion of the activities of
Leicester City FC, and its associated community projects, for local minority ethnic
communities and the development of imaginative programmes designed to attract
more minority ethnic fans to first team and reserve team ‘Family Night Football’
fixtures at Leicester City.

The role of FAR Group Two was to explore ways in which FAR might develop
longer-term ‘community’ initiatives to increase the participation of local minority
ethnic communities in football at both the professional and non-professional level
and to tackle some ongoing issues of racism in local football. Work here also
included the development of anti-racist educational initiatives designed to engage
young people in Leicestershire in the work and philosophy of the FAR campaign.
However, the overlap of interests in the two groups soon meant that work here was
increasingly duplicated and began to lack organisational focus. Also, the overlapping
membership and frequency of working group meetings produced too much time
pressure on already committed FAR members. Accordingly, the FAR group reverted
to a one ‘steering group’ model in June 1999.

The capacity of FAR to engage local agencies in the idea of tackling racism in
football and to deliver high profile, anti-racist events during this early period in the
history of the campaign (see below) meant that by late 1999 FAR steering group
meetings were attracting in excess of twenty local agency representatives and the
forum was becoming an unwieldy, difficult to manage, process. In order to establish
a more productive management structure, key members of the FAR group proposed
the establishment of a ‘committee’ structure whereby FAR members with specific
skills and expertise might focus their attention on four key areas considered vital to
the continuation of the FAR campaign: Fan Behaviour and Match-day Policing;
Community and Education Initiatives; Local Football and Local Clubs; and
Research, Publicity and Funding. Again, however, this arrangement proved impractical and unwieldy although some FAR members did work more closely together, for a short time, on specific initiatives under the stated headings.

Instead, following clashes between the tight ‘corporate’ approach of club officials and the more discursive and critical agendas established by community groups, the FAR group proposed and adopted a ‘two-tier’ management structure in the spring of 2000 in which a smaller, more focused, decision-making, group, sought to implement in practice the ideas for initiatives and for the ongoing activities of the campaign generated and debated by a much larger FAR group, that featured all representative members. However, the ‘two-tier’ management model soon caused resentment and confusion within the group as to the designated roles and responsibilities of representative group members. Some FAR members also complained – correctly - that they were effectively being excluded from the central decision making processes that informed the policy development and direction of the campaign, as FAR member and Unison representative, Gary Gamer, recalls:

‘One of the main things is that some of the local communities don’t see the group as transparent. They think the group is becoming a publicity arm for Leicester City FC in terms of working with local communities. They say to me ‘the group is just a publicity machine for the club’.

(Interview with Gary Gamer, FAR member and Unison representative 19/12/01)

The emergence of long-standing tensions around Leicester City’s previous exclusionary programme and the frustrations of black and Asian community groups indicative of the ‘robust’ nature of local community politics also led to some ‘lively’ group encounters that, periodically, alienated some community-based representatives and also, most notably, members of the Leicester City’s Community Office. The drop-off rate in the attendance at meetings of local clubs and community organisations during this difficult and often tense period in the development of FAR, signalled a negative and wrong-headed response for some FAR activists:

‘I don’t think boycotting meetings or non-attendance at meetings is the right way forward. We need to be involved. We need to work with the club. We need to learn (sic) them about working with communities. Ideally, we’d like it to happen overnight but in reality that’s not going to
happen, so we need to stay working with the club and make sure they come into the communities and work with us. (Interview with Gary Garner, FAR member and Unison representative 19/12/01)

Similarly, FAR member and local football club representative, Joss Johnson, offers an insight into the continued commitment of community organisations to the FAR group, based on an acute awareness of the, historically rooted, processes of institutional exclusion that hinder swift action and threaten to dampen the enthusiasm of some disenfranchised local community representatives:

'There is, sometimes, a lack of intelligence and commitment amongst some elements of the community. Right from the outset, people come along to FAR meetings and expect actions and they are not prepared to understand the processes. You have to realise it takes a lot of pressure to make a diamond. You have to understand the processes and mechanisms and how they work. You have devise new processes that can change the mechanisms. The FA and the County FA, these associations have been running for over a hundred years. These people aren't stupid. They are adept at having systems and processes that actually exclude, and they work hard at that. To go and redress that sort of thing, it's not going to happen overnight. Its not going to happen by coming to one meeting and raising your voice and then going away'. (Interview with Joss Johnson, FAR member and Highfield Rangers representative 11/02/02)

By the summer of 2001 the FAR campaign had reverted once more to a single steering group management model and FAR underwent a 'settling down' period in which the core membership of the group re-established its commitment to the aims and objectives of the campaign. The production of the 'FAR Development and Action Plan 2002-2005' is indicative of this renewed coherence and commitment of the group and the development of a specific sub-group to deal with issues pertaining to work with Leicester City FC is also a sign in the continued development of FAR and its ability to manage effectively, the activities of the campaign, as one FAR member notes:

'The meetings have kept FAR alive. They have allowed people to come to the meetings to express their views, to look at the direction of the campaign and to contribute to that process. Yes, some groups have fallen by the wayside. But, many more have stuck with it. That's the key to the success of partnership working. The meetings have been the heartbeat of
2.4. The funding of the FAR campaign

Since 1998 FAR has received no core funding to assist in the delivery of its stated aims and objectives other than a relatively small figure of £4,000 per annum as part of a covenant agreement made between Leicester City Council and Leicester City FC in 1996 and from which funds have irregularly been diverted to support the FAR campaign. This minimal funding has, typically speaking, provided financial support for: the general management costs of the campaign; has contributed towards the production of FAR T-shirts, banners and other promotional materials; for the purchase of Show Racism the Red Card videos for distribution to local schools and colleges; and has been used to sponsor FAR 'branded' awards at local community achievement events.

With respect to the FAR campaign, there has been some, perhaps, naïve, expectancy on the part of 'community' representatives that Leicester City FC might contribute more directly and generously to the financial support of FAR as a quid pro quo for the positive media profiling achieved by the club through FAR activities and promotions. However, whilst these arguments and expectations might hold some ideological and moral weight, the financial position of the club is a little more complex and this defines the nature of the support offered by Leicester City FC to FAR. According to Charles Raynor, FAR member and Director of Operations at Leicester City:

'The club works on a very tight budget. We have a tight cash flow. We are one of the clubs that works on an 80% wage ratio to turnover. The money that we make goes straight into player's salaries and the other administrative salaries as well. Every penny of the Sky TV money is taken up with player's salaries. There is the perception that Premier League clubs are cash rich. They are at one end, but it's soon swallowed up at the other end. One thing a club can offer is facilities and services. We do have tremendous conference and banqueting facilities here. We have expertise in marketing, sales and community initiatives as well. Whilst it is difficult to contribute cash, as such, it is far more beneficial, I think, to offer the services, which add up to far more than any cash donation
Despite the lack of core funding for FAR, the campaign has been able to locate small amounts of ad hoc funding for the delivery of specific initiatives. In March 1999 FAR was able to attract £8,000 of sponsorship funding from a combination of local commercial and public sector sources for the production of a Foxes Against Racism eight page pull-out in the local newspaper the Leicester Mercury that was delivered to over 150,000 homes in the region (see below). Similarly, the FAR campaign accessed £7,500 from local and national sources in support of the Arc Theatre ‘My England’ tour of Leicester schools and colleges and the innovative ‘Black Looks’ arts exhibition as part of a significant contribution to the wider activities of ‘Black History Month’ in Leicester. The production of the campaign’s Annual Report (1998-2000) was also funded by a donation of £2,000 from Unison. According to some FAR members, the more general lack of core funding for FAR has significantly hindered the progress of the campaign in meeting its stated aims and objectives:

‘I think it’s a problem in the sense that a lot of the initiatives that we want to do need money. I mean lots of people have given up their free time to work to get FAR to where it is today. But, to put forward some good initiatives, to work with schools, community and neighbourhood centres then there has to be some financial input’. (Interview with Gary Garner, FAR member and UNISON representative 19/12/01)

The general agreement amongst the membership of FAR was to proceed towards the establishment of Charitable Trust status, a move which was, in part, shaped by a recognition that despite some key achievements in the promotion of awareness about racism in football locally, the campaign in its present structure had arguably run its course and could do little to move beyond the delivery of short-term, if highly symbolic, and popular single events. FAR member Steve Humphries sums up the general mood of the membership with regard to the proposed establishment of the FAR Trust:

‘It’s the only way forward in my opinion. At least it will have a foundation and free us up a bit. It needs some one to drive it forward and tap into the ideas and experience of others to keep FAR alive. That is what we have to do. We are full of good intentions at the moment but we
For other FAR members the establishment of FAR as a Trust will also assist in a greater degree of independence for FAR from Leicester City FC and will, thus, root the campaign more firmly within a ‘community-centred’ approach to dealing with issues of racism in football in Leicester:

‘The Trust might be a more recognised format and it might gain a degree of independence from the club. The group needs its own identity as a group. That means having the club on board on our own terms, as the Trust terms, and not solely on the club’s terms’ (Interview with Sunil Budheo, FAR member and local community representative 8/01/02)

‘As long as it doesn’t leave the community base I wouldn’t be unhappy about it becoming a Trust. My concern is that I don’t want FAR as a Trust or a voluntary group just to be a publicity arm for Leicester City FC. The description of FAR has to be a ‘critical friend of the club’’ (Interview with Gary Garner, FAR member and Unison representative 19/12/01)

For Leicester City itself, however, the key priorities of the FAR Trust should continue to be centred on professional club activities and on forging links between the club local ethnic minority communities, although, there is also some acknowledgement here of the need for any future FAR Trust worker to engage with the club as an ‘independent advisor’ to offer both advice and support under the supervision of the wider FAR Trust membership. Charles Raynor again:

‘I think it will link certain aspects of the club together. The FAR worker will certainly give Alan Hill [the LCFC Youth Academy Director] the kind of support that he needs to make certain initiatives work. Forge better relationships between the Academy and local Asian football teams and African/Caribbean teams as well. I can see that being a great benefit to the club and I can see that really beginning to change things. Also work better and more closely with community departments and some of their initiatives. WE don’t want the FAR worker to be seen as an employee of Leicester City. That is something we don’t want, despite what people might think. We want them to be managed by the FAR Trust and forging these links to make them better. I think that will be a very positive step’ (Interview with Charles Raynor, 15/08/01).
By mid 2002 the FAR campaign was working closely with Kick It Out to formalise FAR as a legally constituted Charitable Trust. At the time of writing (September 2002) the FAR group was in the process of submitting a funding application to the Football Foundation in support of the employment of a key worker to help deliver these stated aims and objectives. The group remains hopeful that the bid for funding will prove to be successful.

3. The work of FAR with Leicester City FC to combat racism at Filbert Street and to attract minority ethnic fans.

3.1 Policing racism at Filbert Street and the Walkers Stadium

The development of the FAR campaign was, in part, a response to the ongoing incidence of racist abuse of black players and some minority ethnic supporters, at matches featuring Leicester City at Filbert Street (see Williams 1992). FAR has worked closely with its key partner Leicester City FC to ensure the implementation of a series of basic practical measures designed to highlight the club policy on fan racism. Accordingly, the club has been able to adopt those measures outlined in the Kick It Out ten point plan and the FTF report on Racism in Football with specific regard to match-day activities, such as making public statements against over the club PA system, on pitch side hoardings and in match-day programme notes. Further, the FAR group through the activities of the Leicester Racial Equality Council has assisted the club in the provision of supplementary ‘anti-racist’ training for match-day stewards, both prior to and in support of the new standardised and nationally accredited Football Stewarding Qualification (see Football league et al, 1999). For Leicester City, the delivery of anti-racist training to stewards forms part of a wider movement towards a greater professionalism on the part of club staff and an awareness to present a more positive image of the club to its ‘supporter-consumers’.

A designated police representative has been in regular attendance at FAR steering group meetings since the beginnings of the FAR campaign, although, more recently, police attendance has been more sporadic due, largely, to enforced changes in match-
day policing personnel. Nonetheless, this close working relationship has enabled FAR to press for a more focused police response at football and has also engendered a better understanding amongst the group of the roles and responsibilities of the police on match-days and the specificities and constraints of legislation, with regard to policing spectator racism. Since 1998 the Leicester Police have made arrests and achieved successful convictions under legislation dealing with offences involving racism at matches at Filbert Street. Figures nationally suggest convictions of these sorts are rarely pursued (NCIS 2002), however, sporadic overt racist abuse, in the form of mass racist chanting and more individualised forms of abuse, mainly from visiting fans, continues to be a key concern to FAR members and local minority ethnic fans. When such incidents have occurred Leicester City FC have been keen to express their public condemnation of such behaviour and have utilised local and national media sources to this particular end. FAR has also regularly written to other clubs to inform them of the policy of Leicester City FC with respect to dealing with football racism and also to the national governing bodies for guidance on the accountability for dealing with fan racism at football. FAR seems to have made little headway here. In fact, the FA seems to claim no statutory responsibilities or powers to deal with club racism (letter to FAR from Nic Coward, FA Company Secretary July, 2002).

Incidents of racism at Filbert Street also continued to go undetected and/or unpunished. There may be a number of reasons for this including: the difficulty in detecting individual offenders, problems which were compounded by the layout of antiquated Filbert Street Stadium; the inadequacy of CCTV as a mechanism of legal force for recording (vocal) racism; the apparent lack of understanding at official level of what constitutes racist behaviour and a reluctance on the part of some individual stewards and police officers to act against racism if and when it occurs (see McArdle, 2000). Further, the strong focus of home policing towards visiting fans – where the most obvious forms of overt and collective spectator racism do seem to occur at Filbert Street – might also have led to a lack of emphasis on the behaviour of home spectators. FAR member, Sunil Budheo, for example, is very aware of the racism among Leicester City fans:
'I've been to games and sat in the Double-Decker stand and the Kop end and the abuse that came out was shocking. Racist abuse directed at players, directed at fans. There were some black fans with the Arsenal fans and they were getting racial abuse. I changed my seat because I don’t want to listen to that. It has changed for the better. The club has made some real efforts to change it. But there are pockets where there are real issues and they haven’t changed those. There are corners (of the ground) they can’t change. But the general environment has changed. I do feel a lot safer. I do feel a lot more comfortable. But it’s still not the environment I would want. (Interview with Sunil Budheo 8/01/02)

The move from Filbert Street to the new Walkers Stadium changes the landscape for policing racism at Leicester City matches, and the club, the police and other FAR members, including the FWA fans group, continue to work closely together in this respect. Policing and stewarding, of course, represents the ‘sharp’ end of the campaign to combat overt spectator racism at football grounds, nationally, but at Leicester City they have formed only one part of the wider armoury of activities designed to deal with racism and it is some of these innovative match-day activities to which we turn our attention next.

3.2 Anti-racist match-days at Leicester City

Opposing racism symbolically and collectively with visible campaigns and fan events is one important means of highlighting local agendas and of focusing attention on the football crowd as one potential source of racism in football. One key element of the work of the national ‘Kick It Out’ campaign has been to encourage professional football clubs, in conjunction with locally established working groups, to hold anti-racist match-days. For FAR and its key partner Leicester City, the delivery of these highly visible and symbolic match-day events is a key element in the local repertoire of ‘stadium-specific’ campaigning. Largely due to the impressive co-ordinated efforts of FAR partner organisations, these events have developed into increasingly complex and relatively sophisticated affairs.

Under FAR’s guidance in October 1998 more than 2,000 Show Racism the Red Card red cards were held up by City fans in the family enclosure at a televised match at Filbert Street against Spurs. This early attempt at orchestrating a choreographed fan response to racism, largely for the benefits of Sky TV cameras, was somewhat
usurped however by an alternative and much more widely adhered to fan campaign involving City fans hoisting posters proclaiming ‘O’Neill Must Stay’: the club manager was being coveted by Leeds United. Undeterred, in March 1999, at a home match with Charlton Athletic local youngsters from Leicester and Charlton participated in a friendly match organised by the respective Football in the Community schemes of both clubs before watching the game together in the family enclosure. Immediately prior to the game, stickers and anti-racist magazines were distributed by FAR members and local young people from a range of ethnic backgrounds and large banners promoting the anti-racism message were paraded around the ground by the ball-squad. Both sets of players emerged onto the pitch wearing ‘Kick Racism Out Of Football’ T-shirts and messages of anti-racism were reiterated over the club PA system. This particular event formed part of a week of high profile sporting and educational activities undertaken by the FAR campaign (see below).

The FAR ‘anti-racist’ match-day has since become an annual event and has formed an essential component of the campaign to combat match-day racism and to encourage ‘Foxes’ fans to contribute towards a more inclusive environment at home matches and one that might be seen to be more attractive to local minority ethnic fans. At the anti-racist match-day event at Filbert Street in 2001, again featured Charlton Athletic, more than 12,000 Leicester City fans held aloft Foxes Against Racism posters distributed by the FAR campaign. At the time, this was the biggest demonstration of its kind in Europe. The FAR posters, which also featured a message in support of the campaign from Leicester City captain, Matt Elliot – offered a highly symbolic riposte to racism and is designed to encourage a wider sense of partnership and local ownership of the campaign amongst ‘Foxes’ fans.

That Leicester City players now emerge onto the field for the pre-match warm up in specially designed Foxes Against Racism T-shirts adds further to the endorsement of the campaign and its aims and objectives. The match was also preceded by an on pitch 5-a-side tournament featuring local minority ethnic football teams as part of the Lord Mayor’s Spirit of Sport event and this also represented the benefits of multi-agency working between key local agencies that make up the FAR membership.
In 2002 the FAR anti-racist match-day took place in October against Burnley and formed part of a wider programme of sporting and educational activities in Leicester around Black History Month, and as part of the national Kick It Out week of action. At other matches featuring Leicester City throughout the football season the club and FAR members have also been keen to host more ‘corporate’ events that have targeted local minority ethnic media, community leaders and local businesses. These meetings are designed to help promote FAR and the club and its activities to some previously excluded sections of the local community and to encourage stronger community and commercial links between the club and local minority ethnic communities.

3.3 Family Night Football (FNF)

As Leicester City's fortunes – and ticket prices rose – in the early 1990s, so access to Filbert Street and concerns about the potential ‘gentrification’ of Premier league crowds (Williams, 2002) also became problematic, Leicester’s black and Asian fans were also still likely to identify Filbert Street as a hostile and fearful enclosure rather than a strong and valued community base. Partly in response to these issues, Leicester City FC targeted reserve team football matches as a new means of maintaining and extending links with less affluent fans and also with supporters from minority ethnic backgrounds and these games are managed by the club Community Office under the banner ‘Family Night Football’. Charles Raynor, FAR member and Leicester City ‘Director of Operations’ explains:

‘First team games are for die-hard season ticket holders and there is never much flexibility to do any initiatives. In 1994 we realised that reserve team football was an entertainment that wasn’t fully utilised. Premiership football is expensive. In relative terms, to other leisure activities, it is expensive. Families can’t always afford those prices. To keep the family unit together we decided to turn our reserve team games into ‘Family Night Football’ which is low cost admission prices and many communities get in free of charge’ (Interview with Charles Raynor, 15/8/01).

Raynor points here to the clear commercial limits to the club’s campaigns with ethnic minority fans: if they cost money, they are off the agenda. The very different focus and climate of FNF nights at Leicester City FC encouraged FAR to utilise these events to recruit fans from minority ethnic communities. In particular, FAR has
utilised FNF nights to incorporate the celebration of religious and cultural festivals and football tournaments that feature participants from local minority ethnic youth football teams and local schools and colleges. Perhaps the most successful of these events has been the FNF branded ‘Diwali’ night held in November 1999 that featured a 5-a-side football tournament between local Asian youth teams, Asian Bhangra Bands, and singers and dancers, fireworks and other similar entertainment. A number of local minority ethnic community leaders and community workers were invited to a special Diwali celebration meal at one of the corporate function rooms whilst the wider event was attended by local Asian media (MATV) and also Sky TV both of which filmed a brief documentary piece for TV. In excess of 6,000 fans attended the event of which an estimated 25% were from local minority ethnic communities. The FAR campaign has continued to utilise FNF nights as a key site at which to engage local black and Asian families in the activities of Leicester City, with some significant degree of success. Charles Raynor again:

'To theme the FNF games to try to attract families from different communities, we have had a resounding success. It's unbelievable, if you target, or make a community feel special and carry out special initiatives with them you can push up the numbers of people coming to your games from certain communities. At some games we have had a 25% Asian audience, which is a phenomenal success when you think that only 1% of first team games are made up of ethnic minorities. There is the evidence that shows that if you make a concerted effort, talk to community leaders and the community as a whole you can actually make a difference. Going forward it is always envisaged that people who go to FNF will then gain confidence to then try and go to first team games. We think that FNF is the vehicle for getting communities to come to the first team games' (Interview with Charles Raynor 15/8/01).

There is little empirical evidence in fact to support the enthusiastic claims that FNF has acted as a lead into more regular attendance at first team matches for minority ethnic fans. In fact a FAR headcount of 'visible' minority ethnic fans in November 2002 recorded just 1.6% of the crowd of over 25,000 at the Walkers Stadium. Cost may be a factor here; so, too, the perception that FNF events are simply 'entertainments' which lack the intensity and rivalry of first team contests. For Gary Garner, FAR member and Unison representative, cost is the key:
'I think it's all around cost. Through the (FAR) group we have complimentary tickets given to us for FAR and UNISON. I've passed on tickets to our [Highfield Rangers] teams and they have been to matches at FNF, for Arsenal, Aston Villa, Tottenham. They are free tickets. When you are looking at a single parent on a low income and a son or daughter who wants to go and the tickets are £12 or £15 for children and young people? Leicester City could do more. 'Kids for a quid' to attract more fans. When the new stadium is up an running that's what they have to do' (Interview 19/12/01)

Lacking the forbidding history and associations for people from minority ethnic backgrounds that Filbert Street exhibited – a topophobic sensibility (Bale 1991) - the new Walkers Stadium may offer more chance of expanding minority ethnic attendance at Leicester City. Lower ticket prices may do the same. Early signs, however, are not encouraging.

4. FAR and Leicester City's player recruitment and staffing policies

4.1 The Soccer For All scheme

Some limited research has suggested that the continued absence of Asians as players in English football might be best understood as emanating from a series of racial and cultural exclusions shaped by stereotypes held by those officials within the football industry charged with the implementation of scouting and player recruitment (Bains, 1995). Such gate-keeper restrictions seemed to have served to limit opportunities for the progression of young Asian players into the professional structures of the game (Bradbury 2001).

In 1998, the national FTF made a series of recommendations designed to 'open-up' path-ways for player recruitment and suggested that clubs should change their scouting practices to encompass coverage of a wider cross-section of local communities. The FTF recommendations were, in part, informed by the success of a local initiative in Leicester known as the 'Leicester Asian Sports Initiative' (LASI) that was administered jointly by the Leicester City Football in the Community Scheme and Leicester City Council. This local initiative has since expanded and been
re-branded, significantly, (from 1999) as the Soccer For All initiative and is managed by a local, Asian coach, Rashid Abba, who also delivers football coaching at the Leicester City FC ‘Youth Academy’.

Broadly speaking, the Soccer For All initiative targets the eight district wards in Leicester which have the largest Asian populations with football coaching courses for local youngsters at a number of schools and community venues. The initiative is designed to help more talented youngsters progress through ‘development centres’ and ‘advanced development centres’ whereby the most exceptional young players are afforded the opportunity to progress to the Leicester City FC youth academy. The LASI/Soccer For All scheme has been replicated in East London to great effect by a former coach on the Leicester project under the auspices of the West Ham United/Sport England ‘Asians in Football’ project. The ‘Soccer for All’ initiative offers a clear pathway from participation to excellence for talented local youngsters and a number of black and Asian local young people since achieved academy status, although, the more focused and intense environment of the youth academy system has also meant that no Asian trainee has yet to progress as far as post-scholarship status.

FAR has pressed Leicester City in this area and has met with the club’s academy staff on a number of occasions since 1998 to discuss these issues. One key element of the work of FAR here has been to bring together representatives of the youth academy and other player recruitment staff with representatives of prominent local minority ethnic football clubs to help mend the now tenuous links between the professional club and minority ethnic football clubs in the amateur game in Leicester. Institutional custom and practice has meant Leicester City has traditionally used largely ‘white’ local clubs for its local recruitment. The club has sought to recruit local young players from more affluent (white) suburbs of the city and in scouting networks that tend to encompass predominantly white schools and local clubs. More recently, and, in addition to the work of the Soccer For All initiative, the club youth academy staff have invited local inner city multi-ethnic football clubs to events held at the academy training facility and to try to expand their scouting activities to those largely black and Asian clubs that have historically been excluded from scouting networks. Leicester City, tellingly, has no black or Asian scouts. More specifically,
as part of the stated adherence of Leicester City to the new FAR nine-point plan (see appendices), the club is currently seeking to better cement local relations in order to encompass the recruitment of not only local minority ethnic players but also local minority ethnic coaches partly, it seems, to allay the concerns of some FAR members who feel the club has done little to attract local players from minority ethnic, specifically Asian, backgrounds. There are still no local Asian boys - nor has there ever been - above under 14 level inside the club.

4.2 Employment policies at Leicester City

FAR has also worked closely with Leicester City towards increasing opportunities for the employment of local minority ethnic administrative and other ‘shop front’ staff. The local REC worked closely with the club to develop a comprehensive equal opportunities policy in order to establish a commitment to equality and to conduct open and fair recruitment procedures. More recently, Leicester City, in consultation with the FAR group and as part of the new nine-point plan, has updated and amended its equal opportunities policy document. A significant proportion (16%) of match-days stewards and match-day and also casual catering staff at Leicester City are drawn from minority ethnic communities – a common story of low pay, low status, temporary work which boosts figures for ethnic minorities when required. Moreover, at a senior, administrative level, the club remains exclusively white, reflecting a tendency to recruit for senior administrative positions on the basis of personal recommendation and via the ‘closed’ networks that still dominate the national football industry (Bradbury 2001). Further, the lack of opportunities for minority ethnic employment at senior and even junior administrative levels has, arguably, been exacerbated in recent years by the down-sizing of the administrative work-force of the club due to a period of greater fiscal uncertainty. In 2002, just 2% of the club’s permanent non-playing staff was drawn from minority ethnic backgrounds.

The increased willingness of key decision makers and senior management officials at Leicester City FC to engage with FAR on issues concerning the recruitment of playing and non-playing staff from minority ethnic communities suggests signs that the club might be moving towards addressing some of its more structural and institutionally exclusionary processes. But change here is also painfully slow – and
this is a club which is supposedly ‘willing’ to change! A small number of key figures within the club seem committed to change, but changing the structures of racist exclusion and the ‘unconscious’ racism they promote seems a much more challenging prospect. The tendency for many clubs is to ‘assign’ issues involving ‘race’ to the club community department. Charles Raynor, ‘Director of Operations at Leicester City FC, argues:

‘If you have got a person in a senior position within the club that wants to make an initiative work, I think, that is the starting point. If its just left to the community department to try and make things work, invariably they fail, because they don’t have the authority, if you like, to go to senior management meetings and make the initiative part of the strategy. That, unfortunately, happens at many clubs. Many clubs have fantastic community departments that work tirelessly, but don’t have a community person or some-one that is responsible for community activities in a senior management position. It doesn’t get ratified by a senior management group. That’s something that we’ve got to change at Leicester City FC. We as a senior management team are very aware of our obligations and commitments to FAR. Here at Leicester City FC, that has been a major factor. If football clubs had somebody in senior positions that had the willingness to make these initiatives work that would be a major step forward’ (Interview with Charles Raynor 15/8/01)

Raynor probably overstates the willingness of other senior officials at the club to engage with the FAR group, not only around issues to do with the establishment of ‘structures of equality’ regarding the everyday processes and practices of the club, but, also, with regard to the establishment of long-term community initiatives that require more resource input effort, and less obvious and immediate commercial returns for the club. Football clubs are likely to respond to issues such as these, at best, only out of ‘self enlightened interest’. FAR members are clear that the sudden willingness of the club to engage more fully with FAR and to adopt a more open policy on equity issues has occurred at a time when relegation, coupled with a move to a new stadium, has necessitated the ‘re-marketing’ of the club to try to attract new customers. FAR members are also dubious that the broader philosophy of FAR has been widely adopted at senior management and boardroom level. According to FAR member Steve White:

‘In terms of real hearts and minds stuff, I don’t think we’ve touched the directors. I just don’t think we have. Or even the managers. You just don’t seem to be able to get there. And again, I think there are barriers that have
been put in our way by certain individuals that really just see it [FAR’s work] as a digression'. (Interview with Steve White 17/01/02).

5. FAR and educational initiatives

FAR’s ‘educational’ initiatives have depended upon key local partnerships and small reservoirs of funding support. In the same week as the FAR eight-page pull-out appeared in the Leicester Mercury, FAR hosted the midlands launch of the Show Racism the Red Card (SRRC) video at the old Filbert Street stadium. The video is supported by an educational pack and guidance notes for teachers. Pupils and teachers from more than 120 primary and secondary schools in Leicester and Leicestershire attended the event along with the (then) Minister for Sport, Tony Banks, representatives from the FA and PFA, and prominent City footballers Emile Heskey, Frank Sinclair and Andy Impey. These are all black footballers. Football clubs – and players - see racism as a ‘black problem’ and not something that need typically concern the club’s white players. SRRC videos were distributed to each school and were supplemented by a FAR produced educational and resource pack. Some evaluation forms were returned to FAR by teachers in the following months, which, suggested, that at some schools, at least, the video and pack were used as part of a more focused programme of educational anti-racist activities in schools. The pack was also made available to Leicester City’s own study support centre for use by pupils on their educational visits to the club. A prominent FAR member, Steve White, a City fan and a local head-teacher at a largely Asian school in the city offers his own personal evaluation of the event and its usefulness in addressing racism in a school environment:

'In terms of doing the event and getting people there - getting the Sports Minister there - it was highly successful. It certainly gave the event a high profile. In terms of sustainability it was variable. Schools did have a video and they could use it and there were some guidelines. In a sense, as a dissemination model it was very good. For us (Rushey Mead School) what we have done is that we have an enrichment course and a core component of enrichment is equal opportunities. So we use the Kick It Out and the Show Racism the Red Card resources as part of the course to help in discussing issues of racism. You see, the community needs to understand and engage and be empowered, because you need to give
them the means to understand and challenge racism and overcome racism. Where I think the real emphasis needs to be is working in the all-white schools. There’s no doubt about it, it is equally important, if not more so, to tackle these schools.’ (Interview 17/01/02)

In 2001 White’s own Rushey Mead School, with the support of FAR, hosted the Midlands launch of the third Show Racism the Red Card video. Working closely with the LEA multi-cultural advisor, the FAR campaign again produced resources to be made available to local schools attending this event, which also featured poetry, theatre and arts presentations on football and racism performed by local pupils. This event was attended by a number of internationally recognised sports stars from Leicester’s rugby union, cricket, basketball and hockey teams although, Leicester City players, noticeably, were absent. For Steve White this reflects aspects of the institutional culture of the club at senior management level, and the general reluctance at that level to engage in activities beyond the comfortable confines of the club arena:

‘I’m afraid that this side of it [the non-show of players] is just bitterly disappointing. I find it troubling and perturbing that this is something that the club does not seem to have understood and therefore has not given it a value. Nobody at a senior level seems to have got a grip on this and therefore it just doesn’t permeate through. These people see it as ‘I’ve got to give up a player’. We know there are players who are genuine. Interestingly, the ones that have taken an interest are the black player: Sinclair, Impey, Heskey and there are some white players too, Elliot, Gunnlaugsson etc who seem to be well informed. Instead of galvanising and giving a club something to feel good about because they could have had the platform, I mean, they were the reason we were there, Show Racism the Red Card in soccer, in Leicester. They have been criticised for it because they missed out on that opportunity. (Interview with Steve White 17/01/02)

Black players are inevitably likely to be wheeled out by clubs for events such as these. While challenging the forbidding agendas of gender distinction in football might be possible today via complex football icons such as David Beckham (Cashmore, 2002) no similar terrain has yet been opened-up, it seems, with respect to issues of ‘race.’

In October 2000 FAR hosted the ‘Black Looks’ exhibition at the New Walk museum, which, features images of black and Asian players from the English game since the
19th century. Artist Colin Yates focused here on national and local minority ethnic professional players as well as local black and Asian youth groups in Leicester. The 'Black Looks' exhibition formed part of the wider Black History month in Leicester and was attended, yet again, by a number of black Leicester City players, the general public and by more than 600 local schoolchildren, many of whom took part in an Art competition to produce images centred around issues of football and racism. During the same period (Black History Month 2000) the FAR campaign also sponsored the Arc Theatre Ensemble performance of the 'My England' at six schools in Leicester where an estimated 900 young people in total viewed the production. In October 2002, the Arc Theatre Ensemble returned to Leicester to perform the 'My England' production at a number of school and college venues in Leicester culminating in a 'gala' performance at the new Walkers Stadium. These sports/arts events have enabled the FAR campaign to deliver upon its stated aims of utilising the medium of football symbolically to challenge commonly held myths and stereotypes that inform racist and discriminatory behaviour. The importance of these educational initiatives is asserted here by local educator and FAR member, Steve White:

'Cultural diversity is the essence of what we are all about and it is central here. The arts are vital. Therefore, both of those initiatives we grasped with both hands. I though both of them were brilliant. The 'Black Looks' exhibition was seminal. It was so good. And good to see some players there. My England. Brilliant! Our year eleven, we took every-one and they were just transfixed. You were playing to quite a sophisticated audience because of the work we've done at Rushey Mead. It started to instil in your mind that we are all on a steep learning curve here. I got a sense for the first time in my life of what it is like to be a black supporter of England as well as being a white supporter' (Interview with Steve White 17/01/02)

Despite the undoubted successes of FAR in this domain, the sustainability of this of work is difficult due to the lack of core funding and the relative dearth of suitable material in the arts. The structural shift of FAR from a loose coalition of voluntary representatives to a more formalised Charitable Trust might better equip the campaign in this direction. Put briefly, the FAR Development Plan commits FAR to: deliver at least two key anti-racist educational events per annum; to focus educational out-reach work in multi-ethnic and white neighbourhoods; to produce locally specific curriculum materials; to work more closely with Leicester City study support centre;
and to work with other local Educational agencies. The key intended outcomes for this work involves raising awareness about issues of racism in sport amongst young people locally; and the promotion of anti-racism in sport; helping increase the amount of curriculum based work as part of the Citizenship module in Leicester; increasing awareness of issues racism, anti-racism and sport amongst teachers; and better developing links between educational establishments and local professional sports clubs in Leicester.

6. FAR and racism in local football

FAR's origins lie, of course, in evidence given to the Football Task Force by local football clubs about racism in 'parks' football in Leicester. Ironically, to some extent, the national recommendations made on local football by the FTF actually diluted the strength of feeling reflected in submissions to the FTF by Leicester groups. They also lacked certain specificity in defining and explicating the institutional processes of discrimination which limited black and Asian stakeholder representation in the amateur game at the local level. Nonetheless, the FTF recommendations did provide something of an early 'blueprint' for action at the local level, and FAR was keen to engage those key agencies locally that might assist in the process of enabling the campaign to deliver something in this area and, ideally, to help improve the representation of minority ethnic communities on football bodies in Leicestershire.

Since Leicester City Council had played a key role in the local submissions to the FTF, and had also played a central role in the development of the fledgling FAR campaign, it was keen to establish a local legislative framework that would enable the implementation of the specific FTF recommendation to exclude 'local football clubs with a record of involvement in racist incidents from council-owned playing facilities' (FTF, 1998:3). This approach was welcomed by the Leicester City Council and it dovetailed with the broader 'equity' philosophy of local authority culture in Leicester. Mark Laywood had the responsibility of connecting the FTF recommendation into local policy:
'The FTF report was very clear and very specific about what part the local authority should play. The 'Sport on Parks' function at the City Council is very unique and there is not a duplication elsewhere. We manage the city council owned open sports facilities and communal playing fields. We wanted to put in place a system that encouraged people to report incidences of racism. I think the key word is 'encourage' people, because, clearly, there was strong evidence that there were issues of racism on parks, and people did not feel confident in reporting them. They were discontented with the City Council and the County FA. I think it is important for the City Council that we have in place a mechanism of support that makes people safe in our environment to compete in sport. Indoor and outdoor, we do have policies in place but all too commonly people see them as a document in a frame. But this gave us the opportunity to do a 'coalface' initiative that people could see. (Interview with Mark Laywood, ‘Sport on Parks’ officer, Leicester City Council 7/01/02).

The local County FA was less pro-active here, and distrust between local minority ethnic clubs and County FA officials seemed high. In February 1999 following meetings with Kick It Out, the local County FA and a national FA representative, subsequently - if reluctantly - the local County FA began to attend FAR steering group meetings. Its involvement in FAR was, clearly, at the behest of the national FA rather than as a response to the requests and concerns of FAR members and representatives of local ‘black’ and ‘Asian’ football clubs.

'It was purely on Nigel Moore [FA co-ordinator]. Without Nigel Moore we might not have responded. He was the FA official and he saw a need and we supported him' (Interview with Ron Barston, former secretary of Leicestershire and Rutland County FA 5/02/02)

The presence of the County FA at FAR meetings sparked predictable charged exchanges between club representatives and these local football officials. As a result the FAR campaign proceeded slowly towards procedures aimed at curbing racism in Leicester local football. Drawing on knowledge of a similar model initially formulated in the London Borough of Hounslow – the Level Playing Fields Initiative – the FAR partnership designed and produced the Leicester Equality Through Sports (LETS) ‘sports charter’ (see appendices). Broadly speaking, the LETS sports charter offers the facility for Leicester City Council to withdraw the use of City Council owned facilities and parks pitches from user clubs found guilty, by the local Leicestershire and Rutland County FA, of racism (see appendix). Further, under the
LETS sports charter, Leicester City Council and the FAR group also provide an additional reporting avenue for local clubs who wish to report incidents of racism in local football, although disciplinary procedures and sanctions remain the responsibility of the local County FA.

All key organisations in local football in Leicestershire and Rutland, including the local County FA, all district associations and leagues operating in the region, and the national County FA co-ordinator, signed up to the sports charter, along with key agencies within local government and representatives of the FAR group. The charter was officially launched by the FAR group at Filbert Street in August 1999 and the launch was attended by representatives from all contributing partner organisations, along with locally born, high profile, professional footballers, Dion Dublin and Emile Heskey, both of whom had also played in local league football in Leicester.

The charter has been widely publicised in Leicester, including a glossy poster positioned in all City Council owned facilities and changing rooms, a full page advertisement in the Leicestershire and Rutland County FA handbook, adverts in local league handbooks and directories and in match programmes at local cup finals, and in a letter to individual club secretaries informing them about the charter’s key principles, which are made explicit as part of the hire agreement entered into between Leicester City Council ‘Sport on Parks’ department and local clubs seeking to hire local facilities and pitches.

By early 2001 it was clear LETS charter was of limited effectiveness in dealing practically with racism in local football. For one thing, racist attacks were, clearly, still taking place in Leicester - some of them very serious - and they were not being reported via the charter which, after all, applied only to the home club and on city council pitches. FAR campaigned, un成功的, in 2002 to have one group of racist assailants banned from local football. The apparent reluctance of the County FA to engage with FAR, beyond confirming that the existing disciplinary practices and procedures were being enacted, left FAR members frustrated with the apparent lack of progress. To gauge local reactions, FAR survey was undertaken of local football club secretaries in Leicestershire and Rutland on ‘Issues of racism, ethnicity and player and spectator behaviour in local football’ (Bradbury, 2002).
In total, 152 clubs responded to the survey (see Bradbury 2002 for notes on methodology and response rates). More than half (52%) of all clubs surveyed featured players from minority ethnic backgrounds and an estimated one out of every eleven (9%) of all players participating in football in Leicestershire are from minority ethnic backgrounds, a figure, which, broadly reflects the ‘ethnic’ demographics of the county of Leicestershire. Around one in five clubs (20%) featured three or more players from minority ethnic backgrounds and just five clubs reported having a total of 96 minority ethnic players, which, accounted for more than one-third (35%) of all minority ethnic players in the sample.

It was amongst this small cluster of clubs where player recruitment was, to some degree, based on an historical and cultural identification with sections of local African/Caribbean and Asian communities, that there also existed significant numbers of minority ethnic ‘club workers’ and administrators. Amongst the respondent sample, a total of 16% of all clubs played their home matches on City Council owned pitches (which, technically speaking, therefore, were covered by the LETS sports charter). Other clubs played their home matches on County/Borough Council owned pitches, privately owned pitches, or school/college/education department pitches. Minority ethnic players were more likely to participate in local football for teams that competed regularly on City Council owned pitches rather than for clubs that played their home games on pitches beyond the immediate city boundaries, due, in part, for reasons that are likely to be both cultural and geographical.

An overwhelming majority (82%) of club secretaries surveyed as part of the research felt there was at least ‘a small amount’ of racism in local football in Leicestershire and Rutland, whilst a further 10% or respondents felt that racism was ‘considerable’ or spread ‘throughout local football’ in this area. More than one-third (36%) of club secretaries felt that, ‘racist remarks are sometimes aimed at ethnic minority players by opposition players and spectators’ and a further one in six (16%) respondents conceded that racist remarks emanate, on occasions, from their own team and supporters.
The intensity of the racist abuse sometimes aimed at minority ethnic players in local football in Leicestershire and also the sorts of locales where such abuse is now likely to be more common are described by FAR members and members of the management and coaching team at a local African/Caribbean club, Highfield Rangers (see, also, Williams 1994). Gary Garner and Joss Johnson comment:

'Some of the comments that have been made to our players in the past include a group of supporters behind the goal shouting “Get on with it, Nigger; ‘You should stick to robbing cars; You fucking Paki”. It’s probably more [the] spectators than players. I’d say 60%-40% spectators to players. The barracking usually comes from the spectator side, parents as well as young people. It happens more when we’ve played out of town, most definitely. North West Leicestershire, Hinckley: even more abuse there than when you play in the white inner city areas like Saffron Lane and Braunstone'' (Interview with Gary Garner, FAR member and Highfield Rangers Youth Coach 19/12/01)

'Racist abuse in local football [in Leicestershire] is as widespread as its ever been. It hasn’t changed. It has surfaced its head in its most cruel context even with first team at Highfield Rangers more recently, where a trainer was heard to shout from the opposition dressing room "Let’s get into those black bastards". I actually think it’s widespread. At a junior and youth level it hasn’t changed. I do not believe it has changed in 25 years. Our juniors still experience racist, prejudice remarks and comments from the opposition' (Interview with Joss Johnson, FAR members and Highfield Rangers coach 11/02/02)

A small number of club secretaries (6%) surveyed felt that ‘racist remarks are OK, because they are just a part of winding-up opponents’. 8% thought that it is acceptable to ‘wind-up players because of their ethnic background or the colour of the skin’. Respondents here are likely to associate racist remarks with other, more commonplace, forms of banter that mark out a player on the basis of physical characteristics. Here, racist abuse is regarded as an acceptable part of the local football experience, as the comment below indicates,

‘Too much is made of racism. Players taunt each other for various reasons, ie, ‘old man’, ‘big ears’, ‘big nose’ etc. However, all these things tend to be forgotten at the end of the game with the players shaking each other’s hands’ (local football club secretary, quoted in Bradbury 2002)

More than one-third of club secretaries (36%) reported that ‘there can be problems here at matches involving teams from different ethnic backgrounds’ suggesting the
quite widespread existence of racialised tensions in local football in Leicestershire.

Joss Johnson again:

'There have been remarks from spectators aimed at our players such as “monkey, where’s your tail?” More recently, with the [Highfield Rangers] under 18’s team, players haven’t used a swear word but they have been derogatory and flippant about people’s cultural background, about cultural modes of dress and behaviour patterns. Grabbing people in the face and pushing them away. Really demeaning and derogatory behaviour. I think there is a subtle line between that kind of behaviour and the out and out rudeness and bullishness that may take place between white players. When you have black players involved they [white players] have that condescending tone' (Interview with Joss Johnson 11/02/02)

Despite the high profile launch of the LETS sports charter in Leicester in 1999 and the implementation of some wide-ranging publicity campaigns, fewer than one in seven (14%) of all club secretaries surveyed were aware of the existence of the LETS scheme. Despite targeted publicity specifically aimed at City Council owned facilities, only around one in five (21%) club secretaries at clubs which played their home matches at pitches owned by the City Council including just less than one-quarter (24%) of clubs with ‘three or more’ minority ethnic players were aware of the LETS sports charter and fewer respondents at clubs situated outside of the City of Leicester had similar knowledge.

Amongst those club secretaries that were actually aware of the LETS sports charter, no respondents reported that their awareness came from FAR literature or through the pitch hire agreement entered into by those clubs which are leasing facilities from the City Council. Amongst those club secretaries who had heard of the LETS sports charter almost half (48%) reported hearing ‘racist remarks aimed at ethnic minority players by opposition players and spectators’ although these incidents had not been reported to the local governing body or to the City Council. Some clubs here might have considered racist incidents to be ‘not serious enough’ to merit reporting or might disagree with the intentions of the LETS sport charter. They may also consider racist remarks aimed at minority ethnic players to be an acceptable part of the game. Indeed, some club secretaries might have been amongst the sample of respondents that explicitly disagreed with the key principles of the LETS sports charter with respect to clubs losing the use of their facilities if found guilty of racist behaviour.
There was certainly some evidence of a ‘backlash’ against complaints of racism in local football. Typically, it was suggested, for example, that black and Asian players ‘play the race card’ and that ‘things won’t improve until people realise that racism works both ways’.

Less that two-fifths (39%) of local club secretaries surveyed expressed their satisfaction with the way in which ‘the County FA here deals effectively with incidents of racism in local football’ with only around one-quarter (27%) of more multi-ethnic clubs reporting any satisfaction in this respect. These findings might indicate a general lack of confidence in the way in which the local County FA deals with incidents of racism and also might, in part, account for the distinct disparity between the awareness of racist incidents amongst local club secretaries and their apparent unwillingness to report incidents of this kind. Mark Laywood from Leicester City Council suggests:

"The local County FA will say that there are systems in place. Clubs will say: "But those systems are not effective because we have reported this in the past and nothing has happened". There is a big void in between. Until that void is closed and people can see that others are trying to close it, the County FA and local clubs will be in a battle of attrition because there will be those who have had real experiences that the County FA have not dealt with effectively. There will be those that have heard of that and because of that their perceptions will be that the process is not effective and therefore they continue to suffer instances of racism and are not bothered to report it" (Interview, 7/01/02)

A number of club respondents expressed concern that the Leicestershire and Rutland County FA and its affiliated district leagues ‘do not punish their clubs hard enough’ and need to ‘clamp down on offenders and give out strict punishments’ and enact ‘stronger penalties’ on players found guilty of racism. There were also some issues raised with reference to the perceived ‘lack of communication between the County FA and clubs which have been the targets of racist abuse’. As Gary Garner comments:

‘I think its important for clubs to be able to see - for Highfield Rangers and others with black and Asian players - to see it as transparent so that we at least know what action has been taken against the people involved in these incidents’ (Interview with Gary Garner19/12/01)
The apparent relative absence of action taken by the County FA to deal with perpetrators of racism and the alleged lack of transparency in dealing with issues of this kind are probably also compounded by the lengthy and unwieldy disciplinary processes and procedures which are argued to characterise disciplinary hearings at this level. This has, arguably, led to a frustration amongst members of minority ethnic clubs and a questioning of the adequacy of present structures for the effective and equitable governance of local football. As Joss Johnson points out:

'If an issue comes to the table at the County FA - if it involves racism - I’ve yet to see an official stand up and say when racism comes to the table we will deal with this swiftly and deal with it there and then and not allow things to take time and we will look to cut the time taken in reporting and recording. There isn’t that commitment. Nobody wants to deal with it' (Interview with Joss Johnson 11/02/02)

Delay here is often interpreted by local clubs as an unwillingness to address racism, rather than a concern that justice must be seen to be done – and is sometimes slow in arriving. For the County FA, of course, proceeding slowly and carefully is much more likely to be presented as ‘following procedures’ and a process of careful information gathering. However, the reluctance – or more likely the inability - of the County FA to swiftly deal with incidents of racism in local football in Leicestershire and to publicly embrace the LETS sports charter is probably, also, reflective of a tendency to conceptualise approaches to anti-racism as a possible cause of racism. The secretary of Leicestershire and Rutland County FA, Paul Morrison comments:

'You see, my opinion on these issues is the more you highlight it, it attracts those who want to use it, do you know what I mean. The more we are going on about racism in football, you know, we are going to prevent it here, we are going to prevent it there, I just think it attracts them. You see, we are promoting a negative part of the game, aren't we. I mean, we took it [LETS sports charter] on board didn't we, but it's just sat there on the shelf gathering dust. I mean, what's it supposed to do' (Interview with Paul Morririson 5/02/02)

This response of the local County FA to dealing with issues of racism in football in Leicestershire echoes, of course, familiar responses from some professional club chairman and senior officials within the game (Garland and Rowe, 2001; Back et al,
2001, Bradbury, 2001) and also reflect opposition to anti-racism commonly espoused by sections of the new right (Bonnett 2000). For some members of FAR a key problematic in the ability of the group to engage the local County FA in meaningful dialogue and action has been the relative lack of outside support in this area, perhaps from government and certainly from national governing bodies. Mark Laywood comments:

'Since the Football Task Force released this report it seems to be very much go away and get on with it. There doesn't seem to be any national monitoring. The FAR group is monitoring how effective we've been, but who is monitoring that. Who's trying to say, collectively, someone is going to need to pull the County FA in to say, "look, there's clearly an issue here". There is a problem in some system, It gives the County FA an avenue to run. I mean, where's the involvement from the national FA in all of this' (Interview with Mark Laywood 7/01/02)

All County FAs are affiliated to the national FA, of course, and work within guidelines laid down at the national level with regard to rules and regulations for playing the game and for matters of discipline. Further, some local County FA officials are elected to the national FA disciplinary panel (including one former secretary of the Leicestershire and Rutland County FA), which deals with disciplinary issues and appeals processes in the amateur and professional game. However, in terms of the local governance and administration of the game at the local level - which includes the enactment of disciplinary procedures - the national FA views local County FAs as autonomous institutions with the power to act independently of the national body:

'It's not the FA's responsibility to implement discipline within County structures, unless it is under the appeals process. County FA's are the governing body of football in their area. They are independent organisations. They are affiliated to the FA, so they operate within FA rules. But they are independent organisations' (Interview with Mark Sudbury FA Head of Public Affairs 9/5/02)

This 'selective' management of the actions of local County FAs does, of course, have ramifications for the policing of local governance structures with respect to dealing with issues of racism in the game at the local level. Further, that the national FA have no policy of monitoring the incidence of racism in local amateur football also incurs
difficulties for local projects such as FAR in its attempts to measure and highlight racism and its effects in football at the local level. This points to a key problematic of the work of local anti-racist multi-agency projects such as FAR: that work at the local level can be limited – and also undermined – by the limiting strictures of national agencies and the lack of practical support at the national level.

The lack of real progress in addressing issues of racism in local football in Leicestershire also alludes to a key problematic in multi-agency groupings such as FAR in that the philosophy and intention of campaigns such as this can be thwarted in practise by the reticence of some ‘silent’ and even, on occasions, obstructive ‘partner’ organisations. Despite these problems, issues of addressing racism in local football in Leicestershire remain high on the agenda for FAR.

7. Conclusion

This chapter has presented a full evaluation of the Foxes Against Racism campaign at Leicester City FC. In conjunction with the evaluation of the Football Unites Racism Divides project in Sheffield presented in the previous chapter, work here has fulfilled the aims and objectives laid out at the outset of the thesis in examining the origins, development, philosophy and practice of two very different localised initiatives designed to combat racism and promote racialised inclusion in football in Sheffield and Leicester respectively. The mainly observational and interview data presented in this chapter has been presented and analysed from a broadly racialisation perspective to understanding racisms and racialised exclusion and has been informed by the theoretical framework outlined in Chapter One. Of particular importance here is the intellectual concepts which allude to a broader understanding of the way in which racisms impinge upon and are generated by English football and football culture and the way in which the limited and overly defensive responses to issues of racism and exclusion offered by key administrators at Leicester City FC and the Leicestershire and Rutland County FA have arguably curbed the ability of the FAR campaign to progress beyond the ‘symbolic’ to make a real and meaningful impact on the lives of local minority ethnic communities. The theoretical assertions
made at the outset of the thesis and which have provided a consistent theme throughout the main body of work of the thesis, with specific references to the centrality and permanence of white hegemonic practices in football governance, have some real resonance for the FAR campaign. The thesis will make some further concluding comparative comments about FAR and FURD and their activities in the next and final chapter, where the thesis will also consider the scope of this thesis and the various initiatives and programmes, at both local and national levels, it has considered.
Chapter Seven

Some Conclusions

1. Anti-racism in British society

The imperial history of Britain and the intellectual and political systems of oppression that have underpinned its colonial past have not gone uncontested, not only in terms of the revolt and uprisings of indigenous peoples but also with respect to the growth of libertarian movements on British shores such as support for decolonisation and anti-slavery. The arrival and ‘settlement’ of populations from the New Commonwealth in the post World War Two period and the concomitant changes to the ethnic make-up of Britain produced some open hostility from white populations and increased the propensity for racial tensions within the confines of British society which continue to be manifest in late-modern Britain. Accordingly, there has developed a number of organised responses to racism and discrimination that are broadly termed ‘anti-racism’ but which offer significant diversity in their influences aims and approaches. Lloyd has argued:

‘As a political movement anti-racism may be best understood as occupying different points on a continuum between well organised, bureaucratic organisations, pressure groups and protest or social movements which challenge dominant social practices and pre-conceptions’ (Lloyd (2002:62).

In Britain in the 1960s the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination (CARD) were largely concerned with the issues of structural discrimination faced by new ‘immigrants’ and to promote social equality more generally. This liberal approach to issues of racism and discrimination was informed by the US civil rights movement although the efficacy of importing philosophy and practice first developed in America to the distinctly British context has been questioned by some authors (Anthias and Lloyd, 2002; Bonnett, 2000). Growing racial tension in Britain in the 1970s and 1980s and the growth of far right organisations such as the National Front and the British Movement contributed to a resurgence of anti-fascist activity that
sought, physically and ideologically, to confront the rise of neo-Nazi political movements, although these confrontations can be understood to have been fought out on the fringes of British politics and within the realms of popular youth culture. The lack of any co-ordinated ideological responses to racism was particularly apparent in the 1980s where concerns to address structural racism and discriminations and were counter-balanced by alternative attempts to pursue ‘multicultural’ policies, particularly in the sphere of education where the promotion of cultural diversity emphasised a rational pedagogical approach to challenging racism.

These debates and practices were largely played out at the site of local authorities with particular reference to the Greater London Council and attracted vitriolic criticisms and misrepresentation from the political right and the British tabloid press (Gordon, 1990). Despite the commitment to challenging racism at a structural and educational level, both of these latter approaches, arguably, colluded with racist ideologies through a process of disguised essentialism that reified cultural ‘difference’ and ‘otherness’ and portrayed ethnic identities as falsely homogenous (Hall, 1992; Bulmer et al 1998; Modood, 1997). Implicit in the presentation of minority ethnic groups as the ‘other’ was the conceptual absence of ‘white-ness’ as a category that was rooted in its centrality and permanence to the core social and political structures of British society and itself subject to cross-cutting indices class, gender and ethnicity.

The processes of strategic essentialism that underpinned competing modes of ‘anti-racist’ and ‘multiculturalist’ thought and practice has arguably underplayed the extent to which the different in-migration trajectories and spatial distribution and ‘settlement’ patterns of diverse minority ethnic groupings in the urban industrialised centres of England has conditioned differently their experiences of social and economic life and experiences of racism and racial exclusion (Modood, 1997). Similarly, whilst ‘racial’ and ethnic identities are rooted in history, tradition and cultural continuity they are not timeless, discrete entities but are also characterised by change, fluidity and invention (Hall, 1991, 1992; Werbner, 1997; Phoenix, 1998). In the urban spaces of metropolitan late-modern Britain the cross cutting indices of class, gender, ethnicity, regional and national affiliations have arguably given rise to new hybrid and syncretic identities (Phoenix, 1998) that are shaped by a range of
local, national and global forces. However, in other more provincial, post-industrial, locales, for example, in the North of England, that are rather more likely to be characterised by poverty and social deprivation and a more rigid ‘local cultural structure’ (Taylor et al, 1996), there is much less interplay between different ethnic groups, and identities here remain relatively firmly embedded within more insular (white) localisms and cultural solidarities.

A key criticism of British anti-racism is that it has failed to conceptualise fully the way in which the process of integration into English society for minority ethnic communities has been disrupted by the political and ideological project of ‘cultural racism’ and the way in which the complex interplay of old biological racisms and new cultural essentialisms have become manifest in the production of ‘closed’ English identity constructions to posit racialised insider/outside boundaries that allude to false notions of cultural exclusivity at the level of ‘race’ and nation (Gilroy, 1987). From this racialisation perspective, the application of cultural racism is rarely monolithic and is manifest in its complexity and plurality and its capacity to be practiced in partial and, often, contradictory ways. (Anthias, 1990, 1992, 2000; Gilroy, 1999; Hall, 1992; Solomos and Back, 1996). Further, these racialised boundary constructions shape the parameters of inclusion and exclusion in different ways for different minority ethnic groups across a range of local indices inclusive of: social class; territorial masculine identity formations; local economies; and historically embedded local ‘structures of feeling’ (Williams, 1977).

2. Racisms and processes of racialised exclusion in English football

The centrality of sport, and more specifically, football, to the social and cultural fabric of England, has provided a key site in which essentialist notions of ‘otherness’ and ‘difference’ have been played out at the level of the ‘body’ and ‘culture’. In Chapter One, I alluded to the multiplicity of ways in which racism is manifest in football spectator culture, from more obvious forms of orchestrated and individualised racial abuse that incorporates biological referent to patterns of cultural interchange and coded discourse that takes place within white spectator formations.
which refers to shared ‘structures of antipathies’ (Back et al, 2001) and understandings of ‘race’ and ethnicity that allude to racialised hierarchies. I have also argued that the tendency for this kind of racism to be more present in certain football locations and less so in others is likely to premised on a range of local cultural structural factors that allude to indices of the nature of local economies, the presence of specific variants of white working class masculinities and the nature of local ‘structures of feeling’. Where the interplay between these key local factors and wider nationalistic narratives is strong, the potential for minority ethnic inclusion in local spectator formations is weakened. This is not a fixed social formation, but those smaller and medium sized football clubs that remain relatively untouched by the recent globalising and modernising impulses that have informed the significant social and transformation of professional football at the elite level, there is likely to be a greater tendency for local spectator cultures to be more reflective of traditionally ‘robust’ forms of local fandom in which locally embedded and insular ‘tribalisms’ – ‘neighbourhood nationalisms’ - are more likely to be explicitly celebrated.

These assertions are supported by some of the research findings presented in Chapter Four, where many clubs which self-classified as ‘strongly local’ tended to shaped by relatively ‘closed’ cultural attachments and to offer racialised assessments of their potential fan base. The integration of players and fans from minority ethnic backgrounds into these ‘closed’ sporting formations is probably shaped by the requirement for ‘cultural passports’: the ‘giving-up’ of any sense of alternative ‘ethnic’ or masculine identities, in ways which leave the normative hegemonic structures of whiteness in football culture unchallenged and unchanged.

The research findings in Chapter Four also offer some support for earlier assertions that traditional patterns for the recruitment of playing and non-playing staff by professional football clubs further shapes the boundaries for the inclusion and exclusion in football for local minority ethnic populations in a more general sense. Findings here suggest that low levels of participation in the professional game for young men from Asian backgrounds in particular can at least be explained, in part, by the tendency for club scouting and recruitment systems to fail to incorporate a range of football sites in which young Asians are most likely to be present. With only a few locally specific exceptions, the lack of any schemes operated by professional

263
clubs specifically targeting young Asians also suggests that many clubs operate a narrow and 'colour-blind' approach to recruitment of this kind. Also, the relatively low number and status afforded to black and Asian coaches at a number of regionally-specific clubs suggests that, as yet, there is no clear evidence to dispute the claims of some authors (King, 2000) that there still exists a 'glass ceiling' in football that has limited the career progression of black former professional footballers and 'new' Asian coaches. These findings in conjunction with a range of other academic research and anecdotal evidence (King, 2000; Bains, 1995; Vasili, 200; Back et al, 2001) that examine the recruitment of players, scouts and coaches from minority ethnic communities, offer some empirical support for the assertion that essentialist notions of racialised physicality and cultural appropriateness remain embedded within understandings of issues of 'race' and ethnicity in the largely white hegemonic structures of professional football in England.

Findings in Chapter Four that refer to the lack of minority ethnic administrative staff at professional clubs also allude to the operation of similar recruitment and employment policies at these levels. At some clubs these institutionally closed recruitment practices reflect a real 'culture of resistance' to the possibilities for greater equality at senior administrative levels. Some clubs seem almost completely resistant to change, while others reflect more a lack of critical reflexivity and the capacity to grasp new opportunities. The findings presented in Chapter Four alluded to above offer some significant empirical support for the theoretical assertions made in Chapter One and throughout the thesis in that they demonstrate that racisms impinge upon and are generated by football culture and the football industry in complex and multiple ways. The capacity of the thesis to generate data in this respect and offer discursive theoretical evaluation has gone some considerable way to meeting the key aims and objectives outlined at the outset of this body of work with specific reference to professional football clubs and their levels of engagement with the philosophy and practice of anti-racism and broader ideas pertaining to inclusion.
3. Some comparisons of national and local anti-racist interventions in football

I have argued in Chapter Two that the social and historical development of football in Britain and also the (old) Labour Party were both rooted in working class formations and experience. The decline of both 'traditional' football and old Labour in the 1980s was addressed by processes of modernisation which dissembled from core constituencies of class, place and tradition in order to capture new constituencies and markets. The increasing fashionable commodification of football as a site for popular cultural consumption offered (new) Labour an opportunity to engage with a wider audience and align its own political marketability more closely with populist concerns. The New Labour 'Charter for Football' (1996), in retrospect, could be read as a product of this ambition as opposed to any clarion call for real administrative change in football. This assertion is supported by the identifiable shift in emphasis from the bullish approach to wholesale administrative reform laid out in the 'Charter' (whilst in political opposition) to a decidedly non-interventionist philosophy that characterised the remit of the Football Task Force established by New Labour following their election victory in 1997.

The establishment and make-up of the Football Task Force was reflective of New Labour's 'Big Tent' philosophy and pulled together a wide range of, often oppositional, representative organisations with differential access to power and differential levels of access to the decision making process of central government. This 'Third Way' approach to dealing with a range of pressing issues ultimately undermined the capacity to enact real change within the game when faced with the tension between commercial enterprise and fans' concerns and almost inevitably the power of football's new Establishment won out and continues to dominant in football's largely deregulated markets.

Through consultation with a range of football-related bodies and local players and fans, the Football Task Force did offer the opportunity for otherwise disenfranchised groups to articulate, forcefully, their concerns with regard to racism and racial exclusion in the game at the professional and non-professional level ways in which
they had previously been denied. Many of these concerns were featured in the FTF report ‘Eliminating Racism from Football’ although some of the more strident views on issues of institutional ‘closure’ were diluted, and recommendations here were a little unclear and allowed some blurring of responsibility on the part of football’s governing bodies. Again, this raises questions as to the efficacy of the ‘Third Way’ approach of the FTF and its apparent complicity with the inherent power imbalances within groupings of this kind. Also, the inability or unwillingness of the game to address racism in football beyond simplistic and monolithic understandings that locate it as ‘imported’ into football culture by racist pariah fan groups, also limited the capacity of the FTF to open new avenues of critical reflexivity.

The findings presented in Chapter Four illustrate the extent to which professional football clubs have offered only a limited response to the implementation of the FTF recommendations designed to combat more obvious forms or spectator racism and to better ‘open-up’ the core structures and everyday exclusionary practices at clubs in their dealing with local minority ethnic communities. Similarly, the inadequate responses of the FA and local County FAs (see Chapter Six) to a range of measures designed to address issues of racism in local parks football and to pressures for increased representation for local minority ethnic players and administrators as stakeholders in the game at the local and national level, illustrate the relative ineffectiveness of the FTF in effectively engaging on such issues.

To a limited extent, the FTF did raise the profile of football racism if only via the sheer force of the submissions and the tenacity of key members of the FTF to see through the articulation of such concerns in the final report. In one sense, the production of the report fitted neatly with the willingness of New Labour to engage – or at least publicly to appear to engage - in a wider range of ‘social’ issues such as racism and social exclusion in a way in which previous (Conservative) governments had done substantially in terms of public order and crisis management. However, the lack of any enforcement procedures for FTF recommendations and the capacity of the group only to ‘recommend’ the implementation of its proposals meant there was little likelihood of real change.
For some local campaigns, such as the Foxes Against Racism (FAR) group in Leicester (see Chapter Six), the FTF proposals at least served to energise their local efforts to combat racism in the professional and non-professional game, and also provided a useful framework for local action. However, even here, at the local level, the work of FAR has at times been undermined by lack of support at the national level in areas where the actual implementation of FTF recommendations would have smoothed the way. The efficacy of the FTF as a mechanism for anti-racist intervention in football should be viewed in the wider context of the 'Third Way' approach to consensus building favoured by New Labour and the extent to which meaningful and radical change can emerge from this approach. The findings of this thesis would suggest that in terms of addressing issues of racism in football at the core institutional level of the game and disrupting those traditional white hegemonies that exist within professional football governance the FTF has been complicit in its continuity. These assertions are supported by empirical findings presented throughout the main body of work of the thesis and suggests a core consistency of approach undertaken by the author that has enabled the illustration of key linkages which allude to the commonality of limited understandings of racism throughout football governance and in key political interventions designed to address racism and racialised exclusion within the game.

The national Kick It Out campaign was established in its present form at around the same time as the Football Task Force in 1997. Kick It Out shares commonalities with the FTF in that it is reflective of a broad multi-agency approach to dealing with issues of racism within the game. Similarly, Kick It Out has no legislative powers to enforce the implementation of specific measures designed to address racism and to better promote social inclusion in the sport. However, unlike the FTF, the trajectory of Kick It Out is much more defined by its rooted-ness within the game since it is managed and funded by the governing bodies of football and the CRE in order to co-ordinate national anti-racist activities on behalf of football. Kick It Out has a much greater centrality and permanence in the game than the FTF due to the nature of its funding and management by the football establishment. However, Kick It Out also remains peripheral to the institutional decision-making processes of football with regards to policy.
Kick It Out offers a much more sophisticated and co-ordinated approach to dealing with racism in football than its prior national interventions 'Kick It' and AGARI and has broadened out the areas of concern to encompass issues beyond the rather narrow singular conceptions of racism that characterised the largely symbolic actions of the aforementioned national interventions. In particular, Kick It Out has recognised and advocated the importance of localised and contextualised approaches to address issues of racism and the exclusion of minority ethnic communities from a full participation in the game. To this end, Kick It Out has sought to initiate local multi-agency partnerships that feature professional clubs and a range of local ‘enabler’ agencies alongside representatives from local minority ethnic populations to engage in this process. Two such local multi-agency initiatives are 'Football Unites, Racism Divides' in Sheffield and the 'Foxes Against Racism' campaign in Leicester and I have examined these projects in some depth in Chapter Five and Chapter Six. Work to evaluate both Kick It Out and more localised anti-racist projects of this kind has fulfilled the aims and intentions of the thesis in examining in detail the processes and practices enacted to deal with racism and to promote inclusionary mechanisms designed to increase the participation of minority ethnic communities in the game as players, spectators and administrative employees. In doing so the thesis has offered a full evaluation of the origins, development, philosophy and practical delivery of these national and local initiatives and has utilised a clear theoretical framework and empirical research findings to offer assertions as to the key successes and the difficulties of work in this area.

Unfortunately, a lack of time and word length has restricted my initial intention to offer a critical, analytical comparison of the philosophy, structure, efficacy and effectiveness of these two localised initiatives. Put briefly, the capacity of the FURD project to locate significant funding towards the delivery of its stated aims and objectives alludes strongly to the benefits of multi-agency working practices and capacity building approaches to dealing with issues of social and racialised exclusion. The focus of FURD on the ‘empowerment’ of local minority ethnic youth groups in Sheffield has made a real impact on the lives of local young people and contributed greatly to issues of community cohesion and solidarity in some of the most socially and economically deprived wards in Sheffield. The rooted-ness of FURD in youth work experience and the relative autonomy of FURD from its key
partner organisation Sheffield United FC has simultaneously provided the project with its key successes and problems. That is, FURD has been able to set its agenda on its own terms and has engaged consistently in work to benefit local communities with specific reference to youth work activities and the delivery of anti-racist education. However, the lack of any real focus on work designed to address more institutional barriers to greater levels of minority ethnic inclusion either with Sheffield United FC or with the local County FA has meant that FURD has been able to do little to disrupt the white hegemonic practices ingrained in football governance at this level. Further, it is a little unclear to the extent to which FURD has been able to make any real changes to local fan cultures in Sheffield and to challenge the local ‘structures of feeling’ that generate racialised boundaries of inclusion and exclusion for active support.

FAR, on the other hand, has focused much of its energies on work designed to promote new, more inclusive, forms of fandom at Leicester City FC. The project has had some success in this respect although the ‘local cultural structure’ of Leicester is much less rooted in occupational masculinities and is perhaps more permeable to new ‘multi-cultural’ ideologies in sport. FAR has made great efforts to assist in the better ‘opening-up’ of some institutionally ‘closed’ structures at Leicester City FC and this has engendered some limited success in this respect. Similar ‘structural’ work with the local County FA and the implementation of legislative measures designed to deal more effectively with racism in local parks football has been time-consuming and difficult for FAR and has produced little visible reward. The lack of core funding for the activities of FAR has limited the campaign to the delivery of a series of symbolic anti-racist events and campaigns. Nonetheless, through the commitment, creativity and imagination of the campaigns core membership FAR has generated a high local profile and positive reputation locally and nationally. The over performance of FAR has largely disguised its meagre means and its position as a ‘virtual’ project. The adoption of the club ‘brand’ has offered FAR a clear identity but has also engendered some consternation amongst community representatives that FAR has become a marketing tool for the club. At the time of writing Leicester City have gone into administration and several club administrators and some minority ethnic coaching staff have recently been sacked. The loss of key contact points at the club for FAR only emphasises the fragility of these kinds of corporate models of
anti-racism in football that are especially vulnerable to the vagaries of football’s uncertain market forces.

This thesis has offered a comprehensive study of the way in which racisms have impinged upon and been generated by English football and football culture in both the more ‘traditional’ and more ‘modernised’ eras of the game in complex and linear ways. The thesis has also offered an evaluation of a series of national responses to racisms in the game under the period of study, with particular reference to the Football Task Force and the national Kick It Out campaign and its predecessors. An evaluation of the extent to which professional football clubs nationally have engaged with the philosophy of anti-racism and with the more practical recommendations embodied in the Football Task Force and in the activities of the Kick It Out campaign form a central tenet of the empirical findings generated by this thesis. More in-depth studies of two localised initiatives to combat racism and racialised exclusion in football in the North of England and the East Midlands offer a detailed account of the successes and difficulties engendered by work of this kind at the local level. This final chapter has identified a number of common themes that are present throughout the thesis with regard to popular conceptualisations of ‘race’, racism and anti-racism in British society, British sports and, more specifically, in English football and football culture. This final chapter has also cemented some of the key theoretical arguments and assertions made throughout the thesis in a clear and coherent manner. The consistency of these theoretical arguments and their rootedness in sociological understandings of the subject under study suggest that this thesis successfully offers an integrated and holistic evaluation of ‘Racisms and Anti-Racism in English Football’.
Bibliography

Addley, E. (2001) ‘Side by side’ Guardian 01/01/01 p13


Bale, J. (1993) *Sport, Place and the City*, Routledge


Bradbury, S. (2002) *A survey of local football clubs affiliated to the Leicestershire and Rutland County FA: Issues of racism, ethnicity and player and spectator behaviour in local football* SNCCFR


Campbell, D. (2000) 'Genetics the key to black success: Diet, skill and training make little difference if you’re the wrong colour' Observer 23/01/02 p34


Choudhary, V. (2001) ‘Football fails to get support of minorities’ Guardian 18/8/01 p19


Conn, D. (2002) ‘‘Ordinary’ people pay the price at Leicester’ Independent 22/04/02 p42


Football Association (1991) *The Blueprint for Football*


Football Association (2002) *State of the Nation*


Grinnell, P. (2002) ‘City axe one in ten workers’ Leicester Mercury 19/04/02 p12


Kick It (1994) *The CRE/PFA Football Trust campaign magazine*


Kick It Out (1999) ‘Wales Against Racism’ magazine


Nauright, J. 1997 *Sport, Cultures and Identities in South Africa*, Leicester University Press


Thorpe, M (2002) 'Leeds called to task over racist abuse' *Guardian* 26/3/02 p33


Vasaager, J. (2001) 'Poverty and racism create an explosive mix' *Guardian* 9/7/01 p4


Ward, D. (2001) ‘This has been building up for years’ *Guardian* 28/5/01 p4


Williams, J. (1992) *Lick My Boots - Racism in English football* SNCCFR Leicester University


Williams, J. (1994) 'The local & the global in English soccer and the rise of satellite television', in *Sociology of Sport Journal* Vol 34 No 2


Williams, J. (1997) *FA Premier league Fan Survey 1997: Leicester City Football Club* SNCCFR Leicester University

Williams, J. (1999) *English Football and National Identity* SNCCFR Leicester University


Williams, J. (1999) 'All aboard the trans-global football excess' in M. Perryman (ed) *The Ingerland Factor* London and Edinburgh: Mainstream publishing


www.cre.gov.uk (Commission for Racial Equality website)

www.farenet.org (Football Against Racism in Europe Website)

www.f-s-c.co.uk (Federation of Stadium Communities website)

www.furd.org (Football Unites, Racism Divides website)

www.kickitout.org (Kick It Out website)

www.lefc.co.uk (Leicester City FC official website)

www.supporters-direct.org (Supporters Direct website)

www.theifc.co.uk (Independent Football Commission website)

www.srtrc.org (Show Racism the Red Card website)

www.sufc.co.uk (Sheffield United FC official website)

www.the-fa.org/ (English Football Association website)

www.ons.gov.uk (Office for National Statistics)
Football Task Force: Eliminating Racism from Football

Main recommendations

Playing the game: eliminating racism

_The Football Association should:_

- Issue new guidance to referees to make clear than an immediate red card should be shown to players making any racist comments on the field of play.
- Amend FA disciplinary rules to recognise racist abuse on and off the pitch as a distinct offence punishable by separate and severe disciplinary measures.
- Instruct County disciplinary committees that incidents of racism on the field of play should be punishable by severe penalties.
- Require County FA’s to sign up to an anti-racism charter and pledge positive action to encourage wider participation in all aspects of the game.
- Establish a unit to monitor the implementation of the charter and to which all FA-affiliated teams can report suspected breaches of its provision.

_Local authorities should:_

- Exclude local football clubs with a record of involvement in racist incidents from council-owned playing facilities.

_The Professional Footballers Association and League Managers Association should:_

- Recommend inserting an anti-racism pledge in players and managers contracts with breaches incurring severe sanctions (fines or dismissal).

Playing the game: encouraging wider participation

_Local authorities should:_

- Promote special community coaching schemes with the specific aim of encouraging wider participation in football from all sections of the community.
The Government should:

- Make efforts to ensure all schoolchildren – particularly those in inner city schools – have access to playing fields (preferably grass) on a regular basis

Professional Football clubs and Conference clubs should:

- Review scouting activities to ensure teams from all sections of the local community are regularly watched

The Football Association should:

- Set targets for increasing the number of black and Asian qualified FA coaches and referees; and take positive action to meet those targets

Watching the game: eliminating racism

The Government should:

- Amend the Football Offences Act to make racist abuse by individual spectators at football matches a criminal offence

The Football Trust (and bodies awarding grant-aid to football clubs) should:

- Require recipients of grant aid to implement the nine-point plan of the Kick It Out campaign on a regular and ongoing basis

The FA Premier League and Football league should:

- Prepare written guidance for clubs on action to counter racism

All professional clubs and Conference clubs should:

- Amend ground regulations to recognise racist abuse as a separate offence – distinct from the use of foul language – and set out the penalties involved
- Set up a confidential free phone ‘hotline’ through which supporters can report incidents of racist abuse to club officials
- Implement measures in the Kick It Out campaign on a regular basis, including the broadcasting of a clear anti-racism message prior to kick-off of all home games

The Football Association, Football Licensing Authority and Football safety Officers Association should:
• Ensure football stewards are trained to deal with incidents of racism at football matches as part of a mandatory NVQ or equivalent qualification

• Agree a simple procedure to deal with incidents of racism at football matches to be made standard in England

Watching the game: encouraging wider participation

All administrative organisations in football should:

• Adopt a comprehensive equal opportunities policy to cover the recruitment and treatment of all staff

Professional clubs and Conference clubs should:

• Adopt a comprehensive written equal opportunities policy to cover the recruitment and treatment of non-playing staff

• Form partnerships with local organisations – supporters groups, local authorities, community groups and police – to market the club to a wider audience

• Use innovative ticketing schemes to reach sections of the community not currently attending matches

• Offer club facilities for community events and encourage players to visit schools

Wider aspects of the game

The Football Association should:

• Ensure that the FA Council – and County FA councils – are more representative of the game and of the communities they serve

• Require all work to tackle racism in football to be co-ordinated under the banner of the Kick It Out campaign

• Create a Charter Mark to be awarded to clubs and football organisations making substantial efforts to tackle racism and encourage wider participation

The Government should:

• Set a clear time-table for any future work which arises out of this report and carry out a follow-up report to determine progress
Kick It Out Campaign

Ten Point Plan for action by clubs

- To issue a statement saying the club will not tolerate racism, spelling out the action it will take against those engaged in racist chanting and individual racist abuse. The statement should be printed in all match programmes and displayed permanently and prominently around the ground.

- Make public address announcements condemning racist chanting and individual racist abuse at matches.

- Make it a condition for season ticket holders that they do not take part in racist abuse.

- Take action to prevent the sale of racist literature inside and outside the ground.

- Take disciplinary action against players who engage in racial abuse.

- Contact other clubs to make sure they understand the club's policy on racism.

- Encourage a common strategy between stewards and police for dealing with racist abuse.

- Remove all graffiti from the ground as a matter of urgency.

- Adopt an equal opportunities policy in relation to employment and service provision.

- Work with all other groups and agencies, such as the Professional Footballers association, supporters, schools, voluntary organisations, youth clubs, sponsors, local authorities, local businesses and police, to develop pro-active programmes and make progress to raise awareness of campaigning to eliminate racial abuse and discrimination.
FURD development and action plan (revised) 1999 - 2002

1. INCREASE PARTICIPATION OF ETHNIC MINORITY YOUNG PEOPLE IN FOOTBALL AS PLAYERS, SPECTATORS + EMPLOYEES

**Action Planning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target/Priority</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Time scale</th>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Lead Worker(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Identify, monitor + support ethnic minority young people etc</td>
<td>Examine existing coaching structure for effectiveness.</td>
<td>Review performance indicators each 6 months.</td>
<td>20 people obtaining qualifications in each year (5 obtaining coaching certificate)</td>
<td>HH/Paul Archer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Restructure if necessary</td>
<td>Restructure completed &amp; in place by June 2000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ensure optimum progression of coach development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Organise appropriate coaching programmes</td>
<td>Head of coaching to plan on a yearly basis</td>
<td>Review on an annual basis</td>
<td></td>
<td>HH/Paul Archer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Ensure ongoing support for community-based football teams</td>
<td>Closer involvement with teams, including FURD-sponsored team(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>HH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Action Planning

### Target/Priority 1.4 Utilise Streetkick

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Time scale</th>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Lead Worker(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Plan &amp; organise through Streetkick Co-ordinator</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Significant numbers of local/ethnic minority young people employed in new development at Bramall Lane</td>
<td>Streetkick Co-ordinator/ Simon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Re-emphasise Streetkick anti racist element</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ensure greater volunteer numbers involved in Streetkick</td>
<td>Immediately</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ensure key disadvantaged areas have Streetkick events</td>
<td>Monitor summer measures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. More young women involved</td>
<td>programme events list</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Target/Priority 1.5 Work with Sharrow Partnership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Time scale</th>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Lead Worker(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. HH to attend Partnership meetings</td>
<td>Determined by building development timescale</td>
<td>Significant numbers of local/ethnic minority young people employed in new development at Bramall Lane</td>
<td>HH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ensuring job information is fed to MVs + via youth workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MA/HH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Target/Priority 1.6 Distribute concessionary tickets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Time scale</th>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Lead Worker(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ensure continuation and possible expansion of SUFC schemes</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Feedback to clubs re numbers &amp; experiences of clients. Monitoring ethnic minority take up</td>
<td>HH/AR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Broaden to include other local clubs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## INCREASE PARTICIPATION OF ETHNIC MINORITY YOUNG PEOPLE IN FOOTBALL AS PLAYERS, SPECTATORS + EMPLOYEES
## Action Planning

**2. SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASE THE PARTICIPATION AND INVOLVEMENT OF ETHNIC MINORITY YOUNG WOMEN, BOTH IN SPORT IN GENERAL AND MORE SPECIFICALLY IN FOOTBALL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target/Priority</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Time scale</th>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Lead Worker(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.1</strong> Identify women workers and groups of women interested in participating in football</td>
<td>1. Identify new interested women + bring group together</td>
<td>December 2000</td>
<td>Mailing list</td>
<td>AR/Lisa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Use existing publicity channels, for example, website, YS newsletter, talking to groups, target various sectors, for example schools, college through Your Sport, Women’s Resource Centres (for example GAP, ROSHNI, Black Women’s Resource Centre)</td>
<td>Ongoing but already started</td>
<td></td>
<td>AR/Lisa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Chase JTM people</td>
<td>December 2000</td>
<td>Produce posters, leaflets</td>
<td>MA/Lisa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Advertise sessions</td>
<td>March 2001</td>
<td></td>
<td>AR/Lisa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Offer incentives</td>
<td>Jan 2001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Recruit MV(s) to work on women’s football development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASE THE PARTICIPATION AND INVOLVEMENT OF ETHNIC MINORITY YOUNG WOMEN, BOTH IN SPORT IN GENERAL AND MORE SPECIFICALLY IN FOOTBALL

**Action Planning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target/Priority</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Time scale</th>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Lead Worker(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Assess needs/interests/participation levels of young women.</td>
<td></td>
<td>List of people and their interests and/or evidence of interest or lack of it</td>
<td>AR/MA/SH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Have informal meetings/discussions with interested participants through normal FURD work, for example, youth work, education work, Streetkick, coaching</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Research conclusions</td>
<td>HH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Formal research into the needs/interests of young women</td>
<td>June 2001</td>
<td>Research conclusions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Provide football and other sporting opportunities for ethnic minority young women to participate &amp; develop as players and coaches</td>
<td></td>
<td>More girls/women participating in sport/football</td>
<td>LS/HH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. By provision of venue, coach, transport, crèche worker/facilities, subsidised travelling expenses.</td>
<td>March 2001</td>
<td></td>
<td>MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Use women's youth clubs sessions to incorporate football sessions.</td>
<td>March 2001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Identify those who are willing to progress on to training courses such as JTM</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>More women taking the JTM And then using it by coaching others</td>
<td>SH/AR/Lisa/MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Use Streetkick in two respects</td>
<td>March 2001</td>
<td>More girls recruited</td>
<td>SH/MVs/Lisa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a) Touring women's groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) As a forum to recruit interested females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 2. SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASE THE PARTICIPATION AND INVOLVEMENT OF ETHNIC MINORITY YOUNG WOMEN, BOTH IN SPORT IN GENERAL AND MORE SPECIFICALLY IN FOOTBALL

### Action Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target/Priority</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Time scale</th>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Lead Worker(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Organise regular tournaments aimed at ethnic minority young women.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Liase with Julie Callaghan &amp; Luis Silva as to future tournaments</td>
<td>Jan 2001</td>
<td>Organise tournament or find one to take part in</td>
<td>Luis/HH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Inform &amp; make initial contacts with all Youth Clubs &amp; schools and</td>
<td>Feb 2001</td>
<td>Tournament takes place</td>
<td>HH/AR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>centres of proposed dates for tournaments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Contact other cities to arrange tournaments</td>
<td>May 2001</td>
<td>Tournament takes place</td>
<td>HH/Lisa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Work with other agencies to create wider sporting opportunities for</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ethnic minority young women</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contact the Youth Service Leisure Recreation Community Health</td>
<td>April 2001</td>
<td>More ethnic minority young women participating in sport</td>
<td>MA/HH/ Lisa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sheffield Contact Resource &amp; Community centres</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 3. REDUCE RACIAL HARASSMENT

### Action Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target/Priority</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Time scale</th>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Lead Worker(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Monitor/evaluate progress on recommendations based on 'Sheffield, Divided or United' report</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Working with local clubs regarding action against racism</td>
<td>1. Refer to and follow-up forthcoming findings from Leicester University 2. Specifically address club positions and practise regarding anti-racist policies at Sheffield United, Sheffield Wednesday, Rotherham, Barnsley 3. Liaising with Kick It Out, defining who does what in relation to local clubs</td>
<td>Report published before end of May 2000. Before 2000-1 season starts. Published policies at all 4 clubs. Training for club staff. Matchday programme information.</td>
<td>HH/AR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Provide advocacy &amp; support to victims</td>
<td>Find out what procedures are in place post-MAPP. Set up appropriate training.</td>
<td>Immediately</td>
<td>HH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3. REDUCE RACIAL HARASSMENT

#### Action Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target/Priority</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Time scale</th>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Lead Worker(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Encourage access of local people to football clubs, e.g. Community days</td>
<td></td>
<td>Regular (at least annual) Community Days at local clubs, especially SUFC &amp; SWFC</td>
<td>HH/AR/MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Seek creative ways of involving supporters in anti-racist campaigns.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Meet new quarterly deadlines Regular update on website</td>
<td>HH/MA/AR/RJ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Establish liaison with clubs to help provide access/opportunities
- 1. Distribution of KIO/FSA/FURD fanzine
- 2. Restructure membership schemes
- 3. Develop website
- 4. Produce quarterly newsletter
- 5. Write to all supporter scheme members re future plans

Quarterly newsletters
### 4. CHALLENGE RACISM THROUGH ANTI-RACIST EDUCATION

#### Action Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target/Priority</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Time scale</th>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Lead Worker(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Develop the Young Footballers Against Racism Peer Education Strategy</td>
<td>Ongoing – prioritise Shirecliffe/ ‘Lovebytes’</td>
<td>See funding bid</td>
<td>AR – MA/SH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Promote an awareness of Black History</td>
<td>Ongoing – linked to ‘Lovebytes’ re stories Young people’s stories Quiz sheet review</td>
<td>Development of sessions/workshops – Evaluation</td>
<td>AR/YFARs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Establish the YFA Young Footballers Against Racism Peer Education Strategy webpage</td>
<td>Sept – 2000</td>
<td>Production of webpage</td>
<td>AR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Deliver anti-racist work in schools, colleges and youth work settings</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Evaluation – involvement of young people Recruitment of new young people</td>
<td>AR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 5. DEVELOP WORK OF RESOURCES AND INFORMATION CENTRE

### Action Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target/Priority</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Time scale</th>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Lead Worker(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.1</strong> Maintain and enlarge collection of anti-racist material</td>
<td>1. YFAR group to review suitable books &amp; advise on purchase of new ones 2. Better information on books in publication 3. Advertise 'Colouring Over The White Line' 4. Establish efficient cuttings service</td>
<td>Immediately</td>
<td>Expansion of library</td>
<td>RJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.2</strong> Disseminate information regarding resource centre among potential users.</td>
<td>Reprint/redesign info leaflet Publicise new resources e.g. newsletter. Send leaflets out everywhere.</td>
<td>Immediately</td>
<td>Increase in enquiries</td>
<td>RJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.3</strong> Provide effective info service</td>
<td>Seek volunteers and students for help with info service.</td>
<td>Immediate</td>
<td>MVs working with resource centre. Evaluation sheets</td>
<td>RJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.4</strong> Develop and maintain FURD website</td>
<td>Get website on more than one computer. Keep pressure on Dave Lawton Develop MV/YFAR webpages</td>
<td>Immediate</td>
<td>Increased hits on site</td>
<td>RJ/MA/AR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 5. DEVELOP WORK OF RESOURCES AND INFORMATION CENTRE

#### Action Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target/Priority</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Time scale</th>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Lead Worker(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>Develop &amp; maintain FURD exhibition</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Being up-to-date</td>
<td>RJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>Promote the use of the ‘History of Black Footballers Exhibition’</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Fully booked exhibitions</td>
<td>HH/RJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Dissemination of information to museums, libraries, LEAs, football clubs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Develop schools version</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Develop support material for example, teachers’ notes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Recruit support staff, for example, MVs, college placements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 6. VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT: INCREASE PARTICIPATION OF VOLUNTEERS, ESPECIALLY YOUNG PEOPLE 16-24 IN FURD'S WORK

#### Action Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target/Priority</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Time scale</th>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Lead Worker(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Advertise, recruit and retain young people as volunteers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Develop effective marketing strategy:</td>
<td>Immediate</td>
<td>Meet &amp; exceed MV targets</td>
<td>MA/SH/HH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Links with organisations with access to young people (schools,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>colleges, universities, youth workers)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Young person – specific advertising material</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Use of media</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- High visibility for MVs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Poster campaign targeted at where young people congregate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Provide attractive training packages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Obtain attractive sponsors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Develop effective ‘carrots’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 6. VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT: INCREASE PARTICIPATION OF VOLUNTEERS, ESPECIALLY YOUNG PEOPLE 16-24 IN FURD'S WORK

#### Action Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target/Priority</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Time scale</th>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Lead Worker(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **6.2** Retain volunteers | Effective 'carrots'  
Develop & deliver accredited training packages  
Improve monitoring procedures  
Ensure that MVs have something to do. | Immediate       | Lower drop-out rate of MVs                           | MA/SH          |
| **6.3** Network with organisations to provide placement opportunities for MVs | 1. Write to all relevant organisations especially black organisations.  
2. Develop anti-racist induction module for all MVs (gradually using YFARs).  
3. Get out and about with MV roadshow | By 12 May (MV Residential)                  | Build up comprehensive list of contacts               | MA             |
## 6. VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT: INCREASE PARTICIPATION OF VOLUNTEERS, ESPECIALLY YOUNG PEOPLE 16-24 IN FURD'S WORK

### Action Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target/Priority</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Time scale</th>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Lead Worker(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 6.4 Identify & develop training opportunities e.g. coaching, youth work | 1. Utilise existing S&HCFA courses  
2. If necessary, develop FURD-specific courses  
3. Tap into Introduction to Youth Work course  
4. Buy in first aid trainers  
5. Provide access to other sporting qualifications | Ongoing | Accredited volunteer | |
| 6.5 Utilise 'Streetkick' (see section 1.4) | Ongoing | SC | |
| 6.6 Volunteers – ensure key role – community events | Establish planning group for:  
a) Sharrow Festival  
b) SUFC Community Day  
c) SWFC Community Day | Immediate | MVs involved in Community events | MA/AR/HH |
| 6.7 Develop new volunteer initiatives | Encourage participation of MVs in future work (e.g. via residential) | May residential onward | Wider range of initiatives | MA |
## 7. SECURING FUTURE WORK OF FURD

### Action Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target/Priority</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Time scale</th>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Lead Worker(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>Writing &amp; Implementing FURD business plan</td>
<td>Identify MV/volunteers to work with Grant Thornton to produce FURD business plan.</td>
<td>To be completed by March 2001</td>
<td>HH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>Building partnerships with local communities and agencies to identify and access funding</td>
<td>Continue to be aware of funding opportunities via Funding Forum, VONEF, Community Partnerships etc</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>HH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>Explore and deliver commercial sponsors</td>
<td>Develop Business Plan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 7.4             | Identify future work areas for FURD after 2002                        | 1. Ongoing evaluation liaison
|                 |                                                                       | 2. Business plan development plan process | Immediate          | HH             |
| 7.5             | Develop training and consulting arm for FURD                           | HH to meet with AR to discuss ways forward | Immediate          | HH/AR          |
|                 |                                                                       |                          | Bookings              |                |
## 8. DEVELOP REGIONAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

### Action Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target/Priority</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Time scale</th>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Lead Worker(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>Work with the 'Kick It Out' campaign on regional and national initiatives</td>
<td>Attendance at 'Kick It Out' national committee. Develop initiatives alongside 'Kick It Out' workers</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Minutes of 'Kick It Out' meeting. One FURD / 'Kick It Out' initiative each year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>Develop and maintain 'Football Against Racism In Europe' (FARE) website</td>
<td>Secure EC funding for development of website. Identify alternative funding once EC money ends</td>
<td>Ready to begin second year of website by January 2001</td>
<td>Successful well-used website. 10,000 site visits in one year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>Develop opportunities for local young people to participate in international tournaments</td>
<td>Seek funding to assure participation of local young people in the World Anti-Racist Cup</td>
<td>Secure funding by May 2001</td>
<td>Participation of 2 teams in World Anti-Racist Cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>Utilise existing international links to create European work placements for FURD MVs</td>
<td>Liase with MV staff to identify young people and placements</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Placements created and taken up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Foxes Against Racism

Original Aims and Objectives 1998 – 2002

• To directly oppose racism in professional football, especially at matches involving all the representative clubs of Leicester City FC.

• To try to ensure all supporters of the club and rival fans can attend matches without fear of witnessing or experiencing racism or being the victim of it.

• To promote, in the community and at Leicester City, inclusive forms of involvement in football and in the activities of the club. This includes the attraction to matches of more ethnic minority fans.

• To promote anti-racism in football in Leicestershire through educational and other outlets.

• To work towards the eradication of racism in local, non-professional football. To help to improve representation of ethnic minorities on football bodies in Leicestershire.

• To ensure equality of opportunity for ethnic minorities in their appointment or employment in football in Leicestershire either as players, officials, coaches or administrators.
Foxes Against Racism

The 'New' Leicester City – Nine Point Plan

- Recruitment of coaching staff (Academy and Football in the Community)
- Recruitment of Asian and ‘ethnic’ scholars into the Academy and Development Centres
- Recruitment of administrative and ‘front of house’ staff
- Working closer with influential third parties
- Re-establishment of Club’s reputation in the local community
- Commitment to local and junior football clubs
- Awareness campaign
- Ticket pricing initiatives for new stadium
- Research
Foxes Against Racism (FAR)


Education

Aims

• Organise and supervise at least two sport/educational events a year that focus on the issue of ‘race’ and anti-racism in sport. These will normally be hosted by Leicester City FC, but they can be moved to other venues as and when appropriate.

• A focus on areas of greatest educational need in terms of these issues, perhaps especially on out-reach work in poorer white neighbourhoods and schools where racism is still a central concern in sport and in other areas.

• Produce and co-ordinate curriculum materials for local schools on addressing racism in sport. Such materials will have a national and international relevance but will be shaped through the prism of local contexts and local sporting traditions and experiences. The CRE and other bodies also produce material on this score, which we will want to use with Leicester schools.

• Work closely with Leicester City’s own Study Support Centre to integrate work on race equality in sport more centrally into the educational activities at the club.

• Work directly with the Sport England Race Equality in Sport initiative in Leicester and with the Sir Norman Chester Centre for Football Research at the University of Leicester on educational research issues in the city of Leicester and surrounding areas.

Outcomes

• Raising awareness about racism in sport among young people in Leicestershire directly through their school-work and the use of new resources in this area.

• Promoting anti-racism in sport through education, and promoting social inclusion and the greater engagement of young people from ethnic minority backgrounds in sport in Leicestershire.

• Increasing the amount of curriculum-based work in this area in Leicestershire, especially in relationship to the new Citizenship agendas for schools.
• Having more teachers in Leicestershire who are more knowledgeable and more pro-active in these areas, especially in promoting anti-racism in sport and in other subject areas

• The development of new links between schools and educational bodies and professional sports clubs in the city, including player visits and Q&As on issues of racism and how to deal with it

Local Football

Aims

• Supporting capacity building among local black and Asian football clubs in the city and aiding their ambitions for improvements and fund-raising

• Supporting local clubs in dealing with cases of racial harassment and acting as their advocate in such cases if, and when, necessary

• Promoting the Charter Mark standards of the FA among local clubs, especially those from ethnic minority backgrounds

• Promoting a strong anti-racism message in the activities and materials produced on a routine basis by the local County FA

• Supporting attempts for a more diverse representation of minorities in local football administrative structures and encouraging more black and Asian people in Leicester in coaching qualifications and to become referees.

Outcomes

• Measurably more confidence among ethnic minority clubs in the city that racism cases in local football will be dealt with fairly and seriously

• More awareness about the damage caused by racism and fewer incidents of racism in local football in Leicestershire

• More black and Asian clubs in the city capable of reaching the FA Charter Mark and on the way to achieving senior club status in the County

• More qualified black and Asian coaches and referees in Leicestershire

• More channels opened up for the recruitment of young players from ethnic minority backgrounds into local networks of football excellence.
More active involvement of people from ethnic minority backgrounds in the administrative structures of local football in Leicestershire.

Working in Professional Football with Leicester City FC

Aims

• To offer support and guidance for Leicester City in its new multi-racial *Our Futures* marketing and promotional campaign

• To support and guide Leicester City in its equal opportunities employment policies and to monitor and evaluate such policies

• To support the police and stewards at Leicester City in their work in outlawing racism at the club's home matches

• To engage the club's supporters in regular activities and events designed to promote anti-racism and celebrate Leicester City's identity as a club for all members of local communities

• To offer guidance and support in the club's community and educational work in a way which promotes anti-racism and the greater inclusion of ethnic minority communities in the club's activities in these areas.

• To support the club's aims to improve its links with local ethnic minority football clubs and to recruit more efficiently playing scholars from local ethnic minority communities

• To help extend the partnerships between the football club and other agencies - including sponsors - which have an expertise in anti-racism or an involvement with ethnic minority organisations and groups.

Outcomes

• Identifiable increases, over a three-year period, in the number of ethnic minority supporters at Leicester City home matches.

• A reduction in incidents of racism at Leicester City and the further building on the beginnings of a 'culture of resistance' to racism already established among the club's supporters.
• Identifiable increases, over a three year period, in the number of black and Asian scholars taken on by Leicester City.

• Identifiable changes in the applications and the employee profile of Leicester City on both the coaching and the administrative side, as and when positions become available at the club over the next three years.

• Identifiably stronger active links between Leicester City and junior ethnic minority football clubs in the city.

• The production of an annual account of Leicester City’s work ‘in the community’ and its contribution to promoting social inclusion and positive policies opposing racism

Working with Other Professional Sports in Leicester

Aims

• Set common agendas for dealing with racism and social exclusion in sport for all professional sports clubs in Leicester.

• To establish policies of good practice which can be transferred between the different sporting businesses in the city

• Offer support and advice on issues of racism and racial exclusion to a new sporting partnership established between the major professional clubs in the city

• To co-ordinate promotional and educational campaigns against racism involving all Leicester’s professional sporting clubs

• To promote multi-racial cross-sport events and activities involving a number of sports in the city, as well as sponsors and other partners

Outcomes

• The establishment of a cross-sports forum for producing policy with respect to exclusion and racism in sport in Leicester.

• A programme of conferences and workshops in Leicester aimed at dealing with such issues in sport in the city and elsewhere.
The establishment of sport in a leadership position in the city in promoting social inclusion in sport and opposition to racism. We would expect Leicester to offer advice and support to other areas in this respect.

A cross-sport programme of events for schools and young people in the city aimed at addressing racism and promoting social inclusion in sport.

Research on Sports Racism and Social Exclusion in Leicester

Aims

- To monitor and evaluate the effects of the FAR development plan at Leicester City but also at other professional sports clubs in Leicester
- To assess the extent to which policies pursued in Leicester might be successful in multi-ethnic cities elsewhere
- To generate information about anti-racism in sport in the city for use in local schools and other organisations and also for wider dissemination in the UK and beyond
- To increase our understanding of why people from ethnic minorities in Leicester might be interested in sport but not active as spectators
- To work in local football to collect information on experiences of racism

Outcomes

- The production of reliable, research-based information on the success – or otherwise - of the FAR plan and also recommendations about future policy for sport in Leicester
- The dissemination of policy-focused research findings on sport, racism and social exclusion in Leicester
- The production of the first convincing research-based account of evidence on the links between sports participation and spectating among ethnic minority communities in Leicester
- The production of a research-based account of the promotion of 'sport for all' in a multi-ethnic late modern British city, which might be used as a blueprint for other UK cities faced with some of the tensions which are now apparent into some multi-ethnic urban centres in the UK.
Foxes Against Racism

Leicester Equality Through Sport ‘Sports Charter’

- We are totally committed to eradicating racism in sport

- We believe that anyone participating in any sporting activity on parks within the city of Leicester should be able to do so in an environment free from the threat of racist intimidation, harassment and abuse

- We want sport to be played in a way in which all communities are valued and respected

- Where instances of racism in any form are reported we may ultimately consider withdrawing the use of Leicester City Council Sport on Parks facilities from teams or individuals found in breach of the charter

- All clubs should report incidents of racism within local parks football to the Leicestershire and Rutland County Football Association. If you need to contact the LETS scheme you can do so at Sport on Parks Services, Arts and Leisure Department, 12th Floor, A Block, New Walk Centre, Leicester LE1 6ZG