

LEAGUES BEHIND-
FOOTBALL'S FAILURE TO TACKLE
ANTI-GAY ABUSE

'I THINK IT CAN BE A FANTASTIC FORCE FOR GOOD. FOOTBALL AS AN INDUSTRY DOES AN AMAZING AMOUNT OF REALLY GOOD WORK WITHIN SOCIETY. IT CAN BE A REALLY UNIFYING FORCE, AND A FORCE FOR GOOD. IT CAN BE A FORCE FOR BAD AS WELL SOMETIMES.' (P, FOOTBALL INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE)

CONTENTS

SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS [0 2]

CHAPTER 1 – IS FOOTBALL ANTI-GAY? [0 4]

CHAPTER 2 – HOW BIG IS THE PROBLEM? [0 7]

CHAPTER 3 – WHY IS FOOTBALL ANTI-GAY? [1 1]

CHAPTER 4 – WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF ANTI-GAY ABUSE IN FOOTBALL? [1 6]

CHAPTER 5 – WHAT CAN BE DONE? [2 1]

CHAPTER 6 – RECOMMENDATIONS [2 7]

'HOMOPHOBIA IS ENDEMIC IN FOOTBALL CLUBS AND THE FOOTBALL PLAYERS' CULTURE BECAUSE IT IS NEVER CHALLENGED.' (DAVE, ARSENAL SUPPORTER, 38)

[01]

LEAGUES BEHIND -
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INTRODUCTION



Football is Britain's national game. Yet in 2009 not one gay professional footballer in Britain, of which there are undoubtedly many, feels that football is an industry in which it is safe to be openly gay. Neither does the game give lesbian, gay and bisexual football fans and players the respect and protection they deserve.

This pioneering research by Stonewall, including a YouGov survey of 2,005 football fans and interviews with football insiders, shows clearly that anti-gay abuse is all too common on both terraces and pitches and that this abuse almost always goes unchallenged. Fans believe that it is this abuse, from fans, players and teammates that deters gay people from playing football and creates a culture of fear where gay players feel it is unsafe to come out. The research also demonstrates that many others - including women supporters and those with families - are deterred from attending games by the presence of anti-gay abuse.

Fans are clear that it is the lack of any visible action by the Football Association, football clubs and their partners in tackling anti-gay abuse which has allowed it to fester on the terraces and in changing rooms across Britain. Football fans are also adamant that they want this to change and believe that football would be a far better sport if anti-gay abuse was eradicated.

Football has had demonstrable success in challenging other problems, from racism to hooliganism. The same high-profile commitment and imagination urgently needs to be applied to tackling anti-gay abuse too. This research provides the Football Association, football clubs and their partners with a clear challenge from fans. If they fail to rise to it, football risks deterring a new generation of talent and losing its right to claim to be Britain's national game for the twenty-first century.

Ben Summerskill CHIEF EXECUTIVE

'I THINK THERE'S STILL AN AWFUL LOT TO DO BEFORE ANYONE'S GOING TO COME OUT AT THE TOP END OF THE GAME, AN AWFUL LOT.' (R, FOOTBALL INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE)

[02]

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SUMMARY

any football fans and individuals working within the football industry believe that the sport is anti-gay and the majority of fans attending matches have heard homophobic abuse on the terraces. ● **THREE IN FOUR** fans think there are gay players currently in the Premier League or Championship and seven in ten think there are gay players in Leagues One or Two ● **TWO THIRDS** of fans would feel comfortable if a player on their team came out but only one in eight think there is a gay player on their team ● **SEVEN IN TEN** fans who have attended a match in the last five years have heard anti-gay language and abuse on the terraces ● **THREE IN FIVE** fans believe anti-gay abuse from fans dissuades gay professional players from coming out, one in four believe anti-gay abuse from team mates contributes to there currently being no openly gay players ● **OVER HALF** of football fans think the Football Association, the Premier League and the Football League are not doing enough to tackle anti-gay abuse, only three in ten believe they are doing enough already ● **HALF** of football fans think football clubs themselves are not doing enough to tackle anti-gay abuse, only a third believe they are doing enough already

‘NOTHING IS DONE TO STOP HOMOPHOBIC CHANTS. IT MUST BE THE ONLY PROFESSION WHERE THE WORKERS FEEL UNABLE TO COME OUT AND BE ACCEPTED FOR PLAYING FOOTBALL, NOT WHAT THEY ARE.’ (SIMON, IPSWICH TOWN SUPPORTER, 46)

[03]

LEAGUES BEHIND -
FOOTBALL'S FAILURE TO
TACKLE ANTI-GAY ABUSE

& KEY FINDINGS

● **MORE THAN ONE IN FOUR** football fans think professional football is ‘anti-gay’ and only one in three fans think football is less anti-gay than 20 years ago. Fans and individuals working within the football industry are clear that they want football clubs, the Football Association and their partners to demonstrate leadership and make football a better sport by tackling anti-gay abuse. Many feel however that to date not enough has been done to tackle anti-gay abuse. ● **ALMOST TWO THIRDS** of fans believe football would be a better sport if anti-gay abuse and discrimination was eradicated ● **ONLY ONE IN SIX** fans say their club is doing work to tackle anti-gay abuse ● **FIVE OUT OF SIX** fans support the police’s decision to charge fans with chanting anti-gay and racist abuse at Sol Campbell at the Tottenham Hotspur v Portsmouth game on September 28 2008. The benefits for football clubs and football as a whole of tackling anti-gay abuse are clear. Fans would be more likely to attend matches, purchase merchandise and participate in amateur football if anti-gay abuse was tackled. ● **TWO IN FIVE** lesbian, gay and bisexual fans would be more likely to buy merchandise or tickets if football was more gay-friendly ● **ONE IN SIX** of all fans would be more likely to attend football matches if anti-gay abuse was tackled.

1.

1. IS FOOTBALL ANTI-GAY? More than **one in four** football fans think that professional football is an anti-gay sport compared to **one in ten** football fans who think football is a racist sport. **Three in five** lesbian, gay and bisexual fans think football is anti-gay.

One in three football fans believe that football is less anti-gay in 2009 than it was in 1989; three in five fans believe football is less racist.

'It has gone up if anything. Football seems to now be comfortable with anti-gay chants and abuse and not racism. One seems to have been replaced by the other.' (MIKE, CHELSEA SUPPORTER, 28)

'It has increased, as 20 years ago no-one would have considered the idea that a professional sportsman might be gay.' (ALEC, LEEDS UNITED SUPPORTER, 50)

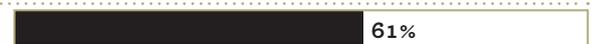
'It has, if anything, gone up. Tabloid intrusion in and speculation and innuendo about Sol Campbell's and other players' private lives has given supporters ammunition.' (JOHN, SUNDERLAND SUPPORTER, 45)

More than three in five fans believe that anti-gay abuse from fans is one of the reasons there are currently no openly gay professional football players and one in four fans believe that anti-gay abuse from team mates dissuades gay players from coming out. Overall a third of fans believe gay professional players are unable to come out because clubs, managers or teammates would discriminate against them or subject them to anti-gay abuse.

'Nothing is done to stop homophobic chants. It must be the only profession where the workers feel unable to come out and be accepted for playing football, not what they are.' (SIMON, IPSWICH TOWN SUPPORTER, 46)

Has racist and anti-gay abuse in football gone down in the last 20 years?

Racist abuse has gone down



Anti-gay abuse has gone down



0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
Percentage of fans

Why do you think there are no openly gay players in the Premier League, Championship and Leagues One and Two?

Fans would use homophobic abuse



Being gay is a private matter



Opponents would use homophobic abuse



The media would portray them negatively



Team mates would use homophobic abuse



No support available to them from football organisations



Clubs and managers would discriminate against them



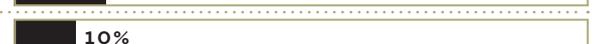
Corporate sponsors would not want to be associated with them



Team mates would not want to play alongside them



Fans would change teams



Opponents would not want to play opposite them



There are no gay professional players



0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
Percentage of fans

'We need to understand it from a player's viewpoint. First, they are footballers who are trying to progress and do their best. Second, this is a short career and they want to maximise income. Third, why should people come out and subject themselves weekly to verbal abuse from opposing supporters? We need to create a safe and supportive environment for people.' (T, FOOTBALL INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE)

'When footballers are suspected of being gay it seems respect for them within the game diminishes and they are targeted by fans and players of opposing teams.' (ALEX, SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY SUPPORTER, 29)

'Professional footballers and people who play in parks would react badly to a gay footballer in their ranks.' (GEORGE, CARDIFF CITY SUPPORTER, 26)

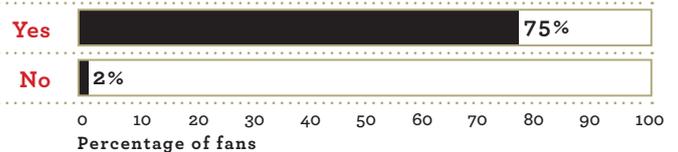
'So unless by sheer fluke of nature everyone associated with the men's game is heterosexual, it's obviously not an environment that they feel that they can come out and sit on the terraces. I don't blame them. You know, who's going to be brave and it's going to be very, brave, brave players that come out and start just breaking down some of those perceptions and barriers.'

(C, FOOTBALL INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE)

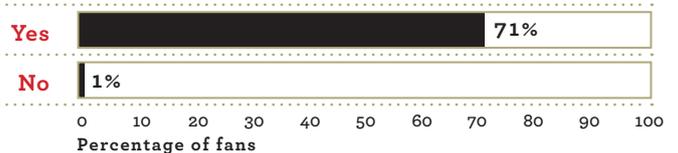
Three in four football fans think there are gay players currently playing in the Premier League or Championship and seven in ten think there are gay players currently playing in League One or Two.

Whilst the majority of fans believe there are gay players in their leagues, only a minority of football fans think there are gay players on their team.

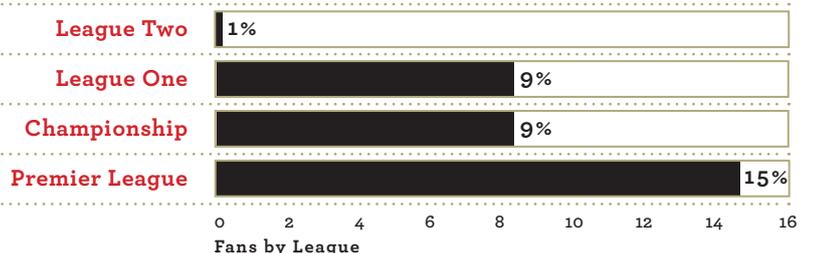
Are there gay players in the Premier League or Championship?



Are there gay players in Leagues One or Two?



Are there gay players on the team you support?



HOW BIG IS THE PROBLEM? Seven in ten football fans who have attended matches in the last five years have heard anti-gay language and chants. This is despite nine in ten fans knowing that anti-gay abuse on the terraces is against the rules of the ground and/or against the law.

2.

‘RENT BOYS ON THE DOCKS. RENT BOYS ON THE DOCKS. YOU KNOW YOU ARE, YOU’RE SURE YOU ARE, YOU’RE RENT BOYS ON THE DOCKS.’ (PETER, CRYSTAL PALACE SUPPORTER, 45)

[08]

LEAGUES BEHIND - FOOTBALL'S FAILURE TO TACKLE ANTI-GAY ABUSE

Fans and football professionals surveyed had heard a range of anti-gay chants and language at football matches in the last five years. This abuse has been targeted at fans, players, managers and officials.

‘I have used the word faggot a lot, as well as pansy and fag.’ (STUART, NEWCASTLE UNITED SUPPORTER, 32)

‘I’ve heard players called “queer” so many times that it’d be easier to list the incidences where it didn’t happen.’ (JAMIE, ENGLISH SUPPORTER, 19)

‘Anti-gay abuse is heard at most matches. If for example a player looks or acts a little effeminate he will get called a “poof” or “rent boy”.’ (GARY, ENGLISH SUPPORTER, 40)

‘You think if the police let them out they’d rip the Brighton fans limb from limb... The fans didn’t look at the game, just spent the whole time bending over at the Brighton crowd, pointing to their backside, really insulting, really abusive, real hatred.’ (C, FOOTBALL INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE)

‘Players being called “fairy” and “girl” if they don’t play well enough. Also a large degree of abuse against our players for being gay or having HIV.’ (KELLY, ARSENAL SUPPORTER, 25)

‘I’ve personally experienced anti-gay abuse at football matches both directed at myself and directed at players who might possibly be gay.’ (SARAH, MANCHESTER UNITED SUPPORTER, 18)

‘My club’s local “rivals” are Watford, whose most famous supporter is Elton John. There are often HIV related or homophobic chants aimed towards Elton John at games.’ (STEPHEN, LUTON TOWN SUPPORTER, 31)

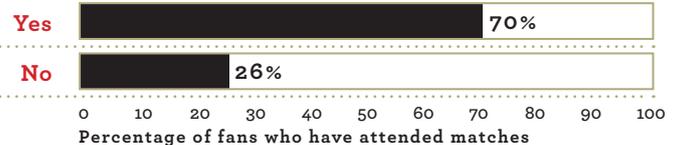
‘Generally it’s been individual fans using homophobic terms like “poof” as a term of abuse to try and be “funny” with other fans – either because a player is not being hard enough or because of his hairstyle or the way he wears his kit. It’s the same as 20 years ago.’ (DAVE, ARSENAL SUPPORTER, 38)

‘I have heard a female linesman called a lesbian.’ (PHILLIP, SHREWSBURY TOWN SUPPORTER, 54)

‘I’ve been a local football referee for about 35 years and the attitude of the players and spectators towards gays is terrible with comments on and off the pitch. I have had to speak to spectators and players. I have to remind players that their comments could be classed as abuse.’ (DEREK, ASTON VILLA SUPPORTER, 53)

Seven in ten fans who have heard anti-gay abuse at football matches say it was directed towards opposing players, almost half (47%) say it was directed at opposing fans and over a third say it was directed towards officials such as referees and assistant referees. One in ten say the anti-gay abuse was targeted at individual fans.

Have you heard anti-gay language at a football match in the last five years?



EXPERIENCES OF AMATEUR PLAYERS

One in five heterosexual amateur football players have heard anti-gay abuse or language whilst playing. Lesbian, gay and bisexual amateur players are over twice as likely as heterosexual players to have noticed anti-gay abuse in amateur football with two in five hearing or witnessing anti-gay abuse whilst playing.

Anti-gay abuse and discrimination in amateur football comes in different forms. Lesbian, gay and bisexual amateur football players gave a number of examples where they have experienced anti-gay abuse and harassment.

'One girl got burnt with a firework thrown at her on the pitch.' (TRISH, AMATEUR PLAYER)

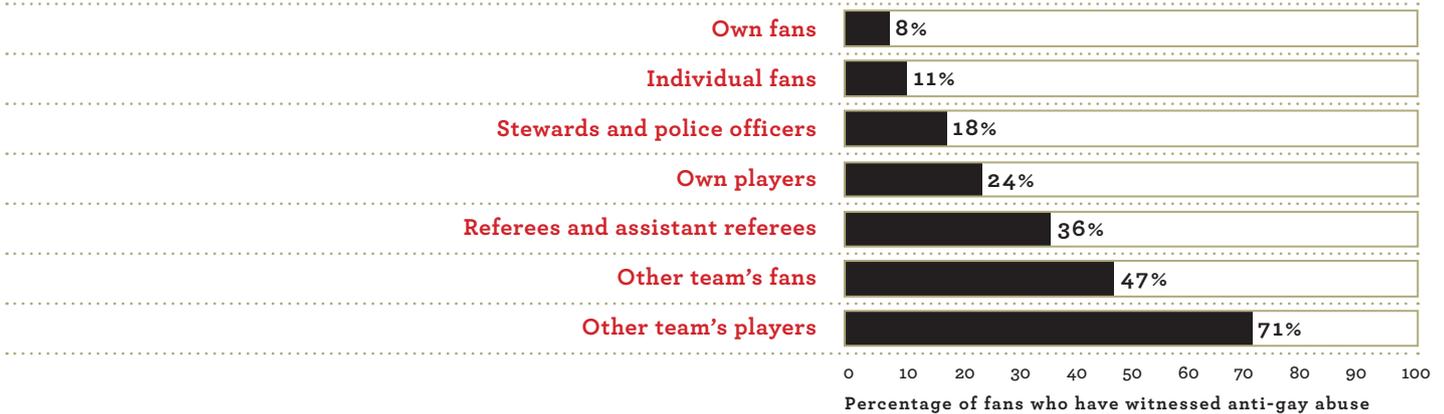
'Bottles were thrown at players over the fence.' (ESTELLE, AMATEUR PLAYER)

'After university I played in a 'straight team' and came out. You got treated differently. One night I was out at a lap dance venue and someone thought it would be funny to book me a private dancer. Needless to say it was humiliating and I made a very fast exit. I never played for that team again.' (NEIL, AMATEUR PLAYER)

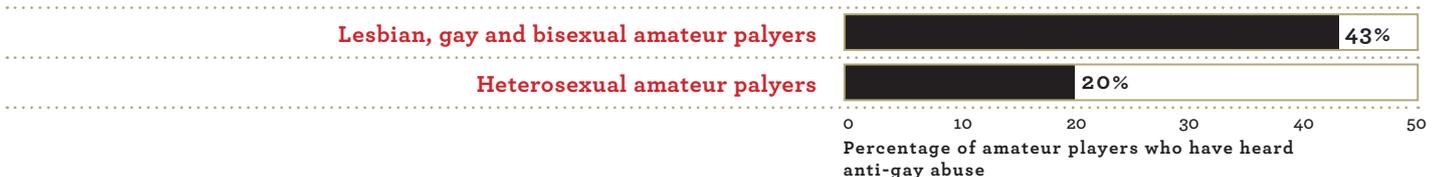
The experience of anti-gay abuse and discrimination has led many lesbian, gay and bisexual football fans to form gay teams. Many feel that gay teams allow them to play football in an open and accepting environment.

'Sometimes it is difficult for gay and lesbian people to go to a straight football club. People don't understand the issues.' (VIC, AMATEUR PLAYER)

Who was the target of anti-gay abuse?



Have you heard anti-gay abuse whilst playing amateur football?



'It is not essentially that it is homophobic. If I was to go to a straight team, it is like going to a new workplace. I would have to gauge it and then quietly decide, am I just going to announce it to everybody? There's a thing to tell and when you come to something like this [a gay team] you don't have to tell; it's just normal. The same as it is for a straight person to go anywhere in their lives, we're suddenly in a place that there is nothing to tell; it's just okay.'
(BELLA, AMATEUR PLAYER)

'In men's football it's probably quite difficult for young gay men to go and join mainstream football and be out amongst their peers.'
(C, FOOTBALL INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE)

'You just feel when you turn up everybody there doesn't have to come out. You don't have to come out because everybody else is gay.'
(TRISH, AMATEUR PLAYER)

Many lesbian and bisexual women amateur players believe that their experiences of anti-gay abuse and discrimination in amateur football are different from those of gay and bisexual men. Many female players feel that sexism has a greater impact on their participation than anti-gay discrimination.

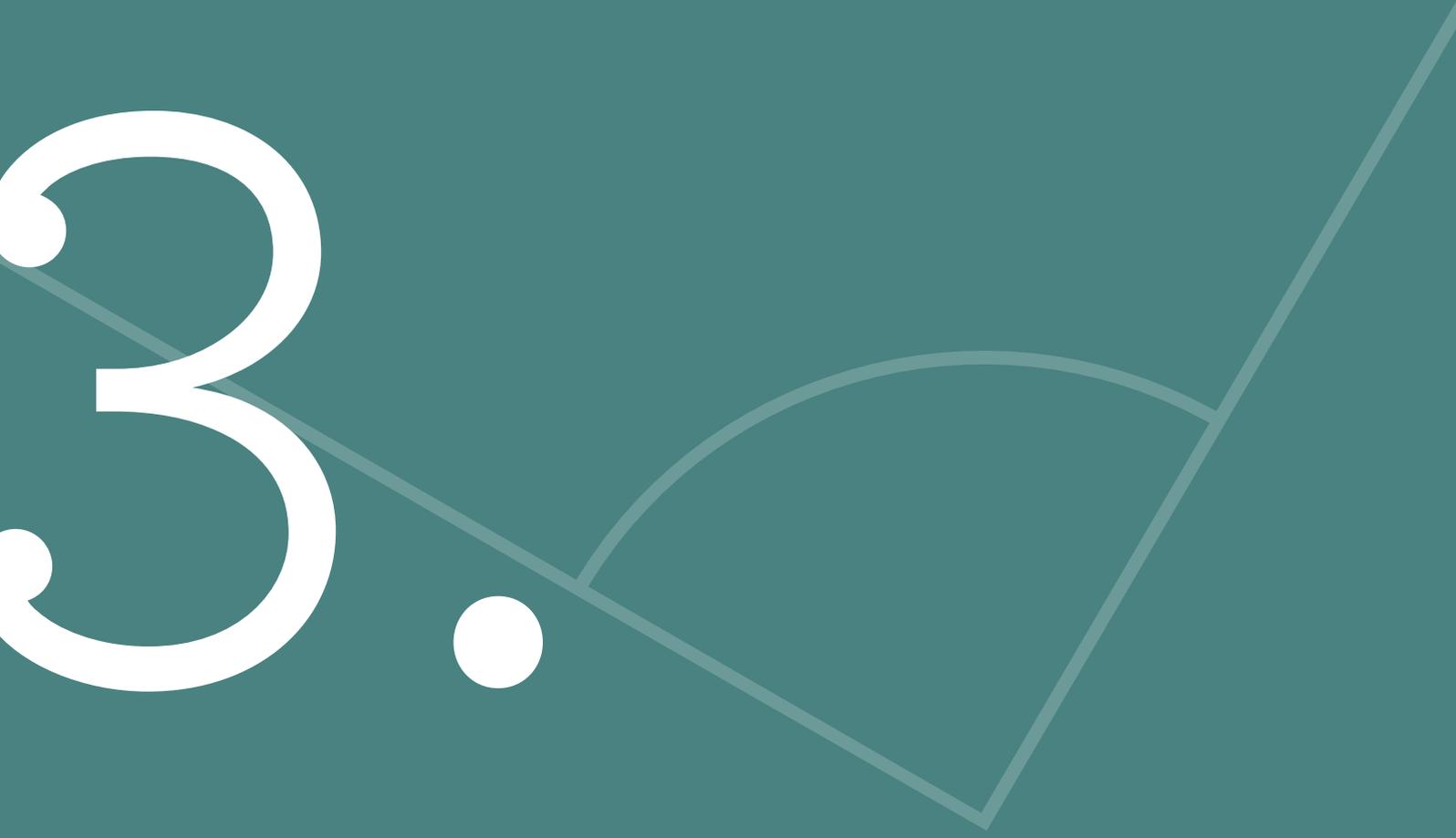
'I really do strongly feel that the biggest influence on me playing football has not been a homophobic one, it has been a sexist one. Girls don't play football, boys do.'
(JULIE, AMATEUR PLAYER)

'I mean women's sport traditionally, has had a lot of gay women in it, I think it's great - a more kind of equal environment if you like, whereas in men's football, men don't tend to come out in their local football team.'
(C, FOOTBALL INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE)

'I think it works either way with women in football. You know the assumption is that if you play football and you're a woman then you're a lesbian. I think in terms of the way that the women's game has tried to improve its image, it has tried to downplay that aspect of it and it has become homophobic, to tell you to keep quiet...'
(TRISH, AMATEUR PLAYER)

WHY IS FOOTBALL SO ANTI-GAY? People who work in the football industry believe there has been a **lack of leadership** at the highest levels of football in addressing the issue of anti-gay abuse and discrimination.

3.

A decorative graphic of a football pitch field is overlaid on the bottom right of the page. It consists of a large white number '3' and a white dot, followed by a light teal outline of a football pitch field with a curved boundary line.

'SOL, SOL, WHEREVER YOU MAY BE; YOU'RE ON THE VERGE OF LUNACY; WE DON'T CARE IF YOU'RE HANGING FROM A TREE; COS YOU'RE A JUDAS C*** WITH HIV' CHANT USED AGAINST SOL CAMPBELL AT THE TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR V PORTSMOUTH GAME ON SEPTEMBER 28 2008

[12]

LEAGUES BEHIND -
FOOTBALL'S FAILURE TO
TACKLE ANTI-GAY ABUSE

'We've definitely got a generation of people running the game who aren't able to understand the implications of their decisions on people that aren't like them ... One of the board members said 'what on earth is that department doing, they're totally out of control'. And it's because they think we're promoting homosexuality...'(R, FOOTBALL INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE)

'I think there's a lack of leadership in the FA. A gross lack of leadership in the FA, but below that level there are an awful lot of good people.'
(P, FOOTBALL INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE)

'Is there anybody dedicated to it? There isn't a real clear focus on resources and people who are dedicated to fix this.'
(C, FOOTBALL INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE)

'It's definitely leadership from the top. It's definitely getting people within the football authorities to kind of come out and not even just say 'Well this is something that we want to address.' It's the whole thing about actions speak louder than words isn't it?'
(B, FOOTBALL INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE)

'The game has to be forced. It's a very conservative industry ... It has to be forced and pushed into doing anything "radical".'
(P, FOOTBALL INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE)

'Homophobia has always lagged behind the issues of race and gender. It is regarded as being more "problematic".'
(VIC, AMATEUR PLAYER)

'The level has not gone down in part because of the unwillingness of the FA, FIFA, referees, managers, clubs and the police to take this abuse at all seriously.'
(HOWARD, FULHAM SUPPORTER, 60)

'Unlike with racism, where there has been a coordinated response between clubs, fans, the FA and the police, there has been very little high profile work to tackle homophobia.'
(LOUISE, TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR SUPPORTER, 34)

'Homophobic abuse is generally ignored and it's certainly not treated as seriously as racism.'
(TONY, MIDDLESBROUGH SUPPORTER, 30)

Only three in ten fans think that clubs, the FA, the Football League and the Premier League do enough to prevent anti-gay abuse and discrimination. Over half of fans think the FA and the Premier League should do more to tackle anti-gay abuse and discrimination. Half of football fans think football clubs are not doing enough to tackle anti-gay abuse, only a third believe they are doing enough already.

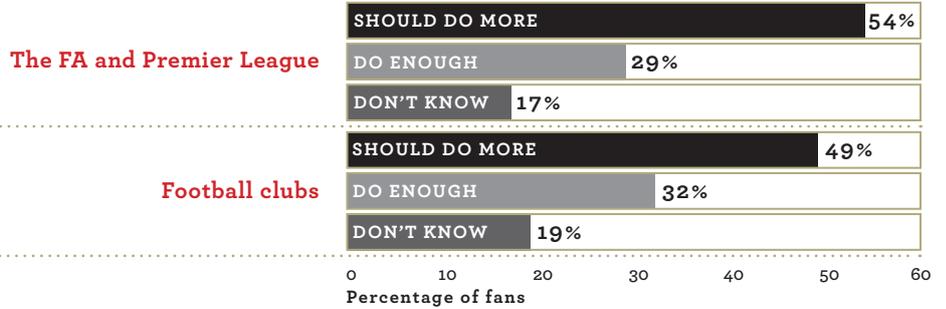
When action to tackle anti-gay abuse has been taken it is strongly supported by fans. For example, five out of six football fans support the charging of fans in connection with the alleged anti-gay abuse used against Sol Campbell at the Tottenham Hotspur v Portsmouth game on September 28 2008.

Whilst over three in five football fans have witnessed or heard of their clubs undertaking activities to challenge racism, only one in six have seen or heard messages from their club challenging anti-gay abuse, for example on posters or in match day programmes.

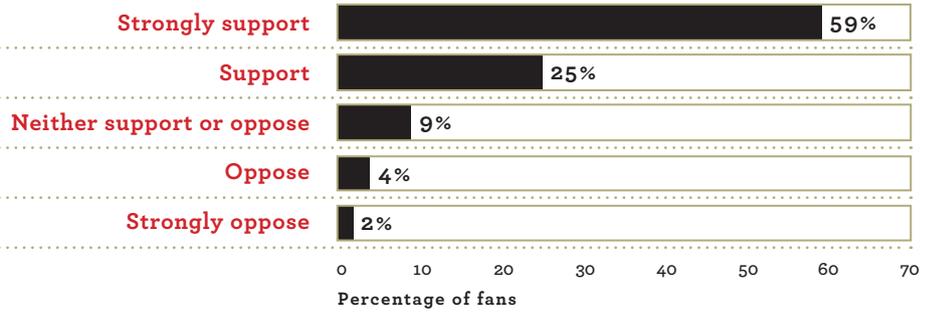
'I FELT TOTALLY VICTIMISED AND HELPLESS BY THE ABUSE I RECEIVED ON THIS DAY. IT HAS HAD AN EFFECT ON ME PERSONALLY AND I DO NOT WANT IT TO CONTINUE. I SUPPORT THE POLICE IN THEIR ACTION.'
SOL CAMPBELL'S STATEMENT TO COURT IN THE TRIAL OF IAN TROW AND HIS CO-DEFENDANT AGED 14

[13]

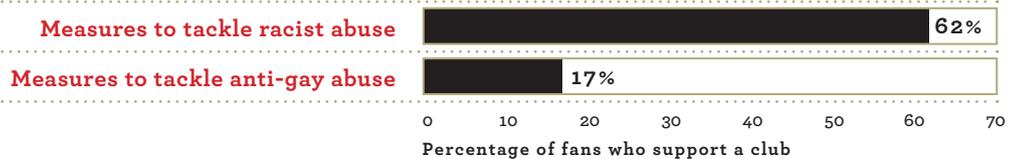
Does football do enough to prevent anti-gay abuse and discrimination?



Do you support or oppose the police decision to charge fans in the Sol Campbell case?



What measures are you aware your club has introduced?



‘IT’S NOT ABOUT THINKING THE PLAYER ACTUALLY IS GAY BUT ABOUT FINDING SOMETHING ABUSIVE TO SAY THAT’S STILL LEGAL. THE FACT THAT “GAY” IS USED AS AN ALL-PURPOSE EPITHET BY CHRIS MOYLES AND THE LIKE DOESN’T HELP. MOST PEOPLE HAVE BEEN SOCIALISED OUT OF RACIAL COMMENTS; MANY STILL USE “GAY”.’ (GRAHAM, CHARLTON ATHLETIC SUPPORTER, 62)

[14]

LEAGUES BEHIND -
FOOTBALL'S FAILURE TO
TACKLE ANTI-GAY ABUSE

Some fans feel that there has been a failure to enforce the rules of the ground.

‘Stewards and police at games have been briefed to tackle racist abuse but homophobic chants are still widely ignored.’ (LOUISE, TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR SUPPORTER, 34)

‘The pursuit of fans guilty of anti-gay abuse is not seen to be important by clubs or police.’ (ARTHUR, WEST HAM UNITED SUPPORTER, 67)

‘Neither the police nor the clubs are willing to do anything about it because they do not regard homophobic abuse as a real problem or criminal behaviour.’ (ROB, SCUNTHORPE UNITED SUPPORTER, 37)

‘It’s not taken seriously. It’s regarded as a joke. Clubs are too scared to take action. Assumptions that fans don’t care, that fans are not gay and that players can’t be gay.’ (IAN, LEEDS UNITED SUPPORTER, 48)

‘Nothing has been done to stop it. I have been on the terraces and have heard a lot of anti-gay abuse over the years and it has not got any better.’ (GWEN, LEEDS UNITED SUPPORTER, 63)

‘Anti-gay abuse is routinely not punished by football’s governing bodies and is only rarely punished by the police.’ (ROBBIE, LIVERPOOL SUPPORTER, 28)

Challenging anti-gay abuse and discrimination is not seen by fans as solely the responsibility of clubs and football organisations, but fans as well. Some fans do not believe this currently happens.

‘No one in the crowd would point a finger at who was chanting abuse as it could turn into a riot, especially if they had been drinking.’ (CLIFF, CARDIFF CITY SUPPORTER, 52)

‘It is also more difficult to challenge than racist abuse, as it can be turned on you such that it is suggested that you are gay and thus you become the target.’ (JULIAN, LEYTON ORIENT SUPPORTER, 44)

The failure to challenge anti-gay abuse and discrimination is seen by many fans as having contributed to a culture on the terraces where anti-gay abuse is acceptable.

‘It is more acceptable to be anti-gay than racist.’ (DANIEL, SCOTTISH SUPPORTER, 31)

‘Eventually there became a stigma attached to being openly racist and it just wasn’t acceptable within the crowd. We haven’t reached that stage with homophobic views.’ (ANDREW, SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY SUPPORTER, 52)

‘Straight people do not feel anti-gay abuse is as bad as racist abuse.’ (MARTIN, ARSENAL SUPPORTER, 49)

‘The view from a large minority of fans is that it’s more acceptable to be homophobic than racist.’ (JOE, HUDDERSFIELD TOWN SUPPORTER, 25)

‘Anti-gay abuse is common and has replaced racism as the accepted form of abuse between players and fans on the terraces.’ (ROB, SCUNTHORPE UNITED SUPPORTER, 37)

‘They know they can get away with more kinds of anti-gay abuse than they can chanting racist abuse. This then becomes an outlet for many kinds of frustration.’ (FRANK, BIRMINGHAM CITY SUPPORTER, 59)

‘Chants are openly sung with little penalty usually.’
(CHRIS, SCOTTISH SUPPORTER, 29)

‘Society is becoming less prone to anti-gay prejudice but football fans are getting older and not changing at the same pace.’ (RICHARD, LIVERPOOL SUPPORTER, 43)

According to fans the failure to challenge anti-gay abuse on the terraces has left some fans unaware as to what language and chants are inappropriate or against the rules of the ground.

‘I think that calling people names like “queer” or “poof” are not seen as abuse. People are so used to shouting these words they don’t think of their meaning. Lots of people see it as harmless as shouting “useless” at a player.’ (PATRICK, NEWCASTLE UNITED SUPPORTER, 35)

Incidents of anti-gay abuse at football matches are often caused by fans with anti-gay attitudes and who hold stereotypical views of lesbian, gay and bisexual people.

‘Some gay males and females flaunt themselves, they deserve all they get.’ (VINCENT, ARSENAL SUPPORTER, 64)

‘I think that homosexuality is a vulgar, unnatural participation and I am not surprised that they come under verbal abuse. I do not think that homosexuality is something to be proud of.’ (ADAM, NOTTINGHAM FOREST SUPPORTER, 56)

‘I think some think gays are not men enough to play football i.e. it is a straight man’s sport.’ (TOBY, MANCHESTER UNITED SUPPORTER, 39)

Many fans feel that the coverage of anti-gay abuse and discrimination in the media – specifically in sports coverage – contributes to a culture where anti-gay abuse is acceptable.

‘There is virtually nothing said by clubs or commentators when there are anti-gay comments. There have been minimal discussions on Football Focus, Sky Sports etc. about the homophobic chants.’ (JAKE, MANCHESTER UNITED SUPPORTER, 36)

‘There have been a few stories in the papers alluding to the fact that certain players may be gay - this only worsens the situation by whipping up a frenzy and suggesting that it is a negative thing. It can only surely further discourage any players who may want to be open about their sexuality. Whilst this kind of tabloid reporting remains, some fans on the terraces are unlikely to lessen the abuse.’ (DUNCAN, LIVERPOOL SUPPORTER, 23)

4.

WHAT'S THE CONSEQUENCE OF ANTI-GAY ABUSE IN FOOTBALL? Almost **two thirds** of fans believe that professional football would be a better sport if anti-gay abuse and discrimination was eradicated from the game. Fans are clear that eradicating anti-gay abuse from football will improve the reputation of the sport.

Anti-gay abuse and discrimination has an impact on the attendance of many fans at football matches. One in six fans say they would be more likely to attend football matches if anti-gay abuse was tackled by their club. Almost one in five fans think football grounds are a bad environment to take children, with a third of these giving anti-gay abuse as a reason.

'Chants are almost always negative against the opposing team rather than positive in supporting their own team ... All these things and more make it extremely difficult for any professional player to be open about their sexuality, and until that can happen without comment I will continue to do my supporting in front of the telly as against going to the club like I did as a kid.' (HOWARD, FULHAM SUPPORTER, 60)

Lesbian, gay and bisexual fans are less likely to have attended a football match in the last five years than heterosexual fans. However, half of lesbian, gay and bisexual fans say they would be more likely to attend matches if anti-gay abuse and discrimination in football was tackled. Almost two thirds of football fans would feel comfortable if there were more lesbian, gay and bisexual fans attending matches.

'I've never seen any gay fans at matches - I don't go with my partner but with a male friend. It just doesn't seem like a very nice place to be gay.' (KELLY, ARSENAL SUPPORTER, 25)

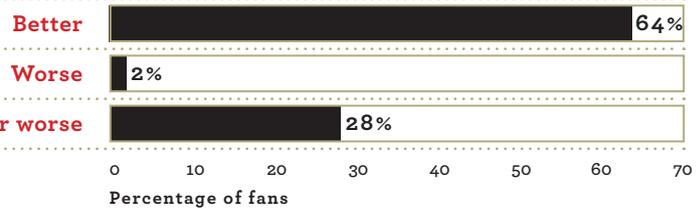
'Any gay person would probably often feel uncomfortable with the behaviour of other fans around them in the ground.' (KIERAN, NOTTINGHAM FOREST SUPPORTER, 27)

Nearly three in four black and minority ethnic football fans and female football fans feel that football would be a better sport if anti-gay abuse was eradicated. Over one in four black and minority ethnic fans and one in five female fans would be more likely to attend football matches if there was less anti-gay abuse.

'Eventually it will improve, but clubs could change attitudes and stop the extreme blokeish culture which may also put women supporters off as well.' (MARK, 50)

'As discrimination is so widespread amongst football fans it will be difficult to tackle. But it is the right thing to do, to tackle it head on, and get past the discrimination in order to make football matches a friendlier environment for everyone, encouraging a wide variety of people to attend matches.' (ROSIE, NEWCASTLE UNITED SUPPORTER, 22)

Do you think football would be a better or worse sport if anti-gay abuse in football was eradicated?



‘THE HOMOPHOBIC TAUNTING AND BULLYING LEFT ME CLOSE TO WALKING AWAY FROM FOOTBALL. I WENT THROUGH TIMES THAT WERE LIKE DEPRESSION. I DID NOT KNOW WHERE I WAS GOING. I WOULD GET UP IN THE MORNING AND WOULD NOT FEEL GOOD AND BY THE TIME I GOT INTO TRAINING I WOULD BE SO NERVOUS THAT I FELT SICK. I DREADED GOING IN. I WAS LIKE A BULLIED KID ON HIS WAY TO SCHOOL TO FACE HIS TORMENTORS.’ **GRAHAM LE SAUX**

[18]

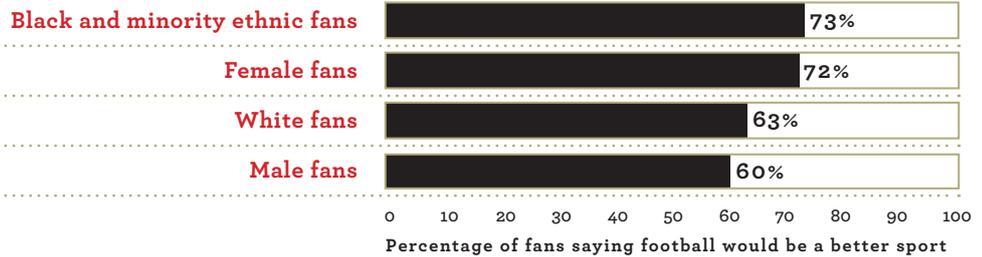
LEAGUES BEHIND - FOOTBALL'S FAILURE TO TACKLE ANTI-GAY ABUSE

Lesbian and gay football fans are less likely than heterosexual or bisexual football fans to have played amateur football. However, three in ten lesbian, gay and bisexual people say they would be more likely to play amateur football if football was more gay-friendly. One in ten of all fans aged between 18 and 24 say they would be more likely to play amateur football if football was more gay-friendly.

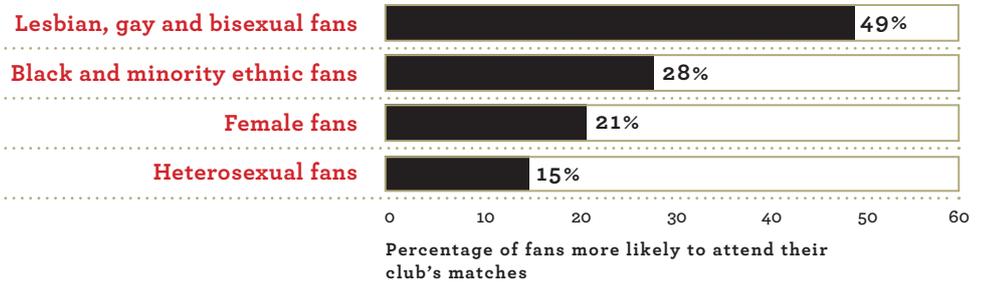
One in ten female fans and one in eight black and minority ethnic fans would be more likely to buy merchandise or tickets from clubs if they tackled anti-gay abuse. Meanwhile, one in eight 18 to 24 year old fans would be more likely to buy merchandise or tickets for this reason.

One in twelve fans would be more likely to buy merchandise or tickets from their club if they were more gay-friendly. Over four in ten lesbian, gay and bisexual fans would be more likely to buy merchandise or tickets from their club for this reason.

Do you think football would be a better sport if anti-gay abuse ended?



Would you be more likely to attend your club's matches if they tackled anti-gay abuse?



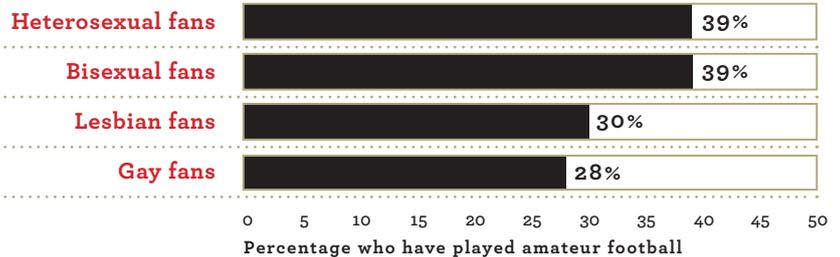
A number of fans feel that the anti-gay abuse and discrimination encountered by players both on and off the pitch has a direct impact on their well-being, particularly in the case of young players.

‘As a mental health professional, I have worked with two young [gay] men who were trainees at professional football clubs and who were having mental health problems. They seemed even less willing than other young men of their ages and social backgrounds to talk about these normal feelings and cited peer pressure in the clubs as a reason why they wouldn’t.’ (DAVE, ARSENAL SUPPORTER, 38)

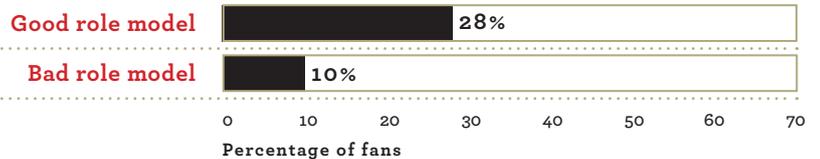
‘The real problem is for young gays wanting to come in to the sport but held back because of the fears and worries of discrimination.’ (CALUM, 57)

The absence of openly gay players means an absence of role models for young lesbian, gay and bisexual people who play football, as well as those who do not. Only one in ten football fans think an openly gay player would be a bad role model for young people.

Have you ever played amateur football?



Do you think an openly gay football player would be a good or bad role model for young people?



‘WHERE DO YOU GO IF YOU WANT A LOAF OF BREAD?’ – ‘A BAKER’S.’ ‘WHERE DO YOU GO IF YOU WANT A LEG OF LAMB?’ – ‘A BUTCHER’S.’ ‘SO WHY DO YOU KEEP GOING TO THAT BLOODY POOFS’ CLUB?’ **CONVERSATION BETWEEN JUSTIN FASHANU AND BRIAN CLOUGH, HIS MANAGER AT NOTTINGHAM FOREST**

[20]

LEAGUES BEHIND - FOOTBALL'S FAILURE TO TACKLE ANTI-GAY ABUSE

Two thirds of fans would feel comfortable if there was a gay player on their team.

Only one per cent of fans would change teams if a player came out on their team.

However, only two in five fans think a player in the Premier League or Championship is likely to come out in the next five years and just under two in five think a player in League One or Two is likely to come out. Just over a quarter (28%) of fans think it is unlikely or highly unlikely that a professional player will come out in the next five years. In many workplaces such shocking results would suggest significant problems with their workplace culture and would indicate that unlawful discrimination may be taking place.

Many football fans believe that it is specifically the reaction of managers, clubs and team mates, and therefore the impact on a footballer’s career, that continues to dissuade gay football players from coming out.

‘No one will ever come out – I’ve a mate in League 1 and he won’t come out. He’s worried about his transfer fee.’ (M, SEMI-PROFESSIONAL PLAYER)

‘There are undoubtedly many gay professional players, but at present, it would be career suicide to come out.’ (WILL, SCOTTISH SUPPORTER, 52)

‘They will not come out because they don’t want to piss off the manager, they want the fans to like them and they want to make it to the first team. They would need to feel very secure.’ (J, SEMI-PROFESSIONAL PLAYER)

‘You know, people who are top sportsmen and sportswomen, they won’t come out because they’ll lose sponsorships deals.’ (CATHERINE, AMATEUR PLAYER)

‘No out player would survive in the game and virtually all the managers would not have a gay player in their teams ... Any gay player would be off on free loan as fast as they could get him off the ground without incurring an appearance before an Employment Tribunal.’ (LUKE, MANCHESTER UNITED SUPPORTER, 61)

How likely do you think it is that a professional football player will come out in the next five years?

In the Premier League or Championship



In Leagues One or Two



0 10 20 30 40 50
Percentage of fans

5.

WHAT CAN BE DONE? Many fans and individuals working within the football industry feel that in challenging anti-gay abuse there are many lessons to be learnt from the game's success in tackling racism. A third of football fans say the high profile campaigns against racism successfully led to a reduction of racism in football.

Many fans believe that the visibility of black and Asian fans and players has made football less racist over the last 20 years. Two in five think the presence of black and Asian players, and one in four think the presence of black and Asian fans has contributed to football becoming less racist over the last 20 years.

'I think it was only that you had the large number [of black players and fans] in the 1970s that you had this huge visible presence in the pit that people couldn't really ignore. And because of that I think you got organisations like the Professional Footballers' Association who realised that members were getting a lot of abuse and they couldn't stand by any more ...' (B, FOOTBALL INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE)

'The continued anti-racist campaigns have largely worked in that even if they have not always changed opinions, they have at least changed behaviour. There has not to my knowledge been any anti-homophobia equivalent.' (RAY, MIDDLESBROUGH SUPPORTER, 25)

Only one in ten football fans feel that it's unnecessary to tackle homophobic abuse and only one in fourteen believe there is no way to tackle homophobia.

Over a third of fans support the idea of a high-profile campaign to tackle anti-gay abuse, similar to anti-racist campaigns. However, both fans and football professionals agree that such a campaign would only be successful with widespread and visible support within football.

'[We need] heterosexual footballers participating in a campaign to encourage gay footballers. This would show they accept and support gay players. Clubs showing publicly how they support and encourage gay footballers. Positive images of all footballers irrespective of anything, supporting each other and enjoying playing together without prejudice.' (AVRIL, EXETER CITY SUPPORTER, 52)

'What you need is a group of high profile players to be part of some kind of educational campaign. If you just get gay players coming out and saying "don't do that", then people will say obviously they're going to say that because they're gay.' (B, FOOTBALL INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE)

Why do you think football is less racist than 20 years ago?



'It would be difficult for current players [who are gay] to front up a campaign because they would have a lot to lose – standing, money, transfers – so I don't think this will happen and I don't blame them if they decided to keep their heads low.' (LEE, AMATEUR PLAYER)

'Something that replicates the successful Kick it Out campaign would be a good start.' (RAY, MIDDLESBROUGH SUPPORTER, 25)

'If individuals don't want to come out, then high profile footballers should make it clear they have played alongside gay people and have no problem about it.' (RICHARD, LIVERPOOL SUPPORTER, 43)

'Pity Alex Ferguson can't say, "this player is gay and it does not matter; he is a Man U player". It will take something like that to start a change of attitude.' (JACKIE, SUNDERLAND SUPPORTER, 58)

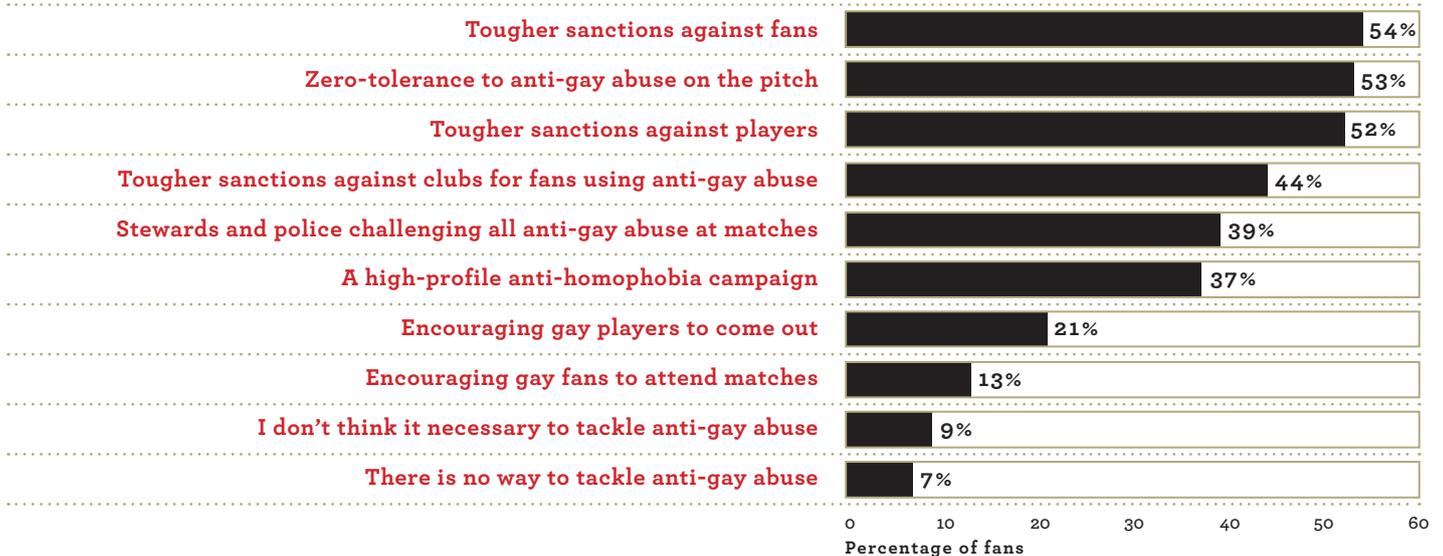
'That's great if you can get straight players doing it. It's great if you can get some gay players doing it but awesome if you can get somebody like Cristiano Ronaldo who the kids worship.' (BELLA, AMATEUR PLAYER)

'You could have gone to any player and said give us a quote on tackling racism and you got the quote. The fear now is if you go to a player and ask them to give you a quote on tackling homophobia, that they would be labelled gay.' (R, FOOTBALL INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE)

However a number of fans felt that any campaign to eradicate anti-gay abuse and discrimination from football should not solely focus on the men's professional game.

'Homophobia is about lesbians as well as gay men. Different issues need different solutions but they shouldn't just think homophobia is all about Justin Fashanu and it is all about the men's game. It's not.' (TRISH, AMATEUR PLAYER)

What should be done to tackle anti-gay abuse in football?



Some fans believe that the existing rules of the ground and the game need to be enforced by the FA and football clubs. Overall a third of fans believe that tougher sanctions should be used against fans and players who use anti-gay abuse, and their clubs.

‘There are sanctions there now, you know, and you might have to get the authorities and even the police and the stewards to take it seriously ... We all hope that education will solve the problem for us. But until we do, obviously we have to punish people. It’s been proven now that you can pick out some and make an example of them ...’ (P, FOOTBALL INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE)

‘A lifetime ban for supporters who chant anti-gay and racist abuse.’ (JIM, ARSENAL SUPPORTER, 42)

‘Abuse of any kind – racist or regarding a person’s sexuality should not be tolerated. People who do this should be banned for life from their team’s ground and away matches.’ (HANNAH, EVERTON SUPPORTER, 58)

‘All forms of discrimination should be tackled head on. Individuals should be identified and prosecuted. Obviously, chanting is a difficult issue and part of the game but the worst/most offensive chants should be tackled by stopping the game.’ (TERRY, IPSWICH TOWN SUPPORTER, 50)

‘I think fans being abusive should be made to leave the match.’ (CRAIG, WOLVERHAMPTON WANDERERS SUPPORTER, 43)

‘Fines of 2000 Euros against teams like Real Madrid make anti-discrimination laws a farce ... 2 million might help!’ (FRASER, ARSENAL SUPPORTER, 53)

A significant number of fans and individuals working within the football industry believe that fans themselves have a role and responsibility in challenging anti-gay abuse. Over two in five fans believe tougher sanctions should be used against clubs whose fans use anti-gay abuse.

‘Normal football fans said, “We don’t want to be listening to this [racist abuse], we’re not going to be joining in. We’re offended by this.” At the moment you don’t have that kind of huge number of fans that think the same way about what they shout about gay players and gay this and gay that. You obviously get individuals in a club that are offended by it, but not large numbers of people.’ (B, FOOTBALL INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE)

‘If fans and players knew that their team would lose points or be disqualified from the competition racist and anti-gay abuse would stop immediately.’ (RHYS, LIVERPOOL SUPPORTER, 58)

‘What happened with racism was the fans themselves said it was not acceptable ... So you have to address it through the fans. You have to get them, the people themselves to start saying [anti-gay abuse] is not acceptable.’ (R, FOOTBALL INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE)

Fans and individuals working within the football industry are clear that the efforts to eradicate anti-gay abuse and discrimination in football have to go beyond the football pitches and terraces and engage the wider community. A number of fans believe football clubs, the FA and their partners should work with the education system and young people to challenge anti-gay attitudes.

'Personally, I think that it all comes down to education and how the younger generation reacts to these things ... Unfortunately, those youngsters who are "open-minded" scarcely seem to attend matches as they perceive the atmosphere there to be one of discrimination rather than a coming together.'

(KEITH, LIVERPOOL SUPPORTER, 42)

'Education a big one - I have seen football as something that will draw people in and start to tackle whatever the issues are, whether it's a play about racism, whether it's children coming into the football club.'

(C, FOOTBALL INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE)

'Get the fans organisations involved. Tie in with challenging anti-gay abuse in wider society and with young men at secondary schools and colleges in particular. The possibility for gay footballers to get confidential support and confidential input into these initiatives.'

(DAVE, ARSENAL SUPPORTER, 38)

'This is a serious issue but is not unique to football - its important to take the same measures in schools as at the ground, but it would be nice for our national sport to set a leading example.'

(NICK, BLACKPOOL SUPPORTER, 30)

'I see this going on in schools and I am watching it at grassroots level where the homophobia is still so intense. We have only just had Section 28 repealed and so most teachers won't touch it with a barge pole. They don't deal with homophobic language.'

(DAISY, AMATEUR PLAYER)

Fans and professionals in football also believe that increasing the visibility of gay players would help challenge anti-gay abuse and discrimination and provide positive role-models to young people, much as it did in the campaign to tackle racism. One in five fans believe gay players should be encouraged to come out to help tackle anti-gay abuse in football.

'This is a relatively new issue for football compared to racism. There were so many black players coming through the system and excelling that something had to be done. All the governing bodies came together to address this problem supported by Kick It Out.'

(T, FOOTBALL INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE)

'Persuading gay players to come out is the best way - if you could co-ordinate a few high profile gay players to come out and at the same time run an anti-homophobia campaign like the recent "Some people are gay. Get over it!" campaign. That would raise the issue and hopefully make gay players realise that they have support from the majority of fans and also weed out anti-gay abuse in the same way as anti-racist abuse.'

(POLLY, HULL CITY SUPPORTER, 33)

'If they COULD be open about their sexuality, then it would present a modern and honest face for up and coming youth.'

(GARETH, 52)

'If a footballer felt able to come out it would help young people to come to terms with their sexuality.'

(BRIAN, CARDIFF CITY SUPPORTER, 68)

'I believe there to be several gay premiership footballers who are not open about their sexuality because of fears of abuse. They would make excellent role models for a diverse society in the 21st century and should be encouraged.'

(ANGELA, MANCHESTER UNITED SUPPORTER, 44)

'Someone would not shout racist abuse because their own team has black players and there are black fans in the crowd. Whereas there are no 'out' footballers, so it is seen as a victimless crime.'

(TOM, TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR SUPPORTER, 27)

However, some fans and football professionals recognise that currently many gay football players would feel unsafe coming out. Fans believe that anti-gay abuse and discrimination must be challenged and support mechanisms must be put in place before gay players should be expected to come out.

'The FA's efforts should be focused on providing support for gay players if they choose to come out and educating players and coaching staff around them.' (RORY, SCOTTISH SUPPORTER, 39)

'I wouldn't go as far as saying we should encourage or put pressure on players to come out. That is entirely for them. However we should make it known that they would receive 110 per cent support - and that by coming out they would be helping the sport immensely.' (GAVIN, SCOTTISH SUPPORTER, 34)

'I would encourage management to make their clubs a safe place for those who do want to come out. I think "zero tolerance" has to operate behind the scenes within the club as well as being directed to abuse on the pitch.' (ANNE, WEST HAM UNITED SUPPORTER, 55)

'I think there's still an awful lot to do before anyone's going to come out at the top end of the game, an awful lot.' (R, FOOTBALL INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE)

Showcasing lesbian, gay and bisexual people who play football is seen by a number of fans and amateur players as a way of challenging stereotypes about gay people who play football.

'I've got to say as a gay man I think it is great to be involved in this game. It provides a different perspective of gay men of people involved in strong, physical and competitive activity. Different from the usual perspective and I think this is important. Teams have been impressed I think by our quality and this means you get treated at the same level. Once they know you can play football it is generally fine.' (PAUL, AMATEUR PLAYER)

Fans also recognise that the media plays a vital role in perpetuating anti-gay abuse and discrimination in football and therefore also in challenging anti- gay abuse.

'I think the media play a huge part in this. If they back gay footballers rather than slating them then it would be more comfortable to come out.' (FIONA, NEWCASTLE UNITED SUPPORTER, 30)

'Being homophobic is still acceptable in the media. Ron Atkinson made a racist comment and was rightly pilloried by the press. Scolari was quoted as saying that if he found out one of his players was gay he would get rid of them from his squad because he did not like gays, yet he is still widely respected.' (KATE, STOKE CITY SUPPORTER, 31)

6.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. DEMONSTRATE LEADERSHIP IN TACKLING ANTI-GAY ABUSE IN FOOTBALL

Half of football fans think the FA and its partners need to do more to tackle anti-gay abuse and discrimination in football. Fans are clear that anti-gay abuse and discrimination remains a significant problem in football because it has not been given the same high-profile attention as other forms of discrimination.

- The leadership of all football organisations needs to visibly demonstrate a commitment to tackling anti-gay abuse in football
- Kick It Out's new role in challenging all forms of discrimination needs to be promoted throughout football and to all fans
- Kick It Out needs to be properly resourced to challenge anti-gay abuse alongside its existing and new areas of work
- A high-profile, easy-access reporting mechanism needs to be promoted for fans and players to report incidents of anti-gay abuse

2. DEVELOP A TOUGHER SANCTION REGIME FOR FANS AND CLUBS

Nine in ten fans are aware that anti-gay abuse is against the rules of the ground and yet seven in ten have heard anti-gay language or chants on the terraces in the last five years. In almost all cases this goes unchallenged. Some fans believe strengthening the sanction regime is vital to tackling anti-gay abuse in football.

- The sanctions used against fans who perpetrate anti-gay abuse and violence at football matches need to be broadened and made consistent with those used against fans perpetrating racist abuse
- Football clubs should make a commitment to tackling anti-gay abuse under the threat of points being docked if they fail to do so
- The FA should annually collate and publish statistics on the extent of anti-gay abuse at different teams
- The FA and Premier League annual fan survey should ask fans about their experiences of anti-gay abuse

3. EDUCATE FANS

Whilst the vast majority of fans have heard anti-gay abuse and chants at football matches, many do not identify this as anti-gay. For any campaign to be successful fans need to be educated as to what constitutes unacceptable behaviour.

- The rules of the ground and rules of the game need to be clearly explained to all fans and players
- All campaigning work to tackle anti-gay abuse needs to make clear in plain English what constitutes 'homophobia'
- Football clubs, the FA and their partners should educate fans and players about the impact that anti-gay abuse and discrimination have on those who experience it
- All campaigning work should acknowledge that anti-gay abuse can affect all fans and players regardless of their sexual orientation

4. TRAIN OFFICIALS AND STEWARDS TO IDENTIFY AND CHALLENGE ANTI-GAY ABUSE AND DISCRIMINATION ON THE PITCH AND THE TERRACES

One in ten fans who've heard anti-gay abuse say it was targeted at individual fans. Fans are clear that despite anti-gay abuse being against the rules of the ground and the rules of the game, it often goes unchallenged by officials.

- Stewards need to be trained to identify and challenge anti-gay abuse and be given regular re-training
- Stewards should demonstrate a commitment to tackling anti-gay abuse on application and throughout their stewardship. Stewards who fail to challenge anti-gay abuse whilst in post should be removed from post
- Referees and assistant referees need to be trained to identify anti-gay abuse and be given regular re-training
- Referees and assistant referees need to demonstrate a commitment to tackling anti-gay abuse. Referees who fail to challenge anti-gay abuse in the same way as racist abuse should be dismissed

5. CHALLENGE ANTI-GAY ABUSE AND DISCRIMINATION OUTSIDE THE GROUND

A number of fans believe that unless anti-gay abuse and discrimination is challenged outside the football ground, efforts to tackle it on the terraces and on the pitch will be undermined.

- Football clubs should ensure that all their community work is inclusive and that they undertake specific initiatives to engage with their local lesbian, gay and bisexual communities
- Football clubs, the FA and their partners should engage in work with schools and young people to challenge anti-gay abuse and discrimination
- Football clubs should work with local lesbian, gay and bisexual youth groups to encourage talented young gay people to participate in football

6. DEVELOP AND PROMOTE SUPPORT SERVICES FOR GAY PLAYERS

One in five fans believe that a lack of support from football organisations deters gay players from coming out. Fans believe that gay players should be offered a comprehensive range of support in anticipation of them coming out or being outed.

- The Professional Footballers Association, the FA and football clubs should visibly declare their determination to prevent discrimination against all football players
- The PFA need to develop a comprehensive support mechanism for gay players to help them to come out if they want and to challenge any subsequent abuse or discrimination
- The FA should hold a conference for agents to advise them of their duty of care to football players and to advise them of how to support gay players
- The FA, LMA and Kick It Out should hold a conference for football managers and boards to advise them of their legal responsibilities towards their gay employees and how to support gay players

7. CHALLENGE ANTI-GAY ABUSE IN AMATEUR FOOTBALL

One in five heterosexual amateur players and two in five lesbian, gay or bisexual amateur players have heard anti-gay abuse whilst playing amateur football. Many amateur players believe that tackling anti-gay abuse in amateur football should be as important as in professional football.

- Establish and promote clear reporting avenues for amateur players who experience discrimination
- Encourage the inclusion of gay teams in existing leagues to challenge stereotypes
- Provide resources and support to gay teams to improve access of lesbian and gay people to amateur football
- Promote the benefits of participation in amateur football to lesbian, gay and bisexual people

8. CHALLENGE STEREOTYPES IN WOMEN'S AND GIRL'S FOOTBALL

Amateur players and fans felt that women's football, both professional and amateur, has particular issues that need to be addressed. Many amateur players feel that football should do more to tackle sexism in women's football as well as anti-gay abuse.

- The FA, football clubs and their partners should use women's football to challenge stereotypes of women in football
- Professional women's football teams must cultivate an atmosphere where lesbian and bisexual women can be publicly open about their sexual orientation

9. WORK WITH THE MEDIA TO IMPROVE COVERAGE OF ANTI-GAY ABUSE AND DISCRIMINATION

A third of fans think negative coverage in the media dissuades gay professional football players from coming out. Some fans feel that the media, particularly the sports media, has a responsibility for highlighting the issues of anti-gay abuse and discrimination in football.

- Football organisations should actively and visibly challenge any anti-gay coverage in the media
- Sports broadcasters and media should endorse and participate in campaigning work to tackle anti-gay abuse
- Sports broadcasters and media should improve coverage of incidents of anti-gay abuse and hold campaigning events to tackle them
- The PFA should work with media organisations, agents and players to challenge negative speculation and coverage of players' sexualities

10. BE A GAY-FRIENDLY EMPLOYER

Overall a third of fans believe gay professional players are unable to come out because clubs, managers or teammates would discriminate against them or subject them to anti-gay abuse. Fans are clear that football clubs and football organisations should be better employers for all of their gay employees.

- The FA and its partners should lead by example and demonstrate their commitment to equality for their own lesbian, gay and bisexual employees
- Football clubs should replicate good practice, as employers, of equality for lesbian, gay and bisexual people by joining an employers good practice programme such as Stonewall's Diversity Champions programme
- The FA and the PFA should advise all football clubs of their legal responsibilities not to discriminate against lesbian, gay and bisexual employees and their duty to prevent bullying and harassment in their workplaces

METHODOLOGY

Stonewall's research included a survey of football fans conducted by YouGov, focus groups with gay and lesbian amateur players and interviews with football industry executives.

FAN SURVEY

YouGov surveyed a sample of 2,005 football fans across Great Britain between 26 and 28 January 2009. The sample comprised 1,502 heterosexual and 503 lesbian, gay and bisexual participants. Headline data has been weighted by sexual orientation to ensure that LGB respondents are not over-represented in the overall figures. The survey was conducted using an online interview administered to members of the YouGov plc GB panel of 250,000 individuals who indicated they were football fans. The resulting data was analysed and presented by

Stonewall. Some figures are presented in summary form rather than percentages and some figures have been rounded to the nearest fraction. Full statistics for references in the report are available on request.

FOCUS GROUPS

Stonewall commissioned the Institute of Community Cohesion (iCoCo) to conduct focus groups with lesbian, gay and bisexual amateur football players. These focus groups were conducted in February and March 2009. Quotes from these focus groups have been anonymised.

INTERVIEWS

Stonewall commissioned the Institute of Community Cohesion (iCoCo) to conduct interviews with a

wide range of stakeholders within the football industry. Between February and April 2009 iCoCo conducted nine interviews with football industry executives. Quotes from these interviews have been anonymised.

SCOTLAND AND WALES

Football fans living in Scotland and Wales participated in the survey of football fans by YouGov. Headline statistics included in the report therefore refer to all participants, including those living in Scotland and Wales. All focus groups with amateur football players and interviews with football industry executives were conducted in England. The recommendations for this report are intended for English football, and where applicable Welsh teams participating in English leagues.

REPORT WRITTEN BY SAM DICK

WITH THANKS TO:

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Prof. Simon Chadwick

Prof. Harris Beider

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Gay Football Supporters Network



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