

10. PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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The FA strongly believes that football has a unique place in English society and can act as a power for good off the pitch in a number of policy areas. We also think that the Government can and should use the power of football to this effect. The FA policy team takes the lead in working with Government and key political opinion formers across the wide range of issues.

In recent years we have built close relationships with the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and other Government departments, as well as with the Opposition parties' sports teams and other relevant parliamentarians. As a result, The FA is viewed by Government as a vital delivery partner.

Examples of recent FA partnerships with Government include working with many different departments such as:

- The Department of Health in tackling obesity and related illnesses through increasing physical activity
- The Department for Education and Skills in producing education resources themed around Women's Euro 2005
- The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on football schemes for community engagement and improvement
- 10 Downing Street, the Home Office, the Foreign Office and police forces to reduce the risk of disorder at Euro 2004 and all other football matches

We keep the 659 Members of the House of Commons and the 700 Members of the House of Lords informed about the work of The FA and football's wider role and regularly contribute to the work programme of the All-Party Parliamentary Football Group.

This work has helped position The FA as a valuable source of information and campaigning resources for parliamentarians. The FA's policy team is frequently the first port of call for an MP or Peer when researching questions and writing speeches on sport, physical activity and other related issues.

The FA has a number of key messages, highlighting the importance of football in our society, which we will continue to impress on the Government and indeed all those willing to listen.

10.1 THE NATION'S MOST POPULAR SPORT

Football in England is as healthy and successful as it has ever been. The game has more spectators, participants and revenues than at any time in its history.

- 37,500 clubs, including 9,000 youth clubs
- 431,000 volunteers – the largest single number in any sector
- 30,000 FA-qualified coaches and 27,000 FA-qualified referees. We can't run the game without them but all but a handful are giving up their time for free.
- The 2005 FA Cup Final was viewed live by 484 million people across 169 countries
- 24.7 million watched England vs. Portugal in Euro 2004 on the BBC and England are again expected to take the largest following to the 2006 World Cup in Germany
- League attendances last season totalled over 29.2 million.

10.2 DELIVERING TO ALL SECTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY

Since the launch of The FA's Football Development Strategy in 2001, participation in all parts of the game has increased.

The number of women and girls playing football grew by over 50% from 2001 to 2004. There are now over 9,000 female teams. In the summer of 2005, The FA hosted a highly successful 'Euro 2005' tournament on behalf of UEFA in the North West of England with over 8 million viewers following the tournament on the BBC.

The FA has committed £1 million to disability football which has helped facilitate an approximate growth of around 40% in participation each year since 2002.

The FA now supports a total of 16 England teams including, Blind, Partially Sighted, Deaf and Hearing Impaired, Cerebral Palsy, Learning Disabilities and Amputee squads.

Small-sided (5, 6 & 7-a-side) football has also grown rapidly, with around 6 million people taking part, an increase of 25% since 2002. This reflects the changing demand for football as lifestyles change and The FA is determined to stay ahead of the demand with the appropriate facilities, competitions and coaching.

10.3 EDUCATING THE YOUNG AND IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF THE NATION

Football is offered by 95% of the 32,000 schools in England. The FA is committed to sport in schools; raising standards, establishing community links and providing competitions.

- 1,700 schools have received the FA Charter Standard award, a 'kite-mark' that gives schools something to aim for and provides guidance to parents.
- The FA has trained 13,000 teachers over the last two and a half years to teach football as part of PE lessons.
- To help school sport, The FA has accessed £800,000 of Government funding for The FA School-Club Link programme. This projects sets out to ensure that all children, regardless of circumstance or ability, should be able to participate in and enjoy physical education and sport. It concentrates on deprived communities and has been extremely successful – thousands more young people are now involved in football out of school, thanks to links made with their local club.

The FA recognises and welcomes the Government's recent investment in sport in schools. It is vital that we engage young people in sport, as it has enormous benefits on education, health, crime and other policy areas. It is also proven that those captivated by sport early in their lives are much more likely to stay involved in sport throughout their lives.

The Government has embarked on an enormous investment programme called 'Building Schools for the Future'. It is crucial that sport is at the centre of this initiative – better facilities are needed for both schools themselves and for the use of the local community. The FA is keen to work with the Prime Minister to make sure that we don't miss this opportunity.

HEALTH

Physical inactivity is making the nation less healthy and costing the taxpayer billions to treat through the NHS. The Government and sports governing bodies need to work together to increase participation in sport and physical activity in order to reverse the trends in poor health.

Many Government departments have a role to play in tackling the issue and we urge the Government to work with us as the governing body of the national sport to do just that.

The FA has recently begun a relationship with the Department of Health and will work together further in 2006 in what promises to be a massive year for English football.

10.4 THE NEED FOR GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT

The Treasury received £600 million in tax from football in the last tax year (Deloitte & Touche). A successful England team also delivers a massive boost not only to the morale of the nation, but also to the economy.

In Great Britain, the Government gives far less to sport than comparative western European countries such as France and Germany. Despite this, English football does more than any other nation in Europe to redistribute money around the game – we are way ahead of our counterparts in leading European footballing nations such as Italy and Spain in terms of redistribution.

The contribution football itself makes to the games grassroots is very significant:

- The FA and the Premier League have both given £20 million per year to the Football Foundation
- The FA Cup Prize and TV funds distributed £22 million to clubs last year
- The FA distributed over £30 million in total to the grassroots game last year

The scale of the game in England means that external help is needed. Research carried out by The FA and the Football Foundation have identified a funding deficit of £2 billion in existing facilities alone, to bring them up to a reasonable standard.

When you consider that this is to cover 45,000 pitches, and does not even cover the increase in participation that we all want, this level of investment cannot come from the football industry alone. The 'elite' of other entertainment industries such as cinema or music are not expected to fund the grassroots of their trade and as our research shows, sport needs assistance.

10.5 TICKET TOUTING

10.5.1 THE EXTENT OF THE TICKET TOUTING PROBLEM

The traditional image of the ticket tout is the shady figure lurking on the street corner a few hundred yards from the event venue. While this problem very much persists, so much so that it often causes major highway and public order nuisance within the vicinity of the event, it is now only a part of the problem of ticket touting.

This touting 'industry' has been fuelled by the growth of the internet, and in particular the on-line auction sites that offer an easily available method of buying and selling tickets.

A quick review of the internet shows that a huge number of tickets are being offered at greatly inflated prices across all major UK sporting events:

THE 2006 FOOTBALL WORLD CUP FINAL

Tickets for the World Cup Final in Germany were offered at prices in the region of £2,000. These anonymous web sales of touted tickets undermine efforts by the football and public authorities to 'screen' all purchasers – a vital security check.

THE 'FUTURES' MARKET

Tickets are now frequently on sale before they have even been printed or distributed, in effect creating a 'futures market'. Tickets for the 2005/06 FA Cup Final were available before the competition had even begun and despite the fact that the venue had yet to be confirmed.

The problem with these 'future' sales is that it encourages a demand that the agencies then have to supply. There are only two outcomes to such a scenario: (i) touts secure advance funds with which they enter the market place seeking to purchase tickets using any means available, or (ii) the fans who think they have bought tickets are subsequently disappointed when the touting operation cannot supply them, or the tickets that are supplied are subsequently declared invalid.

10.5.2 THE NEGATIVE IMPACT OF TICKET TOUTING

Ticket touting is sometimes portrayed as a harmless activity that meets a consumer demand. This is a falsehood. Touting diverts precious resources (both financial and administrative) from Governing bodies and sporting organisations that would be better spent on the development of their sport.

Touting has a negative impact on sports fans who find themselves priced out of events. Additionally, fans who do buy tickets from touts receive none of the usual consumer protections that apply when they buy a ticket directly from an event organiser.

Touting creates a range of public order and public nuisance concerns, from allowing the black market economy to flourish to undermining policing and security arrangements.

THE IMPACT ON FOOTBALL FANS

Touting prices real fans out of being able to attend major sporting events. Contrary to the idea that ticket touting allows increased access to events for real fans (the lifeblood of sports), touting operations make big profits by buying up as many tickets as possible and then reselling them at inflated prices.

Evidence suggests that secondary agents engage in a number of practices which decrease the chances of fans securing tickets direct from the event owner at their face value:

- High-speed dialling equipment to increase the chances of obtaining tickets for high demand events
- Using numerous credit cards in different names, and multiple identities, to secure large numbers of tickets
- Joining clubs solely to ensure preferential mail order tickets
- Buying tickets from individual consumers who are no longer able to attend the event
- Trading with other secondary agents.

The UK is renowned worldwide for staging some of the world's greatest sporting events. These events attract a large number of overseas visitors, creating benefits for the event and also the wider UK economy. The reputation of our events and the UK as a tourist destination are not enhanced when these visitors are hassled or ripped off by touts when

approaching the venue, or are even denied entry because they have bought a forged, out of date, or touted ticket (whose terms do not allow it to be sold on).

A recent OFT study into the ticket market found that the activities of secondary agents (touts) result in three times as many complaints as those of primary agents. Notably, Trading Standards Departments feel that complaints are under-reported, as touts often target tourists, who are not familiar with the law and unlikely to complain.

- The OFT identified the following misleading practices that fans who buy tickets from touts suffer from:
- The face value of the ticket is often not disclosed, and so the fan is unaware of the premium being paid
- Seat locations may be poor or have restricted viewing - as the correct information is not given at the time of sale
- Pre-paid tickets may not even arrive. This also gives an opportunity for touts to supply forged tickets.

Such practices mean touts often fail to comply with consumer protection legislation, including the Distance Selling Regulations and the Unfair Terms in Consumer Contracts Regulations.

For the 1998 World Cup, the Mall Corporate Hospitality Company took over £2.5 million in customers' money for tickets. They went bust and delivered no tickets at all.

THE IMPACT ON THE FA AND EVENT ORGANISERS

The FA's prime objectives are the promotion and development of the football in this country. In relation to large scale events, The FA aim to further these objectives in three ways:

- 1 Ensuring that supporters have access to tickets
- 2 Protecting the integrity and reputation of the game and our leading events
- 3 Maximising our income so that it can be re-invested in the development of the sport at the grass roots

The actions of touting businesses would be direct impediments to these objectives:

- Ensuring that supporters and members have access to tickets
- The FA set ticket prices for our leading events at prices below those that would apply if the market were left to its own devices. This is to ensure that football fans and those members and volunteers of the community sporting club network across the country, are able to afford the chance to attend the 'pinnacle' events. It is extremely disappointing to see the actions of touts undermining this policy.
- Protecting the integrity and reputation of football and its leading events

The FA often receives the blame for the actions and consequences of unauthorised ticket sellers. The disappointed fan who is sold a ticket that doesn't materialise, or is prevented from using a ticket because it has been sold on or is a fraud or duplicate, will naturally vent their frustration at the governing body.

Many supporters assume (wrongly) that the secondary agents are authorised by the sporting authorities. They are informed of this by the touts themselves who describe themselves as official suppliers. To aid this deception, they will often steal the sport's Intellectual Property (such as The FA crest) to make the sites look authentic.

The reputation of events is damaged when spectators are confronted by a huge number of touts when trying to make their way to the venue. The FA take this issue seriously and take very strict action against any of our own members who are sadly tempted to sell their tickets on to touts.

Protecting the revenue streams and resources of the game

Touting diverts precious resources (both financial and administrative) from The FA and the game's other sporting bodies that would be best spent on the development of the sport.

One impact is the direct loss of potential revenue arising due to the sale of unofficial hospitality packages that compete with the official offering. At Euro 96 it is estimated that more than 3000 unauthorised hospitality packages were provided for the England v Scotland game alone.

The second and most significant problem is the loss of time, and resources, that are now devoted by sports event organisers in trying to limit the damage caused by touting. The following are just a few examples:

- A proportion of all police bills paid by event organisers are an indirect result of the problems caused by touting.
- All governing bodies now spend a great deal of time and money following up on tickets that regrettably have made their way onto the black market so that they can take action against the person, club, official or even player who has sold them on.
- Whilst legislation is in place for football matches, enforcement is poor, and so the FA actively monitors internet sales so that it can then contact sites and ask them to remove the tickets from sale. This has resulted in the removal of 700 auctions featuring tickets to FA matches. Such activity takes time and costs The FA considerable resources.
- The internet sites and auction sites that sell tickets frequently steal the copyright of the governing bodies to give the impression that the tickets are official.
- The FA Premier League (through Netresult) has targeted hundreds of internet ticket websites to ensure the removal of clubs' Intellectual Properties. These sites use the official crests and logos of clubs to mislead supporters into believing they are buying from authorised sources.
- Additional stewards are needed at sports events to deal with the knock-on consequences of touts and to advise the public not to buy tickets from touts outside the venues.

Public authorities; Policing, security, fraud, black-market and anti-social behaviour

Most worryingly, touting is an activity that frequently operates outside the law, contravening rules and regulations set down by public authorities; consumer protection regulations are ignored; tickets are stolen, forged and mis-sold; no VAT or corporation tax is paid; and public order offences are regularly committed outside venues.

The following sets out some of the concerns:

- The National Criminal Intelligence Service has evidence that operators in the secondary ticket market are often part of wider criminal operations.
- Ticket touts outside grounds are often seen as threatening and indicative of anti-social behaviour. This leads to an increased need for policing at grounds.
- Concerned nearby residents tend to blame The FA for the activities of touts and thus damage the reputation of both the organisation and our competitions.

- Touts create an environment in which forged and stolen tickets can be distributed. Often tickets are reported missing in the post. Frequently it is found that these tickets are not 'missing', but have been stolen and rapidly reappear within touting operations.

Black economy: Since secondary agents operate on the black market, there are issues surrounding unpaid tax and VAT, to a loss of revenue for the Government. The Inland Revenue have investigated touts at Wimbledon and found they are frequently also claiming benefits to which they are not entitled.

In a climate of increased security threats, the ease with which tickets can be purchased on the secondary market does not mirror Government's increased vigilance in other areas of society, and the need for effective ticketing measures and processes to be in place to aid anti-terror measures.

10.5.3 THE LIMITS OF THE EXISTING LEGISLATION

There is no current national legislation or Government policy that makes it illegal to tout tickets for sporting events, other than for designated football matches.

The legislation that is in place for football was established in 1994 under the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (section 166). While this legislation has been partially effective for football, it needs updating to address the following developments in the touting market place:

The penalties imposed under section 166 are not high enough. It is widely understood within the football community that the level 5 fine (up to £5,000) assigned in s166 is not a sufficient deterrent to prevent organised operations from touting.

The legislation is drafted in a way that it makes it an offence for an 'unauthorised person' to tout a ticket. This does not reflect the reality of a large number of organisations and companies involved in touting, many of which are involved in other criminal activity.

Legislation needs to take into account the largely corporate nature of the crime, and allow suitable punishments (particularly seizure of company assets, disqualification of directors etc.). Studies have shown that almost all the complaints received concern those businesses operating professionally.

The legislation is often circumvented by touts who offer novelty items for sale, such as key-rings with free tickets thrown in.

Other associated legislation, for example the Price Indications (The Resale of Tickets) Regulations 1994, which require that the face value of the ticket and the seat's location must be made clear to the consumer at the point of sale, are not enforced. Other regulations are also ignored, although it must be noted that these are all 'indirect' ways of dealing with a very specific problem.

The most effective solution would be for the Government to act on its 1997 Manifesto commitment to introduce explicit legislation that deals directly with the problem of ticket touting.



10.5.4 PROPOSALS FOR GOVERNMENT ACTION

The sporting community wants the Government to act on ticket touting. The Government recently announced that it would introduce anti-ticket touting legislation for the Olympic Games, should they be held in London in 2012. There is no logical argument why this legislation should apply for the Olympics but not other major sporting events held in this country.

The advantages of introducing new primary legislation are that it could be framed to deal with:

- The fact that companies and criminal gangs now operate in touting and that the measures and penalties need to reflect this, such as imposing heavy fines and the sequestration of assets
- The internet age, including on-line auction sites and the websites that circumvent IP laws and allow the advertising of ticketing services that are breaking the law (in the case of football)
- One of the very compelling advantages of specific touting legislation is that it allows for better self-policing of the problem:
- Event organisers would then be able to print on the ticket, and communicate widely, that it is an offence to re-sell a ticket
- Sites such as e-bay would no longer be able to allow sales to continue under the argument that it is legal to do so. E-bay does remove football tickets from its sites in accordance with the current law, although we believe it could do much more in terms of being pro-active to stop the auction commencing, rather than waiting for a complaint to be registered about the sale.
- For other sports, e-bay has stated "should the legal position regarding the resale of tickets change, e-bay would review its policies to comply with the any new regulations".

10.6 THE FA'S CHARITY POLICY

The Football Association has taken a more structured approach to its charitable donations in 2006, with five selected organisations benefiting from the FA Charity Programme.

The new Programme has been formulated to drive funds into areas where it can directly play a beneficial role. It kicked off on 1 January 2006 and includes two lead FA Charity Partners, with whom The FA will work over the years.

The selected two lead FA Charity Partners are:

- The British Heart Foundation, the nation's heart charity, raising funds to keep more hearts beating
- 'Keep Your Eye on the Ball', a campaign focused on combating testicular and prostate cancer, organised in partnership with the PFA and the Everyman Campaign.

In addition, there will be three 2006 FA Charity Partners, to be reviewed at the end of the year. This will give the Programme flexibility every year to work with a range of causes.

The three 2006 FA Charity Partners are:

- The Bobby Moore Fund, part of Cancer Research UK and established to honour the memory of the late England captain, who died from bowel cancer
- BBC Sport Relief, raising money for a range of projects while urging the nation to get involved in sport
- SOS Children's Villages, which provides a family home for orphans around the world and is an official charity partner of the 2006 FIFA World Cup.

The FA supports these five charities in two key ways; firstly, through a donation of funds derived from revenues generated by the annual curtain-raiser match to the professional season, The FA Community Shield, played in August between the Premiership and FA Cup winners.

Secondly, the Programme will also see the granting of an inventory of rights to each charity to help their general fund-raising efforts. Apart from official association with The FA, such rights will include items to use as auction prizes, as well as help with specific fund-raising projects.

Local community charities will continue to be supported by additional donations from The FA Community Shield revenues distributed through clubs who appear in The FA Cup from the First Round Proper onwards.



10.7 FOOTBALL AND HEALTH

The FA recognises that sedentary lifestyles and obesity are a problem for this country, and is committed to helping fix it. We want to work with the Government and other partners to promote healthy lifestyles, and to use the power of football to achieve this wherever possible.

We believe that a healthy lifestyle is achieved by a combination of a well-balanced diet and physical activity. Football 'competes' with other leisure pursuits, particularly of children, which are by their nature sedentary.

The FA wants more active participation; we do this by investment in football, both public and private, as we believe that participation not only brings benefits to society, but also to the health of the individuals concerned. This investment is raising awareness, funding facilities and providing coaches.

We believe that research shows prevention to be more cost-effective than cure in public health. Active participation is part of the prevention. We are therefore working with the relevant authorities to find innovative ways of encouraging new people to take part in sport, producing that preventative effect.

The FA focuses its efforts on physical activity, as this is clearly where we can have the greatest impact. The aim of all our development work is to increase participation in the game.

While recognising and supporting the importance of nutrition through a balanced diet, we use our position as a sports organisation in an influential position to educate.

The FA launched a Euro 2004 education pack to all schools in the country, using the excitement of the England team's progress in the tournament. The pack aimed to not only improve literacy and numeracy, but also to educate young people about healthy lifestyles - a combination of a well-balanced diet and physical activity.

10.7.1 FOOTBALL'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

The Government has recognised the contribution that sport and football in particular can make in relation to national health targets.

There is great potential for football clubs to work in local partnerships with the NHS on initiatives that can contribute to improving health. In addition, there are opportunities in which both football and health can make more positive use of facilities so that access to services and health information can be enhanced.

Government departments, NHS trusts, local authorities and football organisations have already combined to use the power of football to promote a wide range of education, social inclusion and community initiatives.

Minister for Public Health Caroline Flint MP has commented that 'Football is an important part of many people's lives and with its family-friendly policies including smoke-free grounds, family enclosures and football in the community work carried out by club players, it provides great opportunities to get across key messages about living healthy, active lives.

'Football, alongside other sports, has been ahead of the field in putting these healthy living messages into practice and recognising its role in influencing the lives of its fans and players.'

The game's mass appeal can be utilised to reinforce health messages and build on football's track record of involvement in promoting healthy lifestyles.

Promoting physical activity - Encouraging participation in football, whatever a player's ability, is a way of contributing towards health improvement to reduce the risk of chronic diseases. It can have a positive effect on mental health by boosting self-esteem.

Promoting healthy living for children - By using football-based examples for innovative learning material, young people can be inspired to improve their diet and nutrition and live a healthier lifestyle.

Health facilities at football grounds – There is the potential for football clubs to work with their NHS trusts to develop joint facilities at football grounds and attract people who may not otherwise access local services.

Marketing health and players as role models – Footballers can be used as positive role models through marketing campaigns to promote healthy living or raise awareness of particular health issues.

Promote social inclusion – Football has the ability to engage socially-excluded groups through community-based coaching courses at which key messages about health issues and the dangers of drugs and smoking can be reinforced.

10.7.2 CANCER AWARENESS

The FA has teamed up with The PFA, the Institute of Cancer Research and the Imperial Cancer Research Fund to launch 'Keep your Eye on the Ball', a campaign aimed at raising awareness of testicular cancer within English football at all levels.

Testicular cancer is the most prevalent form of cancer amongst young men between 18 and 35. However, over 90% of cases can be successfully treated if diagnosed early enough.

As the governing body for football in England, The FA recognises its responsibility to take the lead on matters of health awareness. Subsequently, The FA has provided funding for a wide-reaching poster and information campaign to ensure that players, coaches, administrators and fans have access to the full facts and are responsible about checking themselves.

The Football Association is involved in numerous other campaigns and initiatives. For an overview of all The FA campaigns please visit www.TheFA.com/TheFA/FACampaigns/