



3



YEAR

IMPACT REPORT

# FOREWORD

FROM OUR CEO, TONY BURNETT

Over the last 30 years, the work of Kick It Out has undoubtedly had a positive impact on the communities we serve, and I'm proud to be able to lead this organisation on the next stage of its journey.

We are passionate about creating positive change in football. We want those from underrepresented groups to thrive. We want everyone to feel they belong. We want to create a game that is truly inclusive for all.

Our heritage at Kick It Out is tackling racism in football, but our scope for the future is to expand our remit to create more inclusive cultures in other sports and to tackle every form of discrimination. Today, we run education programmes for academy players, parents and fans and we will be developing our education

offering even further in the coming months and beyond. We believe that education is key to affecting behavioural change, whilst also providing people the chance to boost their skills and knowledge and make a positive contribution to society.

We will continue to campaign to make sure football is always welcoming – to everyone. We remain committed to supporting people from underrepresented and minority communities to pursue a career in football and thrive. And we will continue to call out discrimination wherever it happens – from your local park to the Premier League to your social feed.

We are investing further in grassroots football. Our aim is to help diversify the pool of coaches across the game, with a focus on gender, race and disability – we know there is current underrepresentation in these areas, and we want to change that. We are also producing a series of digital learning modules specifically targeted at grassroots clubs, to help create more inclusive spaces for everyone, including those from the LGBTQIA+ community and different faith groups. We want to be seen as thought leaders in the space of equality, diversity and inclusion

in football. To do that, we aim to invest in research, producing industry-leading reports on key insights across the game. When it comes to women's football, we believe we have a role to play in helping to develop and drive this sport forward even further. The success of the Lionesses squad has inspired a whole generation of young girls. Participation is higher than it's ever been. The growth of the women's game in recent years has been phenomenal. We want to support more women into coaching roles, better understand the barriers for women and girls from a range of ethnic backgrounds so that interventions can be appropriately tailored to meet their needs, and support the development of improved player pathways, by being a strategic partner of The FA.

As this report demonstrates, Kick It Out has had a significant impact since its inception 30 years ago.

Fans believe the work of Kick It Out has resulted in less discrimination. We are the most recognised organisation focused on removing discrimination in football. Fans from minority groups believe football is now safer, more inclusive and more welcoming, because of our work. We also

know from this report, that Kick It Out has given people more confidence to call out or report discrimination, and we have seen evidence of this firsthand through our own annual reporting statistics.

Whilst we acknowledge the successes of Kick It Out has had, we also know there is so much more to be done. Discrimination in our game, and in other sports, still sadly exists. Our job is not done, and our work remains more relevant than ever.

We all know Kick It Out shouldn't have to exist. Our biggest hope is that one day football and other sports will no longer need us. But right now, we're still here to put an end to every form of discrimination.

WE  
WON'T  
STOP  
UNTIL IT  
STOPS.



# INTRODUCTION

## THE HEART OF OUR NEW STRATEGY

In 1993, Kick It Out was set up to fight racism in football, expanding to tackle all forms of discrimination in 1997. Since then, driven forward by its love of sport, Kick It Out has been leading the charge for positive change by raising awareness, confronting issues and helping our sport be better.

To commemorate its 30th year, Kick It Out commissioned an independent research agency, M·E·L Research, to undertake an evaluation of the changing landscape of discrimination in football, and the impact Kick It Out has had on this.

As part of this evaluation, M·E·L Research looked into key events and trends that have impacted the inclusivity of football in the past three decades. A survey was conducted with 2,503 football fans to

understand their perception of the extent of these changes, the impact that Kick It Out has had on them, and the changes they have witnessed in the past 30 years, or since they first became a football fan. They also conducted an in-depth study with 28 of these fans to better understand their experiences of football, lived experience of discrimination and the role of Kick It Out in combating this, and a study on the social impact of a specific Kick It Out programme.

The results of this evaluation are presented in this report, which details the progress that Kick It Out has contributed in making football more welcoming and inclusive to all fans since it was formed.

# KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN FOOTBALL SINCE 1993

1993 marked the year not only when Kick It Out was formed, but also when Paul Ince became the first black captain of the senior men's England football team, and the year in which Stephen Lawrence was murdered in a racially-motivated attack. The progress that has been achieved in making football and wider UK society more inclusive to different groups since 1993 can be seen in a number of different developments across the three decades.

In this time, there have been clearly visible and notable changes recorded in the representation of different groups in professional football. From 1992 to 2017, the proportion of players in the Premier League from ethnic minority backgrounds grew from 16.5% to 33%<sup>1</sup>. Likewise, there have been vast strides taken in women's football, with the top tier being professionalised in 2018-19, the BBC and Sky signing a landmark deal to broadcast women's games in 2021 and Beth Mead becoming the first female player to win BBC Sports Personality of the Year in 2022. Small steps have also been taken in the representation of LGBTQ+ players in both the men's and women's games, with numerous openly gay players in the Women's Super League and England

Women's national team in 2023. In 2022, Jake Daniels becoming the first male professional footballer to publicly come out, since Justin Fashanu in 1990.

Similarly, campaigns against discrimination have grown in number and in their reach, with professional players across the country deciding to Take the Knee as a gesture against racism from 2020, while as of 2023, 22 LGBTQ+ fan groups are officially recognised by their clubs in the UK<sup>2</sup>.

Meanwhile, there have been clear steps made towards inclusivity in society more widely. The introduction of key legislation, such as the Equality Act 2010, has strengthened protections against discrimination based on various characteristics, including race, gender, disability, and sexual orientation, while The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act, passed in 2013, legalised same-sex marriage in England and Wales. These and similar legislative changes ensure equal opportunities for all individuals.

The changes in the perceived inclusivity of society to minority groups can be seen in studies of the UK society more widely. In 2020, Ipsos found that 45% of the UK population believe that there is more racial tolerance than there was 10 years ago, while the proportion of the population who would be happy for their child to marry someone from another ethnic group rose from 41% in 2008 to 70% in 2020<sup>3</sup>. Likewise when it comes to the inclusivity of UK society to different sexualities, the British Social Attitudes survey found that the proportion of the population who believe that sexual relationships between two adults of the same sex are 'not wrong at all' rose from 18% in 1993 to 68% in 2019<sup>4</sup>.

This research measures the change in attitudes and behaviours since 1993, to understand the experiences of fans themselves.

So, what impact has Kick It Out had on how inclusive football really is in 2023?

1 - <https://talksport.com/football/269520/proportion-british-home-players-has-doubled-premier-league-began-talksport-special-report/>  
2 - <https://www.footballhomophobia.com/lgbt-supporter-groups/>  
3 - <https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/ct/news/documents/2020-06/race-inequality-june-2020-charts.pdf>  
4 - <https://www.bsa.safcen.ac.uk/latest-report/british-social-attitudes-36-relationships-and-gender.aspx>



# KEY FINDINGS

THE IMPACT OF KICK IT OUT OVER THE PAST 30 YEARS CAN BE MOST NOTABLY SEEN IN TERMS OF FOUR KEY CHANGES

## IMPACT

Fans believe that the work of Kick It Out has resulted in less discrimination

Kick It Out has played a key role in combatting the rate of discrimination experienced in and around football environments. While the number of incidences of discrimination recorded by bodies such as Kick It Out has increased year on year, these appear to reflect an increase in willingness to report, in addition to an increase in discrimination experienced. 58% of fans believe that discrimination towards fans at professional grounds has decreased in the past 30 years or since they first became a football fan, if they have been a fan for less time than this. Similarly, 57% believe that discrimination towards footballers has decreased in this time. The impact that Kick It Out has had on this decline is also clear to fans, with 67% of those who experience discrimination less often now than they did 30 years ago/when they first became a fan believing this is to a moderate or large extent due to Kick It Out.

## REACH

Kick It Out are the most recognised organisation focused on removing discrimination in football

The reach that Kick It Out has achieved in 30 years is notable, with 68% of fans aware of it as an organisation that combats discrimination in football, higher than the proportion who are aware of Show Racism the Red Card (61%) and Stonewall (25%). When asked, unprompted, and prior to any other mention of Kick It Out, to name an organisation that combats discrimination in football, 41% of those who answered named Kick It Out, more than any other named organisation.

## INCLUSIVITY

Fans from minority groups believe that football is now a more inclusive, welcoming and safer place because of the work of Kick It Out.

Tied in to the reduction in discrimination in football environments, 73% of fans believe that football is more inclusive than it was 30 years ago or when they first became a football fan. Particular progress has been seen in how inclusive it is to women, with 82% believing it to have become more inclusive to this group, alongside 75% who believe it has become more inclusive to fans from different races/ethnicities and 75% who believe it has become more inclusive to disabled fans.

## ACTION

Kick It Out has given people more confidence to call out or report discrimination than before

One of the most crucial impacts that Kick It Out has had upon football's inclusivity has been in how it has empowered fans to call out discrimination, and to evaluate their own behaviour. 74% of fans believe that their peers are more concerned about discrimination now than they were 30 years ago or when they first became a fan, with 92% putting this in part down to the work of Kick It Out. This impact has contributed to fans feeling more empowered to call out discrimination where they witness it. 43% of fans state that they are more likely to call out discrimination now than they were when Kick It Out was founded or when they first became a fan. 73% of those who have heard of Kick It Out say that it has contributed to this change.

# IMPACT

## FANS BELIEVE THAT THE WORK OF KICK IT OUT HAS RESULTED IN LESS DISCRIMINATION

A crucial metric when investigating the change in football's inclusivity, is the change in the extent to which fans either witness or themselves experience discrimination in and around football environments. While this can be measured by looking at the reports made of incidents of discriminatory behaviour, these figures don't tell the full picture. Indeed, at first glance, they suggest that discrimination is getting worse - Kick It Out received a 65% rise in reported incidents of discriminatory behaviour from the 2021-22 to 2022-23 seasons, with 1,007 reports recorded in the most recent season.

However, these only provide a snapshot of the full extent of discriminatory behaviour. It is therefore likely these only represent a small sample of the total incidences of discrimination, and with clubs and leagues not currently required to share reporting

data to a centralised reporting body, the full picture is hard to ascertain.

An even more fundamental flaw in using these figures to measure the true extent of discriminatory behaviour in football, and therefore its inclusivity, is that they do not take into account the change in behaviour and confidence among fans in reporting discrimination. Looking at the rise in the number of incidents of discrimination reported in isolation doesn't shed any light on whether this change is due to a rise in incidents that are occurring, or a rise in the proportion of incidents that are reported. In order to contextualise these results therefore, fans were asked about their experiences of discrimination, and how they have changed over time.

These results make clear that discrimination in and around football environments is widely experienced. Almost **a third (31%) of fans have personally experienced discrimination towards themselves**, with 20% of fans experiencing verbal abuse, 15% experiencing gestures/actions and 13% experiencing discriminatory chanting/singing. Discrimination is significantly more likely to have been experienced by fans from ethnic minorities, lesbian, gay and bisexual fans and those with a disability.

### EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION TOWARDS THEMSELVES IN / AROUND A FOOTBALL ENVIRONMENT

Mixed ethnicity fans	54%
Black fans	47%
Asian fans	38%
LGBTQ+ fans	39%
Fans with a disability	36%

Additionally, many of those who haven't experienced discrimination themselves, have nonetheless witnessed it. **Seven in ten (70%) of fans report that they have witnessed discrimination in/around a football environment**, including 52% of fans who have witnessed verbal abuse towards players, 47% who have witnessed verbal abuse towards match officials, 44% who have witnessed verbal abuse towards other spectators and 44% who have witnessed discriminatory chanting/singing. Two fifths (39%) have witnessed a more physical form of discrimination, including 32% who have witnessed items being thrown towards players or onto the pitch, and 25% who have witnessed physical violence/assault towards other spectators.

**FOLLOW UP INTERVIEWS WERE CARRIED OUT WITH SOME OF THESE FANS TO UNDERSTAND IN BETTER DETAIL THE EXPERIENCES OF DISCRIMINATION THAT THEY HAD FACED:**

"In recent years, I still do see and witness a lot of prejudice and discrimination both on and off the pitch, particularly in terms of gender, race and religion. Compared to before, I feel things are a lot more subtle, which can feed into people being passive aggressive in some cases... which isn't healthy. I have definitely experienced my fair share of discrimination and abuse with regards to my identity as an East-Asian woman. I've been told that I'd "probably never be as skilled or match the ability of my male counterparts", and that football is "too rough" for a girl "like me" to be taking part in."

Woman, aged 30 to 34, mixed ethnicity

"My wife is wheelchair bound. At a recent match she needed to go to the toilet, I wheeled her to the disabled toilets, as I opened the door an able-bodied [fan] pushed past her into the toilet and locked the door. When he came out of the toilet I challenged him, he told me to f\*\*\* o\*\* and said 'cripples shouldn't go to football matches'. I spoke to a steward and identified the fan to him, the steward said there was nothing he could do. I reported the matter to a Police Officer in the stadium who said 'only the stewards could take action'. I contacted the club by telephone, they apologised for the disrespect shown to both my wife and myself but said they would take no further action."

Man, aged 60-64, white

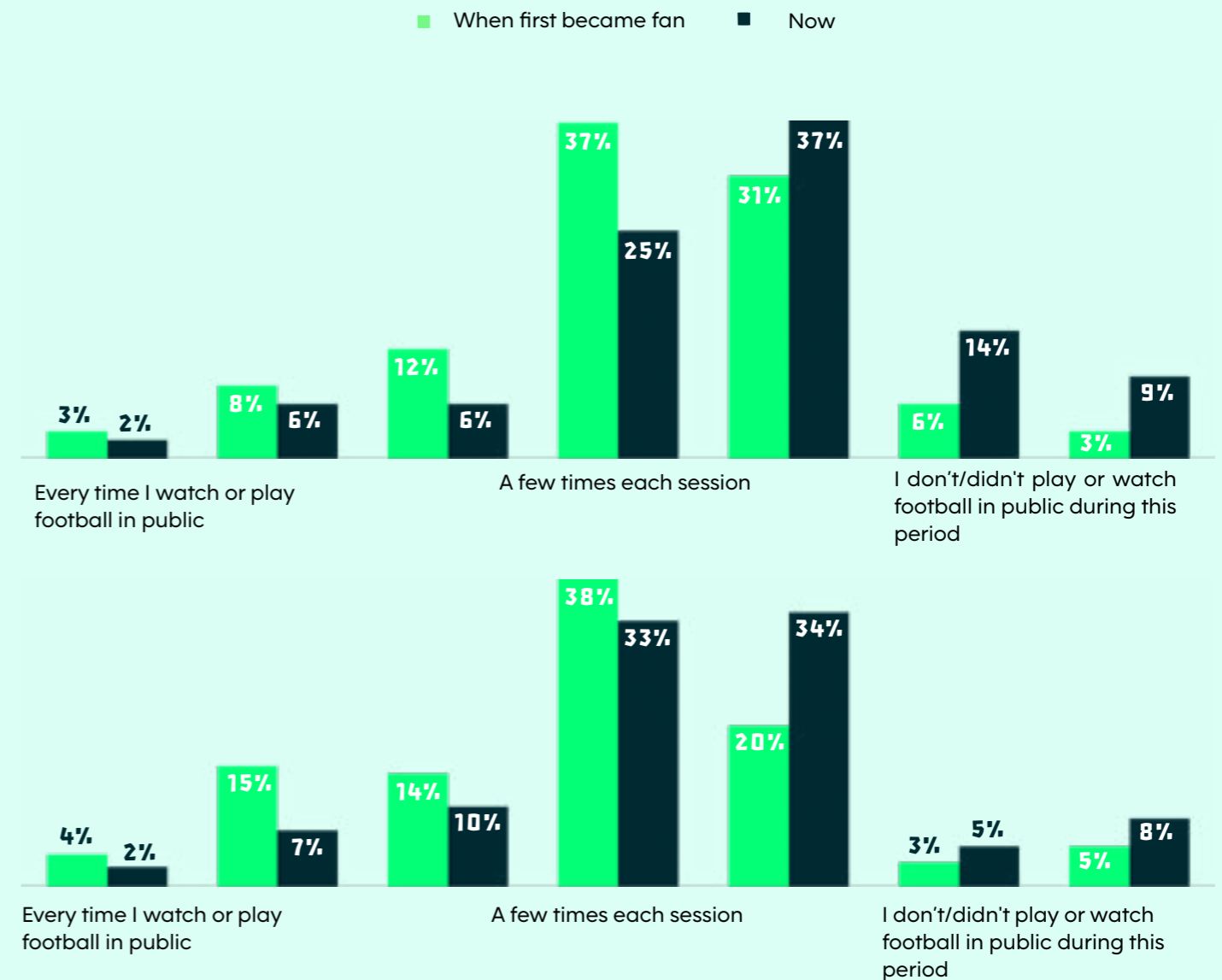
"I've both experienced and witnessed discrimination in a football environment. My discrimination was triggered by supporting a different club to the other supporters which got them angry and they kept throwing racial slurs at me which I did ignore at the time to avoid escalating the situation."

Man, aged 30-34, black

However, whilst the majority of fans report that they have either witnessed or experienced discriminatory behaviour in/around a football environment, the regularity with which fans experience discrimination has declined since Kick It Out was formed. Of those who have experienced discrimination, 24% experienced it at least half of the time they watched or played football in an average season 30 years ago, or when they first became a football fan, if they have been a fan for less than 30 years. This has declined to 14% who experience discrimination

at least half the time they watch or play football now. Similarly, the regularity with which fans witness discrimination has also fallen. A third (34%) witnessed discrimination at least half the time they watched or played football 30 years ago or when they first became a fan, while 18% witness it at least half the time now. In total, of those who have ever experienced discrimination, 41% experience it less often now than they did, with the same proportion (41%) of those who have ever witnessed discrimination reporting that they witness it less often.

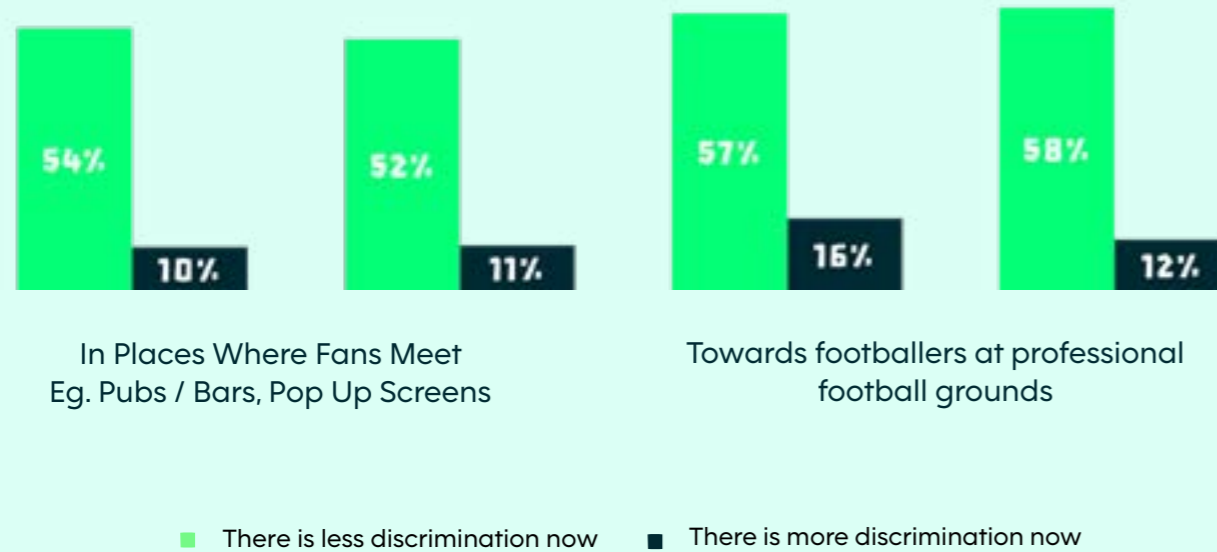
**REGULARITY WITH WHICH FANS EXPERIENCE DISCRIMINATION**



In addition, compared to 30 years ago or when they first became a fan, just over half believe that there is now less discrimination towards footballers at professional grounds (57%), towards fans at professional grounds (58%), in places where fans meet such as pubs or bars, (54%) and in grassroots football (52%).

However, not all fans share this belief - Asian (49%), black (50%), woman (53%) and LGBTQIA+ (46%) fans are least likely to say discrimination towards fans at professional grounds has declined. Meanwhile, Asian (41%), women (49%), LGBTQIA+ (44%) and Muslim (32%) fans, and those who have a disability (50%) are least likely to say discrimination has declined in places where fans meet (e.g. pubs/bars).

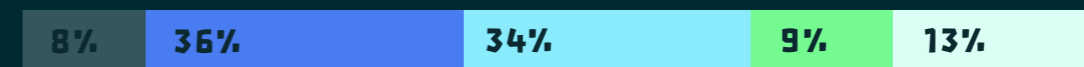
**HOW MUCH, IF ANY, IMPROVEMENT DO YOU THINK THERE HAS BEEN IN COMBATting DISCRIMINATION IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS COMPARED TO WHEN YOU FIRST BECAME A FOOTBALL FAN / 30 YEARS AGO?**



Fans believe that Kick It Out has been a key driver of this decline in discrimination – 87% of fans who are aware of Kick It Out and who experience less discrimination now than when they first became a fan believe that this change can be attributed in some part to the charity. **Two thirds (67%) believe that Kick It Out are responsible for this to a moderate or great extent, including 82% of Ethnic Minority fans**, evidencing the impact that Kick It Out has had upon experiences of discrimination in football.

Further, around 4 in 10 fans who have heard of Kick It Out, believe it have been mostly or completely effective at combating discrimination towards footballers (43%) and/or fans (40%) at professional grounds, with 32% believing that it have been mostly or completely effective at combating discrimination in grassroots football.

**TOWARDS FOOTBALLERS AT PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL GROUNDS**



**TOWARDS FANS AT PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL GROUNDS**



**IN GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL**



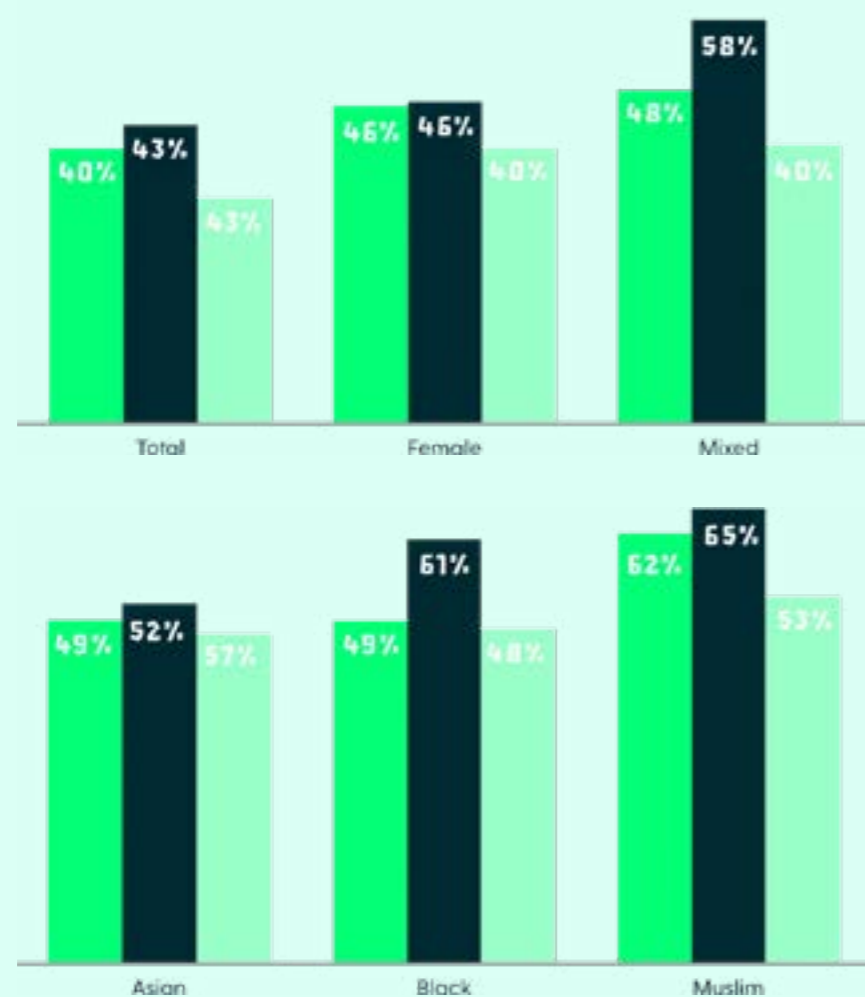
- Not at all effective
- Slightly effective
- Mostly effective
- Completely effective
- Don't know/Prefer not to say



Notably, the perception that Kick It Out has been effective at combatting discrimination in these areas is stronger among some groups of fans than others. Women (46%), Asian (49%) and Muslim (62%) fans are most likely to believe that Kick It Out have been mostly or completely effective in combatting discrimination towards fans at professional grounds.

Whilst black (61%), mixed ethnicity (58%) and Muslim (65%) fans are most likely to believe that Kick It Out has been effective in combatting discrimination towards footballers. Similarly, women (40%), Asian (47%), black (48%) and Muslim (53%) fans are most likely to believe that Kick It Out has been effective in combatting discrimination in grassroots football.

### KICK IT OUT HAS BEEN COMPLETELY / MOSTLY EFFECTIVE IN COMBATTING DISCRIMINATION AT...



■ Towards fans at professional football grounds ■ Discriminatory chanting / singing ■ Gestures / action(s)

A selection of these fans were asked to discuss their experiences of discrimination in football.

A man of Indian ethnicity, aged 60-64, highlights the impact Kick It Out has had in changing attitudes towards discrimination, which have made it less acceptable. "People (fans) are generally more aware and are likely to react negatively should they see/ hear what they perceive to be racist comments / actions. I can remember a few years ago our fans booing a section of our own fans who were trying to get some form of racist chant going and it died very quickly ... I don't see / experience racist behaviour at football matches I go to now. Fans are more likely to turn on and quieten / complain about such actions, even if it's coming from their own supporters. It has become 'unacceptable behaviour'."

However, others are more cautious in their assessment of the impact Kick It Out has had. A black man, aged 20-24 states: "I don't think much has changed, as most people who discriminate aren't really going to change unless they're eventually sanctioned for their vile behaviour, but it is important to still try and spread the message". Nevertheless, he does note some impact of its work. "Fans are definitely more cautious about the language they use on social media and the manner in how they speak to people at stadiums and in public." These changes have had a knock-on impact on how inclusive he believes football to be. "I do feel more welcome in sport. As a black man, it's a bit more reassuring that I can go to stadiums without being questioned about where I'm originally from and being told to go and support another team because I wasn't born in Manchester. It's given me a bit more peace of mind even though there are still times I could be a bit wary."

One of the key ways that fans think Kick It Out has helped reduce discriminatory behaviour, is the success that it has had in empowering fans to feel able to report incidents. Many fans have become more likely to report discrimination in the 30 years since Kick It Out was formed. Half (51%) of fans state that they would report discrimination if they witnessed it tomorrow, with **56% more likely to report it than they would have been** 30 years ago or when they first became a football fan.

It should be noted that despite this, only 25% of those who have actually experienced discrimination reported it, along with 18% of those who have witnessed discrimination. However, some groups of fans who have witnessed discrimination are more likely to have reported it than others, including 34% of mixed ethnicity fans, 32% of black fans, 32% of Asian fans, 29% of LGBTQ+ fans and 24% of disabled fans. This may indicate a need for more work to be done to encourage and support fans to report discrimination, regardless of their background.



Only 4% of fans who have reported abuse have done so directly to Kick It Out, although this rises to 11% among Asian fans and 13% of Muslim fans. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this experience has contributed in many cases to their positive perception of the impact that Kick It Out has had on football's inclusivity. This is not just due to any action taken against the perpetrator of the discrimination, but also in part due to the increased sense of safety provided by knowing that discriminatory behaviours will be acted upon.

"In this instance, I was discriminated against due to my gender. I experienced it back in 2021 during a football game at a stadium I went to. It was from another football fan who told me that I shouldn't be at the match because football is a man's sport, and I am ruining his space just by being there as a woman. I was influenced to make a report because I had a friend who I went with to the stadium who told me that I could report it, as they had heard about Kick It Out from an advertisement. I sent an anonymous message to Kick It Out to report the discrimination. As a result of taking the action to report the discrimination, I was able to feel a lot more safe and at ease at football matches knowing that I could report people like that. The long term consequences (and I suppose short term as well) are that I could feel a lot more safer and at ease at football matches because I didn't have to worry about discrimination, or knew that if I were to be discriminated against, something could be done about it."

Woman, mixed ethnicity, aged 20-24

"I witnessed firsthand fans of England harassing and attacking fans from a different country and also calling me and my mates out for trying to tell them what they were doing was wrong. We were discriminated because we are of a different race (black) and were told to go back to Africa despite being British. This was in a pub in London from British white football fans ... feeling the incident [was] wrong and having seen the [Kick It Out] adverts on television and social media I felt I [could] get help. I felt reporting it was getting something off my chest and letting others know the extent of racism and discrimination in this country."

Man, black, aged 30 to 34

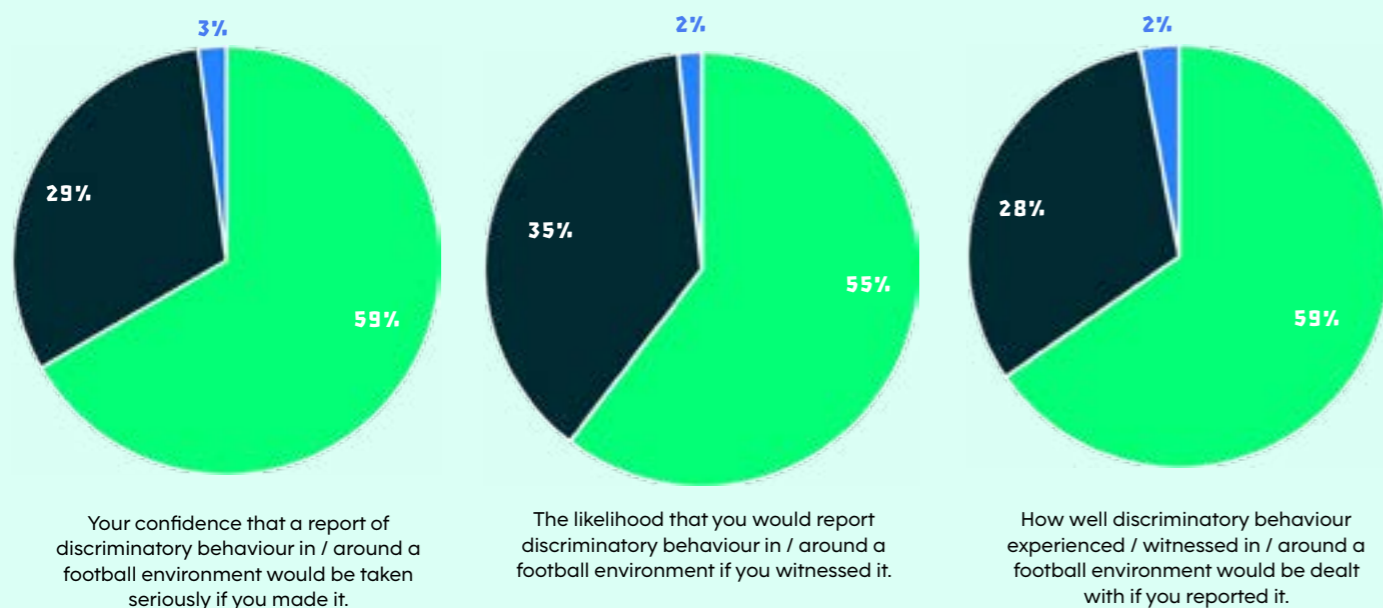
Additionally, Kick It Out campaigns have had a notable impact on the likelihood that fans would report discrimination more generally. Fans who are aware of Kick It Out more commonly state that they are more likely to report discrimination now than they were 30 years ago or when they first became a fan (60%) than those who aren't aware (48%).

59% of fans who are aware of Kick It Out state that it has had a positive impact on their confidence that a report would be taken seriously, 55% on the likelihood that they would report discriminatory behaviour if they witnessed it, and 59% upon how well they believe discriminatory behaviour would be dealt with if they reported it.

The positive impact of Kick It Out on the reporting process has been most widely felt among women and ethnic minority fans. Two thirds (66%) of women fans, 74% of mixed ethnicity fans, 70% of Asian fans and 78% of black fans, say that Kick It Out has had a positive impact upon their confidence that a report of discrimination would be taken seriously if they made one. Again, two thirds (65%) of women, 76% of Mixed ethnicity and 81% of black fans believe that Kick It Out has had a positive impact upon how well discriminatory behaviour would be dealt with.

### WHAT IMPACT DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THE WORK OF KICK IT OUT HAS HAD UPON...?

■ Positive impact ■ No impact ■ Negative impact



We spoke in more depth to fans who have witnessed discrimination. A Jewish man aged 70-74 highlights the role that Kick It Out has played in enabling fans to report discrimination.

"I believe Kick It Out has provided a platform for young players and soccer fans and supporters to report incidents of racism in football. I do think there has been some positive change resulting from the Kick It Out campaign." These changes have had positive consequences for fan behaviour. "I witness much less racial abuse on the terraces. Having a body to report any behaviour of this type has got to be a step in the right direction. I also think it has given a platform for awareness and general fans/supporters are becoming less tolerant of anti-social and racist actions ... It has not impacted me greatly as an individual as I am white, albeit part of a racial minority (Jewish), but I do feel more comfortable on the terraces not having to experience abuse aimed at black players."

Similarly, a black fan aged 30-34, states: "The fact there are platforms for people to speak up if they are discriminated against and people are empowered to speak up mean people are more comfortable to exist in football spaces, knowing that if there is any issues they will be dealt with and the aggressors will be reprimanded. The players themselves, speaking up on their platforms means that change is highlighted on a larger scale, knowing things are changing allows people from marginalised groups to know they will be supported." He cites Kick It Out as having contributed to this through "A raised awareness of discrimination and the empowerment of people in stadiums to be able to speak up and report if there are any incidents. There is also now a protocol that teams and the league follow if there are any incidents". As a result "I feel like as a black man, now I don't have to second guess or consider whether something will happen to me or a comment will be made because of my race".

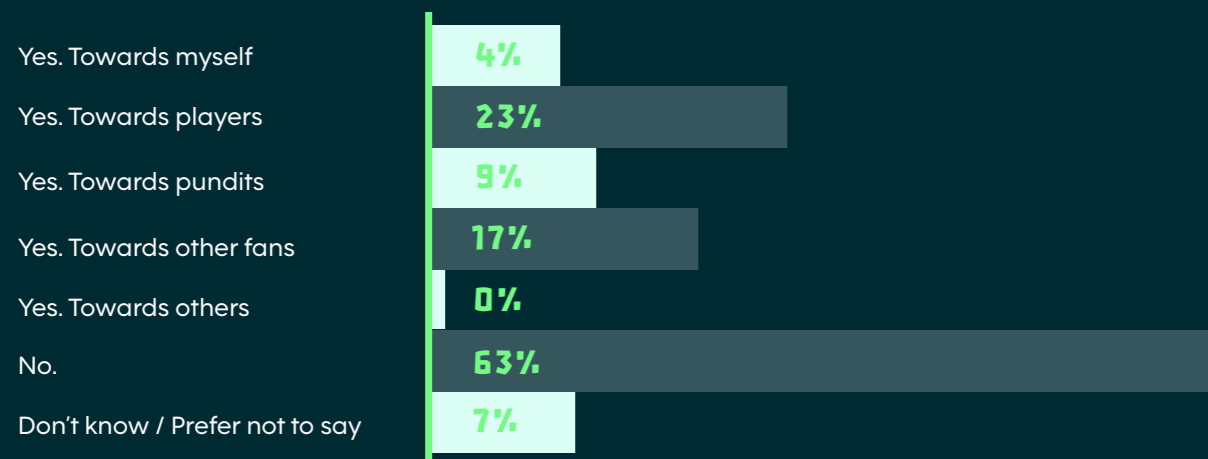
Nonetheless, it is evident that there is still further work that needs to be done to ensure that all fans can get involved in football without fear of discrimination. 85% believe that more needs to be done to combat discrimination towards fans at professional grounds and 87% feel there is more to do to combat discrimination towards players at professional grounds. Only slightly fewer believe that more needs to be done to combat discrimination at grassroots level (79%), and in places where fans meet, e.g. pubs/bars and pop up screens (78%).

Another key area where it is clear that further work is needed to combat discrimination is online. A report released by Ofcom and the Alan Turing Institute in 2022, found that of 2.3 million tweets sent towards footballers during the first half of the 2021-2022 season, more than 60,000 were abusive - the equivalent of one abusive tweet sent every four minutes<sup>5</sup>. A year earlier, it had been widely reported that Marcus Rashford, Jadon Sancho and Bukayo Saka were racially abused via social media following the final of the 2020 Men's European Championship.

Fans hold wide-ranging concerns about the prevalence and impact of abuse online – a third (31%) of fans have experienced some form of discriminatory behaviour online, with 4% having experienced abuse towards themselves, 23% witnessing abuse towards players, and 17% towards other fans.

### HAVE YOU EVER SEEN OR EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATORY BEHAVIOUR AMONG OR TOWARDS FOOTBALL COMMUNITIES ONLINE?

31% have experienced or witnessed any form of discriminatory behaviour online...

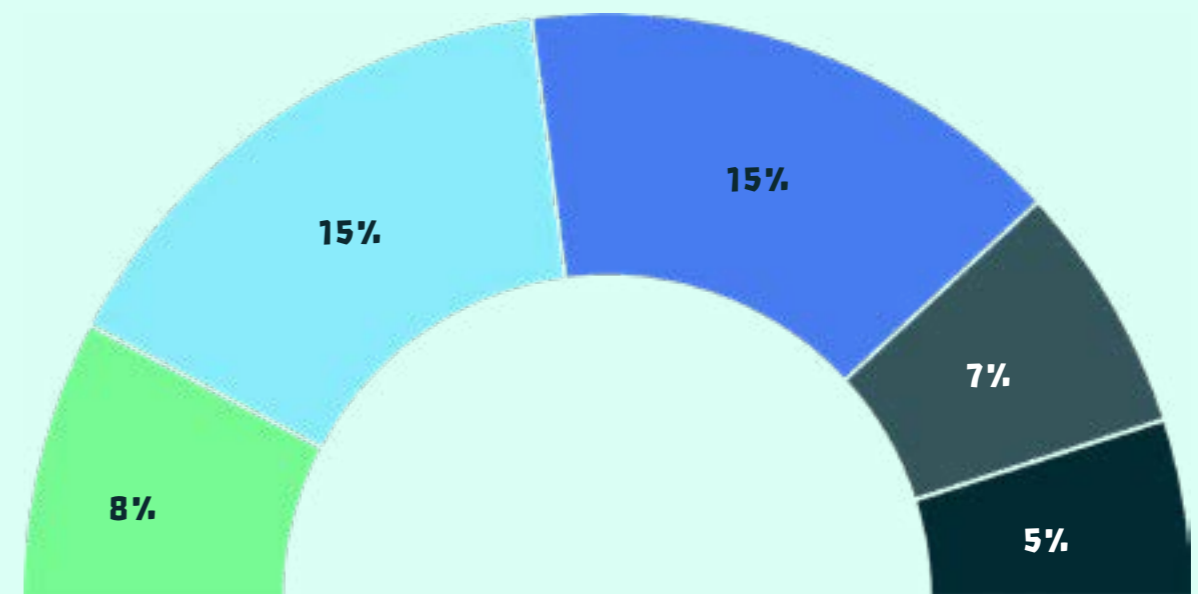


<sup>5</sup> <https://www.turing.ac.uk/news/publications/tracking-abuse-twitter-against-football-players-2021-22-premier-league-season>

The nature of online environments adds complexity to anti-discrimination efforts. Four fifths (80%) believe that online channels encourage or allow people to discriminate in ways they would not in person. Unlike other forms of discrimination, which appear to be declining, 68% of fans believe that online abuse is getting worse, with women (71%), Asian (77%), and black (77%) fans most likely to state this. Further, 76% of fans are concerned that online abuse is impacting the inclusivity of football communities, with 46% stating they are moderately or very concerned. This level of concern is higher among mixed ethnicity (61%), Asian (56%), black (71%), disabled (52%), LGBTQ+ (58%), Muslim (58%) and Hindu (62%) fans.

This is having a knock-on impact on the inclusiveness of football communities and the ability of fans to engage with football. A quarter (27%) of fans report that they are engaging less in online communities than they would like due to fear of abuse. This rises to two fifths (43%) of mixed ethnicity fans, 37% of LGBTQ+ fans, 36% of Muslim fans, 35% of Asian fans, 34% of disabled fans and 32% of women fans.

### HOW CONCERNED ARE YOU THAT ONLINE ABUSE IS IMPACTING ON THE INCLUSIVITY OF FOOTBALL COMMUNITIES?



■ Very concerned    
 ■ Moderately concerned    
 ■ A little concerned  
■ Not at all concerned    
 ■ Don't know / Prefer not to say

A selection of fans who had experienced abuse online provided further detail on this in follow-up interviews. A black man, aged 45-49, discussed his experiences of abuse from fans on his club's website: "I always engage in the discussion and comments box on the club website. I have been enjoying that for so many years until one fan racially abused me and called me all sorts of names as a result of me commenting my views on matches and poor performances by the players of the club due to my colour. I found it appalling and demeaning."

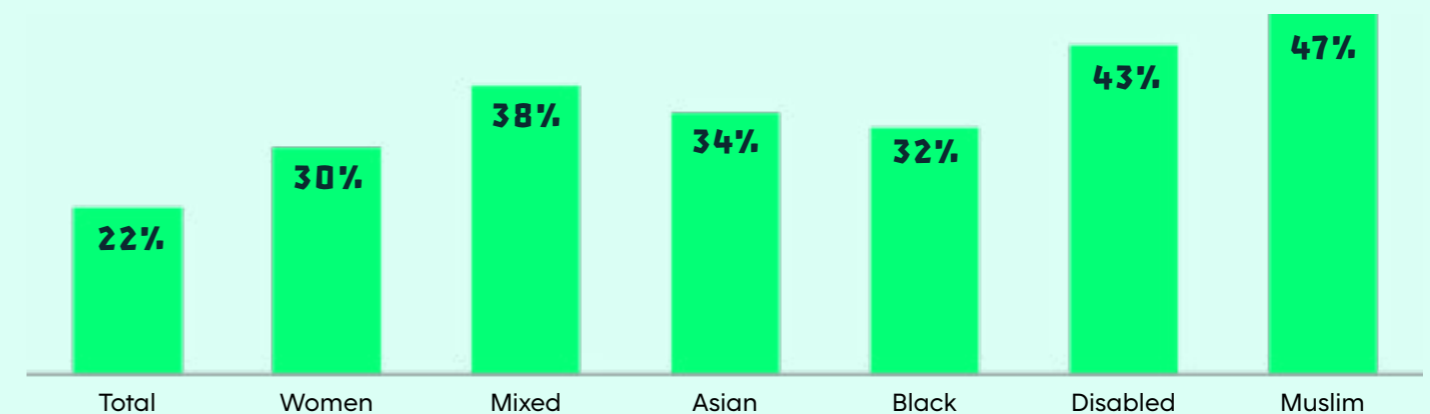
Another black, African fan aged 30 to 34 also highlights the need to tackle online abuse as a key priority for Kick It Out going forwards. "In terms of online, football twitter can be a bit of a cesspit, people hiding behind profile pictures that aren't of them joining together to act as if they know everything." However, he recognises the scale and difficulty of tackling online abuse. "Online is too big of a sphere for Kick It Out to tackle, it's up to the social media companies to deal with that. Anyone from anywhere can create an account and send abuse and they will be hidden unless someone tried to really investigate. That doesn't happen often and if it was, would be 1000s which would take a long time."

This is a sentiment that another fan, aged 35-39 agrees with. "There is a lot of online behaviour and a lot of people hiding behind a keyboard slaying people which isn't fair and a lot of social media companies I feel need to do a lot more to combat this!"

Kick It Out has had some impact in combatting discrimination online, but not to the same extent as in other arenas, with 22% believing that Kick It Out has been "mostly or completely effective" at combatting discrimination online, and 25% believing they have "not been effective at all". However, it should be noted that women (30%), mixed ethnicity (38%), Asian (34%), Black (32%), and Muslim (47%) fans are most likely to think Kick It Out has been "mostly or completely effective" in combatting discrimination online, although there is still room for improvement within these groups as well.

Positively, while online environments appear to enable abusive behaviour, there is also a degree to which fans feel more empowered to call out discrimination online than they would in person. Half (49%) said that they would be more likely to call out an act of discriminatory behaviour taking place online than they would in person.

#### KICK IT OUT HAS BEEN COMPLETELY / MOSTLY EFFECTIVE IN COMBATTING DISCRIMINATION ONLINE



# REACH

## KICK IT OUT ARE THE MOST RECOGNISED ORGANISATION FOCUSED ON REMOVING DISCRIMINATION IN FOOTBALL

The survey asked fans to name an organisation involved in combatting discrimination in football, Kick It Out was the most commonly named organisation, with 42% of those who answered naming it without any form of prompting <sup>6</sup>.

Subsequently, when presented with a list of organisations who are involved in combatting discrimination in football, 68% stated they were aware of Kick It Out, more than the proportion who were aware of Show Racism the Red Card (61%), the Football Supporter's Association (45%) and Stonewall (25%). Only the Premier League (88%) and FA (88%) had a better recognition rate.

There are some groups who have been reached more successfully than others, with men (75%), white (70%), black (67%), Christian (70%) and non-religious (69%) fans most likely to be aware of them. Those who are aged over 45 (75%) and who have experienced discrimination (71%) also tend to be more likely to have heard of Kick It Out.

Kick It Out has grown from an anti-racism campaign in 1993, to consistently running multiple engagement and education programmes combatting discrimination in every level of the game.

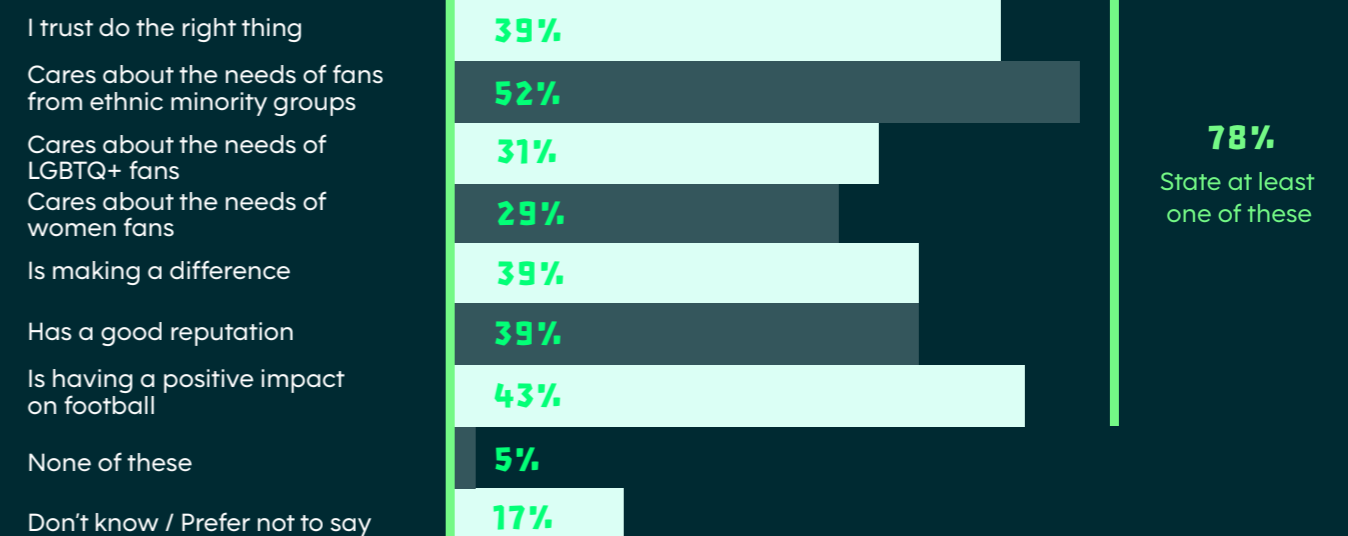
During the 2022-23 season, these included 8,325 minutes of fan education sessions, 124 professional club academy sessions to 3,218 participants, and 136 delegates hoping to progress their careers in football as part of the Raise Your Game initiative. Additionally, Kick It Out have signed up over 100 grassroots clubs and leagues to its Equality Charter.

<sup>6</sup> This question was asked prior to any other questions asked which referred to Kick It Out, in order not to bias respondents towards selecting this response

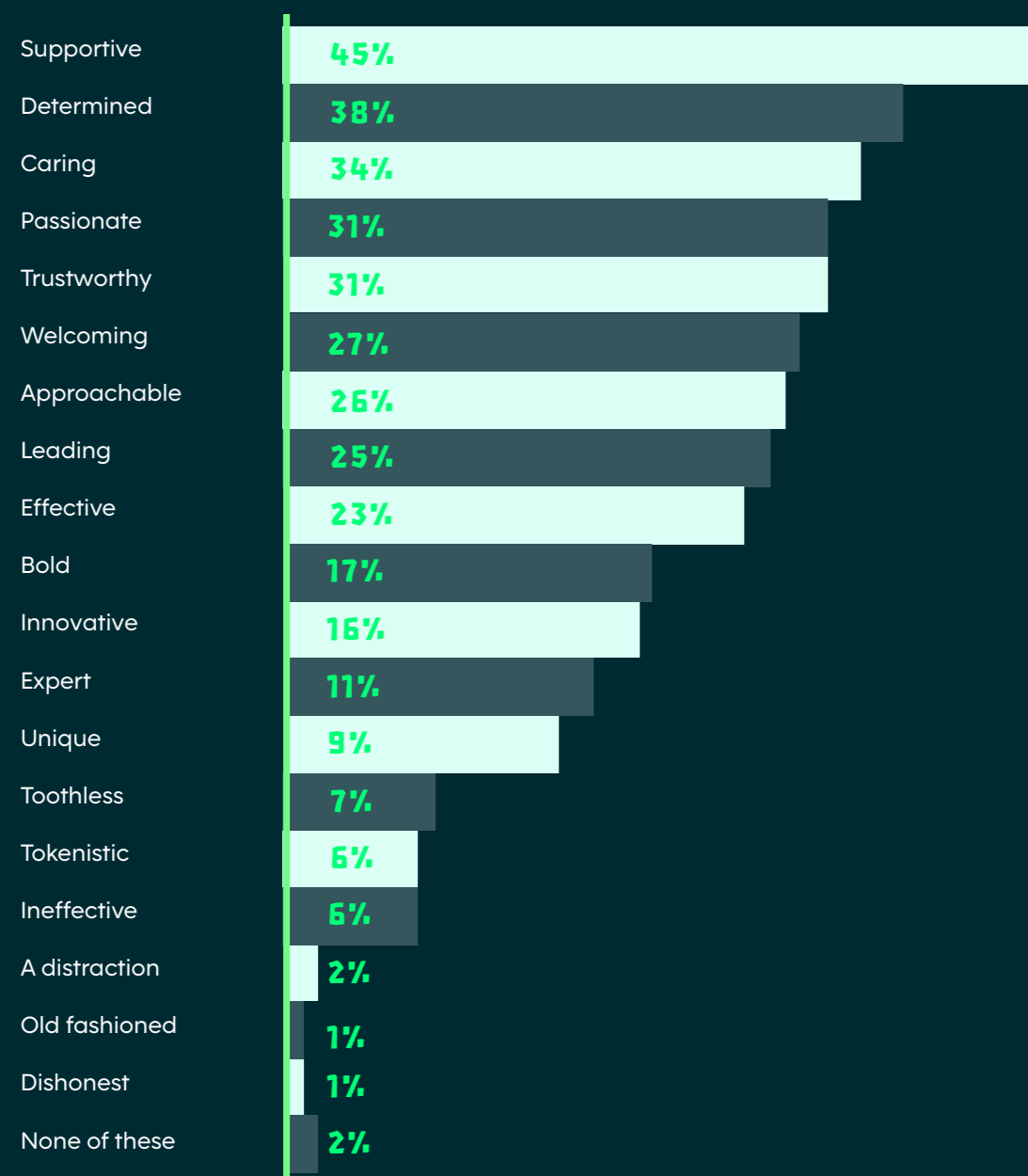
Fans tend to hold a positive perception of Kick It Out and its work. The fans who have knowledge of Kick It Out, tend to associate positive characteristics - with 45% stating they are "supportive", 38% "determined" and 34% that it is "caring", compared to 7% who state it is "toothless", 6% "tokenistic" and 6% stating it is "ineffective".

In total, 73% only associate them with positive attributes, while 14% only associate them with negative attributes. Meanwhile 52% state that they care about the needs of fans from ethnic minority groups, 31% that they care about the needs of LGBTQ+ fans and 29% that they care about the needs of women fans.

## KICK IT OUT IS AN ORGANISATION THAT...



**WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERISTICS DO YOU THINK APPLY TO KICK IT OUT?**



**FANS WHO WERE INTERVIEWED IN MORE DEPTH PROVIDED INSIGHT INTO WHY THEY ASSOCIATED THESE ATTRIBUTES WITH KICK IT OUT.**

"As a former member of HM Forces during "the gay ban" I can appreciate just how hard it is to be a gay footballer. Though there are now quite a few gay teams, at the professional and semi-professional level there is still stigma, and there are very few role models (i.e. out / openly gay pro footballers). When you see and hear some of the racist abuse aimed at footballers of colour, that's hardly surprising. The fact that there is now a vocal and visible organisation trying to tackle abuse is a huge step forward."

Gay man, aged 60-64.

"I think Kick It Out has given many groups of people a voice which is being heard - whether it is gender-based, or being differently able or being of varying ethnicities. In that way I feel supported, and welcomed. I also experience them as having political clout in that they are respected by politicians, sponsors like Sky and Nike, and managers and of course players. In that way they are leading experts, unique and trustworthy. I also experience the whole movement, to which I count myself, although I am not an official member, as approachable, passionate and determined. I do not think it is toothless or ineffective, definitely not tokenistic or old fashioned. It is vital that this movement exists."

Jewish woman, aged 70-74.

"I feel that the KIO campaigns have real impact on communities and reach the people affected, and that they are not only just about talking, but also putting what they say into action."

Mixed ethnicity woman, aged 30-34.

HOWEVER, FOR SOME, THERE IS STILL ROOM TO IMPROVE THE PERCEPTIONS OF KICK IT OUT BY MOVING BEYOND AWARENESS RAISING:

"Even at the standard I referee at, Kick It Out are a visible presence and recognised by players, officials, fans and clubs. They have done an excellent job of raising awareness. The focus now needs to be on further educational and preventative measures - like Raise your Game or the Equality Charter."

Referee, aged 30-34

"I think those who have made positive comments are naive. There are certain instances where small changes have been made but they don't last. Unless and until clubs take strong action and use the full weight of legislation the initiative remains tokenistic and toothless."

White man, aged 60-64.

MEANWHILE OTHERS HIGHLIGHT THE NEED FOR CO-OPERATION FROM OTHER BODIES.

"UNTIL It's tackled, supported at the top and by the legal system, these campaigns are just a smokescreen. The racism has changed, it's gone underground. Just look at the last two major tournaments that England have been in and the racism towards non white players when they've missed important goals. The media plays an important role in the change IF we're going to have any progress."

British-Indian man, aged 45-49

## INCLUSIVITY

FANS FROM MINORITY GROUPS BELIEVE THAT FOOTBALL IS NOW A MORE INCLUSIVE, WELCOMING AND SAFER PLACE BECAUSE OF THE WORK OF KICK IT OUT.

The fan survey reveals that football supporters generally perceive football to have become more inclusive since 1993. Fans were asked about the changes they have witnessed in this period.. These results show that 73% of fans believe football is generally more inclusive now than it was 30 years ago/when they first became a fan.

The extent to which football is perceived as being more inclusive by different groups has varied, with the greatest proportion believing that it has become more inclusive to women, and the lowest proportion to transgender or gender non-conforming fans:

- 82% of fans in total, and 81% of women, believe football has become more inclusive to women.
- 75% of fans in total, including 74% of ethnic minority fans, believe it has become more inclusive to fans from different races/ethnicities.
- 75% of fans believe it has become more inclusive to disabled fans, with fans who do and don't have a disability equally likely to state this.
- 64% believe it has become more inclusive to fans from different religions, including 64% of Christian fans, 69% of Muslim fans, 62% of Hindu fans and 67% of those from other religions
- 61% believe it has become more inclusive to lesbian gay and bisexual fans, including 67% of those identifying as lesbian, gay or bisexual themselves
- 47% believe it has become more inclusive to transgender or gender non-conforming fans. Only 20 transgender or gender-non conforming fans responded to this survey, however 45% of these believed that football was becoming more inclusive to them.



Fans from these groups were invited to discuss their experiences of the change in the inclusivity of these groups.

One fan, a Jewish woman, aged 70-74, said: "If I look at my team, I see a mix of people of many different ethnic backgrounds, genders etc., all wearing the same scarf or shirt. On the match day, "we feel as one". I feel safe in the stadium crowd amongst my fellow fans and do not feel discriminated against because of my gender or age. At one point I even wore my Star of David openly over my football shirt without fear. There are more wheelchair accessible spaces as well, which is great. All that is different when I go to the toilet or get a drink at half time. I then feel more vulnerable as a woman, and also tuck my Jewish Star of David away. The inclusivity in the team is great - as a fan I am proud of all the young men playing so well for my team, no matter which sexual orientation or ethnic background they are." However, she also is clear that there is more work to be done. "It seems that equality and the embracing of diversity is a relatively thin veneer of civilization which can quickly wear off if for example black players miss penalties during the World Cup, as happened with Marcus Rashford when he and [other] black players were abused on social media."

Another, aged 20-24, who is mixed ethnicity and disabled, agrees that there have been changes in the inclusivity of football. "I think a lot of social changes have meant that there's more diversity in football communities, such as being more accepting towards women." However, she only views this as "minor" change and is clear that there is more that could still be done. While "for the most part, the community is quite nice and welcoming to lots of people ... there are a lot of football fans who are quite exclusionary to lots of social groups (e.g., marginalised communities like those with disabilities) and it can be quite off-putting to engage with the community knowing there are people like that."

Fans are clear that they believe Kick It Out is a driver of this change. Of the fans who believe that football has become more inclusive to any of these groups, 79% of those who have heard of Kick It Out believe that it contributed to this improvement, with 56% believing it contributed to a "great or moderate extent". Notably, this view is more commonly held among the groups of fans who are most likely to experience abuse, with 80% of mixed ethnicity, 72% of black and 68% of LGBTQ+ fans who have heard of Kick It Out and who believe that football has become more inclusive, believing that this change has been driven to a "moderate or great extent" by Kick It Out.

#### TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU BELIEVE THAT KICK IT OUT HAS CONTRIBUTED TO MAKING FOOTBALL MORE INCLUSIVE FOR THIS / THESE GROUPS?



- To a great extent
- To a moderate extent
- To a small extent
- To no extent
- Don't know / Prefer not to say

As well as feeling that football has become more inclusive, many fans who attend football games in person report that their experience has improved. Half (53%) of fans feel safer than they did 30 years ago/when they first became a fan, while 47% feel more welcome and 41% feel more part of a community. These feelings are particularly strong among fans from ethnic minority groups. Black (64%), Asian (57%) and Muslim (66%) fans are particularly likely to feel more welcome when watching football live than they did 30 years ago or when they first became a football fan. Similarly, Asian (58%), black (56%), mixed ethnicity (53%) and Muslim (63%) fans are more likely to feel more part of a community.

This is another area in which fans perceive Kick It Out to have had a notable impact, with 68% of those who are aware of Kick It Out believing that it has made them feel safer, 70% believing that it has made them feel more welcome and 66% believing it has made them feel more part of a community. Notably, Kick It Out has had a particularly strong impact on how welcome black, Asian, women and LGBTQ+ fans feel when watching games. Of those who are aware of Kick It Out:

- 74% of women say how safe they feel has been positively impacted by the work of Kick It Out
- 90% of Asian fans feel more welcome as a result of the work of Kick It Out, 87% feel more safe and 87% feel more part of a community
- 84% of black fans feel more welcome as a result of the work of Kick It Out
- 79% of fans who identify as LGBTQIA+ feel more safe as a result of the work of Kick It Out, 80% feel more welcome and 75% feel more part of a community



Fans were interviewed to understand the ways in which football has become more inclusive to them:

One man, aged 60-64, explains the vast progress he has seen in the inclusivity of football as a gay, Arab fan over time.

“Since I started following football 50 years ago it has undergone a remarkable change for the better. More young children and more women. There are still the occasional, but rare, racist and homophobic comments. The latter somehow deemed more acceptable as if it’s just banter. But can’t deny the change for the better, just a bit more to do.” He calls out changes he has seen when watching football live. “The biggest change has been at the stadiums. The composition of the fans is markedly different, with women and children happy to attend. The walk to the ground, and especially when leaving used to be unpleasant as that’s when the atmosphere could get unpleasant with lots of young male supporters roving in large groups and chanting vile stuff.” He describes how he has become more comfortable expressing himself in football environments. “I’m comfortable disclosing my sexuality in the last decade, not something I would have done in the 1980s through to 2000s because of the incessant homophobic insults thrown at officials and players. Back in the 1980s I confronted someone about what they were saying and received constant insults. I didn’t even think about reporting it back then, to whom, what would I say?”. He puts this down to the work of Kick It Out, describing them as “a useful focal point for action against all forms of discrimination” and that they “provide a forum and a place for fans to feel accepted and that they are not part of a small minority”. While he highlights difficulties in quantifying the extent to which the reduction he has seen in discrimination is due to the work of Kick It Out, he states that going to live football matches has become more inclusive, and that “going to live football matches is much more pleasant, with less rancid comments coming from other fans. The work of Kick It Out has changed the norms and accepted references. Racist and homophobic comments are no longer accepted.”

Likewise, a bisexual, mixed ethnicity, woman highlights the positive impact of Kick It Out's campaign work on raising the awareness of the need to promote inclusivity. "I do think more organisations like this should be made available, as discrimination is something that will always be there, and the more people who champion the importance of inclusivity, the better. Their campaigns definitely highlight the importance of doing the right thing, if you witness discrimination and it also encourages the community to work together, to ensure that we can make a difference in the level of respect and mutual understanding received, regardless of who you are." As a result of this work "There is more harmony in the matches I've been to previously, not all games will have such a positive impact, but a lot has changed in football and what people are and are not allowed to do. Which makes the sport a lot more enjoyable. I absolutely think it has made a big difference, in how footballers and the fans are treated. You feel more welcome and included in the conversation. It makes you more excited to attend matches and watch them at home with friends and family."

However, other fans are more cautious in their assessment. A 50-54 year old Pakistani man states that while "over the last 5 years, Kick It Out has been more prevalent at football grounds and taking the knee, which was good to see, [and] usually good support from fans .... I've seen very little change. I can understand Wilfred Zaha's reaction to taking the knee being superficial as nothing major changes, and that is how I feel, especially at the top of the FA." He notes that while change may have occurred "in the early days ... bad fan behaviour seems to be coming back" and indicates that how he feels varies by stadium and club. "In some stadiums, [it is] definitely more welcoming, in others less so."

However, it is not only fans attending games who report that football has become more inclusive in the period since Kick It Out was formed. Football workplaces have also become more inclusive in this time.

Two thirds (65%) of the fans who either work or volunteer for a football organisation in a non-playing capacity state that these organisations have become more inclusive to work or volunteer for since they first started. 70% agree that the organisation they work or volunteer for is welcoming to people from all areas of the population. This perception also extends to those who don't currently work or volunteer for a footballing organisation, with 69% of these fans feeling confident that if they did, they would feel welcomed, including 73% of women. However, fans from an ethnic minority (64%) are less likely to believe this would be the case, than white fans (70%). Whilst those with a disability (65%) are less

likely to feel it than those without (70%). It is therefore evident that there is more that could be done to make all fans feel that they would be welcomed if they did want to work for a footballing organisation.

Among fans and volunteers in footballing organisations who do believe that these workplaces have become more inclusive in the period since Kick It Out was formed, 78% of those who have heard of Kick It Out believe that it has been "at least slightly effective" in combatting discrimination in football workplaces, with 47% stating that they have been "mostly or completely effective".

Through its Raise Your Game programme, Kick It Out has helped make opportunities and careers available in football, for those who may not previously have been able to access them.

More detail on this can be found in the Raise Your Game evaluation on Page 45.

The footballing organisation I work / volunteer for is welcoming to employees / volunteers from all areas of the population



70% AGREE

I feel confident that if I were to work / volunteer for a football club, I would feel welcomed



69% AGREE



## ACTION

### KICK IT OUT HAS GIVEN PEOPLE MORE CONFIDENCE TO CALL OUT OR REPORT DISCRIMINATION THAN BEFORE

A key requirement of any attempt to improve inclusivity is getting buy-in from those in the community and empowering them to take action where discrimination does occur. The findings of the football fan survey indicate that this has happened as a result of the work of Kick It Out.

The proportion of fans who believe that reducing discrimination is important to them has increased in the period since Kick It Out was formed. 31% of fans report that reducing the level of discrimination in football was a “top or moderate priority” to them 30 years ago, or when they first became a football fan. This has nearly doubled in the Kick It Out era - to 60% who say that reducing discrimination is a “top or moderate priority” to them now.

Tackling discrimination is, perhaps unsurprisingly, more of a priority to groups who are more likely to experience it. Black (75%), mixed ethnicity (71%) and Asian (67%) fans are more likely than white (58%) fans to state that reducing discrimination is a “top or moderate priority” to them. Likewise, those who have a disability (66%) are more likely to state this than those without (59%), and LGBTQ+ fans (60%) are more likely to than those who are not (49%). Women are also more likely to state it is a top priority (64%) than men (58%). However, it is notable that over half of fans who don’t fall into these groups also state that reducing discrimination is a “top priority” to them – highlighting the rise in the importance of discrimination to all fans.

31% → 60%

of fans report that **reducing the level of discrimination was a top or moderate** priority to them 30 years ago or when they first became a fan, if they weren't a fan 30 years ago

say that **reducing discrimination is top or moderate** priority to them now

Many fans who are aware of Kick It Out, attribute this change to its work. Half (50%) of these fans state Kick It Out has made tackling discrimination more important to them, including 69% of those who state that fighting discrimination is now a "top priority" to them.

Fans also perceive an increase in concern about discrimination among their peers across the period since Kick It Out was formed. 73% believe fans in general are more concerned about it now than they were 30 years ago or when they first became a football fan.

Where fans are aware of Kick It Out, the vast majority (92%) of those who believe that "fans are more concerned", believe that this is, at least in part, due to the work of Kick It Out. Almost a third (29%) believe that Kick It Out is responsible for "all or most" of this change.

A 40-49 year old black man, states that "Kick It Out have been really vocal in combatting discrimination in football with their continuous adverts and media publicity which have always brought awareness to the public. The awareness being created via several social media platforms is really bringing positive changes to people's perception on discrimination in the public domain."

Meanwhile, a black man, aged 20-24 reports "In terms of their impact on me personally, it's minor because I've always had the mindset towards combatting discrimination as it's mostly my race and ethnicity that would probably get discriminated most often, but they have definitely made me more outgoing in my approach."

Positively, fans do report a change in their behaviour towards discrimination as well as their attitudes. Half (50%) of fans who have heard of Kick It Out believe that its work has had a positive impact on how their own behaviour could impact others in footballing environments. The extent to which Kick It Out has had a positive outcome on how fans think about the impact on their own behaviour has been greatest upon women (57%), mixed ethnicity (75%), black (75%), and Asian fans (65%) and those who have a disability or long-term health condition (60%).

Further to this, 43% of fans are more likely to call out discriminatory behaviour now, with 70% "probably or definitely likely" to call out a friend if they witnessed them engaging in discriminatory behaviour tomorrow, and 34% likely to call out a stranger.

Fans from groups who are more likely to experience discrimination are also more likely to call it out. Black fans are more likely to believe they would definitely call out a friend (50%) or stranger (29%), as are Asian fans (42% a friend, 14% a stranger).

Women are also more likely to definitely call out a friend (40%) or stranger (11%), as are those who have a disability (47% would call out a friend, 20% a stranger) and those who identify as LGBTQ+ (43% a friend, and 15% a stranger).



31%

Believe they would probably or definitely call out a stranger if they witnessed them engaging in discriminatory behaviour tomorrow



70%

Believe they would probably or definitely call out a friend if they witnessed them engaging in discriminatory behaviour tomorrow



43%

Are more likely to call out discriminatory behaviour now than 30 years ago, or when they first became a fan if they have been a fan for less than 30 years

Fans who have heard of Kick It Out are clear that it has had an impact on the likelihood of them personally calling out discrimination.

Of those who have heard of Kick It Out, 73% of those who are more likely to call out discrimination now than they were previously, say that this change is in part down to the work of Kick It Out.

However, it is important to note that while most fans believe they would call out discrimination if they witnessed it, in practice, only 14% of those who have witnessed discrimination, did call it out.

Mixed ethnicity (28%), black (26%) and Asian (21%), LGBTQ+ (25%) and fans with a disability (20%) are more commonly reporting incidents than other fans.



Of fans who have heard of Kick it Out, and who are **more likely to call out discrimination now** than 30 years ago or when they first became a fan, say this is to some degree due to the work of Kick it Out.

Fear of retaliation is the most common reason that fans wouldn't call out discrimination. 67% of those who wouldn't call it out if they witnessed it, stated that this is the reason why.

Whilst Kick It Out has influenced a great improvement in how empowered fans say they feel to call out discrimination, more needs to be done to influence fan behaviour as a whole. Fans who call out discriminatory behaviour need to feel supported by their peers in doing so.

In the in-depth research done with some of these fans, a 20-24 year old mixed ethnicity woman explains the role that Kick It Out has played in encouraging and empowering her to call out discrimination. "Kick It Out has made me realise how important it is to speak out about discrimination in football and how easy it is to report it, as well as to not be scared of reporting discrimination because it'll just make the experience for you and other people so much better."

Elaborating on this, she states: "I feel much more confident calling out discrimination knowing there's a group that will combat the discrimination and do something about it. Knowing I can better my experience and those around me, I always try to report discrimination where it happens."

Similarly, a black man, aged 20-24, reports that he is "definitely more likely to call it out now than I was before as Kick It Out's campaign to report discrimination, whenever seen, has given me some encouragement that there are indeed people that will listen and take it seriously when there are such issues at hand."

However, for some, the work of Kick It Out goes hand in hand with changes seen in society, with a British-Indian man, aged 60-64, stating: "I would call it out now whereas 30 / 40 years ago I would not have had the courage to do so. It has become 'normal behaviour' to call attention to these things if deemed unacceptable. The vast majority of the crowd / public around you are also very likely to support your actions. This is in part down to the work of Kick It Out keeping the profile high but also down to changes in society where such actions are not deemed normal / acceptable."



# SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT:

## RAISE YOUR GAME

As part of the impact evaluation for Kick It Out, a Social Return on Investment study was completed, covering the 2022-23 Raise Your Game programme.

Raise Your Game is a mentoring programme working to open up opportunities for those who may traditionally have not had a career in football.

To understand the social return Raise Your Game has had, in-depth interviews were carried out with mentors and delegates who had been involved in Raise Your Game during 2022-23.

These interviews revealed that there were seven key outcomes across the two groups that were gained from participating in Raise Your Game

### DELEGATES

- Boosted professional network
- Gained hope by feeling part of a football community
- Taken next steps on journey into the football industry
- Gained confidence

### MENTORS

- Grew professional network
- Had an opportunity to give something back
- Helped improve skills or knowledge

Follow-up surveys were then sent to all delegates and mentors to identify the extent to which these outcomes had been achieved, and the extent to which these changes were attributed to the Raise Your Game programme specifically, rather than through other factors, and how long these changes were expected to last.

Using these results, and by establishing what these outcomes would equate to in monetary terms, and using financial proxies, it is possible to establish the social impact value that the programme provided. By comparing the impact value with the cost of running the Raise Your Game programme during 2022-23, it was established that the Raise Your Game programme resulted in £1.48 of social value for delegates and mentors for every £1 spent either directly or nominally on the programme. If you remove the need for the venue hire, the social value increases to £2.06 for every £1 spent.

Element	Value (without venue costs)	Value (with venue costs)
Social return (value per amount invested)	£2.06	£1.48

This evaluation highlights the impact and importance of Kick It Out programmes to underrepresented groups – not only by providing them with meaningful benefits to support their careers in football, but by measuring the social value created for the community.

## CONCLUSION

There can be little doubt that there have been significant strides made in the inclusivity of football in the three decades since Kick It Out was formed. Society-wide changes in attitudes towards discrimination, increasing numbers of anti-discrimination campaigns and greater visibility of formerly underrepresented groups within the professional game all point to progress achieved in making football a game in which everyone feels welcome, included and part of a community.

With reports of discriminatory abuse rising year on year, it is evident that football is not yet where it wants to be, however fans tend to be positive in their views about how football has changed since 1993. For many, discrimination has reduced, fans feel safer, and more welcome.

**This research identifies four key areas in which Kick It Out has driven these changes.**

**IMPACT:** Kick It Out has helped drive the reduction in discriminatory abuse that occurs at football games, by raising awareness of the impacts of these behaviours and encouraging and supporting fans to report abuse where it is experienced.

**REACH:** Kick It Out campaigns and its promotion of anti-discrimination messages have reached 68% of fans. The majority hold a positive perception of those messages.

**INCLUSIVITY:** Kick It Out has made football environments more inclusive and welcoming to fans from across the country, by promoting an environment in which discrimination has become increasingly unacceptable, and providing support in instances where it has occurred.

**ACTION:** Kick It Out has encouraged behaviour changes. Emboldening fans to evaluate their own behaviour, and to call out discrimination and abuse where it occurs, thus creating environments in which discriminatory behaviour is not tolerated.

While few believe that the job is done when it comes to making football as inclusive as it could be, particularly in the online realm, for the majority of fans who have heard of Kick It Out, its impact has been undoubtedly positive. By engaging with fans further, continuing to promote its message of anti-discrimination, and supporting those who are on the end of discriminatory abuse, Kick It Out will likely continue to see large progress in its goal to end all forms of discrimination within sport.



# METHODOLOGY

In conducting this evaluation, M·E·L Research has investigated the changes that have occurred in the wider footballing landscape since 1993 to provide insight into how football's inclusivity has changed over that period.

They have also conducted a survey with 2,503 football fans, to understand their perceptions of the changes that have occurred in football in this period, and the role that Kick It Out has played in driving those changes. The survey was conducted online and included 1,500 fans aged 45 or over, in order to ensure that a large proportion of respondents were able to recall and reflect on changes that had occurred in football over the whole 30 years of Kick It Out's existence, or since they first became a football fan, if they have been a fan for less than 30 years. To qualify for the survey, respondents had to consider themselves a fan of football.

Quotas on fieldwork were set to ensure that the sample was representative of the UK population by age and geography. The profile of the fan survey respondents is displayed on the following page.

The evaluation also involved an in-depth qualitative research study with 28 football supporters who have knowledge of Kick It Out, and who participated in the wider fan survey, to investigate further their experiences of discrimination and the role that Kick It Out has had in their own engagement with football.

The evaluation has also included an in-depth analysis of Raise Your Game, to investigate the impact that this programme has had in helping employers or aspiring employees within football workplaces develop and progress their careers, and the Social Return on Investment provided by the programme.

Analysis was also conducted of data, reports and literature available on key events and trends in the inclusivity of football and wider UK society since 1993.

# FANS SURVEY RESPONDENT PROFILE

## ETHNICITY:

Indian	3%
Pakistani	2%
Bangladeshi	1%
Chinese	1%
Any other Asian background	1%
Caribbean	1%
African	3%
Any other Black, Black British or Caribbean background	0%
White and Black Caribbean	1%
White and Black African	0%
White and Asian	1%
Any other Mixed or multiple ethnic background	1%
English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British Irish	79%
Irish	1%
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0%
Roma	0%
Any other White background	3%
Arab	0%
Any other White background	0%
Prefer not to say	1%
Summary: Asian	8%
Summary: Black	5%
Summary: Mixed	3%
Summary: White	3%

## GENDER:

Male	65%
Female	35%
I identify another way	0%

## AGE:

16 - 19	1%
20 - 24	4%
25 - 29	4%
30 - 34	8%
35 - 39	11%
40 - 44	11%
45 - 49	6%
50 - 54	6%
55 - 59	8%
60 - 64	11%
65 - 69	12%
70 - 74	9%
75 - 79	6%
80 to 84	1%

## DISABILITY:

Yes, limited a lot	6%
Yes, limited a little	15%
No	78%
Prefer not to say	1%

## SEXUALITY

Heterosexual / straight	92%
Lesbian	1%
Gay	2%
Bisexual	3%
Other	0%
Prefer not to say	2%

## GENDER IDENTITY\*:

Identify as the same sex as on birth certificate	99%
Do not identify as the same sex as on birth certificate	1%
Prefer not to say	0%

\*Note that respondents identified as being LGBTQIA in the finding include those who identify as any sexuality other than heterosexual / straight, and / or a gender identity which is not the same as the sex on their birth certificate.

## RELIGION:

No religion	39%
Christian	51%
Buddhist	1%
Hindu	1%
Jewish	1%
Muslim	4%
Sikh	1%
Any other religion	0%
Prefer not to say	2%



# THANK YOU.

WITH YOU ON OUR TEAM,  
WE'LL DO THIS.

Kick It Out is a  
registered charity  
(number 1104056)



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