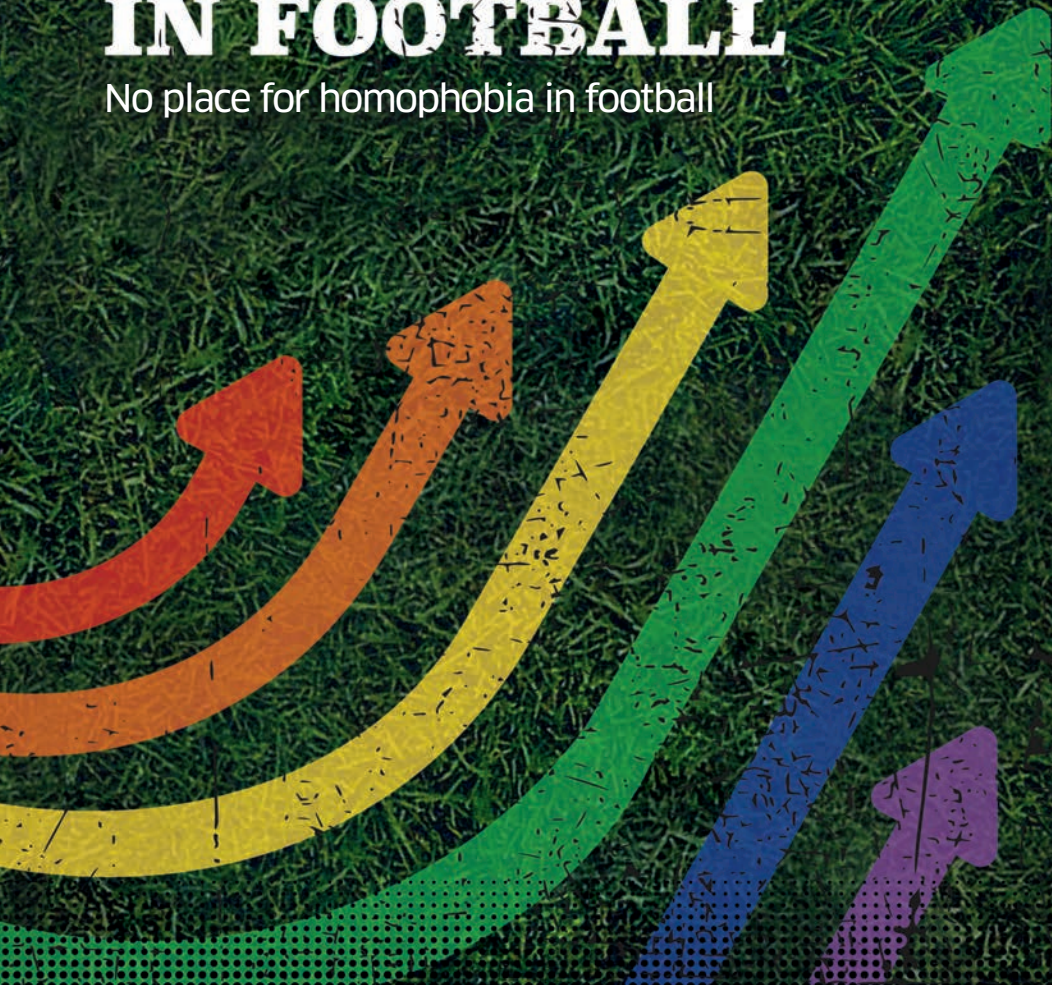


TACKLING HOMOPHOBIA IN FOOTBALL

No place for homophobia in football



A TUC Alliance toolkit



TARGETING TRADE UNION SUPPORT TO COMBAT LGBT PHOBIA IN FOOTBALL

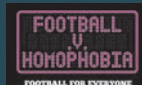
Introduction

The TUC is encouraging trade unions to collectively challenge the prejudice faced by many LGBT people in football and wider sport. As with many trade union campaigns we want to encourage local victories and engagement with local clubs, supporters groups and County Football Associations which are vital to contribute towards removing the barriers faced by many in society.

Whilst many amongst us are football supporters we are not assuming everyone is and those that are may not understand the structures in the game that are needed to ensure positive and collective campaigning/ action. This toolkit will outline to everyone basic principles related to protocol to help effective campaigning.

We recommend that this initiative is primarily designed for use by trade union groups and not individuals. If any individual wishes to engage with a club we recommend approaching supporters groups, some of whom have specific LGBT sections, or if not, can look to create one specifically.

It has been written by members of the TUC alliance against homophobia and transphobia in football, working from a model originally written by *Just a Ball Game?* and in association with The Professional Footballers' Association and Communication Workers Union with thanks to the Gay Football Supporters' Network, Football v Homophobia, and The FA.



Robbie Rogers

Thomas Hitzlsperger

Casey Stoney

Justin Fashanu

WORKING WITH YOUR LOCAL FOOTBALL CLUB

- 1. The first thing that is needed is permission from the club.** It is vital that contact is made with the appropriate person at the club who has the authority to provide the go ahead and is on board to support the initiative. This is likely to be the Club Secretary. The Club Secretary will make the decision regarding proposed activity and sign-post you to relevant contacts in the club.
- 2. As a game, football is committed to tackling inequality and a joined-up approach is essential.** Campaigners should consider informing *Kick It Out*, football's equality and inclusion organisation, which is supported by the PFA, Premier League and FA.
- 3. Any campaign commitments should be set sometime in advance and with the clubs agreement.** Consider LGBT History Month (February), International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHO - 17 May) as possible PR hooks to coincide with any activity. Campaigners should note *Kick It Out* now focuses their activities throughout the football Season (August-May) as opposed to one specific month.
- 4. Consider what resources can be used (leaflet and/or banner production) and any potential costs will need to be budgeted.** Consider co-ordinated action using branches, regions, local trade union councils or regional TUC's.
- 5. Prior to any resources being produced any proofs will have to be approved by the club.** Consider branding any campaign resources with the logos of supporting stake-holders.
- 6. If any activity is planned on a match day ensure a co-ordinated approach with a designated club contact.** This will ensure information such as numbers of people involved, time of arrival and all other logistical details needed for both the Club and campaigners which are vital for security purposes and clear communications.
- 7. Ensure the club is able to inform supporters of the activity.** This could take the form of:
 - Information in a match day programme prior to or on the day of the event
 - Tannoy announcement
 - Pitchside interview
 - Publicity on a club website.
- 8. In the run up to the match aim to get local publicity for the event, with the club's agreement.** They may even press release jointly. Try local community radio, local press, etc.

Standard sample letter to Football Club

Date:

[Insert name of club secretary]

[Insert address of football club]

Dear [Insert name of club secretary]

REQUEST TO WORK WITH [INSERT CLUB NAME] – HELPING TO TACKLE HOMOPHOBIA IN FOOTBALL

I write to you as part of the Trade Union Alliance working to tackle homophobia in football.

The campaign has been devised to support and supplement the work undertaken by Kick It Out and Football vs Homophobia amongst others; who are working towards equality and anti-discrimination for everyone and which I know is part of your club's objective.

[Insert Clubs Name] has signed up to the Government Charter, committed to tackling homophobia in sport and creating a tolerant environment for all supporters, players and club staff.

This initiative is supported by the TUC Alliance, which consists of various stakeholders including, the Professional Football Association, Football Supporters Federation, Kick it Out, Show Racism the Red Card, Communication Workers Union and Unite.

The TUC Alliance has already organised very successful days of action/awareness with both Bradford City Football and Plymouth Argyle and the initiatives were very warmly received by football fans.

We will work closely with any other organisations you require to ensure a co-ordinated and effective approach to delivery of our campaign to tackle homophobia in football.

I look forward to your reply in relation to this request and my contact details are as follows: [insert personal contact details].

Yours sincerely,

Examples of leaflets used at previous campaign events ➤



Standard sample letter to fan group

Date:

[Insert name of fan group]
[Insert address of fan group]

Dear [Insert secretary of fan group]

RE: TACKLING HOMOPHOBIA IN FOOTBALL INITIATIVE WITH [INSERT FOOTBALL CLUB NAME]

I am writing to make you aware that our Trade Union has made a formal approach to [insert name of football club].

The purpose of our contact is to request permission from the club to run a campaign to heighten awareness around the need to tackle homophobia in football. Please find attached a copy of a letter we have sent to [insert club secretary and club name] on this issue.

We would be delighted if we could explore any possible opportunities to work jointly with [insert fan group].

I look forward to hearing from you and receiving your initial thoughts as to our request.

Yours sincerely,

WORKING WITH THE FANS

9. Getting the message across to the fans is the main purpose of working with football to promote the message of diversity and inclusion. Try to engage with supporters' groups online or through fanzines. Consider utilising the support of the Fans For Diversity campaign, run in partnership between the Football Supporters Federation and *Kick It Out*. Find out more at www.kickitout.org/fansfordiversity



WORKING WITH THE PLAYERS

10. To ensure that players are aware of any activity taking place at the club, ensure that the PFA are informed of the date and nature of activity via the email address equalities@thepfa.co.uk and the PFA Player Delegate will be informed.

BROADENING THE SUPPORT

11. Getting people on board to support this and participate on the day is vital. As well as your own union, at all levels, try the local Trades Union Council, regional TUC, and other unions locally to get people on board. Consider all forms of media to engage support including social media.

We would refer you to the extensive list of contacts on this document to enlist the support of specialist organisations who are experienced in this area.



WHEN YOU
ARE PART
OF A TEAM
YOU ARE
NEVER ON
YOUR OWN

12. If there are local LGBT community groups or Pride event organisers, you can approach them to get involved – they may also provide volunteers to help on the day. In recent years, football clubs have become supporters of Pride in their own right and this is an excellent way to build on the initial relationship.

HANDS ON REPORTING!

- ✓ ATTACH **PHOTOS** AND **VIDEO** TO REPORTS
- ✓ REPORT **SOCIAL MEDIA** ABUSE
- ✓ REPORT **CONFIDENTIALLY**

Get your Hands On Reporting by downloading the Kick It Out app

Continued Campaigning

Once the relationship with the club and your contacts has been established, ensure the relationship is maintained.

This is an opportunity to promote the LGBT agenda to the club. Areas for continued dialogue can include:

- Making sure the legal obligation to ensure LGBT issues and complaints at games are taken seriously. Report all homophobic abuse via the Kick It Out app (pictured) and other reporting mechanism used by the club.
- Liase with relevant supporter groups and consider creating LGBT fan groups if there is not one already. They are the voice of the terrace.
- Displaying banners or advertising boards pitch side, following the examples of AFC Rushden & Diamonds, Hyde FC with the 'Think Before You Chant!' initiative, and Arsenal FC's Gay Gooners banners.
- Hosting exhibitions or LGBT awareness days such as #PrideInFootball did in London and Manchester, which helped unite LGBT fans' groups nationwide.



Images from www.kickitout.org

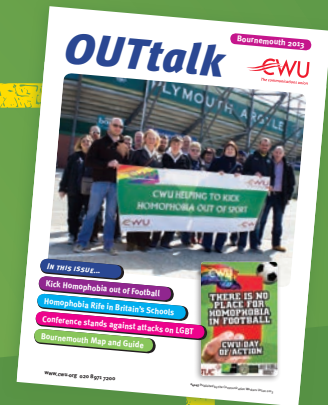
“ REPORT ANY HOMOPHOBIC ABUSE TO KICK IT OUT ”

TUC ALLIANCE CASE STUDIES

13. The TUC Alliance has organised successful events which involved leafleting thousands of football fans at the following matches: Bradford City vs Plymouth (2011), Plymouth Argyle vs Cheltenham Town (2013). The general feedback from fans and clubs involved was extremely positive. There was significant publicity co-ordinated and involved interviews on local radio, match day programme inserts and relevant on-line publicity.

14. The PFA created a dressing-room campaign for professional footballers to promote inclusion “Gay or Straight We Are Winners” and “When You Are Part of a Team You Are Never Alone”.

15. *Just A Ball Game?* worked with Bradford City Football Club to ensure they took a very pro-LGBT stance and this includes the club now flying an LGBT Rainbow flag on match days.



OTHER CASE STUDIES

16. Football v Homophobia (FvH) – During the 2014 Month of Action, held in February each year, Millwall designated their home game against Brighton as their FvH match. Both Millwall and Brighton players wore the FvH t-shirts during the pre-match warm-up, and the club included an article in the match day programme and on the website, and announcements in support of FvH were read out to the crowd. Millwall also created a YouTube piece featuring first team players Danny Shittu and Shane Lowry, and Millwall Lionesses' openly gay footballer Emma Whitter.

17. Through the Fans For Diversity campaign, LGBT fans hosted their first joint event, entitled #Prideinfootball, at the Grange St Paul's Hotel in central London in November 2014. The conference gave fans a chance to meet face-to-face to celebrate and discuss

the rise of LGBT fans' groups over recent years, and to share what they have achieved so far whilst focusing on how they build on this success. The event was supported by The GFSN and the Football v Homophobia campaign.

18. The Gay Football Supporters' Network (GFSN) and Stonewall partnered with a major football sponsor on the Rainbow Laces Campaign. The week-long campaign kicked off with a 30-second spot featuring five Arsenal players wearing the laces and talking about how they can 'Change the Game'. The 'Changing Room' promo was seen by an estimated 10 million television viewers during the Switzerland v England match on Monday 8 September 2014. By the end of the week players at over 70 professional clubs had laced up.



RELEVANT CONTACTS

Communication Workers Union

Contact Fevzi Hussein in the equalities unit to talk about the CWU's experience organising days of action: fhussein@cwu.org

County FAs

Organise the game at local level – contacts are listed on the FA website. The following link takes you to the FA's toolkits on their Rules & Governance page.

www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/equality/football-v-homophobia

Gay Football Supporters' Network (GFSN)

www.gfsn.org.uk
secretary@gfsn.org.uk

Just A Ball Game?

info@justaballgame.co.uk

Kick It Out

info@kickitout.org
www.kickitout.org

LGBT History Month

Throughout February each year:
<http://lgbthistorymonth.org.uk> or Lgbt History Month Scotland: www.lgbthistory.org.uk

Football Supporters Federation

info@fsf.org.uk
www.fsf.org.uk

Football v Homophobia

www.footballvhomophobia.com
info@footballvhomophobia.com

Professional Footballers' Association

www.thepfa.com
equalities@thepfa.co.uk

Show Racism the Red Card

www.theredcard.org
View the homophobia resource:
<http://theredcard.org/resources/homophobia>

Trades Union Congress

Information on LGBT equality campaigns on the equality pages of the website www.tuc.org.uk or contact the TUC LGBT policy officer Peter Purton on 0207 467 1271

There are also organisations devoted to tackling discrimination internationally and their websites also offer valuable information:

The FARE Network (FARE)

www.farenet.org

European Lesbian and Gay Sports Federation (EGLSF)

www.eglsf.info

